

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

Northside Elders' Statement Regarding "Chad Dollahite and The Highland Unity Letters"

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Brethren,

It has come to our attention that brother Chad Dollahite has recently posted some "unity letters" involving the Highland Church of Christ (Dalton, GA) and the Northside Church of Christ (Calhoun, GA) on the "Sons of Demas" and "CFTF" e-mail lists. A concerned brother sent to us brother Dollahite's comments (posted May 20, 2006) regarding said letters, which we quote below:

Further, brother Wesley Simons tried to help resolve the conflict by offering help in drawing up statements for both congregations, statements that were VERY generous to the Northside eldership. Many, including myself, felt that the statement on the part of Northside was far too weak; it sounded much like one going before a congregation saying, "IF I have sinned..." Nevertheless, the Highland elders, wanting to have the fellowship between these 2 congregations restored, all approved the letter. Then, the letter went to Northside, and guess what? THEY rejected it! It could be no clearer that, as of now at least, Northside has NO DESIRE for unity with Highland. I was absolutely floored when I found out that the Northside eldership had officially rejected the letter.

Let all good brethren read the text of these letters below and see for themselves just what these brethren rejected in a genuine, sincere attempt to heal the rift between these 2 congregations. The first letter was to be Northside's letter to Highland, the second was to be Highland's official response, and the third was to be Highland's official announcement to the brotherhood of the restoration of fellowship. They are posted at the end of my message here.

By releasing these letters into the public arena (which he apparently felt "duty-bound" to do), brother Dollahite has unnecessarily further fueled the "fire-storm" already raging among brethren. When the above statement and the letters it mentions (which we have reproduced below) were posted on the e-mail lists, we immediately began receiving phone calls and e-mails requesting our response. Therefore, in order to clear up any questions that might be raised relating to Northside by the Simons letters (and Dollahite's comments concerning them) we had no choice but to prepare and release this statement.

We were very disappointed in brother Dollahite's derogatory statements and implications concerning us in his numerous exchanges with those who questioned him on the e-mail lists "Sons of Demas" and "CFTF." We were troubled by his remarks regarding our alleged contribution to the controversy

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Founder
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Editorial...

“FORM OVER SUBSTANCE”

Country Western singer Blaine Larsen sings a popular country song entitled *I Don't Know What She Said*. The song is about a young man enamored with an Hispanic girl who only speaks Spanish, while the young man only speaks English. When she speaks to the young man he cannot understand a word she says to him, but his infatuation with her is so great he exclaims, “**I don't know what she said, but sure like he way she said it.**” The lyrics of Larsen's song set to the right kind of music makes for a hit country song. However, in dealing with the realities of life, the message of the previous quote from Larsen's song all too often describes the way some people deal with the various and diverse events in life. Rather than base their decisions on the *substance* (facts, truth) of a matter, they more times than not base their judgments concerning whether some one or thing is right or wrong on *how* (*form, style, method, or appearance*) it was done, or how a person approached a matter. *Facts and truth are not their first concern.* Such an approach to life has given rise to the following well-used phrase that describes this wrong headed approach in discerning right from wrong; that phrase is *form over substance*.

At times disgruntled members of the church feel the thrust of the Sword of the Spirit in their hearts (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12). Their reaction is to complain about the preacher's harsh, hateful, mean, uncaring, and unloving preaching. When such members are asked if they are upset at the preacher for teaching false doctrine or in some way propagating a falsehood in his sermons, the growling church members reply, “*It's not what he said but how he said it.*” It is not unusual for such complaints to come from persons wherein the *what (facts and truth)* of a sermon are secondary (or further down such a persons' list of what is important in a sermon). They are interested more in *how* the preacher sounds, looks, and/or acts in his presentation of the same. The real concern of such people is this, *they want preaching that will not convict them of their sins.* Thus, such wretched characters at times attack the *form* and not the *substance* of the sermon (of course this does not mean that the substance of a sermon is never attacked).

Some church members approach problems and seek their solutions with the previously noted mind-set well in place—*form or style over substance*. While some have always approached matters in the church with the previously noted attitude, over this past year we have observed certain brethren (elders and preachers in particular) for the first time (as far as we know) judge things by its *form* rather than by its *substance*.

Although the following example of decision making based on *form over substance* is not the only example of brethren acting accordingly, it is one of the more glaring cases where such has been and is being done. It is in the matter of AP's Executive Director, brother Dave Miller's false doctrine on re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders as Miller taught it, defended it, and practiced by him and the Brown Trail Church of Christ in 1990 that herein concerns us. (In this editorial we will only note the fact that Miller

believes false doctrine on MDR and that he and other AP speakers appear at liberal churches to present their sermons on apologetics without any effort on their part to correct the sins extant in such churches. Suffice it to say in noting Miller's other errors that some brethren are also attempting to deal with these errors in the same way they are approaching his R/R false doctrine—accepting *form over substance*.)

Jesus plainly told us to **“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment”** (John 7:24; Psalms 119:172). Discerning matters by judging righteously simply means to make one's decisions solely on the basis of the truth pertaining thereto as it is applied to the relevant facts in whatever case is under investigation. Furthermore, the inspired apostle Paul obligated all of us to **“Prove all things, hold fast that which is good”** (I Thessalonians 5:21). Also, in those Scriptures **“written afore time for our learning”** (Romans 15:4), Moses gave instructions regarding carrying out an investigation, which investigation is to determine the truth or falsity of a matter. Moses wrote:

Then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you; Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword (Deuteronomy 13:14, 15).

For emphasis sake we will enumerate Moses directions found in verse 14 regarding investigating charges, that if proven, would mean the death penalty for all described in verse 15. Moses instructed the Israelites to: 1) **inquire**, 2) **make search**; 3) **ask diligently**; 4) if it be **true**; 5) and the thing **certain**—only then should one be judged guilty and executed (13:6, 15; 17:6). Add to these directions Deuteronomy 17:6; Numbers 35:30, and Matthew 18:16 and who is it that can come up with a better and more thorough approach for investigating a case? However, in matters pertaining not only to Dave Miller, but TGJ Board, AP, GBN, Stan Crowley, the Schertz, Texas elders, Barry Grider, the Forest Hills elders, MSOP, the SW elders, Rick Brumback, Joseph Meador, SWSBS, Tom Bright, the Philips St. elders, and OABS, we are considered wicked and vile if we seek to follow the inspired instructions previously noted in investigating anything and refuse to be content with *form over substance*.

While we may have missed some, over the last year, MSOP, led by Curtis Cates, has taken different contradictory positions regarding Dave Miller's R/R doctrine. Some of these positions are: **1) It did not happen and we preach against it. 2) Something happened, but it was not R/R of elders. 3) Brown Trail elders and Dave Miller had to do it or they would lose the congregation and preacher school. 3a) They had to do it because the eldership was in a stalemate. 3b) They had to do it because of the bad situation they were in. 4) They did it, but it is not worth splitting the church over.**

MSOP declares that they do not teach any false doctrine, but what about the aforementioned positions they have taken—**all of them within the last 12 months?** WHAT DO THEY TEACH THEIR STUDENTS ABOUT SAID

ISSUE? It is obvious that they do not consider the R/R of elders as taught, believed, and practiced by Miller and the Brown Trail Church of Christ in 1990 to be fatal error. If they do believe said error to be fatal, then why did Keith Mosher make the statement of the previously listed point # 4? We may, therefore, conclude that if MSOP students and graduates go throughout the brotherhood teaching and practising R/R, MSOP will not be disturbed by such teaching at all. Passively MSOP is saying to its students, graduates, and the church, *“You can believe, teach, and practice what Dave Miller, et al. believed, taught, and practiced in 1990 and, while some of us may preach against said doctrine, we will remain in fellowship with you, defend, and support you just as we have Dave Miller and AP.”* The previous comments truthfully apply to BTSOP, SWSBS, OABS, GBN, World Video Bible School, *Spiritual Sword, T“N”GJ*. The same remarks also apply to the Schertz, Texas' preacher Stan Crowley's false doctrine on MDR. *(It would be interesting to hear arguments presented to show the difference in why we were Scripturally obligated to oppose James D. Bales' false doctrine on MDR, but we are not equally obligated to oppose Stan Crowley's false doctrine on the same issue.)*

In their fellowship of each other the previously listed institutions indicate their approval of the aforesaid false teachers and their errors. No doubt Mac Deaver, Buster Dobbs, John Waddey, and no telling who else are waiting in the wings to see if the *balance umbrella* is broad enough for them to get under it with all the other balanced brethren who are already benefiting from its “unity in diversity” in obligatory matters shade.

Also, are said brethren in or out of fellowship with the North Side congregation, Calhoun, Georgia? Or, are they in or out of fellowship with Highland Church of Christ, Dalton, Georgia? All of said brethren support GBN and it is overseen by the Highland Church of Christ elders, Dalton, Georgia. However, the Highland congregation withdrew fellowship from the North Side congregation's elders, but **not** the North Side preacher, **nor** the North Side congregation. Where the Highland congregation got the idea that such a withdrawal of fellowship is authorized by the New Testament, I do not know, but just keep in mind these are the fellows that are overseeing all that is involved in the Gospel Broadcasting Network. *(Please see the North Side elders' statement about said matters in this issue of CFTF)*. As the North Side elders stated, brethren cannot be faithful to God and remain in fellowship with both churches. To fellowship one of these congregations is to be out of fellowship with the other congregation. *How are the brethren who are connected with these schools going to answer students who ask them with which congregation MSOP, BTSOP, SWSBS, and OABS are in fellowship? Or, will they continue to take the position in answering such a question that these errors should not cause a cessation of fellowship between those that believe them and those that do not believe them? These brethren may not realize it, but in the name of balance, they are in the process of boarding Rubel Shelby's “unity in diversity” train—even if it is the caboose.*

—David P. Brown, Editor

between us and the Highland elders/GBN and the subsequent division between us. Brother Dollahite did not contact us (prior to releasing these letters to the public) to verify any of the prejudiced statements, allegations, and innuendos he wrote about us. We were "absolutely floored" when we read his derogatory remarks about our motive for rejecting those letters. To say that we have "NO DESIRE" for unity with Highland was a blatant, unfounded, and irresponsible attack against our Christian character. We have always desired unity, but never at the price of compromise. We have never opposed any good/Scriptural work. The Northside Congregation and her elders have once again been falsely accused of wrong doings by one who should know (and easily could have known) better. It seems that many brethren nowadays base their conclusions and decisions about certain situations on simple hearsay without one shred of evidence, while refusing to consider ample evidence that is readily available. We are therefore made to wonder if this response will have any bearing on the thinking of such brethren, but we feel compelled to make it nonetheless.

We want those who read this statement to know that, in spite of his words and actions regarding this situation, we still love brother Dollahite and wish only the best for him and his good family. We have no ill will toward him or any others. We just hope and pray that he and others will open their hearts to the evidence and stop their campaign to divide the body of Christ by endorsing and defending a false teacher. We intend to demonstrate that the evidence, in light of the Scriptures, proves that the Highland elders caused the division between the Highland and Northside Congregations by embracing a "marked" false teacher. We pray that our comments in this statement will help those who are sincerely seeking answers concerning this new controversy brother Dollahite has created with his e-mail assault against the Northside Congregation and her elders. In fact, his assault was against all faithful brethren who have bravely stood against the current compromise taking place in the Lord's church. We will now do our very best to "give an answer" in harmony with Scripture for our decision in these matters (I Peter 3:15).

We received by e-mail copies of the proposed "unity letters" from brother Wesley Simons on April 12, 2006. We want it clearly understood by everyone who reads these "unity letters" that the words—and ideas—attributed to us in them **are not ours**. We had absolutely nothing to do with this "unity" proposal. It is our understanding that brother Simons wrote those letters with the objective of providing some sort of resolution to the **unscriptural** withdrawal of fellowship which the elders of the Highland Church of Christ (Dalton, GA) enacted against the elders of the Northside Church of Christ (Calhoun, GA) on October 30, 2005.

The unscriptural actions of the Highland elders have made it Scripturally impossible for brethren to have fellowship with both congregations (including GBN, which Highland oversees). As earlier indicated, the evidence will show that Highland's withdrawal was the result of our objection to and exposure of their endorsement of and fellowship with a false teacher, Dave Miller. Highland's withdrawal was imposed upon the Northside elders **alone** and not upon our preacher or members (**who are fully in agreement with our stand against their fellowship of AP/Dave Miller**). Highland's withdrawal of fellowship has forced brethren to make **one** of the following decisions:

1. Support, endorse, and fellowship Highland/GBN (who are in fellowship with a false teacher, Dave Miller) and withdraw fellowship from the Northside Church of Christ for standing in opposition to such (2 John 9–11).

2. Extend fellowship to Northside (who refuses to endorse and fellowship a false teacher, Dave Miller) and refuse to support, endorse, and fellowship the Highland Church of Christ and GBN (Rom. 16:17; Eph 5:11).

Those who try to have it both ways (fellowshipping both Highland/GBN and Northside) are in violation of God's law on fellowship. They cannot have it both ways. God's law teaches us to withdraw fellowship from false teachers and from all those who bid them "Godspeed" (II John 9–11; Romans 16:17; Ephesians 5:11). By their unscriptural actions, the Highland elders have forced this decision upon every Christian who desires to be faithful to God and His Word. For additional Scriptural insight on this issue, we encourage all who read this statement to read also brother Gary Summers's article, "Fellowship and GBN," in the April 2006 issue of *Contending for the Faith*.

Because of the predicament the Highland elders have created, brother Simons proposed the following "unity letters" to resolve this dilemma:

Letter #1—From the Northside elders to the Highland elders:

To the Highland elders,

Brethren, we would like to say that we did not mean to cause any division or problems in releasing the correspondence between the two congregations. We felt that some people were confused because they were hearing conflicting stories. We thought that the best way to solve this problem was to let each congregation speak for its self. It was our view that the writings of each congregation did that.

However, since you say this caused division and trouble, we would like to say we are sorry for that. We certainly were not trying to do that.

We love you as brethren. We pray that Biblical unity can be enjoyed by the two congregations. We plan to do our part in this effort.

Elders of the Northside church of Christ

Letter #2—From the Highland elders to the Northside elders:

To the elders at Northside,

We have received your statement and accept it. We also want Biblical unity. We know that some thought that we withdrew fellowship too quickly. We want you to know that we, too, are sorry if you felt by our withdrawal that we were trying to abuse or mistreat the Northside elders. This was not our aim or goal.

We rejoice because this problem has been solved.

Thank you for helping to resolve this problem. We hope that we can move forward to the glory of God.

Elders of the Highland church of Christ

Letter #3—From the Highland elders to the brotherhood:

Dear brethren,

We are writing to inform you that fellowship between the Northside elders and Highland elders has been restored. We ask that you extend full fellowship to both the Northside elders and the congregation. We are thrilled that this problem has been resolved.

Please, send this information far and wide so that all will know that we are in fellowship with the Northside elders. Please support them in any and every way you possibly can. We love and respect them very much.

The Highland elders

Our Comments on the Unity Letters

First we would like to draw your attention to some of the issues we had with these “unity letters.”

Letter #1 clearly has us suggesting that **we** (i.e., the Northside elders) are guilty of division and of causing the trouble that exists between us and Highland by the following words (composed “**for** us, but, not **by** us”) addressed to Highland:

Brethren, we would like to say that we did not mean to cause any division.... However, since you say this caused division and trouble, we would like to say we are sorry for that.

Are we sorry that division and trouble have occurred between a sister congregation and us? Absolutely. Jesus wept over Jerusalem’s rejection of Him, but His sorrow did not imply that He was the cause of that rejection (Luke 19:41). We regret the division and trouble among brethren the anti movement caused about fifty years ago, but that does not mean that we caused it. Likewise, regretting that division and problems have occurred between Northside and Highland says nothing concerning who is to blame for the division and trouble. Yet, the letter is so worded that any **regret** on our part that any division has occurred appears to be an admission that we caused the division. **Highland is the guilty party** in this sad situation, and the evidence we will provide later in this statement will prove that to be the case.

Letter #2 implicitly endorsed Highland’s withdrawal by the following words in “their” letter addressed to us:

We know that some thought that we withdrew fellowship too quickly.

This statement clearly implies that the only problem with their unscriptural withdrawal was a judgment call on Highland’s “timing.” Not one eldership or congregation we have spoken to honors Highland’s unscriptural withdrawal, and yet, amazingly, this statement suggests that Highland’s only mistake was the “timing” of the withdrawal rather than the withdrawal itself.

Letter #3 implies that withdrawing from the Northside elders only (i.e., rather than from the entire congregation) was Scriptural:

...[W]e ask you to extend full fellowship

to the Northside elders and congregation.

The foregoing statement also overlooks the fact that brother Simons and the Highland elders (since they approved his wording) very specifically **excluded** the Northside Congregation and preacher from the withdrawal, aiming it **only** at her elders. That being the case, why would they now ask brethren to “extend full fellowship” to the congregation from which it had never been withdrawn?

The three letters are characterized by a significant and glaring omission. The current division between brethren generally considered “sound” that has swept the brotherhood because of the widespread acceptance and defense of Dave Miller—a marked false teacher—is unparalleled as far as we can determine. Although Highland’s leadership in accepting and defending brother Miller is at the very heart of the issue between us and them, **there is no mention (not even a hint) of this central issue in any of those three letters—not a single word.** The Highland elders have endorsed and defended Miller’s teaching on elder R/R and marriage intent, and they have even defended his going to the apostate Calhoun Church of Christ and bidding them Godspeed, suggesting that we may have been a little “too sensitive” about his behavior in this regard (see “Letter Exchange Packet,” item #11, page #84).

If the Highland elders sincerely desire to resolve, in a Scriptural manner, the problem they have created for themselves and for the whole brotherhood, they would need to write only **one** letter (not two as brother Simons has proposed for them). It would need to be addressed and sent to the brotherhood in the same manner that they distributed their withdrawal announcement letter of November 17, 2005. (We got our copy by regular mail from them just like everyone else did.) It is not our intent to put words into the mouths of the Highland elders (or of anyone else) on how best to handle this situation, but we do believe the following letter would Scripturally resolve their sin problem:

Dear brethren:

We, the elders of the Highland Church of Christ in Dalton, Georgia, do hereby acknowledge the following:

- (1) The Scriptural validity of the claims of the elders of the Northside Church of Christ in Calhoun, Georgia, that Dave Miller is a false teacher and therefore, their obligation to object to any and all who would ignore brother Miller’s doctrines and extend fellowship to him.
- (2) That the methods by which the Northside elders handled this matter were Scriptural.
- (3) That we had no Scriptural authority to withdraw from the elders of the Northside Church of Christ.
- (4) That, even had there been Scriptural grounds for our withdrawal from any of the Northside brethren, our withdrawal action was unscripturally selective and ignored 2 John 9–11 in taking said action **only** against the Northside elders. Had this withdrawal been valid, it should have extended to the entire Northside Congregation and to all who supported the Northside elders in regard to this matter.

We, the elders of the Highland Church of Christ, hereby repent of these unscriptural acts and ask for the forgiveness of our brethren at Northside and all others who have been harmed by our actions. Our desire is to have unity based upon the Truth, and we beg your forgiveness.

In Christian love,

Elders, Highland Church of Christ, Dalton, GA

We believe the above statements (if sincere) would bring about true unity and peace between sister congregations and would be a good beginning point for restoring peace within our great brotherhood. Any attempt, however, to “smooth” over or “wink” at this problem with yet another compromise will only increase the division that already exists.

In one of brother Dollahite’s e-mails we were disappointed to read his implication that we had a knowing and active part in the compromise represented by the Simons letters. Compromise—when it involves the doctrine of Christ—never results in Biblical unity. Please note what brother Dollahite wrote on May 21, 2006:

I spoke to Wesley Simons today, and I realized that Wesley is being misrepresented. Some of this may very well be intentional, but I am the one who did not clarify the matter, so I want to be sure I make myself clearer regarding the letters that Northside refused. Wesley had been in contact with both Highland AND Northside, and BOTH sides agreed that they would address the break in fellowship that resulted from the withdrawal FIRST, and THEN they would worry about the other issues and work on them. If you want to call it a “compromise,” that is your choice, but consistency demands that if Wesley compromised in the part he played with regard to those letters, then so did Northside.

In response to the statement above we have quoted below the first paragraph of the letter we sent brother Simons on April 28, 2006, which refutes brother Dollahite’s erroneous implication about our part in these compromising “unity letters.” We are made to wonder who is misrepresenting brother Simons as brother Dollahite is accusing in the foregoing quotation, since we did not make brother Simons’s proposal public. But it is clear that someone is misrepresenting us in this matter. Please note our response to brother Simons regarding his proposed “unity letters”:

Dear brother Simons,

We have carefully considered your proposal to restore fellowship between two sister congregations and have come to the following conclusions and decision. First, we want to remind you of a conference call you made to us a couple of months ago to ask if we would consider a letter from the Highland elders in an effort to correct/rescind the unscriptural withdrawal they had imposed upon us. We agreed to entertain **ANY** written communication from Highland that would bring about a Scriptural resolution. We clearly and repeatedly said **we would not agree** to nor participate in a letter exchange that sought a **COMPROMISE**. Unfortunately

we never received such a letter from Highland.

Notice again what brother Dollahite said in the last part of his statement above:

If you want to call it a “compromise,” that is your choice, but consistency demands that if Wesley compromised in the part he played with regard to those letters, then so did Northside.

First, he erroneously implies that we somehow gave brother Simons our “blessing” to write those “unity letters.” Then, based on this totally flawed premise, he says that we thereby became partakers in any compromise that may have been involved in the wording of the letters. Finally, he really gets irrational, apparently arguing that if both parties (Simons and Northside elders) took part in the “compromise” (per his claim), this somehow excuses the compromise.

We also need to respond to another assertion from brother Dollahite, as quoted above:

Wesley had been in contact with both Highland AND Northside, and BOTH sides agreed that they would address the break in fellowship that resulted from the withdrawal FIRST, and THEN they would worry about the other issues and work on them.

First, brother Dollahite based his statement on false information from some source(s), for **we never agreed to any such thing**. Second, if the idea/goal of brother Simons and Highland/GBN was to (1) get us to apologize for something we didn’t do or cause and (2) allow Highland/GBN to **almost** apologize for the withdrawal—with no hint of the fundamental cause of the withdrawal (fellowship with a false teacher), then we are made to wonder if these brethren believe “the end justifies the means.” We believe such an attempted compromise implies no less.

Brother Dollahite further wrote:

From reading those letters, it is not difficult for any reasonable person to know why Northside would not want a copy of them to get out...and that reason has nothing to do with intensifying the division. Those letters show just how far Northside is willing to go to remain divided from their brethren.

We were sorely disappointed that he has thus impugned our motives for not releasing those “unity letters” ourselves (or even wanting them released, as he claims) before now. He may judge our motives if he chooses, but we know what they were and are. We realized from the time we first learned the content of those letters that they had the potential of causing many additional and unnecessary problems among brethren, **especially for those who orchestrated them**. Therefore, we decided not to release them for the good of all involved. If released, we anticipated (correctly, as brother Dollahite has proved) that some would “SPIN” this “unity” proposal and our rejection of it, implying that we and other faithful brethren are “mean-spirited,” “unforgiving,” and disinterested in **any** efforts by the Highland elders or others to resolve this controversy. Now that these letters have been made public (by an employee of Highland/GBN, no less—brother Dollahite), we had no choice but to prepare and release this statement to set forth the truth about our role in these events. All this seems so unnecessary to us, and we regret that the circulation of the “unity letters”

has added yet another element to this controversy—which we are forced to address. However, the evidence we provide will prove that our rejection of those proposed “unity letters” was the only Scriptural position that we or any other faithful eldership could take in this matter.

Why We Could Not Apologize for Causing Division and Trouble

Before making our decision regarding this proposal, we devoted several days to prayer and examination of Scripture. We spent a considerable amount of time going back over all the evidence, discussing our meetings, letters, phone calls, and other communications which led up to this controversy. We reviewed our initial correspondence with the Highland elders about the dangers of using Dave Miller in their GBN program. The first discussion we had with them concerning this was in September 2004. We were convinced we had given them ample evidence and time to seriously consider the controversy surrounding brother Miller, hoping this documentation would cause them to avoid their involvement with him for the good of the Highland congregation and GBN. But, in spite of all the evidence we provided them and that was available from other sources, they rejected the evidence and went ahead and endorsed and fellowshiped Dave Miller, a marked false teacher, in violation of 2 John 9–11. We also considered all the communications we have had with brother Wesley Simons since August 2005 regarding these matters before coming to our final decision. We approached this matter with the purest of motives and with no hidden or unrighteous agendas.

Our review of the evidence, which led up to Highland’s unscriptural withdrawal, seems to point to one decision we made relating to our 2005 lectureship. **The evidence showed:**

1. The Highland elders/GBN made a deliberate decision to endorse Apologetics Press, when, in late May 2005 (after the near collapse of AP because of the Bert Thompson scandal), Barry Gilreath, Sr., and Jim Dearman (along with 58 others) gave permission for their names to appear on the infamous AP “Statement of Support.”
2. Highland/GBN decided to continue their support for AP, even after Dave Miller, a documented and marked false teacher, was appointed as AP’s new Executive Director, thus forcing them to endorse, defend, and fellowship brother Miller.
3. They were planning to use Miller in their GBN program.
4. Highland/GBN indicated that they agree with and they defended Dave Miller’s false doctrines regarding Elder R/R and MDR.
5. Barry Gilreath, Jr. (preacher and elder of the Highland Church), completely agreed with the Highland/GBN decisions to support AP/Miller.

Once we clearly understood those facts, we had no choice but to withdraw our invitation to Barry Gilreath, Jr., to speak on our September 2005 lectureship. Ironically, our lectureship theme dealt with “church discipline” and how we should treat those who have been marked and from whom fellowship has been withdrawn. That one decision—to withdraw brother Gilreath’s invitation—was the turning point in our relationship with the Highland elders.

After we withdrew brother Gilreath’s invitation we began to

receive questions from interested brethren about our decision. In order for the Highland elders to defend their now-exposed relationship with a marked false teacher (Dave Miller), they began to “SPIN” the evidence which we had in support of our decision (and most of which the Highland elders themselves had provided in their letter exchanges with us). The Highland elders then mounted an effort to destroy the credibility and good reputation of the Northside congregation and her elders in an attempt to offset their “SPIN” on this evidence should we release it. Their efforts began to create suspicion in the minds of some that we may have had an “agenda” or ungodly motives for disagreeing with them on the AP/Miller issue and for subsequently canceling Barry Gilreath, Jr.’s lectureship invitation.

They falsely accused us of trying to divide the Highland Church and to destroy GBN. They accused us of being divisive and sowing discord, which was based only on hearsay and without providing any evidence of same. They promoted this misinformation by repeating it to their supporters and to a larger circle of brethren. The Highland/GBN hearsay was also repeated by other otherwise “faithful” brethren, however sincere their motives may have been, further damaging the credibility of the Northside Congregation and her elders.

In order to dispel these rumors, we decided we must release our most recent (up to late September 2005) letter exchange with the Highland elders, dealing with the AP/Miller issue, which included the basis for our decision to withdraw brother Gilreath’s invitation to speak on our lectureship. We provided this information to those who began to question us about the controversy Highland was now creating by questioning our motives. This information began to get the attention of other faithful brethren who were now concerned about the direction of the Highland elders and GBN because of their involvement with Miller/AP. The release of the letter exchanges also got the attention of the Highland elders, who asked for a meeting with us (October 4, 2005), in which they threatened to withdraw fellowship from us for handing out the letter packets. They had prepared a list of imagined grievances against us which they formally read at the beginning of our meeting. They threatened to publish these if we did not repent. We have posted below those charges from their October 4 statement:

Letter Exchange Packet— Excerpt from October 4th statement of Highland elders, page 82

The Bible says to mark those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine you have received. **How ironic, that in your campaign to mark others, you have yourself become a victim of your own unbridled pursuits.** You have sown discord, promoted gossip, and caused an unnecessary breach in the unity of God’s people. The campaign that you are pursuing is neither righteous nor noble. Your words and actions betray you. We therefore, call upon the Northside elders, Ron Hall, Terry York, and Bobbie [*sic*] Hall, to repent, not of your views for they are yours. But we call upon you to repent of the misguided zeal, hurtful actions and words that have been contrary to healing and unity in the body of Christ (emph. added).

In the statement above please note:

How ironic, that in your campaign to mark others, you have yourself become a victim of your own unbridled pursuit.

We do not have and never had a “campaign” to “mark” anyone. Nor are we “out of control” as the Highland elders implied. If marking the apostate Calhoun Church of Christ in 1999 and later Dave Miller for bidding that church “Godspeed” is what they have in mind when they refer to “your campaign to mark others,” then it should be evident how misleading the Highland elders had become in their effort to discredit the Northside Congregation and her elders. Also, if our marking the Calhoun congregation and then Dave Miller constitutes a “campaign to mark others,” then does not Highland’s marking of the Central Church (Dalton, GA) and then of us likewise constitute a “campaign to mark others”? Brethren should consider their own histories before making such wild accusations.

If the Highland elders are referring to our withdrawal of brother Gilreath’s invitation to speak on our 2005 lectureship as part of our “campaign” to “mark others,” then this also shows how erroneous they had become in their thinking at this point. We did not withdraw **fellowship** from the Highland Church or from Barry Gilreath, Jr., when we decided to “uninvite” him to speak on our lectureship. At this point, Highland brought brother B. J. Clarke into the controversy. They accused us of being inconsistent for not canceling his invitation to our lectureship since he had appeared with Dave Miller on various lectureships. (We explained our rationale for not canceling brother Clarke in our letter exchange [Letter Exchange Packet, Item 8, pages 34–40]). Because they had involved brother Clarke, we decided to meet with him during our lectureship to explain our decision to withdraw brother Gilreath’s invitation. In our meeting with brother Clarke, we told him that brother Gilreath had considered our withdrawal of his invitation as a “withdrawal of fellowship” (Letter Exchange Packet, Item 6, page 23). Brother Clarke told us that he did not consider what we had done to be a withdrawal of fellowship. He also said as much in his sermon during the lectureship, the theme of which was “church discipline” (an audio tape of which is available). We gave brother Clarke a copy of the letter exchange we had with the Highland elders, which provided him ample evidence supporting our decision to cancel brother Gilreath’s invitation.

In the first case (i.e., the apostate Calhoun Congregation and Dave Miller for bidding them Godspeed), we most certainly marked and withdrew from them, which action the Scriptures not only justified, but demanded (Romans 16:17–18). In the second case (i.e., uninviting brother Gilreath as a lectureship speaker), no withdrawal of fellowship or marking of anyone took place. We know of no other actions on our part to which they might remotely be referring in asserting that we were/are on some sort of “campaign to mark others.” One case of marking a sister congregation that had apostatized (and marking one who endorsed said apostasy) over a period of six years (1999–2005) hardly constitutes a “campaign.”

If anyone has entered upon any “unbridled pursuit” in this severance of fellowship, it is the Highland elders in their efforts to damage the reputation of Northside and her elders. A favorite ploy of those who are guilty regarding accusations lodged against them is to accuse their accusers, rather than answer the accusations. Surely, it has occurred to some that this is exactly what Highland/GBN has done. In an effort to escape

the searchlight of truth focused on their fellowship errors, they have sought to destroy, by unjustified withdrawal of fellowship, hearsay, gossip, innuendo, and motive judgments, brethren who have dared to expose them. While **our** only motive and “agenda” has been—and is—to obey the Word of God, it has become clear that the Highland elders have some “agenda” items that are most certainly **not** rooted in Scripture:

1. Support Dave Miller/AP at all costs
2. Ignore, embrace, and/or defend certain doctrinal errors (e.g., Miller’s elder R/R, MDR, and fellowship errors) if it is “politically correct” and to their advantage to do so
3. Withdraw fellowship from and seek to ruin the good name of those who oppose and expose their support of a marked false teacher and/or those who dare question the plans and procedures of GBN.

We kindly ask the reader to carefully examine the abundant evidence that Dave Miller is a false teacher and that Highland/GBN began openly endorsing and defending him as early as mid-August 2005.

Again, in their October 4 statement the Highland elders wrote:

You have sown discord, promoted gossip, and caused an unnecessary breach in the unity of God’s people. The campaign that you are pursuing is neither righteous nor noble. Your words and actions betray you. We therefore, call upon the Northside elders, Ron Hall, Terry York, and Bobbie [sic] Hall, to **repent**, not of your views for they are yours. But we call upon you to **repent** of the misguided zeal, hurtful actions and words that have been contrary to healing and unity in the body of Christ (emph. added).

The Highland elders made it very clear that they demanded that we **repent** of the spiritual “felonies” of which they accused us, not merely **apologize** for some minor “misdemeanors.” An apology, merely saying “I’m sorry,” is appropriate for such things as misunderstanding someone or unintentionally hurting someone’s feelings—matters that may not involve sin at all. *I’m sorry* is also appropriate for expressing regret over something that has occurred and that we may have had no part in causing. In matters of personal opinion, judgment, or scruples, both the less mature and the more mature brethren must avoid forcing their respective wills upon each other (Romans 14). However, when one **sins**, he has transgressed God’s Word (I John 3:4), and he must repent to be forgiven. If one is offended because he has been rebuked for his sins, the “offender” in such cases is guiltless and owes no apology to the offended, nor has the “offender” committed any sin of which he should repent. Obviously, the sinner (the one offended in the case just cited) would need to repent and make corrections/restitutions as far as possible.

Now, as far as our situation with the Highland elders is concerned, we expressed during our October 4 meeting with them our regret and our deep sorrow that things have turned out as they have. But they made it very clear that nothing short of **repentance** and a retraction of the information we had made available to others would resolve our conflict and prevent their withdrawal action against us. They would see it no other way. Now these recent “unity letters” have completely omitted and ignored **repentance** as a necessary condition for restoration of fellowship. The only condition required by the

Simons letters is a meaningless statement that we are “sorry” that division and problems occurred when we released our letter exchanges with the Highland elders. Blind men can see that this “unity” proposal is quite different from what they required in their October 4th statement (and their November 17th letters). Formerly, they demanded **repentance**, but now they are proposing a mere **apology**, which amounts to nothing more than another **compromise** on their part, hoping they could get us to compromise with them. Incidentally, within an hour after brother Simons provided us with copies of the “unity letters” he told us that the Highland elders had **already** agreed to them and were awaiting our approval.

Only after verifying (through letters and phone calls) that Highland had endorsed Dave Miller, and after personally talking with Barry Gilreath, Jr., who defended their support of Miller, did we decide to withdraw the latter’s invitation to speak on our lectureship. As indicated earlier, our decision to cancel brother Gilreath’s invitation was the turning point in our relationship with Highland. At this point the Highland elders went on the offensive, first by threatening us, followed by withdrawing from us and beginning their campaign of slander against us in an attempt to justify the withdrawal. Their efforts have caused much of the division we are now experiencing. Their actions resulted in several more requests from brethren who wanted to know what was going on. It was at this point we decided to issue a limited number of the “letter packets,” showing both sides of this controversy and particularly demonstrating Highland’s “bidding Godspeed” to Miller.

Because we decided to release information to support our exposure of Highland/GBN’s errors on fellowship, they began suggesting to others that our motives for said release were less than pure. At this point we want to make something very clear. We understand that **IF** our actions for withdrawing brother Gilreath’s invitation or for releasing those packets had been based on lies or had been maliciously conceived and/or executed, then we **WOULD** be in the wrong. Had we thus behaved, causing the division we now see between two sister congregations (and among many other brethren), then we should apologize **and** repent before God and the brotherhood for such terrible sin. **But when did opposing and exposing error become sinful?** We realize that the offender will be offended when exposed, as in the case of Highland/GBN. We make every effort to be very cautious when making decisions (whether concerning matters of option or matters of applying Scriptural obligations) in view of the **eternal** consequences our decisions may have on the souls of those involved. We weigh every decision we make on the evidence available to us and in light of God’s Word. Therefore, we absolutely deny that we have any hidden/personal motives or agendas for making any of the decisions we’ve made in these matters.

As we have looked back over the events of the last few months, another fact has become very evident in the Highland/GBN controversy. The Highland elders consider(ed) the grave doctrinal issues we raised with them as nothing more than our “personal views” or matters of “judgment.” The doctrinal issues we raised involved the documented evidence relating to Dave Miller/AP and the fellowship issues involving GBN and “Giving and Receiving” contributions to that program. Their attitude toward “doctrinal issues” was further revealed during the Spring

Forum on February 28, 2006. Barry Gilreath, Jr. (Highland elder and preacher), stated (by e-mail) that Highland had withdrawn from the Northside elders over a matter of “judgment.” The matter of “judgment” to which he alluded was our releasing the “letter packets.” The fact is that Highland opposed the release of those “packets” because their letters therein revealed their endorsement and fellowship of Dave Miller. **They did not want this information released.** Those packets also revealed the fact that they not only were fellowshiping Dave Miller, but that they were upholding and defending Miller’s error on Elder R/R and MDR. These facts can be easily discerned by reading our letter exchange.

When one goes back and reads their October 4th statement and their November 17th letter one will be amazed at the number of times the Highland elders refer to “doctrinal issues” as being nothing but our “personal judgments.” Our rebuttal of one such statement appears below from our “letter exchange packet”:

Letter Exchange Packet—page 92, rebuttal #1

(1) The Highland elders stated: “Let us first be clear that we do not begrudge your personal views regarding any of the questions that have been raised and addressed in recent times. Your views are exactly that to us, . . . your views.”

The Highland elders have characterized the doctrinal issues we raised in our letter exchanges regarding the “AP/Miller” controversy and “Giving and Receiving” as it pertains to Biblical fellowship as mere “personal views.” They have taken serious doctrinal issues which they have now embraced and made them matters of personal opinion. This should cause all faithful brethren great concern about the soundness of the Highland elders.

The Highland elders tried to create an issue concerning our “motives” and “integrity” when we released the “private letter exchange” we had with them. They also claimed this release was a “bad judgment” call on our part, which, in turn, led to their unscriptural withdrawal. By the way, we mailed a copy of all our rebuttals to the Highland elders on December 14, 2005, refuting the false charges they made against us. We have never received even an acknowledgement, much less a response, from them.

In our rebuttal, we responded to their statement regarding our integrity as noted below:

Letter Exchange Packet—page 93, rebuttal #7

(7) The Highland elders stated: “Though we are not aware of any laws that were broken in the distribution of our private correspondences [*sic*], it was at the least unethical and absolutely a breach of trust.”

After additional correspondence, it was clear that the Highland elders had made up their minds to endorse and fellowship Miller, regardless of the evidence. In order to fairly communicate this fact we decided this letter and the entire exchange must be made public so others might be able to make “righteous judgment” in this matter. Information dealing with doctrinal issues

(letters, etc.) should never be classified as “personal,” “privileged,” or “private” when souls are at stake, and again, we believe they are. To charge us with being “unethical” and violating a “breach of trust” is another smokescreen to attempt to cover up the unscriptural position the Highland elders have taken in this issue.

It was wise to keep our letters exchanges private initially, for we were hoping the Highland elders would reverse the direction they appeared to be going (endorsing and fellowshiping Dave Miller and his errors). While allowing time to see what they would do, we kept our correspondence with them “confidential.” We hoped they would have the conviction, courage, and wisdom to issue a disclaimer relating to their endorsement of the AP “Statement of Support” and, by implication, of Dave Miller (think what an impact that could have made in all of this mess!). However, factors can arise which override earlier circumstances, even including promises relating to confidentiality. When a bride pledges to her husband-to-be that only death will break their union, most of us (including Highland/GBN) understand that certain extenuating circumstances (i.e., Matthew 19:9) can occur that supersede that promise, thus negating it. The same is true concerning the promise of confidentiality; it should never be considered unlimited or without possible future qualification. To take the position of “once in confidence, always in confidence” concerning any or every document is unrealistic. In some cases (where souls are involved), it can very well be unscriptural.

For the reasons we originally stated above (in our response to Highland)—namely, the weighty doctrinal issues involved—we determined that we not only **should**, but **must**, release the letters from Highland, along with our responses. We fully understand why the Highland elders have strongly objected to our making their letters public. They clearly revealed their intention to support, endorse, and fellowship Dave Miller, in spite of the abundant evidence of same.

They again tried to cast dark shadows on our motives and they again charged us with having an improper agenda when they accused us of gossip and of being divisive. In our rebuttal below, we again explained our motives for opposing Highland’s decision to fellowship Miller and why we released the “packets.”

Letter Exchange Packet—page 94, rebuttal #9

(9) The Highland elders stated: “Brethren, we have been greatly disturbed, immensely disappointed, and severely hurt over the gossip, innuendoes, rumors, breach of trust, divisive actions and the such like that have roots within the Northside eldership.”

While we agree that the things mentioned above are wrong and do much harm to the Lord’s church, we deny that we are guilty of such. We cannot respond to such accusations based on nothing more than hearsay from the Highland elders. We understand this is a very sensitive and emotional issue and that people will sometimes over-react, exaggerate, and take statements out of context. This has likely happened on both sides of this controversy. We believe everyone involved should be “slow to speak and

swift to hear” at all times, but, some “talk” is going to take place. We are facing a very public controversy that affects many brethren and therefore some talk should be expected. Hopefully such talk will be constructive and bring about Scriptural correction where needed. As mature Christians we should recognize that fact. For the Highland elders to make such hearsay charges the center of the present controversy/division is just another smoke screen. We should not allow the “talk/gossip,” “smokescreens,” and “strawmen” rise to overshadow the real issue here: Dave Miller is a false teacher who has been marked and should be avoided (Romans 16:17-18), rather than excused, embraced, and defended. AP has endorsed him in violation of II John 9-11. Now GBN and the Highland elders are in fellowship with this false teacher and the organization (AP) which has taken him in.

Letter Exchange Packet—page 92, rebuttal #5

(5) The Highland elders expressed concern over the release of three packets of information we made available to those who were interested in the events/decisions that led up to our lectureship and the subsequent withdrawal of brother Barry Gilreath, Jr.’s, invitation to speak. These packets were made available to some who questioned our decisions (based on the AP/Miller issue) after they had spoken with Miller and had come away with the “opinion” that he was not guilty as charged. We believed the packets served to adequately and fairly answer these concerns. If anyone who received one of these packets (by our hand) was offended we apologize. It was never our intentions to warn brethren about the Highland/GBN controversy who did not want to be warned. The Highland elders are seeking to create a smokescreen here by charging us falsely with “sowing discord” and “causing division.” Warning good brethren about a false teacher and those who are endorsing such is not sowing discord or causing division among the faithful. Brethren, we are commanded to oppose false doctrine and those who teach or uphold such. This is simply following scripture. It seems that when faithful elders, preachers, and others “stand in the gap” against those who are determined to destroy the Lord’s church, the faithful are made out to be the troublemakers. This is an old tactic used by those who refuse to follow God’s Word. We are reminded of Ahab’s charge to Elijah in 1 Kings 18:17-18: “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah that Ahab said unto him art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim.” Before releasing these packets, several preachers had reported to us that brother Gilreath, Sr., and Dearman had approached them, accusing the Northside elders of sowing discord, causing division and trying to destroy GBN. Since these were false charges, and in order to accurately answer them, we released all the “letter exchanges” we had with the Highland elders to prove that their charges were false. We let the evidence speak for itself.

That Alleged “Fairly Lengthy” Dollahite Conversation

We will now consider another statement by brother Chad Dollahite that needs to be addressed. A brother on the CFTF e-mail list suggested to brother Dollahite that perhaps he should ask the Northside elders “first-hand” their opinion of those “unity letters.” Brother Dollahite responded as follows:

Give me a break; I HAVE spoken to one of the Northside elders in what was a fairly lengthy conversation, and I have read their plethora of “packets” that they have spread to the four winds. I practice what I preach, and I don’t appreciate the insinuation that I don’t. I still want to know what you’d do if a neighboring church’s elders started trying to get members where you preach to leave, saying you were a false teacher. I still want to hear why folk are so quick to criticize Highland, yet it is seemingly okay for Northside to print blatant lies about Highland in their packet (i.e., that Highland solicits from liberal churches, just because the GBN dvd [sic] was shown at the evening lecture at FHU). And, then there is the release of unauthorized correspondence, as well. Try as you might, you cannot honestly contend that Northside is just squeaky clean here...

We have discussed brother Dollahite’s following assertion:

I HAVE spoken to one of the Northside elders in what was a fairly lengthy conversation....

Neither of the current elders has had even a “fairly short” conversation with him (much less a “fairly lengthy” one) about any of the controversy involving Highland/GBN. Perhaps he has reference to the following: In September 2005 brother Bobby Hall (one of the Northside elders at that time) was in a food line at the youth lectureship in Morganton, GA. Brother Dollahite was in line in front of brother Hall when a conversation came up about a recent phone conversation he had had with Dave Miller. In that conversation, brother Hall learned the following (summarized, as verified by brother Bobby Hall):

In September 2005, brother Dollahite called and talked to Miller about his visit to the apostate Calhoun Church and his endorsement of them in 1999. Dollahite said that Miller was very cordial and willing to answer his questions. Miller told him that he had received a large package from Northside before time for the meeting and after reading a few pages decided to wait and talk to the Calhoun brethren about their situation when he arrived in their city. After arriving, he spoke with the Calhoun preacher (Frank Mills at the time) and later to the elders and was convinced that they (the Calhoun elders and preacher) were not the problem, but that those who left (i.e., the Northside brethren) were the trouble makers.

Brother Dollahite seemed to be satisfied with Miller’s new version of his Calhoun visit. Because of the Dollahite conversation, we decided to give him some information at that lectureship which contained our “Open Letter,” detailing the facts concerning Miller’s visit to Calhoun and the warning that he was a marked false teacher. We thought that information might help brother Dollahite see that Miller’s 2005 version of what happened relating to his Calhoun visit was quite different

from the story Miller told some of the Northside brethren in 1999, when Miller said in so many words, “I don’t have time to read all the stuff brethren send me.” Incidentally, this was the same “Open Letter” we gave the Highland elders in 2004, but in spite of this proof of Miller’s error, eventually they chose to **extend** fellowship to Miller and **withdraw** fellowship from us! There is no doubt that Miller’s visit to Calhoun closed the door of escape to many Souls who might have been rescued, and the Highland elders, by their unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship from us, put padlocks on those doors for the precious Souls left in that apostate church. What Miller and now Highland have done with this situation has implications for eternity and will be brought into judgment by our Lord if repentance is not forthcoming.

We have not heard from brother Dollahite since that very brief conversation with brother Bobby Hall some eight months ago. Besides, his conversation was entirely about Dave Miller’s visit in 1999 and had nothing whatsoever to do with the Highland/GBN controversy or the “unity letters **which did not even exist at the time. Brother Dollahite has not discussed this present controversy, which he has created, with us at all.**

We need to address one more thing from brother Dollahite’s statement above:

I still want to hear why folk are so quick to criticize Highland, yet it is seemingly okay for Northside to print blatant lies about Highland in their packet (i.e., that Highland solicits from liberal churches, just because the GBN dvd [sic] was shown at the evening lecture at FHU).

The statement to which he refers can be found in our Letter Exchange Packet—Item #9, page 56. We have printed it below for your consideration:

As to our discussion regarding the receiving of funds for Preaching the Gospel and now in addition G.B.N., we acknowledge your statement, “We want to emphasize that we do not solicit funds from those we believe to be unfaithful.” Since that statement was made we have been informed that that affirmation is no longer accurate. This is not an assumption on our part; neither did the information come to us second hand. This eldership has met with two brethren who preach for the apostate Calhoun Church, from whom the Highland elders have accepted documentation as to their apostasy, who were solicited at the Freed-Hardeman Lectures. Shall we assume that these were the only apostates in attendance from whom funds were solicited? As to whether this would constitute fellowship, the preachers (who brought G.B.N. up in our meeting) expressed the possibility of their participating in the G.B.N. program. They also recognized (by their own statements) our duplicity for not extending fellowship to them in certain areas, but participating with them should we join with them in supporting G.B.N. Mack Lyon also affirms that participating in “In Search of the Lord’s Way” program is fellowship as stated in the September 2004 “Search Light”. Brother Lyon states: “...join hands with us NOW. WE NEED YOUR HELP! AND WE’D LOVE TO HAVE YOUR FELLOWSHIP” (p. 2). With this being said we must also conclude (lest we make an

unwarranted assumption), that the DVDs promoting the program, are mailed to faithful congregations only.

The statement made by brother Dollahite needs no further explanation.

Response to Four Additional Dollahite Accusations

We will now address two of four additional accusations brother Dollahite has made on the e-mail lists: (1) We have accused their preacher of being a false teacher and, (2) We have tried to divide the Highland Church.

Brother Dollahite wrote on May 20, 2006:

When people begin to seek personal visits with members of a sound congregation, telling those members their preacher is a false teacher and that they need to leave that congregation, what more would a person have to do to be considered divisive and/or sowing discord?

He wrote on May 21, 2006:

I still want to know what you'd do if a neighboring church's elders started trying to get members where you preach to leave, saying you were a false teacher.

Sadly, in the accusations above brother Dollahite is simply repeating hearsay, originated by the Highland elders. Where is the proof for such? We have already addressed these false charges (Letter Exchange Packet—page 94, rebuttal #9, quoted earlier). Neither the Highland elders nor brother Dollahite can prove these charges—**because they never happened**. At this point we will be very specific with the **truth** about this claim so there can be no misunderstanding about our part, or lack thereof, in these false accusations.

We are aware of only two instances in which direct contact occurred between members of the two congregations relative to these affairs. The first of these contacts was made sometime before and the other one soon after Highland's unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship from us on October 30, 2005.

1. The first incident involved a member from Highland who had visited Northside on a fairly regular basis. This good Highland sister asked one of our elders about the controversy involving Highland and us. This lady said the Highland elders had refused to answer questions and would not address the problem before the congregation, although they had had a meeting with only the deacons. When speaking to one of the Northside elders, the Highland sister asked if he knew what her elders and preacher believed about the "Miller errors." Apparently, she had learned about Miller's false doctrine after reading (1) his September 23, 2005, statement which the Highland elders had handed out (and of which the Highland elders sent us a copy via one of their deacons who then gave it to a Northside member who gave it to us) and (2) the review of Miller's statement by brethren Dub McClish and Dave Watson, which we handed out. These documents doubtless prompted her question about what the Highland elders and preacher believed. The Northside elder told this sister that the Highland elders and preacher agreed with Miller on Elder R/R and MDR and she could check

with Barry Gilreath, Sr., to verify this fact. (Their endorsement of Miller is documented and was made available in our "Letter Exchange Packet," dated 12/02/05). The Northside elder encouraged this sister to stay at Highland and encourage her elders to correct this division they had created by embracing a false teacher. This is the advice we would have given any other member of the Highland Church had they approached us at that time, but none others did.

2. The second incident involved a widowed sister from Highland who wrote one of our elderly widows that she had received a visit from a deacon and another man from Highland (just after Highland announced their withdrawal). They told her that the Northside elders were "out of control" and were causing them "lots of problems" and therefore they (Highland) had withdrawn from us. Our elderly Northside sister was very upset about what the Highland sister wrote and met with us in tears about what to do. We encouraged her to be patient and to encourage the Highland sister by visiting and talking with her. She felt she could not make that visit at that time because of the tone of her letter (we saw and read the letter.) We then encouraged our Northside sister to write her a letter and assure her that Northside had done nothing to deserve Highland's withdrawal. Our Northside sister wanted something in writing to give to the Highland sister, so we gave her our November 2 statement (i.e., our rebuttal of the false charges the Highland elders made against us in their October 4th statement.) She wrote a letter and sent this information to the Highland sister to help her understand that the Northside elders, whom she once respected, were being misrepresented by those who visited her from Highland. We never heard anything further about this situation.

These two instances are **the only ones** we are aware of in which direct contact occurred between Highland and Northside members regarding this situation. These contacts certainly do not fit the grievous charges leveled against us by the Highland elders and repeated by brother Dollahite—that we have been "sowing discord" in or that we have attempted to divide the Highland Congregation. Now let brother Dollahite and/or the Highland elders bring forth proof, if they can find it, for these false charges they are so freely spreading about us.

The third accusation involves our fellowship with the Green's Lake Road Church in Chattanooga. Apparently, brother Dollahite made one final statement on the "Sons Of Demas" and "CFIF" lists before his most recent exit. One of those remarks, in part, involved Northside and our relationship with the Green's Lake Road Church. He wrote on May 22, 2006:

The Northside church has no problem with promoting and supporting several activities of the church at Green's Lake Rd. (in Chattanooga), even as recent as the Bible Bowl, held May 7, at the Green's Lake Rd. building. This is especially interesting, seeing as how Green's Lake Rd. supports GBN monthly, and the associate preacher at Green's Lake Rd. (yours truly) works as the production

manager for GBN. Strange indeed. Before making such statements as, “All of this new realignment has made for some strange brotherhood ‘bedfellows,’” (as quoted from his 43-page tirade against Curtis Cates), perhaps Dub McClish should work on some of his own “bedfellows” and the strangeness egregiously present with them.

Please note that in an earlier statement he indicated that he is in agreement with Highland’s withdrawal from us:

Is Highland’s withdrawal of fellowship from the Northside elders in harmony with the teachings of King Jesus? Yes, it is, based on Romans 16:17.

Since that is his conviction, then he is the one who has violated Highland’s withdrawal (which he deems to be “Scriptural” by his statement above) by inviting Northside and participating with Northside in the Green’s Lake Bible Bowl on May 7. In this situation he clearly violated God’s law on fellowship if he really believes what he has stated above.

When one is faced with a doctrinal issue which involves fellowship, as in the case of Highland/GBN’s involvement with a false teacher, we need to be very careful not to move too fast and cause unnecessary damage to fellowship which has existed harmoniously between other sister congregation. These brethren may become involved in a controversy such as the one we are facing here whether directly or indirectly. Time needs to be given for dialogue concerning the issues now facing those brethren. We should move with extreme caution and make sure everyone involved has all the facts relating to the problem and give each party adequate time to study and address the controversy fairly before withdrawal of fellowship is considered or exercised. And while we need to be patient, some situations may require that we move quickly to avoid greater damage to the body of Christ. How quickly one moves is a matter of judgment, depending on several factors, which we will note below. However, one’s patience should not necessarily be mistaken for unscriptural tolerance or inconsistency, as brother Dollahite is implying above. Nor should “patience” be used as an excuse for what is, in reality, unscriptural tolerance or acceptance of doctrinal error(s). Brother Daniel Denham has posted (May 20, 2006) a message on the “Sons of Demas” list, which addresses the present controversy, as it relates to fellowship, in a very logical and Scriptural way. We also believe he has adequately addressed the fellowship issues raised by brother Dollahite’s divisive “dot connecting” that he has been promoting on these lists. Brother Denham wrote:

Relative to fellowship, it should be kept in mind that 1) the current state of things did not come about over night and sorting through everything involved in it, as well as educating brethren, especially brethren relatively young in the faith as to what is going on and has been going on among certain fro [*sic*] some time requires time and demands a degree of patience, but (2) such patience is not necessarily required in dealing with those who have known what is going on and has been going on for some time. The same principle is served in deal-

ing with other situations, even within congregations.

When one is dealing with a relatively new convert, he patiently teaches, admonishes, and rebukes, and even bears long with said party, when he is obviously spotty in his worship attendance. It may take some time to bring him around. You do not immediately push for withdrawal of fellowship from him after he misses a few services due to things within his control. HOWEVER, the path taken and approach used with a much older member doing the same thing, one who clearly knows better but persists in it nonetheless, are quite different, are they not? When 2 John 9–11 was written, its immediate historical background involved the work of evangelists who often traveled from region to region and city to city preaching the Word. False teachers—or those who became such—also did the same. Brethren often would provide their homes as places to rest and stay in until they were ready to move on to the next work. We see this clearly demonstrated in the travels of Peter and Paul, as well as even during the time of the Limited Commission (Matt. 10).

Some brethren, unfortunately, at times were not as discriminating as they ought to have been. As today, there are those who are new converts, and did not necessarily know any better, and those who should have known but who, for whatever reason, did not (willful ignorance on some of them’s [*sic*] part). There would also be, without doubt, those who knew better but went on and offered their homes despite such knowledge for a variety of reasons. It may have been that they were actually sympathetic with the message of the false teacher or sympathetic to him as a person, especially in cases wherein he may have formerly taught the truth and had previously established a friendship with his host. There would be those who would not even be aware of his change in doctrine, practice, or fellowship, until some time later. The point is that many of the very congregations to which the epistle would eventually be sent would involve a myriad of situations, and the implementation and application of 2 John 9 would have to be done against that background and thus requiring similar patience, etc. in dealing with the particular parties involved. Such would even be true relative to John’s own practice in dealing with members within the respective churches. The very fact that he writes the command by inspiration is sufficient proof that there were some who were in danger of violating the inclusive and exclusive scope of Biblical fellowship (cf. 1 John 1:7–10).

Suppose, for example, the letter was written from Troas and arrives at the church in Ephesus, where John had had extensive ties. John would probably be in fellowship with the brethren at Ephesus. However, some among them may have been receiving the very false teachers about whom he was warning, and thus bidding them God-speed through such support, aid, and encouragement involved in their hospitality, misguidedly or deliberately. In each specific case, the situation may differ and require a somewhat different approach until such time as

the parties in question would have surely had sufficient time to sort out the matter and make proper correction. BUT, brother Chad, would such authorize John to fellowship openly and directly Cerinthus, a well-known Gnostic heretic in his day? Or to extend knowingly the right hand of fellowship to an impenitent Demas or to Hermogenes? I believe you can see the difference. But would it necessarily follow that John was in fellowship with Cerinthus, Demas, et al., because some new convert at Ephesus in his ignorance extended hospitality to them?

There is a period needed to sort through and help settle matters through proper study and thinking. My impatience over this matter is with those, like brother Lyons [*sic*, i.e., Mack Lyon], who have had a virtual lifetime to have sorted things out and be on the right side of things, and with those of similarly long standing who should know better than to be tied in with works that knowingly involve fellowship with those in error. When one is presented with facts he cannot explain, questions he cannot answer, and situations he cannot defend, then he needs to back up and examine that in which he is involved. When evidence is abundantly presented to the effect that a particular brother is in serious, fatal error or supportive of fatal error, then there comes a point and we are well aware or should be well aware of it, but persist in acting as though no problem exists but with those pointing out the error, there comes a point in which we are without excuse and thus subject to the rightful sanctions of being disfellowshipped ourselves. Some degree [*sic*] judgment is involved as to how to go about dealing with the situation, but that does not imply that we can ignore the situation in perpetuity.

We want to remind brother Dollahite that Northside, at this point, has not announced any withdrawal from anyone over this controversy. Northside has not withdrawn from the Green's Lake Road Congregation. Their good elders have stated to us and to others that they will not (do not) honor the unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship which the Highland elders imposed against us. Brother Dollahite should seriously ponder the dilemma he has created for himself by his support of the withdrawal while his own elders refuse to honor the withdrawal. He can't have it both ways and be either honest or consistent. If he continues to support the Highland withdrawal, he is in rebellion to his elders' decision. If he submits himself to the decision of his elders, he must confess that he erred in pronouncing the withdrawal "Scriptural." Should he do so (which would be the right course of action), how long are we to suppose the Highland/GBN brethren would retain him on their payroll?

The brethren caught up in this new "unity in diversity" movement have sought to put those of us who will not "go along to get along" in a classic "double bind" on the subject of "fellowship consistency." If we exercise longsuffering and patience with brethren who are not aware of some of the current issues or who may be trying to work with some brethren who are in error, we are asked, "Why did you wait so long to mark them?" On the other hand, if a case warrants moving more rapidly to mark some who are well-informed on this present controversy, but have chosen to side with error or to

remain mute, we are asked by the same ones, "Why did you act so quickly; why didn't you give them more time?"

Again, we believe there needs to be time for additional dialogue between sister congregations who have maintained a good relationship up to this point. We have confidence in these elders that they will do what is right, in God's sight, in this matter. The burden to honor and uphold Highland's unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship is not upon those who refuse to honor it. Rather, it is upon brother Dollahite, the Highland elders, and others who believe it is Scriptural. Since he has brought the Green's Lake Road Church into this discussion, we believe brother Dollahite's elders will now want to address his remarks and any violation of fellowship which he suggests took place. We believe he may have also forced them to address other remarks he made on the "Sons of Demas" and "CFTF" lists.

The fourth accusation involves our position on MDR. Brother Dollahite wrote on May 20, 2006:

I might further add that several have shown inconsistency in another matter. Many have drawn lines of fellowship over GBN/AP/Dave Miller/Mack Lyon/etc., yet they have no problem brushing the MDR issue under the rug, saying that "good brethren" can disagree (I am ONLY referring to the issue re: whether a civil divorce ends a marriage). Why it is ok for "good brethren" to disagree on that, yet anyone who would have anything to do with GBN or Mack Lyon or Dave Miller is a person who is guilty of fellowshipping error? Why is it that the Northside elders can disagree with their very own preacher on this issue and still remain in full fellowship with him, yet when it comes to GBN, they say it is erring because Dave Miller has been on the network?

Since brother Dollahite is a member of the "Sons Of Demas" list, one might suppose that he read the account of our convictions on this issue in January of this year. If he has indeed read the following post from brother Kent Bailey (which was his response to another brother regarding this issue), then we are made to wonder why he would bring this up again. Please note what brother Bailey wrote below on **January 22, 2006**:

Most brethren that know about the MDR controversy, especially the discussion/exchange conducted in Chattanooga in January 2005 know where I stand. I'm sure most know where you stand as well (at least those who have heard the audio tapes).

Since then, I have spoken on the Northside Lectures and have been scheduled to preach in a gospel meeting there in the future. Ron Hall, one of the elders there, indicated to me that it is the position of the elders at Northside that local churches must stand for the divine principles set forth in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 but each local church would have to make its own decision on how to handle the application of those principles by determining each case on its own merits (or demerits in some cases). That doesn't sound like that [*sic*] those brethren are pressing this as an issue with me. As a matter of fact the Northside preacher, unless he has changed his views, takes the same position that I advocate. I certainly do not want to misrepresent any brother, or brethren on this or any other issue.

If I have misunderstood them, I will stand corrected....

Brother Bailey further wrote:

After posting my last E-mail in response to your material on this particular thread I spoke to Ron Hall, of the Northside Church in Calhoun for clarification as to what those brethren believe and teach regarding the MDR controversy.

Ron told me explicitly that the Northside elders reject the false position that civil law is the final authority in determining who is either married or divorced. They further believe and teach that if a guilty fornicator unjustifiably obtained a civil divorce from the violated innocent victim, that this innocent spouse still had the scriptural warrant to put the guilty mate away and form a scriptural second marriage (provided that they enter into a second marriage with a scripturally qualified partner). In short the Northside Elders reject the “race to the court house doctrine” as being false in addition as to also rejecting the claims some have falsely made against us in accusing the both of us as accepting the “waiting game” theory, which the both of us have never advocated....

One would think that brother Dollahite would have discussed this matter with us to see what we believe on this issue before making this accusation again on these lists, **but he did not**. If he had contacted us he would have also learned that our preacher does not disagree with our position stated above. We believe this issue has been adequately answered and should not be allowed to become another “smokescreen” by brother Dollahite and/or the Highland elders to divert the controversy from the real issue. The fact is, Dave Miller is a marked false teacher, and the Highland elders and GBN have embraced him—and his errors—in fellowship. Until brethren are willing to deal with this one fact, then all of these other issues are raised in vain.

To the very best of our abilities, we have provided the bases for our convictions, decisions, and actions involving these troubling accusations made by brother Dollahite (1 Pet. 3:15). We have acted out of pure motives and with convictions that are true to the Scriptures.

Report on Attempts to Determine Brother Dave Miller’s Doctrinal Positions—Directly from Brother Miller—and to Seek a Statement of Repentance

We will now address another issue that came to our attention when we received the proposed “unity letters” from brother Simons in April. In late April (2006) we were made aware that some brethren were going to try and arrange a meeting with Dave Miller in an effort to persuade him to make a precisely worded public statement of repentance for his errors. While we have been hopeful that brother Miller would make such a statement, we are doubtful that such will take place for the reasons noted below:

1. We had decided last August/September to try to meet with brother Miller to question him about some of his doctrinal positions and to discuss the controversy and confusion they were causing. We arranged

for brother Wesley Simons (a “neutral” party, since brethren Gilreath, Sr., and Dearman had told Miller that Wesley Simons “could be trusted”) to arrange our meeting with brother Miller. We wanted to ask him some very specific True or False questions regarding elder R/R and MDR and about his endorsement of the apostate Calhoun Church of Christ in 1999. We requested that our conversations be recorded so no one could misrepresent what brother Miller said to us or what we said to him. Brother Simons graciously agreed to do as we requested. He made two attempts to arrange such a meeting, but brother Miller refused each time.

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

3. Brother Miller has told various ones different accounts of his trip to Calhoun in 1999. Apparently, his story about his meeting with the apostate Calhoun Congregation varies, depending on the person(s) with whom he is talking. For example (as earlier noted), in September 2005 brother Dollahite (now on the GBN staff) called and talked to Miller about his 1999 visit to and endorsement of the Calhoun Congregation. As we have reported above, brother Dollahite said that brother Miller indicated that, after visiting with the elders and preacher of the Calhoun Church, he decided that the ones who left (i.e., those who constitute the core of the Northside Congregation) were the ones in error. This version is quite different from the original version brother Miller told the Northside brethren in 1999, and he has even told other versions to other brethren.

4. Brother Paul Brantley (an elder of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL) called and asked brother Miller some questions in August 2005. Very recently we learned from brother Michael Hatcher that brother Brantley called brother Miller again (April 24, 2006), at which time brother Miller told him the following:

- a. The elder r/r program he promoted and they practiced at Brown Trail was not wrong or unauthorized.
- b. He would promote and practice the procedure again if the need arose.
- c. If a Scripturally qualified elder received less than 75% of the congregational vote, he would need to resign .
- d. If an elder who is obviously **not Scripturally qualified** received 75% or more of the congregational vote, he would be allowed to

- e. remain in the eldership.
- e. He (i.e., Miller) does not recall telling anyone that he said the elder R/R procedure at Brown Trail was a “mistake”.
- f. He (i.e., Miller) does not know with whom the rumor originated that he said the elder R/R procedure at Brown Trail was a “mistake,” but he has never said this to anyone.
- h. He (i.e., Miller) is tired of receiving such calls and dealing with such questions.
- i. He (i.e., Miller) has said all he is going to say on the subject, and he will issue no further statements.

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

Now, in light of the foregoing facts, we are made to wonder what certain brethren who may still be seeking an audience with brother Miller hope to accomplish. This statement should not be misunderstood: We would love to see brother Miller make a public statement of repentance, but the evidence thus far reveals a Dave Miller who in a “denial” mode, who keeps changing his story, and whose pride/vain glory in these matters has become his stumbling block.

Conclusion

We could say much more, but, if the evidence we’ve provided is insufficient to convince those who have questions, it is unlikely that additional evidence would do so. We believe we have done what any **faithful** eldership would have done if faced with this situation. We brought to the attention of the Highland elders the seriousness of their decision should they use Dave Miller on the GBN program. But instead of looking at the evidence and standing for the Truth, they retaliated against us and other faithful brethren. We became their enemies because we simply told them the truth (Galatians 4:16). No mere “apologies” from us—especially for things we didn’t do and problems we didn’t cause—will correct Highland’s sinful words and deeds.

We realize fully how very sensitive and divisive the AP/Miller-Highland/GBN-Northside controversy has become throughout the brotherhood. Likely, however we responded to the Simons “unity letters,” our response would only have caused further polarization between the faithful and those who have chosen compromise over Truth. We are disappointed that these “unity letters” were ever written and promoted as a realistic (or Scriptural) solution to the division which exists not only between sister congregations, but ultimately throughout the brotherhood. We are also disappointed that brother Dollahite—and whoever gave him permission to release the “unity letters”—thought their release would somehow justify Highland/GBN’s fellowshiping a false teacher and withdrawing fellowship from us. Sadly, we believe these “unity letters” are already now being used to further divide brethren.

In summary, we made the decision not to go along with the

proposed “unity letters” for the following reasons:

1. We believe that, in light of the evidence and the Word of God, we would have sinned against God to do so.
2. We believe that any hint of our participation in the compromise these letters represented would have sent the wrong message to faithful brethren.
3. We were mindful of those who are still searching for the truth in this controversy and of the “mixed signals” our acceptance of the letters would have sent to them.

We based our decision on the evidence leading up to the Highland elders’ unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship from us, and we applied God’s objective standard to that evidence (I Thessalonians 5:21) and made a decision that we believe is Scriptural and pleasing to our Lord. We refused to make any of our decisions along “party lines,” or base them upon any sort of “politics” or “brotherhood consensus.” No matter how popular or unpopular our decision may be, we will not compromise—even if we have to stand alone. God’s faithful people must never seek to win popularity contests.

If any who read this statement can provide evidence, in light of Scripture, that proves we have erred in rejecting these “unity letters,” we would count you as a good friend if you would bring that to our attention. We appreciate your quest for truth.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (I Corinthians 16:13).

Elders, Northside Church of Christ, Calhoun, GA

Ron Hall, Terry York

May 30, 2006

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*“It is much easier to speak pleasant words,” he said. Certainly it is much more in harmony with my natural inclinations; but it is the perfection of selfishness for one to limit his teaching to things that produce pleasant sensations in the hearers or readers. The preaching that sends the hearer away pleased and satisfied is, as a rule, worth less stuff....He who clamors for peace, for a cessation of disputing and discussion, is simply begging that the wolves be allowed to tear the flock unmolested; he is asking God’s warriors to cease their fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil.—J. A. Harding*

*(Lloyd Cline Sears, The Eyes of Jehovah (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co, 1970), p. 9*

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# RE-EVALUATION

Michael Hatcher

After giving it much prayerful thought and a great deal of study, I have come to the conclusion that we should practice the doctrine of re-evaluation/reaffirmation. When Dave Miller preached his sermon in 1990 advocating the re-evaluation of elders, he used the illustration that if “20 or 30% of the congregation thinks I am a dummy preacher, I promise you I’d leave.” Why stop with “20 or 30%”? Why not 10% or 5% or even 1%? Why not simply let one individual determine it? If not, why not? The arbitrary number which brother Miller chose—“20 or 30%”—was purely his choice. The elders at Brown Trail chose 25% for their re-evaluation/reaffirmation from the Brown Trail congregation. If they have the right to pick that arbitrary number (percent), then surely others have the right to make their own arbitrary choice. The arbitrary number which I wish to use is one person (at least for now).

Since we are going to let one individual determine it, I want to be that individual. I also know that when I re-evaluate brother Miller, that he will not “lock my feet into the dirt and say, ‘*Well I’m qualified so they’d better accept me,*’” because we know “that attitude alone disqualifies a man.” Thus, while Miller might be “qualified” to be director of *Apologetics Press*, I know he will be leaving because of my re-evaluation, and my re-evaluation does not reaffirm Miller as the director of *Apologetics Press*.

This ability to re-evaluate/reaffirm in this way will also allow me to re-evaluate some other things as well. Miller already applied this principle to elders and to himself, but why stop there? I should also be able to re-evaluate each one of the deacons. Of course, it does not matter if these deacons meet God’s requirements for their work (I Timothy 3:8-13). They will be reevaluated and if I decide that I do not want a specific one doing that work, then I will not reaffirm him to the work of a deacon.

However, why should I stop at simply re-evaluating/reaffirming the ones we have mentioned. I should also be able to re-evaluate/reaffirm all the members also. One might have come to faith (Hebrews 11:6) by the hearing of the Word (Romans 10:17). Then upon that faith they might have repented of their sins (Acts 17:30) and confessed the faith which they now possessed in Jesus as being God’s Son (Romans 10:10). Also, they might have obeyed God in the purifying their souls (I Peter 1:22-23) by being baptized in water for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). They might now be living a life of faith (II Corinthians 5:7), living separate from sin and dedicated to God. *However, none of this matters because while one might be qualified to be a faithful member of the Lord’s church, we still have the right to re-evaluate/reaffirm that member.* If I do not like him, or he does not meet with my approval, then I simply will not reaffirm that person. I guess that will make him an ex-Christian since he will no longer be a member because he was not reaffirmed.

In his sermon advocating the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders, Miller affirmed that all these previous classes should accept this re-evaluation. He states:

No one should be threatened by the prospect of being evaluated, not a one of us, the preacher shouldn’t be, the School of Preaching instructors, the elders, the deacons

and all of us as members, ought to have in our mind set, in our attitude, an evaluation mentality, because my friends the Lord is going to evaluate us one day—and it may be sooner than we think.”

With time things change. Brother Miller acknowledged this fact when he said in that same sermon:

Since the complexion of a congregation in terms of its membership can change over a period of time, over a period of years, an eldership may conceivably no longer consist of the same individuals that the membership would look out from among themselves and appoint.

About 2000 years ago the apostles began setting forth a doctrine. **“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers”** (Acts 2:42). During those 2000 years the “congregation” of the Lord’s people has changed. Thus, we should also be able to re-evaluate/reaffirm the “apostles’ doctrine.” If not, why not? Thus, in that **“apostles’ doctrine”** we can re-evaluate what we like and what we do not like—it does not matter if it is qualified or not. Those things that I do not decide to reaffirm will be eliminated from the doctrine, while those things I reaffirm will be retained. *(This is what liberals have done all through the years—they simply did not call it this.)* [The previous argument set out by brother Hatcher is exactly the argument used by Dr. Daniel Callam, Roman Catholic Priest and Professor at the Roman Catholic University of Saint Thomas, Houston, Texas in his efforts in our debate to show that the Bible only is not the only rule of faith and practice for all men. *This is why the Catholics refer to the church as “a living church”—the Majistorium (the teaching arm) of that false religious institution keeps things updated.* —EDITOR]

Surely we all know that this last illustration is totally wrong and sinful. We do not have the right to include what we want and exclude what we do not desire. To do such makes a mockery of God’s Word. While there are those who would **never** consider re-evaluating/reaffirming the “apostles’ doctrine,” they will and do defend the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders as preached by Dave Miller and practiced by Brown Trail in 1990 and again in 2002. *There is as much Bible authority for one as there is for the other (or any of these for that matter).* There is **no** Bible authority for any of them. If it is sinful to re-evaluate/reaffirm the “apostles’ doctrine” (and it is), then it is just as sinful to re-evaluate/reaffirm elders (or any of the other illustrations used in this article).

We plead with those who have taught and practiced this vile doctrine to repent. Admit the sin which you have committed, and pray for the forgiveness of your sins. Those who have supported the brethren who have taught and practiced this doctrine in violation of II John 9-11, please repent before it is too late. Your soul is too valuable to squander over such sin.

—4850 Saufley Road  
Pensacola, Florida  
32526



The late G. C. Brewer wrote that “*some people, who are not good enough to submit to the will of the Lord, are just too good to be lost and, therefore, we will have to remove the will of the Lord so that they can be saved*” (G. C. Brewer, “Grace and Law: Legalism and Liberalism,” *Gospel Advocate*, June 16, 1955), p. 206.

# Why Such Fear, Unless...

Lynn Parker

The American Psychiatric Association defines phobia as a fear that “is either irrational or excessive.” Further, the APA says a phobia is an “abnormally fearful response to a danger that is imagined or is irrationally exaggerated.” The symptoms of a phobia include, among other things, “Feelings of panic, dread, horror, or terror, . . . an overwhelming desire to flee the situation . . .” and “extreme measures taken to avoid the feared object or situation.”<sup>1</sup> According to the Anxiety Disorders Association of America, a phobia is an “inordinate fear” and it “can lead to the avoidance of common, everyday situations.”<sup>2</sup> Serious, indeed!

But even more serious are a few phobias that seem to have afflicted brethren in several places. Some elderships and preachers are refusing to put anything in writing. When The Gospel Journal Board defended Dave Miller and showed Dub McClish and David Watson the exit door, several of us wrote various board members. We were referred to the President of TGJ Board, Curtis Cates (also Director of Memphis School of Preaching) for answers. So letters were sent but no answers have been forthcoming. When Lenoir City, TN elders sent specifically worded doctrinal questions to the Director and faculty of Memphis School of Preaching, they were met with the strange sound of silence. When brethren wanted to know where Cates and MSOP stood regarding Dave Miller’s errors, you will not find anything in print. Nothing. Zero. Zilch. Nada. Frank Chesser, one of the principals in this current mess, does not answer letters either. The Schertz, Texas elders (one of which is Ken Ratcliff, Gospel Journal Board member), who oversee false teacher Stan Crowley, will not answer letters either. The Southwest elders and Joseph Meador, Director of their preaching school (Austin, TX.) will not answer specific questions in writing concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Change is taking place, and it is being introduced by silence on a myriad of doctrinal matters. Keep these wise words of Frank Chesser in mind: “His refusal to answer is itself an answer.”<sup>3</sup> Are these men suffering from a phobia or two? “Papyrophobia” is a fear of paper. A fear of writing or handwriting is “graphophobia.”<sup>4</sup> *Why would brethren be fearful of answering questions in writing? You can think of at least one reason.*

The Spring, Texas Elders in conjunction with their 2006 annual Spring **Contending for the Faith** Lectures (February 26 through March 2, 2006) hosted an Open Forum. The purpose was to bring to light the causes of recent serious division in the brotherhood. It served to document, for now and future generations, the errors embraced by formerly sound brethren. It served as a public explanation and Bible study. Brethren from the Memphis School of Preaching and the Southwest School of Biblical Studies in Austin, Texas among others were invited to speak and answer questions. But alas, they were “no-shows.” Has a phobia gripped these brethren? “Fear of speaking in public or of trying to speak” is *glossophobia*. Maybe they did not want to hear sermons that would reprove their ungodly conduct. Fear of sermons is *homilophobia*. Perhaps they thought any effort to defend sinful actions would result in failure. That’s *kakorrhaphiophobia*—a fear of failure.

It could be that *hypenygophobia* (or *hypegiaphobia*)—a fear of

responsibility—has grasped these brethren. Maybe the disorders of *optophobia* (fear of opening one’s eyes) or *photophobia* (a fear of light) have become contagious and swept through Austin, San Antonio, Memphis, Montgomery, and several other places (figuratively speaking). Good news! Phobias are treatable!

I do not seriously think these brethren are suffering from any disorder. They are fearful, but not sick. Every week we hear from more folks who have investigated and seen that certain brethren have indeed changed and lost their zeal for truth. They are moving left. Maybe the rash of cowardly silence and refusal to put answers in writing is because certain brethren hold untenable positions, have engaged in not-so-secret sins, and they fear further exposure. Enough already of “secret,” “private,” “confidential” explanations to an individual or small group. Such is seen in dirty Washington politics but now several congregations, leaders thereof, and preachers are practicing such despicable tactics. Some followers seem interested in listening to only their long-time friends and heroes while neglecting truth, but the wise man wrote, “**He that pleadeth his cause first (seemeth) just; But his neighbor cometh and searcheth him out**” (Proverbs 18:17). Please note who is willing to step up and speak “on the record.” “**The wicked flee when no man pursueth; But the righteous are bold as a lion**” (Proverbs 28:1). Jesus spoke of those who prefer to lurk in the back-alley darkness: “**For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reprov’d. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God**” (John 3:20-21). God being our Helper, we fight on—with everything up front and on the record. And we fight phobia-free.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.healthyminds.org/multimedia/phobias.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.adaa.org/GettingHelp/Briefoverview.asp>
- <sup>3</sup> Frank Chesser, **The Spirit of Liberalism**, p. 139
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.phobialist.com/>

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## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

In the May, 2006 issue of *CFTF* we carried an e-mail exchange between brethren Dub McClish and Eddie Whitten regarding MDR. In his June 7, 2005, email to McClish, Whitten made some erroneous comments that need correcting. Said remarks are found in the second full column, first full paragraph, on page 13.

Whitten's erroneous remarks were made in response to McClish's statements found on p. 8, beginning with the second full paragraph in column 1. McClish's comments run through the remainder of the second column, ending with the conclusion of said paragraph that flows from p. 8 to column 1 of p. 9.

Evidently Whitten had forgotten that his "retirement letter" was written around October 2002 to several brethren besides me. In that letter he said that he would finish out any commitments he had through the end of 2002. But from 2003 onward he would limit most of his work to the Northeast congregation in Bedford, TX, where at the time he was a member. Of course, Whitten's letter posed a problem for us, because some months before receiving it, the Spring elders had given me permission to dedicate the 2003 Spring lecturehip book to him. It is very important to understand that IN SAID "RETIREMENT LETTER" WHITTEN WROTE NOTHING ONE WAY OR ANOTHER ABOUT OUR MDR DIFFERENCES. **Thus, Whitten did not give as his reason for "retiring" the differences between us over MDR.** Therefore, when I phoned Whitten, I had to tell him about the book dedication to get him to attend our 2003 lectures, for we had always had Whitten as one of our speakers. In that phone conversation he never explicitly or implicitly indicated that he was "retiring" because of the differences we had over MDR. As McClish well pointed out to Whitten, how could he (Whitten) not have known

our position on this MDR issue, for articles dealing with this MDR issue were printed in *CFTF* quite some time before the September 2002 *CFTF*. Moreover, as early as the fall of 1992 I had written a series of articles in the Southwest Church of Christ bulletin on the same MDR issue.

The only discussion we ever had about MDR was in Whitten's house during January, 2003. It was an amicable discussion. He never indicated to me at that time or by any means of communication what he wrote in said letter exchange with McClish. His comments about me being "cold" to him is a figment of his own imagination. Until Whitten wrote his "retirement letter" several of us stayed in contact almost daily with each other via the internet. But after his "retirement letter" it was as if Whitten had fallen off the earth. I was particularly confused about his action, but I was by no means the only one with whom he ceased virtually all contact and, thus, they too wondered what was going on with Whitten.

Only after writing and printing "Where We Stand," in the April 2005 issue of *CFTF*, which article answered Jim Waldron's, et al. false position that he and Whitten believe, did I receive Whitten's letter informing me that he had withdrawn his fellowship from me. I really do not know what has invaded such fellows' minds causing them to think they can say as much as they please about a matter, but if those who disagree with them respond to their teaching, the respondents become some of the most wicked and vile people on earth—talk about arrogance and inconsistency gone to seed, there you have it.

We waited almost a year to publish said correspondence. However, it is very important to note that the letter exchange between Whitten and McClish, that Whitten started, was in the hands of none other than Joseph Meador when he and the rest of TGJ Board met on July 19, 20, 2005 to construct the situation that forced Dub McClish and David Watson to resign from TGJ. During the past year we have heard all sorts and sizes of whining from different ones, especially Curtis Cates, about making public so-called confidential material. While neither McClish nor Whitten stamped CONFIDENTIAL on said exchange, is it not interesting that Meador had a copy of it, and it definitely was not McClish who passed it on to Meador? Hmmmmm, why did Whitten put said correspondence into Meador's hands? And, another hmmmmm, why did Meador bring said correspondence to that particular meeting of TGJ Board? Furthermore, in all of his whimpering and whining over the misuse of so-called confidential material, why has Cates not exposed Meador for having and using said correspondence to his own ends?

—EDITOR

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# PLAYING POLITICS WITH THE TRUTH (The “Fellowship Without Endorsement” Theory)

Joseph Meador

And Jesus said unto the Pharisees..

Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. And he said unto them, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition. (Mark 7:6-9).

In late 1986 I received a letter from a preacher concerning fellowship between brethren. In his letter he penned the following statement:

Even sound gospel preachers differ on many points—some major, some minor. If the use of a speaker implies endorsement of every aspect of his belief, I seriously doubt that we could find any person we could conscientiously use. There would surely be some part of that person’s position that most of us would have scruples about.

I would agree without argumentation IF the above quotation pertained solely to differences in matters of approved opinion (that is to say, those opinions which do not contradict the Christian faith). Yet, time and time again we are hearing this same cry from preachers in reference to variances, not in matters of approved opinion, but rather in matters of faith and practice, e.g., doctrine. As a result, the unscriptural notion is being promulgated by some that we can enjoy spiritual fellowship with an individual or congregation without practicing doctrinal endorsement.

It seems that every generation is plagued by some disturbances over a misunderstanding or a twisting of a particular doctrine which is set forth clearly in the Scriptures. Today, such a situation has arisen concerning the doctrine of fellowship, its scope and limitations, in that some, not content to let the Bible speak, have created the “Fellowship Without Endorsement” theory. This false doctrine is one of the cardinal tenets of the “Unity in Diversity” heresy as expounded by **W. Carl Ketcherside, Leroy Garrett, et. al.** (circa 1970 to the present). Therefore, this particular teaching is worthy of our careful and prayerful study in light of God’s Word. (We might well note and consider the teaching of Christ in I John (especially 1:1-7), II John and III John before going further.)

## FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES COMPANIONSHIP

A sacred psalmist of Israel wrote, **“I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.”** (Psalm 119:63). In this one verse we have the two mandatory ingredients for divine fellowship: 1) oneness in a scriptural association, *i.e.*, the family of God (Acts 2:42, 47), and 2) faithfulness unto the law of God (II John 9-11). Upon an examination of I John 1:1-7 one learns that fellowship is vertical (faithful believers with God) as well as horizontal (faithful believers with each other) and that true fellowship between believers exists only when such believers are in fellowship first

then is the natural result of spiritual fellowship with the Father. It is not a goal or prize to be sought in lieu of doctrinal righteousness. Yet, many today would seek and strive for “unity” at the expense of doctrinal fidelity. When such occurs, fellowship with God is broken automatically (by not walking in the light), and, as a result, true individual Christian fellowship ceases to exist. Hence, spiritual unity cannot be realized (emphasis mine—EDITOR).

In essence, fellowship between believers (resulting in unity) always is predicated upon first arriving at and maintaining fellowship with God by walking in the light of sound doctrine (II John 9). Unity that is achieved in any other way (*i.e.*, through the schemes of men) is not spiritual unity but rather carnal union, of the most sectarian stripe.

## FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES COMMUNION

Amos, a great prophet of Judah, asked. **“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”** (Amos 3:3). Herein the idea is revealed that fellowship involved agreement, *i.e.*, likemindedness in matters of doctrine. (*cf.*, I Corinthians 1:10.) Thus, we note that true fellowship involves spiritual communion (oneness) of the highest spiritual order among God’s people, which, as we have noted earlier, is established by first “walking in the light” of God’s Word.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. **“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”** (II Corinthians 6:14). The point is graphically illustrated and the question is answered by Paul: **“Come ye out from among them and be ye separate.”**

Christian communion, or oneness, exists only when there is first communion or oneness with God. This harmony was certainly in the mind of Christ when he prayed. **“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”** (John 17:20-21). True spiritual communion then is something that is very precious—however, it also is something which man easily cheapens and disfigures when, without authority, he offers it up for bid at so-called “Summits” or “Unity Meetings” and extends the “right hand of fellowship” to those who are not entitled.

## FELLOWSHIP INVOLVES CONSISTENCY

Perhaps the single source of confusion to many brethren regarding the Bible doctrine of fellowship is the matter of consistency. It is a Bible fact that fellowship involves a strict adherence to the divine guidelines set out by God. Therefore, fellowship demands consistency.

In attitude toward those in error, the Christian should retain a spiritual composure. He should never lower himself by engaging in a personal diatribe against any enemy of the truth, but rather he must concentrate upon the issues at hand. Yet,

in confronting those in error and in doing battle for the faith, some sincere brethren inevitably feel that such faithful gospel preachers are too harsh and unloving. As a result, the mandate for consistency in matters of faith rests upon an emotional fulcrum whereby man's sympathies outweigh God's Word as the standard of judgment regarding fellowship, and hence the scale often is tipped toward unholy union.

However, this was neither the understanding nor the practice of the apostle John, the one "**whom Jesus loved.**" This exiled preacher of the faith could not and would not extend Christian fellowship to anyone who did not "**walk in the light,**" nor could he fellowship those who had ceased "**walking in the light**" of God's Word.

The beloved apostle John could not, and therefore faithful Christians today may not, render fellowship to those who:

- 1) walk in darkness,
- 2) claim they have no sin,
- 3) refuse to keep the Lord's commands,
- 4) hate their brothers,
- 5) love the world,
- 6) deny that Jesus is the Messiah,
- 7) live life-styles of sin,
- 8) do not have compassion on the deserving needy,
- 9) reject God's testimony about his Son,
- 10) go beyond the doctrine of Christ,
- 11) refuse to abide in the doctrine (teaching) of which Christ is the originator,
- 12) are dictators.,
- 13) exalt themselves and love to have the pre-eminence,

- 14) fail to receive apostolic instruction,
- 15) speak wicked words about God's servants,
- 16) oppose and criticize faithful servants of God, or
- 17) practice evil. (Cf., I, II, and III John.)

### WHAT JOHN DID NOT SAY

In view of Diotrephes (III John 9), and using this erring brother as a test case, we may quickly realize that John, in regard to the doctrine of fellowship, did not say, as many are saving among us today, "*Well, after all, he is my brother and he deserves my fellowship,*" or "*He's my brother in error, and, after all, every brother is a brother in error*" (but there is a marked difference in a brother who refuses doctrinal correction and one who walks in the light cf. I John 1:5-10). or "*Even if I cannot fully fellowship him (F), I still can extend partial fellowship to him (f) while refusing to endorse his erroneous doctrinal beliefs.*" or "*Although I do not agree with his doctrine. I will continue to fellowship him out of love, for God desires mercy and not sacrifice,*" or "*Surely we can seek out a means by which there can be unity between us in spite of our doctrinal differences.*" or "*I cannot refuse to fellowship him due to the adverse reaction it might cause with other brethren,*" or "*Although he is actively teaching and promoting false doctrine, I will spend a year or two studying with him before I mark him and cease fellowshiping him.*"

Let it be noted in all sincerity and in all seriousness and from a heart of deep concern, that anyone, whether preacher or elders, who has used any of these excuses in order to justify fellowship with one not entitled, is walking contrary to God's formula for unity. May God grant unto us the wisdom to realize the importance of being faithful unto Him and Him alone, rather than substituting our desire for His express commands. In so doing, some will avoid playing politics with the truth.

—8900 Manchaca Road  
Austin, Texas 78748

*[Meador's article originally appeared in the May, 1988 issue of CFTF, pp. 1, 3. At the time it was printed he was preaching for the North Main Church of Christ, Madisonville, KY—EDITOR]*

## EDITORIAL REMARKS PERTAINING TO MEADOR'S ARTICLE

*[In introducing brother Meador's 1988 article, the late editor of CFTF pointed out that the previous article originally appeared in a series of articles in the North Main Church bulletin. Brother Rice thought so much of the message conveyed therein he sought and received permission from Meador to put the series into one article and print it in CFTF—this is the preceding article. However, today Meador has repudiated the position he held and stated so well in his 1988 CFTF article. Now he embraces and contends for the position advocated to him by the preacher in 1986, which position Meador quoted in the second paragraph, first column of his 1988 article. Meador now upholds the view advocated in said quote. Please read the quote again and remember that the rest of Meador's 1988 CFTF article was written to expose and refute the fallacy revealed in said quote.*

*Meador fellowshiped the following errors and those who teach them: 1) Dave Miller and his false doctrines on the R/R of elders, MDR, and fellowshiping liberals (those who teach doctrines that loose men from what God in His Word has bound on them) without attempting to correct their errors; 2) Stan Crowley and his false doctrine on MDR, and those who support Crowley; 3) the Gospel Broadcasting Network's use of, defense of, and fellowship with Dave Miller along with those who*

*support the same; 4) the Highland church's unscriptural withdrawal of fellowship from the Northside church's elders, thus, he and all others who remain in fellowship with the Highland congregation are out of fellowship with the Northside elders and those who remain in fellowship with the Northside elders, and 5) MSOP's efforts to defend their fellowship of along with other brethren's use of Dave Miller and Stan Crowley, et al. 6) Today Meador has no problem castigating, berating, and slanderously labeling those brethren who refuse to fellowship and promote any of the aforesaid false teachers, their brotherhood projects, and their supporters. As to people such as your editor, who continue to believe, preach, and defend the Biblical view he once held and advocated, Meador has made his attitude very clear.*

*Meador will go down in infamy for his statement about those who continue to stand where he once stood when he falsely labeled us as "...a few who are in 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." However, the previous statement proves conclusively the radical change he and others who agree with him have made over the past several years.—EDITOR]*

# CLEVELAND, OK AND CALHOUN, GA: WHAT DO THEY HAVE IN COMMON?

David B. Watson

At one time in the past the congregation in Calhoun, Georgia was sound. At one time in the past the congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma was sound. The congregation in Calhoun, Georgia became so un-sound (liberal) that the faithful members had to leave and begin a new work (the Northside congregation in Calhoun, Georgia). The congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma became so unsound (liberal) that the faithful members had to leave and begin a new work (the Westport Road congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma). Brother Dave Miller was scheduled to speak at the apostate Calhoun, Georgia congregation. Brother Brant Stubblefield was scheduled to speak at the apostate Cleveland, Oklahoma congregation. Miller was warned about the apostate congregation in Calhoun, Georgia by faithful members of the Northside congregation in Calhoun, Georgia. Stubblefield was warned about the apostate congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma by faithful members of the Westport Road congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma. Miller went ahead and spoke at the apostate congregation in Calhoun, Georgia in spite of the warnings of faithful brethren. Stubblefield went ahead and spoke at the apostate congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma in spite of the warnings of faithful brethren. History has repeated itself.

There is still more of a parallel to be made here. The reasons the Northside congregation began in Calhoun, Georgia, having separated from the apostate congregation in Calhoun, are numerous. Several doctrinal issues were involved including not supporting false teachers and false teachings. The reasons the Westport Road congregation began in Cleveland, Oklahoma, having separated from the apostate congregation in Cleveland, are numerous. Several doctrinal issues were involved including not supporting false teachers and false teachings at Oklahoma Christian University and the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. In both places some in the apostate congregations would not endure sound preaching against false teachers and false teaching in the brotherhood (II Timothy 4:1-5). In both places some in the apostate congregations would not approve of marking them that cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ (Romans 16:17; II John 9-11). Again, history has repeated itself.

There is still one more parallel to be made concerning this situation. Dave Miller is Editor of *Apologetics Press* material. Brant Stubblefield is Editor of *Reflections* material. David

Brown is Editor of *Contending For The Faith* material. Stubblefield's Associate Editor, brother Rick Popejoy, will not have anything to do with Brown, Editor of *Contending For The Faith*, because he (Brown) opposes Editor Miller who spoke at the apostate congregation in Calhoun, Georgia. But Stubblefield's Associate Editor, Rick Popejoy, will have everything to do with his Editor, Stubblefield, who spoke at the apostate congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma. "**The legs of the lame are not equal**" (Proverbs 26:7). Stubblefield has spoken on the Tennessee Bible College lectures with brethren Malcom Hill, Mac Deaver, Glenn Ramsey, Kerry Duke and Phil Sanders. *It is beginning to look like the Editor and Associate Editor of Reflections will go anywhere and speak alongside anyone (or sanction such) while not going to those programs and not speaking alongside those brethren who oppose going anywhere and everywhere and speaking alongside apostates.*

After Miller spoke at the apostate congregation in Calhoun, Georgia he was contacted by the faithful brethren from the Northside congregation wanting to know why he went ahead and spoke at the apostate congregation in spite of their warnings. After Stubblefield spoke at the apostate congregation in Cleveland, Oklahoma he was contacted by the faithful brethren from the Westport Road congregation wanting to know why he went ahead and spoke at the apostate congregation in spite of their warnings. Brother Ryan Kepke, faithful preacher for the Westport Road congregation wrote Stubblefield saying, in part: "*You are either one ignorant brother of brotherhood issues or you have a Bible that no longer has II John 9-11 in it.*" I checked his Bible and found that II John 9-11 is still there.

**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into [your] house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (II John 9-11).**

—P. O. Box 690  
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## "TEXAS PROVERB"

T. R. Burnett

There is more joy in a printing-office over one sinner who pays in advance, and abuses the editor on every occasion, than over ninety and nine church members who take the paper and sing its praises and puff the editor, but never contribute one cent to keep him out of the poor-house.

[T. R. Burnett, "Burnett's Budget," *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. 37, Nol. 9 (February 28, 1895), p. 131. As quoted by Earl West, *Search For the Ancient Order* (Indianapolis, IN: Religious Book Service, 1950), p. 340.]

## SOME SAGE AND MUCH NEEDED WISDOM FOR TODAY

*...do not just shrug your shoulders and say, "O, well, if we leave the situation alone and do not stir it up, it will come out all right..." Brethren error doesn't just die out—it must be fought and whipped out! And don't you ever forget it. Error of either extreme—liberalism or anti-ism—must be met with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, Ephesians 6:17... You must not allow men to elevate their opinions to the level of law and bind them on you.*  
[Thomas B. Warren, *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan's Homes* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1963), p. 3]

# Directory of Churches...

## -Alabama-

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

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

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

## -England-

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

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

## -Georgia-

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

## -Indiana-

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

## -Louisiana-

**Chalmette**-Church of Christ, 200 Delaronde St., Chalmette, LA 70044. Mark Lance, evangelist, (504) 279-9438.

## -Massachusetts-

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

## -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-

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

**Murfreesboro**-Church of Christ, 837 Esther Lane, Murfreesboro, TN, Sun.

Bible class 9:00 a.m., Worship 10:00 a.m., Fellowship meal 11:00 a.m., Devotional 12:00 p.m.; Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. For directions and other information please visit our website at [www.murfreesborochurchofchrist.org](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; [tgj@charter.net](mailto:tgj@charter.net).

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

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

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

**New Braunfels**-1130 Hwy. 306, 1.5 miles west of I-35. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. [www.nbchurchofchrist.com](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., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Tel. (307) 635-2482. evangelist: Tim Cozad.

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