

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

The View From Planet Deaver #1

Terry M. Hightower

Were Jesus' Moral Qualities Infused Virtues?

The Bible plainly declares that angels are ministering spirits (Luke 16:22; Heb. 1:14) who came and ministered “unto” Jesus after His temptation (Mat. 4:11)—likely to strengthen Him with food (1 Kin. 19:5,7) and protect Him from wild beasts (Dan. 6:22; Mark 1:13). Luke reports that in Gethsemane that He **“kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him”** (Luke 22:41-43, emph. TMH). As a human with all the characteristics and weaknesses as any one of us (Heb. 2:14; Phi. 2:8-9), does this mean that the Lord had reached a point in which He needed more than indirect help-to-the-mind (i.e. roundabout providential actions and means) coupled with His own volition in order to carry out His assigned task? Did He have to have the Father to give Him supernatural Spirit-on-spirit power by means of a Direct Operation upon His heart so that He could go on through with His death by the hands of the Romans? Did He really have a “subliminal movement” not ultimately subject to or powered by His “internal Self” (i.e., to forces under His personal control)? Remember, that everyone who truly longs for heaven **“hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”** (1 John 3:3; emph. TMH) by personally obeying the Father’s will.

From the Total Context of the Bible, ought we to con-

clude that in effect this angel totally or even partially directly infused the Lord with strength? Or, was the mere fact of the angel’s presence nearby Him comforting to Him because He realized such a being could only have come from His Father [plus any words of encouragement he might have offered (cf. Acts 27:23-24)? Did the angel perform a Direct Operation upon Jesus’ human spirit “in conjunction with” God’s Word, coupled with God’s additionally provided indirect, circuitous providence? Should we not properly understand that whatever the angel did to strengthen the Lord, such did NOT involve an immediate-to-the-heart operation at all since the Lord Jesus is Himself credited with maintaining His own personal moral obedience in that He aligned His human will up with the will of the Father (Heb. 7:27; 5:8-9; 1:3,8-9; 2:8; Phi. 2:8-9) as set out by God’s Word? The Holy Spirit can do a lot of things (i.e., namely His assigned role on behalf of the salvation of mankind), but *He will not do what men must personally do for themselves, no matter what our Calvinistic friends say, either in or out of the church!*

Your Choice: Active Or Passive Internal Sanctification?

While most of us in the church realize the serious error involved in any similar attempt to insert a “direct sense” into any Bible verse (e.g., Eph. 3:16) whereby deity is alleged to be directly instilling courage or any other moral virtue above and beyond a person’s own volitional application and control, the view from planet Deaver is that even when one is directly infused or enabled by the Holy Spirit to act be-

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

LOVE AND AUTHORITY

Jesus made it clear that the Biblical love principle never rises higher, sets aside, nor makes null and void the authority principle. He emphasized that principle when he said, “**If ye love me, (ye will—ASV, 1901) keep my commandments**” (John 14:15). John, the inspired apostle of love, wrote the same thing about the relationship of love in a Christian’s life to Christ’s authoritative Word when he wrote:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him... By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (1 John 2:3-5; 5:2, 3).

Major Premise: Jesus and the Apostle John said that when a person loves God he will keep His commandments..

Minor Premise: Brother Famous Preacher is a person who will not keep God’s commandments.

Conclusion: Therefore, Jesus and the Apostle John said that brother Famous Preacher is a person who does not love God.

When anyone *explicitly* teaches that one’s love of God excuses him from obeying God, or that God loves us so much that He is not concerned about our obedience to Him, we know that person is a liar and the Truth is not in him. Also, any doctrine that *implies* that one’s love for God or God’s love for him excuses him from obeying God, that person is a liar too (Ecc. 12: 13, 14; 1 Cor. 11:2; Heb 5:8, 9).

Among all the great component parts of love (*agape*) listed in 1 Cor. 13, not one of them permits disobedience to God’s commandments. Please notice that Paul tells us that love “**rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth**” (verse 6). When men teach that faithful children of God are pleasing to Him when they fellowship brethren who are disobedient to God, refusing all the time to repent of their error, they lie. *Christians are authorized to fellowship only those brethren who are in fellowship with God.* But a church member who refuses to obey God is not in fellowship with God. Thus, the faithful are not authorized (in fact they are forbidden) to fellowship those who refuse to obey God (2 John 8-11; John 8: 31, 32; 12:48).

There is nothing intellectually challenging involved in arriving at a correct understanding of these great Truths. Problems arise only when men refuse to accept them without prejudice, respect of persons, and/or bias. Then, of course, the principles must consistently be applied to every case calling for their application. To do otherwise is also to sin.

—David P. Brown, Editor

Our dear sister in Christ, Martha Bentley, 85, passed to her reward after suffering a massive heart attack early on Monday morning, April 26, 2010. At the time of her death she lived in Knoxville, TN. She was preceded in death by her husband, of 62 years, Ernest L (Ernie) Bentley and step daughter, Tommie Pafford. She is survived by her nephew, Jay Caldwell and his wife, Debbie and their daughter, Jacie. She is also survived by a stepdaughter, Ann Bentley, of Charlotte, NC and stepson, Ernest Bentley, Jr., of Johnson City, TN; several step grandchildren and step great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. The funeral services were held in the Click Funeral Home Farragut Chapel with Kent Bailey, long time Gospel preacher and dear friend of the Bentley's, officiating. Grave-side services were held on Thursday at Fremont Cemetery in Union City, TN with Harrell Davison, long time evangelist and family friend presiding. Memorials may be made to Spring Church of Christ, P. O. 39 Box 77383 (earmark for "Contending for the Faith" publication).



MARTHA BENTLEY

When I remember sister Bentley I think of a woman who loved her Lord and proved it by her uncompromising stand for and obedience to the Truth of God's Word. She loved the Gospel, Gospel preaching, faithful Gospel preach-

ers and their families, faithful brethren and the church of Christ.

There was no pretense or sham about sister Martha and one had no problem knowing where she stood on any religious subject. She was appalled at those who compromised their preaching and life to keep friends, obtain money, and to sit in the chief seats prized by the worldly minded. No taint of hypocrisy was to be found in brother and sister Bentley's lives. They went about doing good because they were good as the Bible defines the same.

Sister Bentley was an excellent writer, authoring one book, *Mother, Where Art Thou?*, and numerous articles. She was a regular writer for *CFTF* and a speaker to her Christian sisters on many lectureships.

She was truly ready unto every good work.

To Jay and Debbie, who helped so much in the last months of her life, we wish the best and urge them to be faithful to the Lord in all things. We are thankful they were in a position to help sister Bentley.

Below you will find one of sister Bentley's good articles, the message of which is a fitting tribute to her faithfulness to the Lord. She is and will be greatly missed.

—David P. Brown, Editor



REMEMBER SHILOH

During the time of Joshua's leading Israel to possess the land God had promised them, the Ark of the Covenant was kept safely at Gilgal. After the conquest it was removed to Shiloh in Ephraim and remained there from the last days of Joshua to the time of Samuel (Josh. 18:10; Judges 18:31; 1 Sam. 4:3).

After the death of Joshua the people turned to idolatry in direct defiance of God's commands to have no part with other nations and their gods, "That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves to them" (Joshua 23:7).

"...if ye do in any wise go back and cleave unto the remnant of these nations even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you..." (Joshua 23:13).

The Ark of the Covenant was taken from Shiloh and carried into battle against the Philistines and because of the

sinfulness of Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, was lost. God's anger was greatly kindled and Shiloh after that was lost in insignificance.

Behold ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold even I have seen it, saith the Lord.

But go ye now into my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; Therefore will I do unto this house which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh (Jer. 7:8-14; 1 Kings 9:6-7).

God was patient and allowed enough time for repentance, but the time came when the promised destruction came just as promised (Gen. 6:3). God's promises are sure and certain (2 Pet. 3:9).

Recorded history is plain in telling us how God has dealt with his people who disregarded his laws and trampled on his commands. These things are written for our learning (Rom. 15:4) and just as certain as those in the Old Testament suffered promised punishment, so shall we if we continue to ignore the written word.

All too many today obey the first principles of the Gospel and get no farther than coming out of the baptistry and attending Sunday morning worship. Many are continuing to sow discord, rebel against godly elders, fail to study on a daily

basis, and continue to fellowship those who “sound good.” Many have closed their minds to the false teachers of today, thinking “They preach truth,” though not the whole truth. The sheep are being ravaged by wolves and “**my people love to have it so**” (Jer. 5:31).

God reminded back-sliding Israel to remember what he did to Shiloh. He has given us warnings also (Rev. 20:12, 21:8). Remember Shiloh!

—Her works do follow her.

Tragic Fellowship Compromises

Lynn Parker

Recently we have seen several brethren criticize and castigate what they have termed “A to Z Fellowship.” Rather than deal in generalities, we will be specific so that all know the positions taken. We do not want to wage battle against straw men. Neither do we want to misrepresent any brother or that brother’s position, even when the brother is in error. First, notice a few pertinent points:

1. We are not urging that people rush to withdraw fellowship from every brother who holds to error.
2. We believe in, and have practiced, patience while correction is being made and where a brother is teachable and penitent.
3. At issue is not a fellow who sits down to eat with an unknown brother, from an unknown town, who holds to unknown doctrines. Herein we are discussing those situations where brethren know what Rubel Shelley, or Max Lucado, or Dave Miller, or Joe Beam, or Phil Sanders teach.
4. *Patiently bearing with a brother and giving him to time to repent is not what many are practicing as they say nothing and do nothing.* That is just so much smoke. How many years are some going to wait while false teaching continues to spew forth to lead souls astray and certain men say nothing? What some apparently mean is that they hope someone else, somewhere else, somehow, and sometime over the next decades will broach the subject with the false teacher. Nobility? Hardly. More like cowardice.

Tom Wacaster wrote the following which may be representative of the position we now scrutinize:

Because a brother chooses not to become embroiled in a certain conflict in the brotherhood does not mean that he has compromised the truth; nor does it suggest that he has somehow aided and abetted the enemy. The following scenario

would actually present a problem of fellowship to some: Brother “A” was on lectureship “X” with brother “B” who himself appeared on lectureship “Y” with brother “C,” who last year appeared on lectureship “Z” with brother “D,” who has taught error concerning marriage and divorce. Conclusion? Brother “A” has become soft on the truth because he was associated with brother “B” who himself fellowshipped brother “C” who evidently was not concerned about what brother “D” teaches on marriage and divorce! Here is another scenario that has caused good brethren to “withdraw” from another: Brother “A” serves as a missionary in the church. But this brother has never once publicly said anything about Dave Miller or the AP controversy. Hence, this brother has been accused of being no better than “Max Lucado” or “Jeff Walling” – in fact, he is even worse because at least the flagrant false teacher is more easily recognized (Tom Wacaster, *Biting And Devouring One Another*, www.churchsoftware-plus.com/Archives/BiteDevour.pdf).

Here we will examine some points brought up by Tom Wacaster such as the brother who “chooses not to become embroiled in a certain conflict in the brotherhood,” the missionary who never publicly takes a stand against Dave Miller (a false teacher), and the depiction of fellowship between brethren “A,” “B,” “C,” and “D.”

Those Who Choose Not To Become “Embroiled”

Surely care must be taken when deciding whether or not to involve yourself in a brotherhood “conflict.” If a controversy is about opinion/option, then all are well-advised to give it a wide, tolerant berth. If, on the other hand, at stake is a doctrinal (obligatory) matter that affects salvation, one has no choice but to take a stand. But then, that’s the difference that makes a difference, isn’t it? In the Dave Miller and the *Apologetics Press* controversy, either we are dealing with matters of opinion/option or we are dealing with matters of faith/obligation. *Do not confuse the two.* Countless times the church has been attacked by denominations over

the use of mechanical instrumental music in Christian worship. What denominations (and some of our erring brethren) view as a matter of opinion/option, we know to be a matter of faith/obligation. Some in the brotherhood are confusing the doctrine of elder reaffirmation/re-evaluation with a matter of opinion/option, such as the color of the church building carpet.

Our brother Tom Wacaster laments,

Here is another scenario that has caused good brethren to “withdraw” from another: Brother “A” serves as a missionary in the church. But this brother has never once publicly said anything about Dave Miller or the AP controversy. Hence, this brother has been accused of being no better than “Max Lucado” or “Jeff Walling” – in fact, he is even worse because at least the flagrant false teacher is more easily recognized.

Do I have a choice about whether to become “embroiled” in a fight where souls are at stake? You know the answer. God had something to say about those who would remain neutral in times of war. **“Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of Jehovah. Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, Because they came not to the help of Jehovah, To the help of Jehovah against the mighty”** (Judges 5:23). The late George Darling wrote,

Maybe, it’s because I’m a little older, or maybe it’s because I appeal to the younger preachers as a sounding board. Many times I have preachers come to me bemoaning the fact that they are mistrusted. These men are sad because the brethren seem to have so little confidence in them. They condemn the elders and others for being skeptical of them and their actions. There is a remedy for just such situations. It can be remedied once and for all by this method. (The same remedy will work for the congregation that is wondering “WHY” they do not have the fellowship and cooperation of sister congregations) When someone doubts your orthodoxy just come out into the open, hiding nothing and make a clear statement of just where you stand. If one makes a clear statement of his position then both the Christian and the modernist and liberals know where he stands. There will be no doubt anymore, but as long as a man persists in playing in both camps, and carrying water on both shoulders, riding two horses at once and doing the “split” he can expect to be treated with “care.” The reason why men are mistrusted is almost invariably because they refuse to take a definite stand.

...A man is known by what he promotes, condones and opposes! More commonly you hear this expressed, “A man is known by both his friends and his enemies.” If a man, (please keep in mind that the same rule applies to a congregation or an eldership), upholds unscriptural works or heretical teachers, whether this be in the form of a denominational ministerial association or a project concocted by our brethren designed to draw away disciples from the old paths, taking his place among them, recognizing them as his brethren in Christ, you can know that that brother does not promote New Testament Christianity! If he merely condones this mongrel association and says nothing for or against you can know that

his convictions do not run deep enough to cause him to cry out with a voice like a trumpet against the sin and division caused by these rebellious leaders(?) and that he is refusing to abide by the divine revelation of God. On the other hand if a man openly opposes the ring leaders of digression, refuses to attend their hodgepodge assemblies, obeys the Lord’s injunction to MARK them that are causing division and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which was learned, and TURNS away from them, and preaches with all his might that there is BUT ONE CHURCH and not 300 plus, people know where this man stands.... (George E. Darling, Sr., “WHY?,” *Defender*, June, 1972).

“A man is known by what he promotes, condones, and opposes.” Was brother Darling wrong? Now brother Wacaster defends an unnamed missionary who “has never once **publicly** [bold emphasis mine–LP] said anything about Dave Miller or the AP controversy” (is Tom Wacaster speaking of himself?) and now this missionary is held in suspicion. Why doesn’t this missionary just come out publicly and plainly and state what he believes, thus removing any doubt? Can you really tell where a man stands by not only what he supports but also what he opposes? Brethren used to think so—and some of us still do. More importantly, God’s word teaches the principle. Tom Wacaster wrote,

As for the brotherhood problems, I stand where I stood more than three decades ago when I began preaching. I think David Miller is a false teacher regarding marriage and divorce, and his reaffirmation of elders, **and I think the brethren who are ignoring this undeniable fact are in fellowship with a false teacher** [bold emphasis mine – LP]. I think Stan Crowley teaches error and I have emailed him until I am blue in the face and he gives no response. I opted out of the Shertz lectures two years ago and have not been invited back for 2006 or 2007. I wrote the folks at AP and told them that I would not be subscribing to R&R again, and asked some questions regarding all that has been happening, but again, silent as a tomb I did speak on the Lubbock lectures two years ago and talked to Tommy about Dave Miller’s so-called “statement,” and curiously he has not invited me back either (Email letter from Tom Wacaster to Michael Hatcher, dated July 27, 2007).

Somebody changed. It was March, 2010 when Tom Wacaster spoke on the Memphis School of Preaching Lectures, expressing his respect for men there, his appreciation for being given the opportunity to speak, and feeling honored to fill the pulpit. Conspicuously missing from brother Wacaster’s sermon was any rebuke of the false teachers and their supporters at Memphis. Memphis School of Preaching, through its faculty and overseeing eldership, has more than amply demonstrated support for false teacher Dave Miller, and Stan Crowley at Schertz, TX., another marked false teacher. They had Phil Sanders, a man who has been known as a truth compromiser and one in fellowship with those not in fellowship with God, on this very lectureship with Tom Wacaster.

It gets back to guilt by fellowship. Are we guilty of sin when we fellowship those in error? Now one more time we will state that we are not at all saying that in given situations and certain circumstances you cannot work with those in error while they learn better and repent. Sure—rebuke, reprove, admonish. But do not silently condone their error and thus partake of their evil deeds! And if he won't repent the Bible is clear (Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 John 9ff). Bill Cline wrote:

Is there such a thing as guilt by association? When brethren, especially preachers, continually seek the services and fellowship of those who are known false teachers, is there any justification in questioning their doctrinal soundness? Brethren, if the New Testament is going to be our only rule of faith and practice, then lines are going to have to be drawn and their boundaries adhered to!

The New Testament teaches that the false teacher is to be marked (Rom. 16:17). If any man does not obey the teachings of the Christ, we are not to have any company with him (2 The. 3:14). We do not need to wait until judgment to find out who the false teacher is so that we can mark him. We have the responsibility to make that decision here and now!

In 2 John 10-11 John wrote, "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (ASV). May we all understand that **to give countenance and sanction to a false teacher is to share his guilt.** How judicious and cautious the Christian must be! **In this passage God forbids us to do anything that would in any way encourage or support the false teacher and his doctrine!** There is such a thing as guilt by association and the doctrine of Christ plainly teaches it.

Someone may counter, "Jesus associated with sinners" (Luke 15). Yes, He did, but His association with them was **in no way an encouragement, an endorsement, or a support of them in their sin!**

We may share the false teacher's guilt by SILENCE. Not long ago I heard a preacher tell a story about Jesus talking to a young man and telling him to shave off his beard! Before the service was over the man was forced to make correction of the false doctrine. To have remained silent would have been wrong for every supporter of the truth in the audience. ...

There are other ways we may share the false teacher's guilt. We may share such guilt by INDOLENCE, UNCONCERN, PUBLIC COUNTENANCE, INWARD APPROBATION, OPEN APOLOGY and ASSISTANCE. We must be careful of our soul's welfare in its association with the false teacher.

Churches need to examine the man they secure for gospel meetings. If they have already scheduled men who have now turned out to be liberals, they need to write them and tell them their services will no longer be needed and tell them why they aren't needed. And gospel preachers, check on the places you go. **Some of the liberal churches are using sound gospel preachers in their meetings. The same can be said for many of the seminars. They sprinkle the staff of lecturers with a few sound speakers. Brethren, have**

you ever considered your association with such? Have you considered that your name and soundness are possibly being used? Have you considered the fact that your appearance on such seminars or in such meetings may be causing brethren to question your soundness? [bold emphasis mine - LP]

We appeal for all who are concerned about the truth to carefully examine their association with others and be certain that they neither encourage nor support the false teacher. Some may say, "Wouldn't you go preach in a Methodist church?" Yes, I would, but my sermon would demonstrate beyond question that I neither supported nor endorsed them in their denominational error. And it is very doubtful that I would ever be asked to speak for them a second time.

In matters of opinion let us cultivate the widest liberality; in matters of doctrine let us cultivate uncompromising firmness. (William Cline, Guilt by Association, *Defender*, June, 1972)

"A" Fellowships "B," Who Fellowships "C"...

But now to the matter of fellowship and lectureship appearances. Remember, we are not discussing here just appearing on a lectureship with a false teacher. We are saying that if that happens, the faithful child of God will come out clearly against the errors of the false teacher. No one will leave the auditorium without knowing that the false teacher is just that! Brother Robert Taylor, recently known for his compromise in this area, once upon a time came down strong on men who would appear on lectureships with false teachers without publicly rebuking their false doctrines. As brother Cline stated, "my sermon would demonstrate beyond question that I neither supported nor endorsed them in their denominational error. And it is very doubtful that I would ever be asked to speak for them a second time."

Some are making fun of the principle of guilt by association (more accurately it is, "guilt by fellowship" (2 John 9ff). To them it is really an inconvenient doctrine. We're not talking here of an Apollos who received correction when he had taught error (Acts 18:25ff). We are speaking here of someone who has been corrected and had opportunity to repent. We'll call him brother "A." This is not someone who, with time and patience, is coming around. Nope, the way of truth has been explained to him and he has been given time to amend his ways and teaching. (Sounds like the situation with Dave Miller, doesn't it?) Brother "A" stubbornly refuses to repent and persistently remains in his error. Now is "A" in fellowship with God? No, of course not (2 John 9ff)! Can brother "B" fellowship "A"? No (2 John 9ff). Well, now brother "B" says, "'A' is my brother and I don't agree with him but I'll fellowship him anyway." (Sounds like Memphis School of Preaching, et al., doesn't it?) Is "B" at liberty to do this? Of course not (2 John 9ff). Is "B" in fellowship with God? No (2 John 9ff). So neither "A" nor "B" is in fellowship with God or God's faithful children (2 John 9ff). Now that is simple enough.

Along comes brother “C” who is fully aware of A’s error. C is fully aware of B’s compromise. But “C” reasons, “I don’t agree with A, and I wish B wouldn’t buddy up to him but I’m not gonna break fellowship with B over it.” That, friends, is basically a primer in how you allow false teachers free course to influence. It surely is possible for each succeeding person, from brother Abel to brother Zechariah, to be out of fellowship with God and thus out of fellowship with God’s people if each disregards God’s law of fellowship. This could all be stopped at some point by “B” or “C” saying, “No more! Teach false doctrine, fellowship false teachers, or otherwise persist in sinful behavior, and I cannot, out of respect for God’s word, fellowship you.” Is

“B” tainted because he fellowships “A?” If tainted means “in sin,” then the answer is “yes!” Is C tainted because he fellowships B? Of course, seeing that B is not in fellowship with God. What if twenty-five men followed a false teacher, or extended the right hand of fellowship to those who are supporting the false teacher? Could twenty-six men, represented by letters “A–Z” be in sin for disregarding God’s laws regarding fellowship (2 John 9ff; Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17)? Then you can have twenty-six men in sin! Remember brother Wacaster’s scenario of four men (A, B, C, and D) that appeared variously on three lectureships? Let us test that in light of Bible principles. For sake of clarity, we present the following chart:

<p>LECTURESHIP “Z” THEME: BIBLE MORALITY “COME HEAR THESE PILLARS OF THE FAITH PROCLAIM THE TRUTH ON BIBLE MORALS.”</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Rubel Shelly Rubel Shelly: “Abortion Is Sinful” </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Tom Wacaster Tom Wacaster : “Fornication Is Sinful” </div> </div>	<p>IS TOM IN FELLOWSHIP WITH RUBEL?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, then Tom is in sin (2 John 9ff; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:11). • If yes, then Tom is not in fellowship with God or God’s faithful . • If no, do the hosts of the lectureship know? • If no, does Rubel know of Tom’s position? • If no, is Tom publicly reproving Rubel for his public error? If not, why not? • If no, is Tom’s appearance with Rubel tacit endorsement of Rubel? If not, why not? • If no, will brethren be led to believe Tom is in fellowship with Rubel by Tom’s appearance here?
<p>LECTURESHIP “Y” THEME: GENESIS “COME HEAR THESE PILLARS OF THE FAITH PROCLAIM THE TRUTH ON GENESIS”</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Tom Wacaster Tom Wacaster : “Joseph and Jesus” </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dub McClish Dub McClish: “Moses and Christ” </div> </div>	<p>IS DUB IN FELLOWSHIP WITH TOM?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, then Dub is in sin (2 John 9ff; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:11). • If yes, then Dub is not in fellowship with God or God’s faithful . • If no, do the hosts of the lectureship know? • If no, does Tom know of Dub’s position? • If no, is Dub publicly reproving Tom for his public error? If not, why not? • If no, is Dub’s appearance with Tom tacit endorsement of Tom? If not, why not? • If no, will brethren be led to believe Dub is in fellowship with Tom by Dub’s appearance here?
<p>LECTURESHIP “X” THEME: EVANGELISM “COME HEAR THESE PILLARS OF THE FAITH PROCLAIM THE TRUTH ON EVANGELISM.”</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Dub McClish Dub McClish: “Zeal in Evangelism” </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Daniel Denham Daniel Denham: “Daily Evangelism” </div> </div>	<p>IS DANIEL IN FELLOWSHIP WITH DUB?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, then Daniel is in sin (2 John 9ff; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:11). • If yes, then Daniel is not in fellowship with God or God’s faithful . • If no, do the hosts of the lectureship know? • If no, does Dub know of Daniel’s position? • If no, is Daniel publicly reproving Dub for his public error? If not, why not? • If no, is Daniel’s appearance with Dub tacit endorsement of Dub? If not, why not? • If no, will brethren be led to believe Daniel is in fellowship with Dub by Daniel’s appearance here?

CONCLUSION

It brings me no pleasure to expose brother Wacaster’s error (and those who hold to his doctrine). I have, in years past, counted him as a dear friend and brother. We have worked together in several efforts. Tom asked me to moderate for a

debate he had with a Baptist preacher some years ago (I was unable to moderate due to secular employment). But Tom and those of like persuasion, are wrong, grievously wrong in their position and actions. This compromise on God’s laws of fellowship is an aid to false teachers. It allows false doc-

trines to gain momentum and acceptance in the brotherhood. If Tom Wacaster and others persist in their current course of conduct, they will lose their souls and no doubt, take many down with them. It does not have to happen.

END NOTES

¹As quoted in *CFTF*, March, 2010, p. 15, Robert Taylor wrote:

It is difficult to figure out some of our brethren in their inconsistent actions. They will bemoan the liberal spirit that is capturing large portions of our once uniformly conservative brotherhood. Yet on a continuing and even increasing basis they will appear with them on lectureships, workshops, seminars, and other occasions. It would be wonderfully courageous and highly commendable if they went to unmask their errors and uphold Truth with militant majesty; yet this they do not do as a general rule. There may be a few exceptions along the way but not many for sure. ... yet each year there are a few more conservative brethren who agree to speak...and with the

backing of their elderships respectively. If they went there with the spirit of Elijah before Ahab or the false prophets of Baal, the spirit of noble Nathan before adulterous David, the spirit of John the Baptist before Herod and Herodias, the spirit of them would not have the welcome mat extended to them for repeat performances. Will any doubt? If so, on what logical basis?

“Birds of a feather flock together” is not just true of winged fowl; it has a spiritual application as well. Brethren who constantly associate with false teachers, never confuting them, have not yet learned to hate every false way (Psa. 119:104, 128; Rev. 2:6). Yet they want to maintain a reputation for soundness. Such is extremely hard to attain and then maintain while giving tacit endorsement to liberalistic forces (From the Annual Denton Lectureship Book, *Studies in Joshua, Judges, and Ruth*, pp. 528, 529).

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LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY CREATES THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Lloyd Gale

The opening sentence of a letter dated February 12, 2010 from Earl Lavender, Executive Director of the Institute for Christian Spirituality, Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN., states: “Lipscomb University is pleased to announce the opening of the INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY.” Lavender goes on to say,

Through this institute, Lipscomb will offer its second doctoral degree and several certificate programs for Christians who want to deepen their walk with God. Programs are designed for everyone from the church leader who needs a safe place to grow and discern God’s call **in his or her life**, to the beginner in the faith journey who is eager to grow. Lipscomb is pleased to offer fresh resources that will nurture deeper spiritual lives. (Bold mine – L.E.G)

To celebrate this new institute John Ortberg, a nationally known speaker and author in spiritual formation, will be here on March 2nd for many exciting engagements which are listed on the postcard below. You are invited to join us on the Lipscomb campus and participate in these events throughout the day.

Being aware of how far Lipscomb has departed from the once delivered faith, caused me to doubt that this “nationally known speaker” was even a Christian. Is it possible for someone to be a spiritual person who has not obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ and who is a member of some humanly conceived church; a person who does not believe what the Holy Spirit inspired apostle Paul recorded in Eph.4:1-6:

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With

all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Could a person be called a spiritual person who does not believe, teach and practice these inspired words? Is a person a spiritual person who denies, and has never obeyed, the Lord’s instructions pertaining to what one must do to be saved—one, therefore, who has never been cleansed from his sins by the blood of Jesus Christ?

Is it not true that the spiritual person is the person who believes and obeys implicitly all of God’s teachings pertaining to his salvation; that the spiritual person is the person who walks in harmony with the instructions of the Spirit. Not just some of His instructions but all of them that have to do with faithful Christian living? **“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all”** (James 2:10) This great spiritual state is reached by a diligent study, learning and obeying God’s Word concerning becoming a Christian and in living the Christian life (Matthew 8:31; 1 Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10).

Is it not true that our Lord Jesus Christ built His church about 2,000 years ago to house all the saved and to save others by preaching the Gospel, edification of the saints, and by engaging in benevolent works? The Lord’s institute for spirituality is the church. He promised to build it, did

in fact build it, and purchased it with His own blood (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Acts 2:38, 41, 42, 47). Is not the action of Lipscomb another effort to repudiate what the Bible teaches concerning New Testament Christianity?

So who is this “nationally known speaker and author in spiritual formation” John Ortberg?

He currently serves as the pastor at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in California. Prior to that he served as teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church South Barrington Illinois, one of the largest congregations in the nation. So now we know that some who claim to be members of the church of Christ are going to be taught about “spirituality” by a man who has never obeyed the gospel, who is not in a covenant relationship with God, and is not himself spiritual. Quite remarkable!

I wonder if John Ortberg is aware of a recent survey of members of the Presbyterian church that found one out of three Presbyterian do not believe one must be a Christian to be saved? Presbyterian doctrine does not teach that one must

obey the Gospel and be added to the blood purchased church of Christ by the Lord (Acts 2:41, 47). So one who denies John 14:6 and Eph. 4: 1-6, along with many other Scriptures, back in March taught some apostate Christians and no telling who else about spirituality. Will wonders never cease?

It appears that many Americans are recognizing what is happening as the progressives in our government are ignoring and violating our Constitution and Bill of Rights. They are rising up in protest and demanding a return to the Law of the land. I pray for the day when once faithful members of the Lord’s church, and others, recognize how far many have departed from the once delivered faith (Jude 3). Pray that they open their eyes and see the disaster that awaits if they continue down this road. It seems that no matter how radical the departure from the faith is some refuse to see it. Must they wait until they open their eyes in eternal torment before they realize their sins? Pray that such may not be the case.

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(Continued From Page 1)

yond one’s own ability relative to an assigned task—such action still is accredited as morally virtuous for that individual just as if he had done it by himself. So we can safely assume that all those opting for Passive Internal Sanctification must accept the notion that Christ’s behavior as the son of man need not totally have been caused by self-determined inner states (wherein the action is free and the agent morally responsible—hence personally virtuous) as He progressed through life, but that actions in His life could be caused by non self-determined inner states (wherein the action is not free and the agent is NOT morally responsible—hence is NOT personally virtuous by that act). Now here, brethren, is the “Deaver doctrine” in all of its unbiblical glory! Make your choice for either ACTIVE INTERNAL SANCTIFICATION or for PASSIVE INTERNAL SANCTIFICATION! I have previously upheld and will continue to contend for the active version for both non-Christian and Christian—instead of what might be accurately described as “Virtue by Association” or “Virtue by Proxy”—will you?

Should the reader attempt to foist the absurd (i.e. false) notion that I have in essence become an “anti-cooperation-ist” in that I allegedly refuse to allow God to help the Christian as Mac has accused me of, then I would hasten to **“Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes”** (Pro. 26:5) by pointing out that Mac is the one who holds the “saints only” viewpoint regarding God’s direct-to-the-mind operation and not me! [Yes, it’s true that I actually laughed out loud when I first came across this “answer and response” from Mac. I have also needed Dramamine to just watch (much less to study) the Deavers’ lurch

to the left—which induces more motion sickness than a State Fair dive bomber to those of us who have known them for years. In recent days, Mac and Weylan are likely having to take Dramamine in observing Todd’s further leftist pendulum swing! From their own discord I am forced to conclude that either the Holy Spirit is confused (just as He seems to be among rank Pentecostals who are also in disagreement with one another while each claims a Direct Operation) or that NONE of them are actually getting a Direct Divine Illumination of the Spirit! I think you know my answer (cf. 1 Cor. 14:33)!

Deaverite Fellow Travelers

Despite a small chorus of Deaverite “cheerleaders” who specialize in not even being aware of the primary writings by myself and others, most folks have had the good sense to “see through” this erroneous choice of passivity instead of activity regarding moral action! Malcolm Hill has displayed a singular ignorance of the detailed case that has been mounted by many of us against this doctrine of ethical passivity, following the “Pied Piper of Denton” in falsely accusing us of upholding an “inactive Deity.” Yet, quite strangely, it never seems to dawn upon those breathing the rarified air of Planet Deaver that they maintain this same alleged “inactive” view of the Spirit of God towards any and all (i.e., billions!) non-Christians! Thus, while God directly blows a wind into the saint’s sails, the non-Christian is left to paddle his own canoe by means of the Word only. But I would ask what kind of meaningful response can you have toward your opponents if they have not taken time to inform themselves adequately about it? Malcolm’s feet are firmly

planted in midair on “planet Deaver” so that he seems to be responding not to people and ideas as they really are, but to a construction in his own mind and of his own imagining. (I suspect he has become a bit like a crazy uncle who used to be able to be somewhat reasonable and articulate, but now is only an embarrassment to the family).

Lack of space forbids a complete exposition, but the reader can surely see that something more is at stake here than simply one’s own personal virtue and culpability! We can see that without a voluntary choice and carrying through by one’s Self as to what is right (both negatively and positively), there can be no such thing as virtue. *NOTE:* puppets and dogs are incapable of virtue because they act without conscious thought and control! Ask yourself if you agree with Mac’s version of human “freewill” which includes a “morality” based upon factors beyond man’s conscious thought! Without that freedom of choice and “hands-on” control, there is no morality and no love but only an automated, mechanical response. Once again we turn to the burning issue: *Was Jesus the way He was because some force outside His own volition so ‘infused Him with virtues’ or accomplished (i.e., carried out) the virtue for Him that He could do nothing but good?*

The Spirit and Hebrews 4:15

If your answer to the above question is “Yes”, then what is the true meaning of Hebrews 4:15: **“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”?** When we examine Jesus’ life, we find a pervasive and powerful presence and activity of the Spirit throughout, including His birth (Luke 1:35) and John’s announcement that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:8). The Spirit is present in dramatic form from the very beginning of His public ministry, for there was a perceivable coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him at that time (Mat. 3:16) in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Isa. 42:1). But did Jesus have His moral qualities for Himself, or did the Spirit directly help or “inject” Him with such attributes as strength and love? Did the Spirit “do” the courage and “do” the love?

Immediately after His baptism, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit” into the situation where the temptations took place (Luke 4:1). Mark’s statement is forceful: **“And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness”** (Mark 1:12). The rest of the ministry of Jesus as well (including His teaching) was conducted in the power and by the direction, either directly or indirectly, of the Holy Spirit. Peter told Cornelius about **“Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him”** (Acts 10:38). Jesus declared: **“If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the king-**

dom of God come upon you” (Mat. 12:28). Such was done directly by God’s Spirit.

When the seventy returned and reported that even demons were subject to them in His name (Luke 10:17), even Christ’s emotions were said to be in or by the Holy Spirit: **“In that same hour he rejoiced in (by—ASV) the Holy Spirit** (v.21; cf. 1 The.1:6; emph. TMH). While no one doubts Jesus’ inspiration, the question is: *Did the Holy Spirit directly infuse or cause the ethical fruit of the Spirit we call JOY in Him here?* **Question:** *Was Christ only able not to sin but did avoid sinning, or was He not able to sin?* Is it the case (as some affirm) that Jesus is God with a quasi-human character upon which the Holy Spirit acted so that it would be physically possible but morally impossible that He would sin? Incredibly, some brethren (like those on planet Deaver) agree with those Calvinists who answer: “Yes!” According to Dallas M. Roark, Louis Berkhof defended Jesus’ sinlessness

on the basis of the essential bond between the human and divine natures... In doing so he altered the nature of Jesus’ temptations, especially in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, and reduced the significance of Jesus’ will in his obedience to the Father.

This is to alter the nature of our Lord’s temptations all right, and, in fact, to do away altogether with any significance of Jesus’ will in His “obedience” to the Father. Berkouwer contends that:

One must hold...that those are wrong who are content to say that Christ was able not to sin... The moment the Scripture introduces the temptation in the wilderness it mentions Christ’s being filled with the Holy Spirit. In his life there is a mysterious incapacity for sin stemming from his love and mercy.

Roark says:

The truth of the life of Jesus could be stated in terms of an analogy in which gold is tried, but it is part of its nature that it always stands the test.... Therefore, the human nature would be under the realm of enabling grace (presumably—don’t you see—through the direct operation of the Holy Spirit—TMH) **in which it could not sin** (emph. TMH).

Everyone involved in this latest Holy Spirit controversy which began in 1994 will remember the disquieting “trac-tate scoldings” we were privileged to receive from those on Planet Deaver concerning “enablement,” the meaning of which was exactly the same as Berkhof, Berkouwer, and Roark, but only set forth in different verbiage.

A Hellish Lie: To Misinterpret Heb. 9:14 to Uphold “Theistic Determinism”

Please note the strong parallels between the Deaver view of Ephesians 3:16 and this crucial verse: **“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living**

God?” (Heb. 9:14; emph. TMH). Since our Lord had the Spirit without measure (John 3:34), does this verse really teach that the Holy Spirit DIRECTLY moved Jesus to offer Himself up unto God? From their allegations concerning New Testament Christians, we need to ask those on Planet Deaver if they really want to affirm that *God is attempting to change the human heart by His direct sovereign power or by persuasion?* Surely we all know that we MUST uphold “Self-Determinism” and not Deaverism’s “Direct Theistic Determinism” of morality! Perhaps just here a definition of “persuade” is in order: “1. to cause to do something, esp. by reasoning, urging, or inducement; prevail upon; 2. to induce to believe something; convince.”

Despite their logical pedigree which has always stressed PERSUASION by evidence, the Deavers actually have ended up affirming that the faithful Christian only decides by his own direct will up to a point (i.e., he “pre-decides”) that he wants or desires to do right and then the Holy Spirit goes on to DIRECTLY enable or move him to do the moral or right thing. Once again, those on Planet Deaver affirm such both positively (e.g., from love through self-control as fruit of the Spirit—Gal. 5:22-23), and yes, even negatively (e.g., to refrain from works of the flesh!—Gal. 5:16-21)! Thus, while (I assume) they still rightly reject deterministic, mechanical external forces upon the human heart as the prevailing cause of ethical action, the Deavers substitute in its place the living, non-materialistic power of the Holy Spirit! Pure and simple this is to deny that man is the actual choicemaker in virtue or goodness and is in fact to make an “end run”

around such verses which falsify such a position (and which quite strangely the Deavers affirm about non-Christians). Paul said: **“let us cleanse ourselves of all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God”** (2 Cor. 7:1) and Peter also affirmed that humans are to **“be like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living”** (1 Pet. 1:15). Along with other faithful brethren, I have rejected the “Let go and let God” poppycock all of my life when argued by denominationalists and by Christians, and I reject the same when coming from the marvel which is Planet Deaver! May God help us never to get wedded to ANY doctrine (or interpretational procedure) that implies such a hellish lie, especially about our Lord’s great moral accomplishment in His truly personal sacrifice of Himself on Calvary’s cross! While it may be truthfully said that under the Holy Spirit’s influence Jesus went to the cross, rose from the dead, ascended in the heavens, and there made an offering for the sins of the world, as Milligan concluded, “it was not to any extraneous influence, but to the personal dignity, glory, and Divinity of Christ himself, that the infinite value of his offering is to be ascribed,” Though certainly cognizant of and accepting of the fact of influences, the view of self-determinism maintains that a person’s acts by which he will be judged are in the final analysis caused by himself—by that person acting by means of his own will. The difference between “Direct Theistic Determinism” and this viewpoint is the difference between error and Truth. (*More to follow*).

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Is Todd Deaver Also Among The Prophets, Or Maybe Even The Apostles?

Daniel Denham

As we continue to follow and chronicle the development of the Deaver doctrine, we have watched each new stage in this development with both intense wonder and profound sadness. Roy C. Deaver was a mentor and friend, but his son Mac Deaver has brought about a sully of his name in a way that it may never be able to recover.

We have watched over the past year the progression (actually digression) of Todd Deaver over into the Emerging Church camp with the likes of Al Maxey, John Mark Hicks, Rubel Shelly, and Jay Guinn. Todd is the youngest son of Mac, and is, along with Glenn Jobe, credited by Mac himself with convincing the latter to accept the idea of present day Holy Spirit baptism. Now another milestone has been reached by Todd, and it causes one to ponder whether Mac

will not be far behind his son on the matter.

Todd has become a member of the postmodernistic leaning Missional Outreach Network headed by James Nored, and involving among its regular bloggers such liberals as John Dobbs and Sixto Rivera (cf. http://www.missionaloutreachnetwork.com/xn/detail/2422312:Event:32693?xg_source=activity). Todd even has his own webpage with this program (cf. <http://www.missionaloutreachnetwork.com/profile/PhilipToddDeaver>). It promotes the idea of present day spiritual gifts including that of apostolic authority (<http://www.storyofredemption.com/page20.html>). The following link will take one to a document on the Internet that outlines their error on this point and even presents the feminist dogma that women were also apostles in the same

sense and with the same authority as the others (http://www.storyofredemption.com/The%20Gift%20of%20Apostolic_Missional%20Leadership.pdf). They affirm that “Junias, a female” was an apostle (cf. Rom. 16:7). They fail to note that the term “apostles” is masculine gender. If Junias is female, then she fails to qualify on that account. But the term Junias can be either masculine or feminine. These brethren are thus seeking to build their case on something that they cannot even be certain about relative to the identity of this person (cf. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. IV, pp. 426-427). Junia would actually be the feminine form, and Junias properly masculine (H.A.W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans*, p. 567).

But even more to the case is the fact that the construction states that the Andronicus and Junias mentioned by Paul were “of note among the apostles.” The idiom does not mean that they were apostles! It simply means that they had a good reputation “among the apostles.” The Greek phrase *episeemai en tois apostolois* does not demand that they were “among the apostles,” but indicates only that they were “of note,” viz., held in high esteem, “among the apostles.” Meyer, especially, discusses at length the force of the idiom and translates it as “distinguished, i.e. most honourably known by the apostles” (italics his, p. 568). So also concludes Moses Lard in his *Commentary on Romans* (p. 456). Even the vast

majority of commentators who take it to refer to an inferior class of apostles (a class not in the same category and did not possess the same authority as the twelve) apply it to two men here and not to a woman at all. Only in recent years, due to feminism’s influence and the egalitarian liberalism rife in our schools, has this new view been postulated affirming that there were female apostles in the full authoritative sense of the word.

But even more alarming about Todd’s new defection is the implicit claim now to possess gifts that in Biblical teaching were clearly miraculous in nature. How long will it be before Todd and his new cronies are hopping pews, barking like dogs, running into walls, and belting out the “holy laugh” like the Third Wave Charismatics in the Emerging Church Movement they are following? How long will it be before Mac and company join in the frolics with this “new breeze of the Spirit” blowing through the liberal churches? Remember folks a couple of months ago I reviewed and answered an article by Mac’s buddy, Malcolm Hill, president of Tennessee Bible College in Cookeville, TN, who disparaged anyone who would dare “limit the power of God.” Are they preparing for the next quantum step in abject Holy Rollerism? We will see in due time. Sad indeed! Todd is well on his way. Will Daddy be following?

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MAXIMUM AL

Gary W. Summers

The April issue of *Contending for the Faith* published my recent review of the February lectureship book, *Profiles in Apostasy #1*. I had previously printed it in *Spiritual Perspectives* on March 21, 2010; it is also on our web site, www.spiritualperspectives.org.

This lectureship and book have elicited something quite unusual—responses. Most of the time, liberals just ignore everything that faithful writers say. In fact, silence is common; Max Lucado has used it for years. But for some reason, putting together a collection of reviews of their various nefarious works has really gotten under the skin of a few. One of those who has taken sharp exception to the book reviews is Al Maxey, who because of his exceeding passion shall herein be referred to as Maximum Al. This is not necessarily a derogatory phrase. Although he is in error, one must admire the fact that he is moved to write about what he believes when most others will not defend their doctrines. A few comments will suffice regarding his reply.

He begins his review of the April issue of *CFTF* thus:

I suppose I will never cease to be amazed by the antics of the hardened legalistic patternists who profess to be devoted disciples of Jesus Christ, but who in reality are little more than rabid, rigid religionists. Their numbers are shrinking daily (thankfully), and at some point in the not too distant future they will be little more than a footnote in the history of our movement.

As the saying goes, “You have never been loved until you have been loved by a liberal.” Generally, when they are not preaching on love (Perverted concept of it—Ed.), they are trying to convince their audiences not to be judgmental (usually against those preaching heresy). It never occurs to them that, when they say such passionate things against those conscientiously trying to follow Jesus, *they are themselves judgmental*. Maximum Al, however, is not even wound up yet. Although he is capable of penning a good alliteration (rabid, rigid religionists), such epithets cannot take the place of evidence. I’m surprised he did not

say, “legalistic logicians,” but he does find fault with those who believe there is a Divine pattern given to us in the New Testament. Was God a “legalistic patternist” when He instructed Moses: “**See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain**” (Ex. 25:40; Heb. 8:5)?

He may actually be right about the shrinking numbers. However, it might be good to ask the question, “Did the number of the faithful to God shrink before the time of the Flood?” or “Did the number of the faithful shrink before the time of the captivity?” When an unscriptural organization began to permeate the churches in the fourth through sixth centuries, was there a Maximum Alphonsus who wrote about legalistic patternists who could not accept men to rule over numerous congregations? Did he express thanks that their numbers were shrinking daily and would soon be nothing more than a footnote? It happened just that way. Numbers do not prove correctness of doctrine or clarity of thinking. Most people think that salvation is by “faith only.”

Perhaps Maximum Al has a movement, but genuine Christians are simply trying to live by the teachings of the New Testament (Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; et al.), that has been the case since the first century.

Perhaps we should have added the descriptive word relentless in front of maximum, also. Al continues his verbal tongue-lashing of us for several more sentences, closing with: “and the Lord will deal with whatever is left of them when He returns” (the dwindled down number). Since I know and talk regularly with many of the men who gave reviews for the lectureship, I can say confidently that they are ready for the Lord’s return at any time. We have nothing to fear.

He claims that “these people” hate those who are grace-centered, Christ-centered, and proclaim liberty in Christ. He also calls us Diotrepheses (3 John 10), who want to impose our will on others and silence them. I must apologize for not taking some of these charges seriously, but they are so over the top as to be laughable. Diotrephes was so arrogant as to refuse to accept the apostle John. The liberals, not us, have that problem—particularly when that same apostle wrote about those who refused to abide in the doctrine of Christ in 2 John 9-11. Liberals fall all over themselves in an effort to make the passage say something—anything—than what it actually teaches.

The fact is that liberals have bombarded the brotherhood with books that are filled with error, yet we are trying to silence them? Well, we’re not doing a very good job if that is our goal. Rush Limbaugh has received this same type of criticism for decades for his exposure of politically liberal ideas. As he puts it (and this is paraphrased): “I get up in the morning and see what institutions and beliefs I hold dear are under attack, and I offer a defense.” We do the same thing. The liberals have assaulted the Biblical teaching on

marriage and divorce, the doctrine of eternal punishment, the distinctive nature of the church, and we defend the Truth with respect to those crucial matters.

Limbaugh does not make things up. He plays sound clips of what political liberals say; then he responds to it. The writers of *Profiles in Apostasy #1* do the same thing. They quote from the liberal’s own material and show, through the Scriptures, where the error is. Furthermore, we do not want liberals to be silenced; we want them to debate so that others can hear firsthand what they teach.

In his review of the April issue of *CFTF*, Al decides to call it Contentious for the Faith, which is not original; most of us have heard that phrase for three decades. Al, can’t you be a little original? How about calling it *Cantankerous for the Faith*, or *Crabby for the Faith*?

The Review

Now that Maximum Al is warmed up, he devotes attention to my review of the book, which he calls a “shameless plug.” Well, what did he think “Recommended Reading” would be—a plea to ignore the book because it is so crummy? Shameless is inappropriate, however, because the review highlighted some of the best material presented therein.

“Mr. Summers begins the article by declaring (and I assume he does so with a straight face), *Profiles in Apostasy #1* is one of the best reference works of this century.” Yes, the comment was straightforward—and accurate. Nowhere, to my knowledge, have such evaluations been gathered together into one handy volume, with abundant quotes from the authors under review.

Maximum Al takes issue with what I wrote concerning his book, *Down, But Not Out*: “For years, various name brand liberals have been writing books to influence brethren away from the Scriptures.” Al claims that his book “sought to do just the opposite....” Well, of course he would say that. Wolves usually claim to be sheep, but the claim does not make them sheep. Max. Al writes:

The book is filled with references to both OT and NT passages pertaining to the topic of marriage and divorce (in fact, I have dealt with every passage within the Bible pertaining to this subject, something, to my knowledge, no other book on this topic has ever done).

Okay, so Maximum Al deserves credit for being the most thorough heretic on this subject. Of course, he claims that he is leading people away from the “traditional misunderstanding and misapplication” of brethren back to what the Scriptures actually teach. In truth, however, brethren were once united on what the Scriptures taught—until James D. Bales, James Woodroof, Olan Hicks, and others began leading people away. Al is simply one of several to follow in their footsteps (although he may be more thorough). Covering every passage does no good if your presuppositions are

faulty to begin with. He continues:

Olan Hicks, a very dear friend, who wrote the Foreword to my book and with whom I was blessed to spend some time at the recent Tulsa Workshop, stated within his comments, “This is no slanted, narrow-scope treatment. This book puts the matter in the context of the entire Bible and of history! Each Old Testament book is summarized separately and a perspective is drawn from each by sound exegesis. The New Testament text is also treated with a thoroughness that is rare and an objectivity that is refreshing. ... It is very much textual and contextual” [*Down, But Not Out*, p. 5].

Max. Al says much more than he may have intended here. First of all, faithful brethren do not attend the Tulsa Workshop (*at least not for the reasons that Al does—Ed.*); it has been a haven for liberals for decades. Second, for Maxey to seek Olan Hicks’ endorsement is somewhat like Boo Boo calling Yogi Bear as a defense witness when charged with stealing a picnic basket. Third, since Maximum and Olan are such good friends, does Al also believe that the use of instrumental music is all right? Olan does. [See the 7-part series concerning the debate I had with Olan Hicks (see October and November, 2005 on our web site).]

The next thing that Max. Al complains about is that I must not have read his book. That much is true. I did, however, read the book that I reviewed, and two brothers who did read Maxey’s book analyzed it. They gave good evidence for their conclusions, and I trust their judgment and their correct use of evidence. Besides, Olan Hicks would not endorse a book that did not hold a position similar to his.

Most of the rest of Big (as in Maximum) Al’s article takes issue with the writing of Daniel Denham and David Brown in the same April issue of *CFTF*...

The Pattern

As indicated previously, Maximum Al is not much on patterns (Emily Dickenson might be disappointed; come to think of it, she might agree). He says that he does “deny that the New Testament is a divine blueprint or pattern.” Really? Then what is it? This is a curious position. Jesus told the woman at the well that true worshipers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. How does one worship in truth without specific commands or an example that serves as a pattern?

To illustrate, we have an example of the church in Troas meeting on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Is that a pattern that we may follow? The Corinthians were obviously meeting regularly, and Paul told them to lay aside a gift on the first day of the week. Is that a pattern or a coincidence? If it is not part of a pattern, upon what day of the week should we meet? Does the day matter? Could we just select Tuesday and proudly proclaim, “We don’t have a pattern for what we are doing, and all of you pattern-hating brethren can feel free to join us”?

Does it matter when we observe the Lord’s Supper? Can we observe the Lord’s death in that way every night of a gospel meeting? Or can we do it like many denominations do—just a few times a year? If we don’t believe in Divine patterns, then what are the answers to these questions?

What about giving? How often should that practice be observed? Should it be on the first day of the week? On Tuesdays? When? Paul tells brethren to give generously (2 Cor. 9:6-7). Now if we only knew when to do so!

If there is no Divine pattern regarding worship, can we gather at the gymnasium and let various members of the congregation divide up into teams and play basketball for worship? The rest of us could cheer. We can open and close with prayers, sing during the quarter breaks, and have a devotional during half time. Probably more effort would be put forth on the part of some worshipers than is usually given, eh?

Is the organization for a local congregation, one of elders and deacons, something the church today must follow? Do we even need to have these functions today? Paul gave qualifications for these roles of leadership in the church. Is that organization intended as a pattern, or are we now free to disregard it? Can women lead in the church and in worship? Could we not have one man, or a council of men, rule over several congregations in an area? How about having one man rule over all the churches, if we are discarding Divine patterns?

Back to the Simple Teachings

Big Al said that his book was designed to lead people back to the simple teachings of the Scriptures. Really? Let’s take this excerpt from Maximum Al’s book, as quoted in Lester Kamp’s review. Al wrote in his book the following words:

When Jesus declares that adultery has been committed, He is stating far more than the fact of two people engaging in a physical act, He is declaring the fact of a broken covenant between the husband and wife. Although sexual infidelity may well have ultimately been the cause of some of those disunions, there is little doubt that in some of the Lord’s statements about divorce and remarriage **sexual infidelity is not even remotely being alluded to when he utilizes the word adultery...** (122-23, Emphasis mine, LK) (467).

What? Oh, sure. How many times have you read Jesus using the word adultery and said to yourself, “I bet He’s not talking about the physical act”? Apparently, claiming that

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adultery does not refer to the physical act is Maximum Al's way of returning to the simple meaning of the Scriptures. Must we cover every passage? Okay.

In Matthew 5:27, Jesus refers to the quote from the Law, as do Matthew 19:18, Mark 10:19, and Luke 18:20: "You shall not commit adultery." Was that covenant breaking or the literal act? Already the definition of the word adultery is clear in 4 out of 12 times Jesus used it. In Matthew 5:28, He says that a man who lusts after a woman has committed adultery with her in his heart. Right! How many worldly-minded men, when a beautiful woman passes by, begin thinking of breaking a covenant? Or are they imagining a literal action?

Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 define marital adultery (an unscriptural divorce followed by an unauthorized marriage). The newlyweds are living in an adulterous relationship. Mark 10:10-11, along with Luke 16:18, deal with that same sin.

The final two times are found in John 8:3-4, when the woman was taken in the very act of committing adultery. Was she covenant breaking? Maxey's statement that Jesus was not alluding to sexual infidelity is preposterous. Of course, He was. And no one, reading the Scriptures, would think otherwise. One needs to have help from men like Olan Hicks and Al Maxey in order to arrive at some other explanation.

We have no appreciation for Al's doctrines, but we do appreciate him for sending an e-mail with his response to my book review in it. Although we are confident that the teaching of his book, if believed, would do great harm, we do appreciate the fact that he spoke up to defend himself, which is more than can be said of most other liberals. We have no personal ill will toward him whatsoever and pray that he and the others whose books were reviewed will come to see the truth and abide in it, as most of them once did.

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-Oklahoma-

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

- Tennessee-

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-Texas-

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

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