

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

## “NEW’ ANTI-ISM” AND A RESPONSE

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Dub McClish

I have reproduced two articles. Brother Brian Kenyon, Assistant Director of Florida School of Preaching, wrote the first article, “New’ Anti-ism,” that immediately follows this note. The second article, “Trying on ‘Anti’ Shoes,” written by brother Gary Summers (evangelist with the South Seminole Congregation in Winter Park, FL), is a response to the Kenyon article. “New’ Anti-ism” was published in the January 2008 FSOP paper, *The Harvester* (archived at <http://www.fsop.net/>). Over the last several months, various FSOP alumni, former teachers, and other long-time friends and promoters of the school (and even one prospective student) have directed some earnest questions of concern relating to fellowship to the school’s administration. These questions have arisen because the school has continued to use certain brethren on its annual lectureship who are bidding Godspeed to brother Dave Miller, Executive Director of Apologetics Press, who is a marked impenitent false teacher. These questions have continued over many months, with no response whatsoever from school officials. Instead of “**being ready always to give answer**” (1 Pet. 3:15), the administrators have apparently felt themselves above even being questioned, much less having to provide answers.

Rather than respond to perfectly legitimate questions, Kenyon, with obvious approval of FSOP Director, brother Jackie Stearsman, chose to write the following article in which he boldly levels some serious charges against some of his brethren. His boldness is imperfect, however, as he not only fails to name in his article any of these mythical “new” antis he has in mind. As indicated by Summers, he refused to do so in person, as well. Although we are most certain he had some

specific individuals to whom he refers, we are left to wonder how we can help Kenyon oppose these rascals when he will not tell us who they are. Enough irony, however. Given the facts that (1) several of us have asked some probing questions about the school and (2) these questions were criticisms (one might say “anti”) relative to some current FSOP practices and/or policies, it is not impossible to perceive who Kenyon has in mind.

It might even occur to some that Kenyon’s article demonstrates the severe level of discomfort these questions have caused him and his fellow administrators. Instead of defusing the questions and inhibiting the questioners, Kenyon should have foreseen that his article only provokes more questions relative to the direction of the school. How much better to simply respond to questions from sincere brethren than to ignore them and then issue a set of oblique charges aimed at the querists. Silence is hardly either a wise or a Scriptural manner of dealing with questions and issues among brethren. *Brethren do not thus behave when they have nothing to hide or when they have answers that are convincing.* Unfortunately, silence has become a pattern of behavior in those brethren whose institutions have come under criticism since mid-2005. We are saddened that FSOP has also chosen this modus operandi.

Summers wrote his article after reading the Kenyon article and then asking him in person at the January 2008 FSOP Lectures just who these “new” antis are. Kenyon’s condescending and elitist reply, “If the shoe fits...,” provided Summers’ title, “Trying on ‘Anti’ Shoes.”

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

## Editorial...

### NEW FELLOWSHIP ERROR

The fellowship of false teachers, Dave Miller and Stan Crowley, has turned out to be *the horse on which a new error concerning fellowship has ridden out to trouble the churches*. Such churches as Forest Hill, Memphis, TN, Southwest, Austin, Texas, the Schertz, Texas congregation, Southside, Lubbock, TX, et al., are examples of churches that practise this new error. Also, brotherhood works such as MSOP, SWSBS, ETSOP, FSOP, Tri-Cities School of Preaching, GBN, AP, TGJ, OABS and the like are presently in the forefront of pushing this new fellowship error. It can be identified by contrasting the Truth these brethren teach about withdrawing fellowship from false teachers and their failure to actually withdraw fellowship from them. *It is quite simple—they teach one thing and practise something else.*

Informed brethren know that brother Robert R. Taylor, Jr. is in fellowship with Miller, Crowley and many of their apologists and supporters, but, the best we can tell, Taylor thinks as long as he teaches the Truth about the sin of fellowshiping error, it is not incumbent upon him in every instance of it to practise what he preaches. He is not alone in this hypocritical conduct, at least when it comes to certain ones for whom he and they have too much respect. This is the reason we have chosen two excellent articles by Taylor, though he does not consistently apply what he teaches in them to Miller and Crowley and those who fellowship them, to include in this issue of *CFTF*. Here is the new doctrine regarding fellowship—*Teach the Truth about fellowship, but go against it in practice if it means the loss of friends, jobs, speaking on lectureships, money, brotherhood projects or whatever is perceived to be a chief seat to be given up.*

We have also included a sermon delivered by the late brother E. R. Harper while he was the preacher for the Fourth and State congregation in Little Rock, Arkansas. We think he preached it sometime in the late 1930's. He worked with that church between 1934 until 1945. Along with brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Harper battled the false doctrine of Premillennialism. Harper primarily concentrated his efforts against the error in Harding College.

Although in his article Harper has Premillennial heretics in mind, he reveals what has always been true of false teachers and their supporters—they attack the defenders of the Truth in the same way. They seek to discredit and slander those who oppose them rather than deal with the issues in the light of the Bible. Harper shows that the same thing was typical of the digressives of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century church in their attacks on those who fought their innovations—they were determined to push into the church. Please carefully consider what Harper wrote as we deal with the underhanded and unbalanced tactics used by today's heretics in their attacks on the faithful brethren who stand in their way.

—David P. Brown, Editor

## “NEW” ANTI-ISM

Brian R. Kenyon

Last summer this writer attended a wedding in the auditorium of a church of Christ that, according to the 2008 Guardian of Truth Directory of Churches, stands “opposed to...church support of human institutions (orphan homes, hospitals, old folks homes, colleges, etc.), the sponsoring church arrangement, and church sponsored recreation.” The wedding was beautiful!

What struck this writer’s attention, though, was the use of recorded wedding music that contained mechanical instruments of music. There are “regular” churches of Christ that do not even allow that! The use of recorded instrumental music at a wedding in a church building is a matter of judgment, and elderships have every right to decide whether or not it will be allowed in the church buildings they oversee (cf. Heb. 13:7, 17). The point for this study is that here is a congregation that at least one time was on the far right concerning matters of judgment, yet now shows signs of Scriptural balance.

### WHAT IS “ANTI-ISM”?

Simply put, anti-ism can be defined as “binding what God has loosed.” Anti-ism makes stricter the standards of God by binding doctrines that God has not bound (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-3). This writer has found from his experience in talking with these brethren that the doctrines most of them bind are in the area of expediency (discussed below). Thus, perhaps a more accurate label for these brethren would be “anti-Biblical expediency” brethren. For the most part, these brethren take matters of judgment and bind their opinion as if it were what God had already bound in heaven (Mt. 18:18)! These matters of judgment may include whether or not to build a kitchen in the church building, whether or not to support a benevolent work involving “nonsaints” from the church treasury, or whether or not to cooperate with other local churches of Christ in supporting missionary work.

To further illustrate taking matters of judgment and binding opinion as if it were God’s law, consider the point about having a kitchen in the church building. Surely, all rational Bible students would agree that God has authorized a church building. Inherent in God’s requirement to assemble is a place to assemble (cf. Heb. 10:24). A building, of course, is not necessary, but is permitted. A church can assemble by the river or under a tree. Why a local church would want a kitchen in the church building is a matter of judgment. The Bible authorizes members of the church to have fellowship (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn. 1:3), and eating together is one way to show fellowship with one another (cf. 1 Cor. 5:11). Inherent in eating together is food being prepared. Therefore, a church building is authorized to have a kitchen by the authority to have fellowship with one another. Also, when one considers that the first century church often met in people’s houses (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19), and people’s houses may have places where food was prepared, one realizes that the place of assembly is not the sacred part about worship, but rather the process and

practice (Jn. 4:24).

Is a kitchen necessary? Of course not! In fact, a kitchen may even be detrimental in some buildings because of the attitude of some members. It may be best not to have a kitchen in some circumstances. However, to say that it is wrong in all situations to have a kitchen in the church building because, in one’s own opinion, it is best not to have one in certain situations is anti-ism! For more doctrines of anti-ism answered, see the appendix of our 1999 lectureship book, *What Does It Mean to Be a Christian Like Paul?*, or check our website in *The Harvester* section.

### MOVEMENT TO THE LEFT

Although no amount of anti-ism is good, there is a sense in which the term “new” anti-ism reflects a positive change. As seen from the wedding at the church building of an “anti” congregation as noted in the beginning of this article, some churches of Christ characterized with anti-ism are seemingly moving left, toward the doctrinal center of the way. In fact, it is not uncommon to learn from faithful brethren who know and/or have visited congregations that are listed as being opposed to “church support of human institutions (orphan homes, hospitals, old folks homes, colleges, etc.), the sponsoring church arrangement, and church sponsored recreation” that these churches no longer “push” the doctrines that gave them this identity. It seems that the younger members know nothing about the issues that took place, especially in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, that resulted in these congregations withdrawing fellowship from those who did not accept their opinions as to how evangelistic and benevolent works should be supported. Because of this, the soil in some instances may be ready to renew fellowship.

### MOVEMENT TO THE RIGHT

What is more tragic is that some see a “new” anti-ism developing in the brotherhood today. Some, who previously walked together, seem to have moved apart, and many see this as a mere matter of binding judgment. Are they binding their judgments as if they were God’s final word? As a result, they have withdrawn fellowship from all who do not agree with them in every detail of their opinions. Men who previously spoke on lectureships in full fellowship now actively oppose the good efforts of others. It seems that this “new” anti-ism is a repeat of the very same steps that lead [*sic*] to the previous wave of anti-ism in the mid-twentieth century.

### ENVY AND POWER STRUGGLE

From interviews this writer has had with Christians who were active in the Lord when the anti-ism split occurred in the 1950’s and 1960’s, it seems that envy and arrogant power struggles were just as much, if not more, the cause of anti-ism among churches of Christ than anything else. Because a certain segment of the brotherhood did not agree with the man chosen to preach on a national radio program sponsored by churches of Christ, that segment not only had nothing to do with that radio program and the churches that sponsored it, but they also actively opposed them. Because an overseas mission work supported by many local American churches

was having success, a certain segment of the brotherhood was envious, called the missionary a “Pope,” and not only had nothing to do with the mission work and those who supported it, but they also actively opposed them.

Additionally, some reflect upon the “old” anti-ism and see a follow-the-leader type mentality. Brethren did not seem to objectively examine the evidence and act upon it. Rather, they chose to follow the leading spokesmen because of previous relationships.

When one sees the events that seem to be shaping this “new” anti-ism, is it prompted by envy and jealousy and/or a struggle for perceived power? If those events never occurred, would that segment of the brotherhood be acting as they are? Envy is indeed destructive (cf. Mt. 27:18)! Could it be that earthly ties are resulting in the follow-the-leader mentality that characterized “old” anti-ism?

### CONSTANT NEGATIVISM

In the first chapter of his book, *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes*, Thomas B. Warren warned against the two extremes of liberalism and anti-ism. He mentioned two characteristics of anti-ism that are particularly relevant to the “new” anti-ism of today. First, the anti-ism of the mid-twentieth century was characterized by a “spirit of negativism.”<sup>1</sup> By this was meant that anti-ism was so busy saying what the church could not do that the church could easily be lulled into thinking that just because it was not doing the things anti-ism said were wrong that it was acceptable to God. Such, however, must not be the case. “But let us not forget that there is also a positive side. The great commission is world-wide; it includes every person on earth.... We cannot meet that responsibility by what we do not do.”<sup>2</sup> To be sure, we must avoid sin, but we must understand that sin does not necessarily result because one person’s judgment on expediency does not agree with another’s! The “new” anti-ism is also characterized by a “spirit of negativism,” constantly claiming what we cannot do in areas of expediency.

Second, the anti-ism of the mid-twentieth century was characterized by personal attacks and verbal abuse. Warren said, “do not let personal abuse of you cause you to be guilty of abusing others.... If someone misrepresents you, do not misrepresent him in return. If someone says ugly things to you, do not say ugly things to him in return” (cf. Mt. 7:12).<sup>3</sup> Rather, Warren said pray for such a person because “the fact that he does these things proves that he is a soul in deep need.”<sup>4</sup> To read some of the articles written by the “new” anti-ism, one would think they hate brethren and brotherhood efforts to reach the lost. One would think that the people who disagree with their judgments are incarnations of Satan himself!

### UNDERSTANDING EXPEDIENCY

Since misunderstanding expediency seems to be at the heart of anti-ism, whether “old” or “new,” a study of it is appropriate here. In English, the word “expedient” means that which is “useful for effecting a desired result; suited to the circumstances or the occasion; advantageous; convenient.”<sup>5</sup> There is also a negative sense in which the word is used (such as getting gain for oneself regardless of what is right or just),

but the basic meaning of the term is that which gives advantage. The English word “**expedient**” is found seven times in the King James Version (Jn. 11:50; 16:7; 18:14; 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23; 2 Cor. 8:10; 12:1). The Greek word *sumphero*, from which “**expedient**” is translated, occurs in nine other places. It is translated “**profit**” (1 Cor. 7:35; 10:33; 12:7; Heb. 12:10), “**profitable**” (Mat 5:29–30; Acts 20:20), “**better**” (Mt. 18:6), “**is [not] good**” (Mt. 19:10), and “**brought...together**” (Acts 19:19).

Of particular interest are the references in First Corinthians: “**All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any**” (6:12); and “**All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not**” (10:23). In these verses, the Greek word translated “**expedient**” [**helpful, NKJ**] (from *sumphero*) means “to help, confer a benefit, be advantageous or profitable or useful...something that is useful or helpful.”

Two truths about “expediency” must be realized. First, no unlawful action can be done expediently. That is, there is no circumstance that God allows one to advantageously do something unlawful (cf. Rom. 3:8). Second, merely because an action is lawful does not mean that it is always expedient. All lawful actions do not necessarily edify (1 Cor. 10:23 cf. 1 Cor. 8:1–13). Furthermore, the unlawful pursuit of a lawful thing constitutes bondage, and that results in sin (1 Cor. 6:12 cf. Rom. 6:16).

The principle of expediency applies as follows. All actions must have Bible authority (Col. 3:17 cf. 2 Jn. 9–11). The Bible authorizes by its explicit statements, revealed examples, and implication. These avenues of authority must be ascertained by “**handling aright the word of truth**” (2 Tim. 2:15, ASV). In most authorized actions there are areas of expediency. For example, the Bible authorizes Christians to partake of the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week, and that unleavened bread and “fruit of the vine” are to be used (Mt. 26:26–28; Acts 20:7). However, the Bible gives no exclusive pattern as to what time on the first day of the week the Lord’s Supper must be served. Thus, the time of day on the first day of the week is a matter of expediency. There is just as much authority for partaking of it at 9:30 a.m. as there is at 2:30 p.m. The congregation (elders, if there are any) must determine which time gives the most advantage. Where there is no exclusive pattern given for fulfilling a God-authorized obligation, and as long as the obligatory action is not altered or omitted, any expedient action (which is not inherently sinful) may be used. Remember, an “expedient” is that which gives advantage.

What is expedient for one congregation may not be so for another. This does not mean that the expedient is unscriptural for the one congregation. By what authority does the “new” anti-ism tell a congregation across the country what it cannot do in matters of expediency, then break fellowship?

### CONCLUSION

No amount of anti-ism is acceptable to God (cf. Rev. 22:18–19). While there is room for optimism at the “old”

anti-ism that seems to be moving back toward the center, there is much disappointment over the “new” anti-ism. Some involved in it witnessed the tragic consequences of anti-ism in the 1960’s. All of us should have learned the lessons from history. Why do some bind what God has loosed and/or break fellowship over differences of opinion? Let us endeavor **“to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”** (Eph. 4:3).

#### ENDNOTES

1. Thomas B. Warren, *Lectures on Church Cooperation and Orphan Homes* (1958; Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press, 1963) 35.
2. Warren 35.
3. Warren 35-36.
4. Warren 36.
5. Webster’s *New World Dictionary*, Third College Edition, 1986.
6. Walter A. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd rev. ed. by William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979) 780.

## TRYING ON “ANTI” SHOES

Gary W. Summers

More than a month ago, a friend called to talk for a few minutes about a work-related problem. In the course of the conversation, he asked if I had seen a certain article; the answer was no—that it had not yet come in the mail. A few days later someone else asked the same question, and the answer was the same. What was ironic was that the article emanated from Florida, yet brethren in other parts of the country had already received it; my copy came about a week later. I have not been sure how to respond to it.

The author of it is Brian R. Kenyon, whom I have admired and respected for more than a decade (not to mention raiding Krispy Krème Donuts together in Lubbock). The article, titled “‘New’ Anti-ism,” appeared in *The Harvester*, published by the Florida School of Preaching, in January of this year. Brother Kenyon wrote some outstanding sections on various “anti” topics for the 1999 Florida School of Preaching lectures, which I reviewed and recommended.

In this current article, he applauds a looser stance on the part of some “anti” churches which may lead to greater fellowship between those who disagree on certain issues. But then he writes: “What is more tragic is that some see a ‘new’ anti-ism developing in the brotherhood today.” Kenyon does not name anyone in particular and couches much of what he writes in vague terms, which may cause someone to say, “Does he think I am included in this category (due to a misunderstanding on his part), or is he referring to a group of people that he knows but will not specify? Just exactly who is he referencing?”

So, at this year’s [January 2008] Florida School of Preaching lectures, I asked him, “Who did you have in mind when you wrote this article?” His answer was, “If the shoe fits....” He could not talk further then, but there has been no further contact since. So, in this article I am going to try on

some “anti” shoes to see if they fit.

By his own definition, *anti-ism* is “binding where God has loosed.” This shoe is the wrong size for me; it is about three sizes too small and not nearly wide enough. I have never made any attempt to bind anything not clearly taught in the Scriptures. Any doctrine that is based on highly interpretive texts cannot be bound on others. In those instances, one may give an opinion but not bind the interpretation upon others. No one has ever spoken or written to me, saying that I am trying to bind my opinion on any matter, unless it would be a denominationalist that insisted that my citation of Scriptures to prove baptism is *for* the remission of sins was an opinion. If it is thought by anyone that I am binding where God has loosed, my plea would be to produce the evidence of it. No, these shoes do not fit.

Have I made a matter of judgment a matter of doctrine? This shoe does not fit, either—and for the same reasons. My toes would be so cramped in such shoes that I could not walk properly. No, matters of judgment and expediency must be recognized for what they are and not be made matters of fellowship. If God authorizes a practice, and the way of accomplishing it is Scriptural, that settles the matter.

#### “SOME...HAVE MOVED APART”

Having tried on some shoes that do not fit, I now turn to the perplexing statement that follows the introductory remarks about the “new” anti-ism:

Some, who previously walked together, seem to have moved apart, and many see this as a matter of binding judgment. Are they binding their judgments as if they were God’s final word? As a result, they have withdrawn fellowship from all who do not agree with them in every detail of their opinions. Men who previously spoke on lectureships in full fellowship now actively oppose the good efforts of others.

Kenyon, the reader will notice, did not specify any individual or situation, which makes it difficult to comprehend his meaning, not to mention presenting a different perspective on the matter. I am not a big fan of shopping, and trying on shoes is wearisome; it would be, oh, so helpful to have an example at this point in his assessment of things.

Failing such specifics, I will provide an answer based on experience. That some “walk no more together” is certainly true. Many of us once walked with brother Mac Deaver—as few as a dozen years ago, but when he began to insist that the Holy Spirit operates on the Christian *directly*, we rightly parted company. Surely, Brian agrees with faithful brethren on that point. Another very capable preacher left his wife and married another woman. We walked together as recently as ten years ago. I am fully persuaded that Kenyon no longer walks with him today. As recently as two and four years ago, we all fellowshiped two brothers that have now been withdrawn from by the congregation that they served. Surely the writer of this article would not extend fellowship to them.

But, of course, he meant other brethren who did not have those specific problems. Of course, I cannot speak for everyone, but I do know what happened in my instance. I did not cease walking with others; they ceased walking with

me. As a case in point, I was invited to speak in the first nine lectureships at a particular place. Suddenly, the invitations stopped. Who stopped walking together? One of my closest and dearest friends invited me to speak a number of years on the lectureship he conducted. Suddenly, that came to an end, also. There are more examples, but these will suffice. Now who is responsible for the change? Would it not be those who direct the lectureships? Understand that there is no *complaint* here. Six months or more often fly by without a game of golf due to time constraints. We all have plenty to do. But the writer seems eager to blame some (in a vague manner) who may not be the source of the problem.

Some may be actively opposing good efforts, but then some efforts may not have the same character they once did, either. Some lectureship directors have invited speakers that many brethren feel are questionable; some have much less enthusiasm than they once did when men of unquestionable soundness were invited. Just as a lectureship director is free to invite whomever he wishes to speak, brethren are free not to support those works.

### PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

The next point would seem to be an accusation:

Additionally, some reflect upon the “old” anti-ism and see a follow-the-leader type mentality. Brethren did not seem to objectively examine and act upon it. Rather, they chose to follow the leading spokesman because of previous relationships.

Hmm! Is that the same thing as saying, “Brethren, we better hang together”? Many brethren would really like to have specifics on this point—so that we can report it to our leader and know what to think and what to do. Oh, all right; that was a little sarcastic, but it is warranted by such an insulting statement.

All of my preaching life I have been encouraging people to examine the evidence. The same thing holds true with brotherhood problems. This may sound incredible, but many do not want to look at the evidence. Three preachers provided written material on a certain subject to one lectureship director, and to anyone’s knowledge he never read it. I asked a friend, whose book I had recommended, about a certain subject, and he stated repeatedly that he would not discuss it. I wrote a very kind letter to another brother, asking for a rationale for certain questionable actions. After two months without a reply, I spoke to him in person, and he said he had no intention of responding to me. It was then that I wrote the article, “The Sounds of Silence,” about them and others like them. Kenyon, could you please make it plain who is not considering the evidence? Many of us who have tried to get evidence before people (to no avail) need more information on this subject.

Kenyon goes on to say that the “new” antis (whoever they are) are “prompted by envy and jealousy and/or a struggle for perceived power.” Really? Is there some *evidence* for such a statement, or is it a matter of *judgment*? If he means what I think he means (although there is no way to know without clarification), the notion is absurd, since those of us in the

minority clearly have no clout whatsoever, and there is no expectation of convincing those in the majority any time in the near future—particularly when so many refuse to consider the evidence.

### HATING BROTHERHOOD EFFORTS

One final charge will be considered:

To read some of the articles written by the “new” anti-ism, one would think they hate brethren and brotherhood efforts to reach the lost. One would think that the people who disagree with their judgments are incarnations of Satan himself!

Wow! Here I am, back at the shoe store again. I did write against Eastern European Missions, after talking to its president and assembling information. Does Kenyon support them? I have not written against the “Churches of Christ Disaster Relief,” but several have. They are trying to reach people with the Gospel through benevolence. Does Kenyon endorse them? I have taken issue with Truth for the World because their own website tries to justify women teaching [in such a way as to exercise dominion over men—**Editor**]. Does the Florida School of Preaching think that is a Biblical position? Does anyone want to defend the Missionary Society concept? The point is not how many things we may be against; the important thing is the *reason* for opposing something.

This congregation [South Seminole, Winter Park, FL] is currently helping to support five missionaries overseas and four works here in the states. We give over \$3,000 a month to help spread the Gospel; this “anti” shoe certainly does not fit. Many people who are opposed to certain works are also mission-minded. We certainly could use some details right about now.

### “PERHAPS” THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM

Mindreading is not my forte, but my guess is that some of the things in Kenyon’s article have to do with the oppo-

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sition many brethren have to Dave Miller and Apologetics Press, so long as he is head [or a part –**Editor**] of it. Some mistakenly think that opposition to Dave only surfaced after certain events occurred in 2005, but if they had bothered to examine the evidence, they would know that such is far from accurate. Miller approved of the elder reaffirmation/re-evaluation process conducted by Brown Trail in the year 1990. Most brethren, including many who now fellowship Dave, opposed this practice. This practice caused a split in that congregation.

Living about 40 miles from Brown Trail from 1995 to 2003, I had opportunities to talk to Dave about this subject, but did not because everyone in the area said it was something that would never be repeated. And it was not until 2002. Prior to this time, Robert R. Taylor, Jr. had written against the practice; so had Dub McClish. Here are a few facts that many seem to be unaware of.

1. When it was learned that Miller had been invited by brother Bert Thompson to work with Apologetics Press, the brethren at Rowlett, Texas wrote to Thompson in protest, since the re-evaluation process was underway again at Brown Trail (they lost 135 members). Bert dismissed the complaints with a wave of the hand, and the Rowlett Church felt they had no choice but to cease sending their monthly support—even though they had been doing so since day one of Apologetics Press. This event occurred in 2002—three years before 2005.
2. I wrote a lengthy analysis of the re-evaluation/reaffirmation process and sent copies to the leaders of Brown Trail, protesting their return to this practice. This article is available on our website—under the date Dec. 22, 2002—three years before 2005.
3. *The Gospel Journal*, edited by brother Dub McClish, contained an article (October 2002) written by Marvin Weir, recounting what had happened at Brown Trail.

The notion that Miller is now being attacked because certain other things happened is simply not factual. And no one is envious of him. Most freely admit that he is a talented writer and an excellent preacher, but he is wrong on the aforementioned issue, as well as his false position that “intent” makes the difference as to whether a marriage is valid or not. Are we supposed to fellowship those who are wrong and refuse to repent?

### TRYING ON LIBERAL SHOES

Kenyon provides an excellent quote from the late brother Thomas B. Warren, and attention needs to be called to a key idea. The opposite of anti-ism is liberalism, which is “loosing where God has bound.” In other words, are we to be for things that the Scriptures do not authorize? No, on that basis we do not use mechanical instrumental music. God never authorized it for use in New Testament worship. For that reason some have referred to us as anti-music.

Would it be right to fellowship and support someone who was teaching premillennial doctrine? Would it be permissible to take a stand against someone who taught that the Lord's

Church is a denomination? Is it appropriate to be united with those who partake of communion on Saturday evening? Are these matters of judgment? Can we fellowship those who practice hand clapping in the assembly in addition to singing? Did God authorize anyone to re-evaluate elders periodically (after one year, three years, twelve years)? Is there an apostle who opened the door to such a practice? Was there a church who did it in the New Testament? Then, are some loosing where God has bound?

Some argue that 1 Timothy 5 might imply that such could be done as an expedient. Really? Read it: **“Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest may also fear”** (1 Tim. 5:19–20-NKJV). Where are statements about needing 75% approval or resigning? Where is the vote of the congregation mentioned? Anyone who can see such things in these verses has strange eyesight, and his shoes are going to fit a little loosely! If an elder is sinning, he should be rebuked. If he refuses to repent, the church should withdraw fellowship from him—just like anyone else (Matt. 18:15–17). There is no authority in this passage for elders to retain their office by popular vote.

Do not the Scriptures teach that we should be **for** what God authorizes and be **opposed to** what God does not authorize? This is not a problem of anti-ism; *it is a matter of fellowshiping someone who has taught false doctrine and refuses to repent of it.* How can we extend fellowship to one who has both taught and practiced false doctrine and never repented of it? Someone with a Ph.D. in communication ought to be able to say something as simple as, *“Yes, I did it, and it was wrong. I repent of it.”*

How can we fellowship someone who adamantly refuses to do so? If others have a rationale for doing so, they have not shared it with the rest of us. Referring to an unnamed group of people as the “new” anti-ism is counterproductive. An examination of the evidence in an atmosphere of mutual love and respect might prove fruitful. The sounds of silence are certainly not. **“Let brotherly love continue”** (Heb. 13:1).

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# CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Fellowship, in the New Testament, derives from the key, kingly word of *koinonia*. From the scholarly works of Thayer, Bagger (sic), Vine, Woods and others we discover that fellowship is an association, a partnership, a joint sharing or participation, a communion, a contribution, etc. These definitions, if applied accurately, will enable us to understand the fellowship the early believers had in Acts 2:42, the fellowship bond that existed between Paul and the precious people of Philippi in Philippians 1:5 and 4:14-17, the fellowship that permeates the two great chapters of giving in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 and that fervent fellowship that the apostle of love portrayed so ardently and attractively in 1 John 1. In this article I plan to address my remarks to the limits of Christian fellowship. Obviously, it is limited to the circle of pure, unadulterated, unblemished and pristine New Testament Christianity. There is a two fold concept of Christian fellowship. God's full counsel in this momentous matter is not reached until both concepts are accepted and acted upon in responsible fashion.

Christian fellowship is limited to those who have obeyed the Gospel. Christian fellowship is based on faith—not flesh. There is a marvelous passage in Matthew 12:46-50 wherein our Lord's physical mother and fleshly brethren came and desired a conversation with Christ. Jesus asked, when informed of their nearby presence, "Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother?" (Matt. 12:48-50). At this time his fleshly brethren even denied his Deity (John 7:5). To do his will was/is the important thing. James and Jude, his half brothers and writers later of two New Testament epistles, evidently learned this, for both emphasized their spiritual link with Christ in their literary productions and ignored totally any fleshly connections.

To do the will of God initially means to obey the Gospel and to do so in a framework of Truth—not denominational dogmas and dogmatism. It means to hear or read correct doctrine (Rom. 10: 17). It means to believe the correct teaching about Christ's Deity (John 8:21, 24; Matt. 16:16; Acts 8:37). It means to repent correctly (Acts 2:38; 17:30). It means to confess correctly Christ's Deity (Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10). It means to be baptized correctly (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21). Correct baptism means correct (not corrupt or denominational) teaching precedes it; it means one is a correct candidate; it means the correct action (a burial or immersion) occurs; it means the correct purpose motivates (i.e., to be saved, to come into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to receive remission of sins, to enter the kingdom or the church). People who are immersed with little or no awareness of these imperatives are

not like those in New Testament times; and nobody in New Testament times was ever baptized to be a Christian plus something else, some of our popular young preachers to the contrary notwithstanding. Obedience to the Gospel puts us in that regal realm.

*Christian fellowship is limited to those who continue in faithfulness* [Italics mine—DPB]. This is really the bottom line of 1 John 1:7 which states, "**But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.**" To walk in the light is the equivalent of doing the Father's will. It means faithfulness in the development of personal righteousness and godliness; it means regularity of worship; it means diligence in our work for the Lord; it means proper preparation in our waiting and watching for the Lord's second advent. It means faithfulness in our becoming carriers of redemption's sweet story to alien sinners; *it means faithfulness in our efforts of reclaiming apostates* (James 5:19-20) *and those who stumble due to a sudden temptation that overcomes them* (Gal. 6:1) [Italics mine—DPB]. It is not enough to say we fellowship all who have obeyed the Gospel. *Past obedience to the Truth does not always add up to present fidelity to Truth. Christian fellowship is limited to those who have obeyed the Gospel and who right now are continuing to walk in the light as the Lord is in the light. This is not a twofold limitation we have imposed; it is one the Lord has imposed and we had better respect it and act upon it in responsible fashion* [Italics mine—DPB]. (As quoted in the *The Forest Hill News*, Vol. 29, No. 47, Nov. 19, 2002, p. 1, Barry M. Grider, Editor)

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[Brother Taylor believes that the re-evaluation/reaffirmation of elders as preached/practiced by brother Dave Miller and the Brown Trail Church of Christ is authorized by the Bible, **or** Miller never preached/practiced it, **or** it is an optional matter, **or** Miller has clearly and publicly repented of and repudiated it. We say this because Taylor fellowships Miller, et al. *Surely he would not write an article such as the preceding one while knowingly fellowshiping a false teacher.* Would not a person be a hypocrite if he did that?

In view of the preceding article and the one to follow, how can Taylor fellowship Miller who also believes and defends his so-called "marriage intent doctrine"? Further, how is it that Taylor can fellowship Stan Crowley, seeing that he teaches error on MDR. We ask the same of anyone who follows Taylor's example?

The message in the preceding article and the one to follow are right on target. But, obviously Taylor does not think he, MSOP, et al., are sinning as they fellowship Miller/Crowley et al. *If ever anyone has turned a blind eye to error Taylor and friends are doing it in the case of Miller, Crowley, et al.* —Editor ]

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING 2 JOHN 9-11

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

This trio of valiant verses reads:

**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.**

## CAN ONE REMAIN FAITHFUL WHILE IGNORING THIS TEACHING?

A gigantic NO and for reasons both cogent and convincing at least to the mind that loves Truth and loves it supremely, to the mind that loves righteousness and hates iniquity as our blessed Lord did (See Psalms 45:6; Heb. 1:8,9). Ten reasons will now be numbered and noted.

1) These three verses constitute a portion of God's Word. If one can ignore three verses with impunity, why not three hundred verses, three thousand verses or thirty thousand verses which gets nearly all the 31,102 verses from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21? John did not write these three verses to be ignored. The Holy Spirit did not inspire these three verses to be ignored. God the Father and God the Son, the real originators of all Truth, did not direct the Holy Spirit to convey them to John to be ignored when once written.

2) To ignore a potent passage like this shows spineless toleration for error and no real regard for maintaining a sound faith and a faultless practice. Please recall that there is only one acceptable stance for any soldier of Christ toward any error, toward all error—EXPOSURE AND OPPOSITION.

3) To ignore such shows that one is not really concerned with the doctrine Christ taught and/or had others proclaim in his name so faithfully and fervently. To despise the doctrine of Christ is to despise Deity who authored the doctrine or teaching.

4) To ignore such means that one thinks as highly of error and the errorists, who push and promote such, as of Truth and the dedicated soldiers of Calvary who preach and practice such. A person of such disposition surely cannot love righteousness and hate iniquity as did our Lord.

5) To ignore such makes impossible our abiding in the doctrine of Christ and this means that we forfeit both God the Father and Christ the Son. We cannot have one without the other and we cannot have either minus the doctrine of Christ.

6) To ignore such means that we are giving our stamp of approval to every flagrant falsehood and error that comes along. It means that we are supportive of those who would destroy the very cause of Christ on earth.

7) To ignore such means that we are really more interested in the spread of error than in the spread of saving truth and this defeats the very purpose of our being.

8) To ignore such means that our homes would soon become the very citadels of every corruptible error that comes along. The concept of CHRIST IN THE HOME could NOT remain in such surroundings at all. Children would soon be corrupted by such devious influences ever surrounding them.

9) To ignore such would place us in the position of influencing all others to ignore this same passage and its weighty warning. We would thus become a millstone around the necks of others pulling them down into the waters of destruction.

10) To ignore such is the equivalent of erecting a sure blockade toward our going home to heaven at last. Ignoring Scripture and going home to heaven are incompatibles.

## HOW SHOULD THE FAITHFUL REGARD THOSE IGNORING THIS PASSAGE?

The very same way that John would have regarded the elect lady and her children had they responded back with a rousing rejection of this sage, apostolic counsel. John did not write it for the initial readers to reject it, ignore it or defy it. He wrote it to be believed and practiced with dedication and permanence. Had they rejected or ignored it, it would have produced a very serious rupture between John and this Christian family. No longer would John have designated her as **"the ELECT lady"** (v.1). No longer would he have commended her children because they walked in truth (v.4). No longer would he have referred to this family as ones **"whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth..."** (v.1). John would still have loved them but they would no longer have been fellow-dwellers in the righteous realm of kingly Truth. No longer would he have referred to the fact that Truth indwelt this lady and her children (v.2). No longer would he have anticipated a fullness of joy in a face-to-face meeting (v.12). No longer could he have conveyed joyful greetings from the children of her elect sister—her faithful nephews and nieces. Rejection of Truth always mars such family ties in Christ. It would have broken the heart of the aged apostle had he learned that this esteemed lady and her children treated with contempt and a sneer such precious points as he incorporated into this trio of truthful admonitions, these needed exhortations. John would have surmised promptly that the whole scope of Biblical teachings relative to discipline would have been in serious jeopardy with this lady and her children. This would have been inclusive of instructive discipline and corrective discipline and both of these get nearly the whole of apostolic doctrine. Instructive discipline is very comprehensive including all New Testament truth designed to keep us in the way that is holy and right.

But even more important than John's disappointment would have been Deity's view of such. Can anyone imagine that the Timeless Trinity would view such rejection with ardency of approval, with pleasure ready to be pronounced? Jesus pleased the Father by honoring His Will. This is the only way we can please God now—by heeding and honoring His Will and that Will is intently inclusive of 2 John 9-11.

Deep suspect should be our attitude toward any person who would tamper with Truth as set forth in these three verses of towering Truth. What about those who once knew the Truth of these passages, believed these passages, faith-

fully proclaimed them, defended them when they came under attack and lived in harmony therewith but now have rejected them or rewritten them. The reason is very evident why some have turned from these passages or have rewritten them. They want to join hands with denominational groups like the *Independent Christian Church*. They wish to count them as long lost brethren. With others, they want to be invited to their growth seminars and teach them how to grow a thriving denominational church. They wish to be in full fellowship with such. The principles of 2 John 9-11 condemn in forthright language such compromises and so these spiritual weaklings have rewritten or ignored what John wrote here. Such people have left the Truth PERIOD! They should be warned. If the marking works no change for the better, they

should be avoided as per Romans 16:17-18. Some of our hedging brethren evidently have ignored the Romans passage as well as 2 John 9-11. A rejection or ignoring of these passages cannot be treated with lightness. It is a momentous matter that is solemn and serious. We are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness as per Ephesians 5:11 and these are definitely of that order when they come with their Christ-denying doctrines of flagrant falsehood and fatal errors. We are straitly forbidden to receive such or convey to such God speed or good speed in the spread of their nefarious notions of wrong and wickedness. (*SEEK THE OLD PATHS*, page 90, Vol. 11, No. 11 November, 2000). [*Sadly the editor of STOP has aquired a bad case of "lockjaw" when it comes to dealing with the Miller, et al., errors. Now why could that*

## FELLOWSHIPING ERROR

E. R. Harper

*How Far Can Love For Brethren Fellowship Error?* In this sermon today I am discussing one of the most vital of all questions that will ever challenge the mind of the brotherhood. I am discussing the issue of "How far can our love for each other carry us into the fellowship of error or those who would teach the error." Upon the Truth of this proposition shall live the church as we know her today. This correctly understood and practiced, the church will live; this misunderstood and defeated, and the church will again go into "digression" or the "Dark Ages" as it has before. Therefore, I ask you to listen with patient ears, open hearts and receptive minds. Forget all things before today and think of our future; forget all personalities that may have ever entered your heart and listen to my plea for the Truth upon which the church is builded; seek to find wherein I go astray in my reasoning this morning and then write me.

### LOVE

We today have a distorted idea of what love in the Bible embraces and what it demands. That we are taught to "**love one another with a pure heart fervently**" is true; that the Lord said in John 13:34, "**A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another, as I have loved you that ye also love one another**", is also known to us all and taught by every preacher of the Gospel known to me. But in this same chapter it shows "how the Lord loved them." Judas was with them in the beginning of this chapter. Judas was in error. The Lord's love was great enough to include him, IF Judas had remained with the Lord and his disciples. But Judas betrayed his Lord and sold him to the enemies. *Question:* Did the Lord just "love" him into the "fellowship" of his disciples? Nay, verily. The Lord knew how to "love" but he at the same time knew "whom to love."

So this passage cannot be used to make us to allow our "love" to keep in our fellowship those who are in error and make us to force upon the brethren the fellowship of those who are in error and make us to force upon the brethren the fellowship of that

which would destroy the very church itself. The Lord said here, "**Love one another AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.**" Well he "cast out" of their midst the ONLY one who was wrong and who was "running with", "fellowshipping" and "defending" the enemies of the Lord. Now he says for us to do with each other as he did with them. The Lord in Mark 3:19 called him the "**betraye**r", in Luke 6:16 the "**traitor**", and in John 6:70 the Lord said "**And one of you is a DEVIL**" talking TO JUDAS. The Lord here shows that those in error, those who are dangerous to the future of the church should be POINTED OUT, yes, as we hear much about "marked" because of their unsoundness. But in Luke 22:22 Christ says this about him, that is Judas, "**But WOE unto THAT man by whom he is BETRAYED.**"

Now in John 13:26-27, the Lord said, "**He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.**" That is, Christ had branded him as a "traitor", "betrayer", and a "devil" and now tells him, to his face, that he is the one who is to betray him and then orders him to "Get out and get done what his heart has set to do."

Then in this same chapter, verse 34, Christ says, "**A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**" But you will notice he gave that AFTER he had sent Judas, the betrayer, out of their midst, for verse 31 says, "**Therefore, when he was gone out Jesus said**". Our Lord never bound on us to "fellowship and love error nor men in error", but to "love as he had loved them". He got rid of the evil "or the error" and then gave the command. Of course that part of it would not be told us by one who forces error upon us.

But it might be stated that we should "love everybody" as Christ "loved the world and gave himself for it." In that same way, so are we. But had you ever thought of this, Christ will not save the entire world,

even though his love for the world was great enough that he died for it. Now why? His love does not embrace error nor the men who teach error to the extent that he will save them. We also should love the souls of men in error to the extent that we shall do all we can to save them by the Gospel, but that does not bind on us the fellowshiping of their errors nor the partaking of their sins. Jude says in verse 21, **“Keep yourselves in the love of God”** and Christ says, John 15:10, **“If you keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love.”** Love embraces Truth and the men of the Truth and it will reach out to extend the arms of mercy to lift men out of the error, but that is as far as it can go. If you will not “abide in his love by keeping his commandments” then the love of Christ will not benefit you.

It is said that in the Bible they “went to meet Paul whom they knew not, just because he was a Christian” and that is right, but he did not teach “error”. It is pointed out that the “Church is the GREAT BROTHERHOOD of Christians” and that is true, but that implies they were **“Stedfast in the apostles’ doctrine”** and it is called to our minds that the “Church is commensurate with or to all the needs of God’s children.” This is likewise true, but who is included in that? In Acts 5, Ananias and Sapphira were killed. They were members at Jerusalem. In 1 Cor. 5, there was one to be turned over to the devil. There were Hymenaeus and Alexander, who were turned over to Satan. They all represented error both in lives and doctrine, but the church did not include them in her fellowship. So there is a limitation to what the church must include. We are told that we should “lay down our lives for our brother”, but not for those teaching error. *That is the point.* John says **“he that saith I love God and hateth his brother is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”** I am glad to say this morning that there lives no man on this earth whom I hate. I do not fellowship some men and doctrines, but I do not hate the men nor do I hold one thing against those who do not see as I do. I know some men who preach, “Love your brother” and who are long on “fellowship” until it comes to fellowshiping me and then the theory stops. Do you get what I mean, friends? The Lord said, **“Thou hypocrite get the beam out of thine own eye and then you can see the mote in your brother’s eye.”** I must be careful that no hate is in my heart toward my brother before I speak too much on this **“new commandment he has given us.”** Those who criticize *us* do to *us* the *same* thing they would accuse *us* of, if they are not careful. Do you see that?

I have known men, and so have you, who have been able to influence people with tears and sermons on “love” and “fellowship” and who could “feel terribly ashamed of the conditions about them” and at the very moment they were saying that, maybe, hate was ruling their hearts—was why they were so criticizing. Be careful brethren that when we preach “love” that we *really practice* what we preach. But if “shame” was so *deeply* affecting them, why will they not *surrender* the error that is causing our trouble and *then* the *shame* will

be gone. Try that for a while and our preaching can be on “love”. It is a *shame* that I have to so teach and have to come to the defense of the Truth because of the error that is trying to find its way into the church. That is where the real shame comes.

There is not a man living but that if he would but teach the Truth and expose the error, that I could not and would not love and fellowship him with all my heart. I have never criticized any man, men, or doctrine, only as it was based *purely* upon *principle* and *not* upon personalities. I have not been criticized because of error I preach, have I brethren? It has always been “personalities” with my critics.

It is said that we will be persecuted for the Truth, and that is true brethren, for I have experienced that with bitter tears. But shall I let hate govern my heart just because men have persecuted me; have misrepresented me; have tried to ruin my influence in the church; have tried to even slander my name that they might ruin my influence? Nay, verily, but with a heart of a Christian I must pray for them and try to teach them the error of their way and if possible lead them back to the Truth, that we may all be saved without the loss of one. But, if they will not *hear* us in this matter, *then* Christ said in Matt. 18, let them become as a heathen to you.

### Winning the Victory

There is one thing I am glad to see taking place and that is the church is overcoming the influence of premillennialism in all parts of the country. The fight *we*, not them, have been waging is bearing fruit throughout the nation. From Texas—Abilene Christian College, from Tennessee—Freed-Hardeman College, from Kentucky, from Oklahoma, from Alabama, from scores of places in Arkansas and all over the country, is coming to those of us who have been waging the fight for Truth and opposed to error, the good news, that premillennialism *and her advocates*, are being *renounced* and the *Advocate*, January 6th, has one of the finest articles I have ever read, showing how harmful **it** has been and how we are getting rid of it. They must *all* go and they *will all* go. Those of us who are leading this fight will suffer persecutions. Those who believe the error and who are, and have been, defending those who do teach it, are going to say that we do not “love them” and that we are “trouble makers” and do us, as our brethren were done 50 to 75 years ago, over the “digression” affair, but it is “but the last stand” and they too will have to go and we shall *all* rejoice that the shame of 75 years ago has not been repeated by the premillennialist and their defenders in the church today.

I have heard men say how it “hurt their hearts” to know that brethren in the church are “sowing discord” and how that they are made to “bow their heads in shame”—because we have confusion. Yes, I have shed more tears over this very thing and have spent more sleepless nights over our troubles than has any man in the state of Arkansas, I believe. And I have shed those tears, from a broken heart, until they ran down and dropped to the floor and *that in the presence of those who condemn me*, while I was begging them for peace and Truth to reign. I am glad to say brethren that my

prayers are being answered and that everywhere “that” peace is once again rising over the brotherhood and this error is really being put away from us. I know there are some who are still causing us a little trouble and who are still defending those in error who are dying hard and who would force upon us the fellowship of this error and, even of the men who teach the error, but it is only a matter of time until *they* will *also* be set aside unless they change their ideas, for the *church*, not E. R. Harper, but the church, has at last gotten her eyes open to the seriousness of the matter and today “Truth” is on the “war path” and she is bringing victory to her cause once again. Just keep still, dear hearts, and do not become excited over the radio speeches of men who have defended error all their lives and whose lives and names have been a “symbol” of error in every part of the country where *they* might have been. Truth is winning and, thus their speeches of *vengeance* you are now hearing. It is hurting them, but we must keep fighting.

### Things Loved Into the Church

Go with me now to the harm that this “Love everybody and everything” idea has brought the church in the past. See what this “eating meat or not eating meat idea, this “circumcision or uncircumcision” idea; this “Paul’s tolerating error” business has done to us in the past and then you can *really* bow your head in “shame.” But that shame of 50 to 70 years ago shall not happen again. Do you hear me, brethren?

In Acts 2 we have the history of the church in Jerusalem which is said to be the “mother church” of us all. It is many times pointed out that they “loved one another” and that they “fellowshipped each other” and that there were no brethren in it trying to “mark” or “brand” some preacher as unsound. It was also pointed out in this chapter that they sold their goods and gave them to each man as he had need. That “**ought of their possessions belonged to them**” if a brother was in need. That is as it *must* be if we *remain* God’s children. But the reason for all this “love, fellowship and giving to each other” is found in verse 42 of this same chapter. It says “**And they continued STEADFASTLY in the APOSTLES’ DOCTRINE.**” That is overlooked when error is trying to force its way into our ranks. We are prone to see “only” the “love” and “fellowship” part of it and then conclude that this great church was like the “certain” editor: “too good to lift her voice” to condemn any brother for introducing error into their ranks.

Now the reason why they continued to have this fine fellowship and love and respect for each other and the reason why they were not shamed by discord and confusion, was, “They all continued in the apostles’ doctrine” and did it STEADFASTLY.” The very thing for which I am contending and the very thing for which I am being fought in Arkansas today, as you are hearing.

Now our point is simply this, Does our “love” for each other force us to allow a brother to bring in error and force it upon the church? If these brethren had NOT remained STEADFAST in the Apostles’ Doctrine; *Question*: Would they have continued to enjoy all that good fellowship and love for one another? Let that question be answered. John says in 1 John 1:7, “**If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another and**

**the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”** So John and Peter clearly show that “**Fellowship one with another**” can only be enjoyed when we “**walk in the light**” and when we “**continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.**” That is the one point you will not hear stressed in this “love” and “fellowship everybody” “eating meat” idea that is popular today. It would destroy it.

### Examples of This In Practice—“50 to 75 Years Ago”

Let us go back now to the days long ago. Let us see what happened 50 to 75 years ago over this very same argument and then ask if the church in Jerusalem would have “loved” it right into its fellowship. There was a time when there was no outstanding trouble among us here in America. We were all together and enjoyed this sweet “fellowship” of Acts 2.

### Instrumental Music In Worship

But after a while there arose a group that wanted to force upon us “instruments of music” in the worship. Some of our brethren said, No, we do not believe it is right. But the other crowd contended for it. Those who opposed it were branded by those forcing the error, as “fighters” “radicals”, “troublemakers”. They were said not to have any “love in their hearts”, they were branded at “legalists” and those who wanted the instruments began to “cry” and preach on “Love and Fellowship” and that “We are brethren and must die for each other.” And began to “weep” over the “discord” and “confusion” that “certain brethren” were making in the church over a little thing like music. They began to say that we must recognize that our brother “*might* be right and we *might* be wrong” and they were just “too good” to fight over it. They just loved everybody too good. Do you ever hear that today? Well, it is the cry *always* of the man who realizes he is in error and has to win with tears and not Truth.

### The Result

Well what happened with this cry of theirs over the music question? They just “loved” and “fellowshipped” brass bands right into the church over our brethren

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who had been in peace and harmony for years and then those who opposed the bands, etc., were branded as the “trouble makers” and “church splitters” and out we went. But before it was introduced we had peace. The introduction of it brought the confusion. So it is today with premillennialism. Its introduction has brought the shame. Then, too, after digression one time “got the church,” all that “love” and “fellowship” idea left them and we had to either take it and say nothing about it or be arrested for disturbing the peace and cast out of our own meeting houses for which we had spent our money to build. It never fails to be that way. So is premillennialism.

### “Boards”

Then there came along those in our ranks who said we want “boards” to run the church. It can function better if we had “state boards” and “national boards”. We objected and fought it and were opposed and talked about just as we are today in our opposition to the “future reign of the Lord on earth.” But the church had not gained the experience that it has today and so when these men arose everywhere with soft words and tears and began to cry “Love everybody” and to be so “ashamed and humiliated” because of the confusion some of the “radical brethren” were causing, well they just “loved” and fellowshipped” that thing right into the church over us and we had to either worship under “Religious Dictators” or get out, for their “love and fellowship” arguments had all been forgotten. They had “then” gained control and we were out. *So it is and will always be when you fight an issue on “sentiment” and not facts.* Facts “embrace love and fellowship” but “sentiment and tears” breed “hate”. Of course those who opposed this innovation were persecuted then, but today the church lives by their “real love” for the church and because of their “real love and desire for fellowship.” It can only be had and enjoyed based upon “Truth.” Premillennialism is not Truth.

### Societies

But after awhile they said the church as organized by the Lord was not “sufficient” to run the Lord’s business successfully with “bands and boards” that had been “loved” into its fellowship, so they came to us with the idea of “societies” in the church for the purpose of doing the work of the local church. What happened? We fought it and opposed it and did our best to keep it out. But again they “cried”, “loved” and “fellowshipped” it *right into the church.* All who opposed it were “shamed” and made to look as men “without hearts.” Friends, almost a century has passed and what do you today think of men like dear old brother Lipscomb, brother Elam, brother Freed, brother McQuiddy, brother John T. Hines and scores

of others who were made to lose the best friends they had on earth just because they opposed the error and defended the truth.

But that “love”; “We be brethren”; therefore “fellowship me in my error” for “I may be right and you wrong” idea did not stop there. It went so far, as error always will, until it just “loved” into their fellowship, “union meetings” with those who actually denied the very fundamentals of becoming a Christian. It actually lead to the surrendering of the plan of salvation. Why? “We love everybody” so that we want the “fellowship of all people”— and they go it.

### The Climax

The final end of it is, they carried that idea to its “logical conclusion” and today those who were “one time our brethren” have *surrendered every distinct principle* they ever had and you know the history of it now. *Question:* How do you feel today, you who are members of the church of Christ, concerning those dear old men who “suffered the persecutions” and who had the courage to stand up in the face of all the thrusts that were made about them and at them, and bring out of it all the church unscarred; though fewer in number, yet stronger in faith and wiser in how to prevent any future “shame” as that was. The compromises today would not bring her through the struggle.

Now you are ready to talk about where our “shame” comes in. That was a “shame” that really made us bow our heads. Just to think that we were held up before a people, that we had condemned for *their* division, and then division was FORCED upon us by a few men who “cried” and “loved” everything right into our fellowship and by so doing brought reproach upon our fair name and took from us “all our schools” and “most of our meeting houses” and left us a *hundred years behind* to fight our way back into the hearts of the people. The premillennialists today shall not do that to us.

Now I know that today it hurts our hearts to have error in our congregations and it puts us to “shame” to have to let the world know that we have it, but the shame is not “half so great” as it *would be* if we sat silently by and let men today just “love” *premillennialism right into the church*, and take us away from the Truth, and then have to face a world “divided and broken” as we *once* were, and have them laugh us to shame now as then, and to rejoice that our army has been “weakened and set

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back” and will not therefore be able to “fight the battle” against error and sin, in all ranks and walks of life. Let me tell you, my brethren, there is never any place to bow your head in “shame” when you are *fighting for the Truth*. Truth is the greatest cause for which a man can give his all and never be ashamed nor afraid to defend her sacred principle.

If we were to lose the fight by compromising the Truth, we might be shamed. Those back 50 to 75 years ago, who were deceived by the soft cries of the compromisers, they bowed their heads in shame when they saw what they had done, that they had “fought” the very men who had been defending that “dear old institution bought by the blood of our Lord.” But “that shame” is *not again* going to be ours to have to bear. We are winning the victory and premillennialism is being swept from us and those who are going to teach it are leaving us by the scores and going with the denominations and those who remain and *continue* to *fight us* and oppose the Truth, will *soon* be going the way

of all the rest, or will have their days cut short, because the people *now* have their eyes opened to its dangers.

Talk about its “shame”. The “shame” is, that men have *introduced* it and would “not give it up” and let the church *rest* in peace and have forced us to have to take such a stand against its effects. If it had *taken* the church, there would have been grounds for “shame”, and I grant you that in Louisville, Ky., Knoxville, Dallas, Fort Worth, Horse Cave, Ky., Abilene, Texas and one or two other places where those who *teach* it *pulled off* from the church, they did shame the church, but not those of us who are defending the Truth, we didn’t shame it. And now today those who would force us to fellowship that group, who *pulled* away from the church, and who *brought* “shame” to our ranks, should bow their heads in “shame” and repent of *their* sins and spend what few years they may have in helping to build “back what they have torn down.”

If there be trouble who is to blame? The man teaching the error or the man teaching the Truth and

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

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### **Friday, April 11**

7:00 p.m.

*Guilt by Association*

Dub McClish

8:00 p.m.

*“Hath Not God”*

Harrell Davidson

### **Saturday, April 12**

1:00 p.m.

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

Brad Green

2:00 p.m.

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

Daniel Coe

3:00 p.m.

*Open Forum (Questions & Answers)*

David P. Brown

### **Dinner Break**

6:00 p.m.

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

Harrell Davidson

7:00 p.m.

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

Dub McClish

### **Sunday, April 13**

9:30 a.m.

*Do The Boundaries of Fellowship Matter?*

Gary Grizzell

10:30 a.m.

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

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opposing error? Here is what I believe: That Christ came to this earth, died, was buried, arose, went back to heaven and was seated upon the throne of David to reign until his second coming, at which time, is the end and at which time the Lord surrenders the kingdom to the Father. I do not believe that he will slay the people and the birds will eat their flesh after the Lord's second coming and before the end. I do not believe that 1 Cor. 15:24-28 teaches that there is a space of time "between the Lord's second coming and the end", during which time he is "conquering the world with the sword from his mouth", maybe two thousand years, and at *which* time He is re-establishing his reign over all the earth" But I oppose this latter reign. Wherein am I the trouble? Brethren, can't you see the "trouble and shame" all came from those opposing me?

#### TRUTH—THE BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP

Now I believe that any man who teaches to the contrary on the kingdom, is in error and certainly does have a "hobby" to ride and should be "marked", even though he may become all excited about it over the radio. Let all men in the church take the position I have just taken, and see how soon this "love" and "fellowship" will be restored to all. But it can only come "as we walk in the light" and as "**we continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine.**" Premillennialism is not in that doctrine. It must go and is going.

Suppose Philip had gone off and tried to put a brass band in the church during his day. Do you think the apostles would have said, "Brethren, we are all God's children and we must love one another and give our lives for each other and now Philip might be right and we might be wrong, so let us not brand him as *unsound* nor *mark* him" and so we will just "love" him and his band right into the fellowship. Suppose Stephen had gone from the church in Jerusalem, that "mother church" and he had introduced the "boards and societies" into the church. Do you think the church at Jerusalem, in order to have peace and to continue in

love and fellowship, would have just taught the people to tolerate him and his error? If John had gone out and begun to preach that "the Kingdom has not yet been set up and had told Peter you are wrong when you so teach. It will not be set up until the Lord comes back again; that it is going to be an earthly kingdom and rule the world; that Christ is not *now* upon the throne of David, etc.". Do you think Peter would have just "loved" him so good that he would have just taken him right on in and then that Peter would fight, condemn and persecute those who opposed, bringing such teaching in before the church? If Philip, Stephen and John had gone out teaching that AFTER the Lord comes back again that he is going to be on earth, maybe two thousand years, slaying, killing, conquering and re-establishing the *divine* government on the earth: that the birds were going to eat the fleshly bodies of the people the Lord had slain, "after his second coming"; praying for the Lord to come that this might be done, "after his coming"; and then branding Peter and all who did not so teach, as "wild speculators" and "bondservants of human theories"; demanding to know wherein premillennialism destroyed the word of God, etc., do you think if they had done all this that the church in Jerusalem would have continued to fellowship them, or would they have "marked them" just as we do today? Nowhere is the place to bow our heads in shame and weep, just to know that some will do that. May God help us to love the Truth and fellowship Truth and "that" only is our prayer. Then and *then* only may we enjoy the fellowship we "all desire."

—Deceased

*The mills of the gods grind late, but they grind fine.*

—Greek Poet

**THOUGH THE MILLS OF GOD GRIND SLOWLY, YET THEY GRIND EXCEEDING SMALL;**

**THOUGH WITH PATIENCE HE STANDS WAITING, WITH EXACTNESS GRINDS HE ALL. —F. VON LOGAU**

*Translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

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

## -England-

**Cambridgeshire**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); [www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org](http://www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org). Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or [Keith.Sisman.net](http://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, [ocoeechurchofchrist@yahoo.com](mailto:ocoeechurchofchrist@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.

## -North Carolina-

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

## -Oklahoma-

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

## - Tennessee-

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

## -Texas-

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

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

**Hubbard**—105 NE 6th St., Hubbard, TX 76648, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Delbert J. Goines; [djgoins@gmail.com](mailto:djgoins@gmail.com).

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