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FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

Southwest Church of Christ, Austin, TX Ladies Day Has Cassandra Martin to Speak

David P. Brown

Who is Casandra Martin? She is a member of Champions Church of Christ, Houston, TX and on Sept. 27, 2008 she spoke at the SW church's Ladies Day. According to her web site—

Casandra graduated from Harding University, where she met and married her husband, Ken. After college, Casandra taught at Northland Christian School where she was named Teacher of the Year. After several years of teaching high school, God gave Casandra her greatest teaching assignment — her children, Emily, Ryan, and Jonathan.

After becoming a stay-at-home mom, God opened the door for Casandra to use her teaching skills to teach women about God's Word and His love for them. Her experience in working with women in the church includes teaching and coordinating Ladies' Bible classes as well as serving as the Spiritual Growth coordinator for a Women's Ministry Steering Committee. Casandra also enjoys sharing with many of God's women while speaking at retreats, Ladies' Days, and Bible Lectureships. Recently, she had an article appear in *Christian Woman* magazine (<http://home.houston.rr.com/wowmartin/>).

Martin is scheduled to speak on the 2008 Harding University Lectures, specifically in the Women's Lectures on the topics: "Studying and Understanding the Text" and "Digging Deeper". She is also to be the Keynote Speaker on the topics of, "That We May Believe (1)" and "That We May Believe" (2). To review the other speakers on the Harding University Lectures go to the following lecture web address: <http://www.harding.edu/lectureship/schedule.html>.

On Sat., Oct. 11, 2008 Martin is scheduled to speak in the *Abundant Joy Women's Conference* in Houston, TX. She

is to speak to one of the "Break Out Sessions" regarding "Spiritual Growth." Her topic is *Praying With Your Eyes Wide Open: Experiencing God's Presence Through Prayer*.

Other speakers on the 2008 Conference are: Keynote Speaker, Irie Lynn Session, a graduate of Southwestern Christian College. She received a Bachelors degree in Social Work from Oklahoma Christian College and a Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University with certification in Black Church Studies.

Session is a social worker with over twenty years experience working with children and families in high-risk situations. She has been a parole officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, an investigator for Child Protective Services and the Adolescent Coordinator for Bryan's House, serving youth and families impacted by HIV/AIDS. **She is the Senior Pastor of New Life Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in Dallas, Texas. She also serves as the Associate Minister of North Texas Area of the Christian Church in the Southwest (<http://newfriendsnewlife.org/staffDirectory.html>)** [Bold Mine—Editor].

The second keynote speaker is Susan O'Donnell. From her web site, we learn that she

is the Co-Host of the Morning Show for the most listened-to Christian radio station in the country. She also hosts a call-in talk show "Sunday Nite with Susan O'Donnell." She is a former Pastor's wife and a Hoosier who has found a home in Houston, Texas. She uses her experiences—everything from being raised on a farm in the Midwest to the tragic loss of a 17-year marriage—to encourage and enlighten, and she's

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

Editorial...

THE SOBERING OBLIGATIONS OF A GOSPEL PREACHER

If a man is a preacher of the Gospel as the Bible defines such, his desire to preach grew out of his love for and faith in God. He is very interested in doing his part to save people from their sins and keeping the church faithful. He knows he has no business preaching for any other reason. Furthermore, though he may have chosen to be a preacher of the Gospel for the scriptural reason, if that reason ever ceases, he should find something else to do. The obligations of a teacher of truth and a contender for the faith are coeval to the work of all faithful evangelists—something most preachers schools and churches have forgotten or they conveniently ignore. Teaching the whole counsel of God and contending for the New Testament system cannot be scripturally divorced one from the other if the preacher is to make full proof of his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5). Gospel preaching will always demand the most fervent love for and the utmost faith in the only begotten Son of the living God and all that pertains thereto. Hence, God's preacher will possess a fervent and unquenchable zeal for the cause of Christ.

The comments of the previous paragraph should not be construed to apply only to those preachers who are supported "full time" in their work. However, we are sorry to say, in the minds of most people the "full time preacher" is the only person who qualifies to be called a "real" preacher. By this false definition the evangelist Stephen (the preaching deacon) would not qualify as a true Gospel Preacher. We do not accept that description as the final standard for determining who is and who is not a faithful Gospel preacher. *The reason this is the case is because the New Testament does not limit the definition of the term evangelist to the man who is financially supported by the church and, therefore, giving his time fully to preaching the Word.*

The church greatly needs more of her dedicated, mature men and their families to see the need to preach and financially support themselves to do so. This means they need to be willing to engage in the necessary preparation. It also means they must be knowledgeable of the errors that trouble the church. This the the way that churches may once again be planted in areas where now only churches at various stages of apostasy exist, or where no church exists at all. Such men are also needed to strengthen small churches that are struggling to keep the ancient, primitive, pure New Testament order of things alive and well.

The Rubel Shelly/Max Lucado/Higher education apostate brethren through their liberalism (loosing brethren from what God in His Word has bound on them) have "trashed" the Gospel and the church of Christ to the point that they consider themselves a denomination, or they see nothing wrong with the "pious denominationalist". Moreover, in the last three years several preachers, churches and schools of preaching

who have opposed the preceding liberal brethren have begun to practice and advocate a fellowship of brethren unknown and contrary to the New Testament order of things (2 John 9-11). In a pitiful attempt on their part to justify this erroneous fellowship of false teachers and those who support them, they are forced into declaring that a little leaven *does not* leaven the whole lump; that we can associate with certain brethren who preach only a small amount of error concerning obligatory matters and God is pleased with our actions. Moreover, they have taught that if the liberals taught and practiced a certain error they would be wrong in doing so, but if brethren known primarily for opposing liberal error teach and/or practice the same error liberals do, they are not wrong. Some have gone so far as to teach that the Re-evaluation/Reaffirmation of elders falls into the area of expediency as one option for keeping the eldership pure (For instance B. J. Clarke of the Memphis School of Preaching and Gospel Broadcasting Network). We are told that the R&R of elders and those that fellowship all involved does not pose a threat to the purity of the Lord's Gospel and His church. Those of us who continue to practice and preach what all of us seemingly once did, are now labeled as viscious, vile, divisive, unloving and other like terminology, freely and gladly used by the very ones who condemn us for "calling a spade a shovel".

But the faithful preacher of the Gospel must never allow anything or anyone (friend or foe) to handicap his work for the Lord. Thus, the New Testament evangelist will never permit his family, brethren, friends, etc. to wrongfully influence him

regarding his Godly life and what he preaches.

The preacher and his family will be friendly and have friends, but the preacher will never allow those friendships to bias, prejudice or in any way influence him in his choices of topics to preach—especially his own friends and family. For those brethren who count the preacher their friend, they will never expect, nor will they attempt to influence him to omit, alter, or water down the topics that address their needs. They will expect him to preach to them what they need to hear whether they realize they need it or not. In fact they will thank him for bringing such to their attention. If these brethren are the preacher's true friends, they will love and appreciate him because he, in no uncertain terms and with great plainness of speech, tells them what they ought to hear.

God has but one Son and when He sent Him to earth He made him a preacher. That ought to tell people something about God. When preachers steadfastly follow the example of Jesus found on the pages of the New Testament and comply with Paul's instructions regarding preaching the Word in season and out, they will be what God expects them to be and will have the relationship they should with God, the church and everyone else.

The Godly preacher must not allow elders to hinder him in his work. This means that the preacher will not refrain from preaching about the qualifications and work of elders. Being close to elders and having a good working relationship with them can tempt one not to preach what he ought to preach. A preacher's respect, support, scriptural honor and defense



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Al Maxey

The New Covenant writings ARE the divine pattern which must be followed for both fellowship and salvation.

Affirm—Darrell Broking

Deny— Al Maxey

The Debate Began With Darrell Broking's First Affirmative Posted on July 3, 2008.

- 1st Affirmative: Darrell Broking
- 1st Rebuttal: Al Maxey
- 2nd Affirmative: Darrell Broking
- 2nd Rebuttal: Al Maxey
- 3rd Affirmative: Darrell Broking
- 3rd Rebuttal: Al Maxey
- 4th Affirmative: Darrell Broking
- 4th Rebuttal: Al Maxey

The New Covenant writings CONTAIN specific requirements and expectations of our God, few in quantity, that are essential for both fellowship and salvation.

Affirm—Al Maxey

Deny—Darrell Broking

- 1st Affirmative: Al Maxey
- 1st Rebuttal: Darrell Broking
- 2nd Affirmative: Al Maxey
- 2nd Rebuttal: Darrell Broking
- 3rd Affirmative: Al Maxey
- 3rd Rebuttal: Darrell Broking
- 4th Affirmative: Al Maxey
- 4th Rebuttal: Darrell Broking

of Godly elders must not degenerate into a fear of preaching those things that address the elders' needs. The best of elders, deacons, preachers, et al., will never be without the need to grow—but growing can be painful. As preachers become weary and lax in their God-ordained duties, so can elders.

Because elders are in the scriptural position of “calling the shots” in the congregation, it is easy for them to slip ever so gradually into a frame of mind that causes them to forget a significant and major portion of their duty to God in shepherding the congregation over which the Holy Spirit made them bishops. Besides making very sure that the church does *only* what Christ (the Chief Shepherd) authorized it to do (discharging the obligations to which God has made the church responsible), their primary work focuses on choosing the options that are the most expedient (advantageous) in discharging her obligations to God. Some matters require less prayer and deliberation than do others in order for the elders to decide the most expedient option to use in discharging the obligation God has charged the church to do. Elders *must* know the members of the church (their personalities, temperament, degree of knowledge, faithfulness, zeal, abilities and so on). They *must* know how to use the official servants of the church, the deacons, in the overall program of work that God expects the church to accomplish. They *must* lead exemplary lives before the congregation. They *must* know the difference between a hard headed, cantankerous old ram or ewe and the little lambs, yearlings, etc. In all of this, elders *must* know how to work with the preacher they superintend—what qualifications a man *must* meet to be God's preacher, the responsibility of the preacher to God as he works to teach the whole counsel of God and contend for the faith. Godly elders, Godly deacons and Godly preachers make an unbeatable (by the devil and his crowd) combination. Working together as the Bible teaches them to work will go a very long way toward developing a congregation as God wants it to be. The elders, deacons and preacher(s) should be living such saintly lives that they are always ready to defend the Godly conduct of each other in the spheres of work that God has ordained them to do. They will pray for one another; they will encourage one another, they will exhort one another; and, yes, when necessary, they will rebuke one another.

Elders, preachers, and in reality any faithful member of

the church, should never allow unjust criticism from unruly members to cause them to grow bitter or lax in their work for the Lord. But it has happened and can happen again.

Notice what the prophet Jeremiah had to say about doing what God assigned us to do. **“Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully (*negligently*—ASV, 1901), and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood”** (Jer. 48:10). *A person who does any work “deceitfully” or “negligently” is one who omits what ought to be done.* Do you know of any greater problem in the church today than that of omitting what ought to be done? Notice God's attitude toward those who, in working for the Lord, omit part of what He has obligated them to do— **“cursed be he.”** Remember, in every judgment parable our Lord gave, men are sentenced to hell because of good deeds left undone, rather than for something evil they did. Of course, this does not mean that brethren can practice the works of the flesh and go to heaven (Gal. 5:19-21). *But it does tell us that we are prone to measure our faithfulness on the basis of the evil we do not do, rather than by the good works God has obligated us to do.*

Under penalty of the curse of God, the preacher must not allow anything or anyone to cause him to omit any part of his work. Thus, Paul said to the Ephesian elders: **“Ye know... how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house... For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God”** (Acts 20:18, 20, 27). Under the Law of Moses God demanded service to Him with **“all the heart”** (Deut. 10:10). Our Lord said the greatest commandment is that we must love God **“with all the heart”** (Matt. 22:37-39). Christians are obligated to God to be **“in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord”** (Rom. 12:11). Remember, the Lord said of certain slothful brethren, **“I will spew thee out of my mouth”** (Rev. 3:16). We therefore conclude that we must:

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee: (1 Tim. 4:15, 16).

—David P. Brown, Editor

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Church Controversies (A Review)

Bruce Stulting

It has been my privilege to benefit from the writing and preaching of many faithful gospel preachers. Wayne Jackson is one such preacher. I first met brother Jackson in 1987 at the Shenandoah Lectureship in San Antonio, Texas when he defended the plan of salvation against a Primitive Baptist preacher. Although brother Jackson is unaware of the fact, his work in that debate helped me make up my mind to obey the gospel and encouraged me to become a gospel preacher. For over twenty years, I have profited from brother Jackson's writing and preaching. However, on July 8, 2008, brother Jackson wrote an article entitled *Church Controversies* the contents of which I must take exception.

“Non-civil war”

In his first paragraph, Jackson “contemplates” a brotherhood that is engaged in what he calls a “non-civil war”. Since he doesn't define his terms, the reader must deduce from the rest of the article what is meant by “non-civil war”. In the same paragraph he talks about “little people” who make “big issues” out of “non-issues”. Thus, we conclude that he has in mind that “non-civil” refers to the manner in which one wages “war”. It is interesting to note that Jackson does not identify the “little people” or what he considers to be “non-issues”.

The fact is, the church is in a war and each Christian is a soldier in Christ's army. For the most part, the minions of Satan attack from outside the church. However, the Scriptures reveal that there are many enemies of the faith to be found within the church. Jesus warned about “**ravening wolves**” that disguise themselves as sheep (Matt. 7:15). Paul was in peril among “**false brethren**” and warned that Satan's ministers could “**be transformed as the ministers of righteousness**” (2 Cor. 11:15, 26). Peter warned that there would be “**false teachers among you**” (2 Peter 2:1). John commanded, “**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false**

prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John. 4:1). The church at Ephesus was commended by the Lord as to “**. . . how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars**” (Rev. 2:2). These examples and more could be given to prove that the church is in a “civil war”. Sometimes the battles are fought on a congregational level, but often they spill over into the brotherhood. When this happens, other congregations must get involved in order to oppose those who teach and support error.

Brother Jackson seems to suggest that we ignore problems within the church in order to be “united against the growing forces of evil that threaten the stability of society and the welfare of our families”. With whom is Jackson suggesting we unite? Must we unite with unfaithful brethren against a common foe? Are those who are denominationalists, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists or atheists, affected by the “**. . . growing forces of evil that threaten the stability of society and the welfare of our families**”? If so, must we unite with them to wage war against a common foe? Certainly, we would agree that as citizens in a given civil nation we could unite with others against a common threat to the home and society. However, there are restrictions placed upon the church regarding fellowship (2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; 2 John. 9-11).

Two kinds of Brethren!

In the next five paragraphs, Jackson discusses internal problems that affect every congregation regardless of size. In this part of his discussion, Jackson refers to two types of brethren: (1) “Some people are honest, pliable, and easy to gradually mold into mature Christians” and (2) “Some are perpetually childish, supersensitive, grumpy, and/or constantly on the prowl for a fight.” He then gets to the purpose of his article: “The key issue is: when and how do we deal with them?” Jackson answers his own question by stating,

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“There is no simple, universal solution”.

I strongly disagree with Jackson's answer. There is a simple, universal way to deal with rebellious, contentious brethren: **“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear”** (1 Tim. 5:20). Furthermore, **“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself”** (Titus 3:10, 11). Finally, we are commanded, **“mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them”** (Rom. 16:17). This is the scriptural method of dealing with brethren who cause strife in the church.

However, brother Jackson suggests, “Frequently the chronic complainers simply must be ignored.” Did God ignore those complainers among God’s people of the Exodus? *NO!* To warn Christians against committing the same sins of which those Hebrew children were guilty Paul wrote:

they were overthrown in the wilderness . . . Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. 10:1-12).

Jude also wrote about false teachers in the church, calling them **“...murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage”** (Jude 6). These wicked church members cannot be “ignored” with the hope that they will go away of their own accord! *[If Jackson considers certain brethren to be walking in the crooked path he describes in the article brother Stulting is reviewing, Jackson has every obligation to God and the church to deal with them as openly and in the same manner as did the inspired writers of the two previously quoted scriptures and as he deals with the Rubel Shelly types in the church.—Editor]* It is interesting that brother Jackson suggests “Others may exert considerable unsettling influence, and need to be addressed in a more forceful fashion—perhaps even to the point of suspending fellowship.” Why Jackson’s distinction between sinners? It seems that brother Jackson is suggesting that there are degrees of sin. However, God will **“... render to every man according to his deeds...For there is no**

respect of persons with God” (Rom. 2:6-11). Remember, **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” and “the wages of sin is death”** (1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:23). We cannot ignore sin in the congregation, in the brotherhood or any where else!

It is often the case that when one is trying to make a point look believable, he will exaggerate a problem to an extreme and then attack the extreme (construct a “paper tiger”). This is what brother Jackson does in the following paragraph:

Internal personal problems ought to be dealt with within the local family, and should not be broadcast throughout the brotherhood. One scarcely can imagine the sort of chaos that would reign if **EVERY** (emphasis mine BLS) local controversy were to be elevated to a nation-wide scale, and pontifications were issued across the worldwide family of God that if a church, eldership, or preacher does not fall in line with a certain clique in a distant city, state, or country, they must be disfellowshipped! How insane is that? (Paragraph five).

I do not know of any faithful child of God who would advocate that “EVERY” local controversy must be “elevated to a nation-wide scale.” Does Jackson know brethren who do? If so, who are they? Brother Jackson, “Is there ever a time when internal congregational problems must be ‘broadcast throughout the brotherhood’”? From his past writings and lectures, I know that he believes there are times when some internal congregational issues must be addressed throughout the brotherhood!

In the latter half of the previously quoted paragraph, Jackson condemns “pontifications” being “issued across the worldwide family of God.” If by “pontifications” he has in mind one who is binding his opinion, we strongly agree. However, who are the “pontiffs” and what are they “pontificating”? Surely Jackson would not oppose one who is simply holding the brotherhood to the standard of the Scriptures. *By the way, but very important, please note that brother Jackson’s article is self-condemning in view of the fact he wrote to instruct the “worldwide family of God” about how to deal with internal local congregational problems.* Was he “pontificating” when he declared how these matters ought to be handled by all the churches of Christ? Does brother Jackson expect all churches, elderships, and preachers to fall in line with his teaching? And, if they do not, must they be disfellowshipped? The only

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way that brother Jackson can be consistent is if he were dealing with a “pontificator” in his home congregation. If that were the case (according to his own article), he would only be able to circulate his article within his own congregation. Otherwise, he would be meddling in the internal affairs of other congregations! ***Physician, heal thyself!***

The fact is this, we live in a time when a single congregation or one man can have brotherhood-wide influence. Brother Jackson certainly does and he fully intends to do so. Preacher training schools, publications (such as Jackson’s web site, books and paper) and television/radio programs are examples of ways in which controversies in a single congregation can spill over into the entire brotherhood. When any of the previously noted works begin to teach error (i.e., Elder reevaluation/reaffirmation or the “intent to marriage error”), the entire brotherhood can be influenced. Since these works have far reaching influence, their error must be dealt with on a brotherhood-wide level. When faithful brethren call to account those in error and demand repentance, they are not “pontificating” any more than Jackson routinely does in his brotherhood work.

Consider the church at Jerusalem as they dealt with the problem of binding circumcision on the Gentiles, etc. They sent letters **“unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia”** (Acts 15:23) and stated that the Gentiles **“abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well...”** (vs. 29). Were the elders and apostles “pontificating” when they wrote this letter? NO! They were simply spreading the Will of Heaven to the churches concerning this matter. Were the churches in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia obligated to comply? YES! What would be the consequence if they did not? Fellowship with those congregations would have to cease. This is a Biblical example of how to deal with congregational issues that affect the “worldwide family of God.”

“Some Guiding Principles”

Brother Jackson offers some “guiding principles” for dealing with church controversies. A casual reading of said principles reveal a surprising lack of Bible authority for the following views.

Suggestion one: “Local church controversies are much too complex for outsiders to know all the relevant facts.” To show the absurdity of this statement one only has to read the epistles of the New Testament all of which dealt primarily with “local church controversies.” Were the controversies that existed at the Corinthian church so complex that Paul, an outsider, could not know all the relevant facts? Some may suggest that Paul could understand the complexities since he was an inspired Apostle. However, Paul commanded, **“Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me” and “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ”** (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1). Can we “follow” Paul’s example of assessing a situation in another congregation? Of course we can! Otherwise, we would be unable to truly follow Paul. [*Did it ever occur to brother Jackson, as well those who think as he does on the subject of his article, that these letters, that*

make up part of the New Testament, were to circulate among the churches? Thus, the internal problems of the church in Corinth, for example, were known by all the churches of that day that read them, even as we know the same things about the church at Corinth today.—Editor]

Brother Jackson states, “Long-distance analyses, therefore, likely are to be highly subjective and significantly inaccurate.” How accurate was Paul when he analyzed the situation regarding the fornicator in Corinth (1 Cor. 5)? Not only was Paul able to accurately analyze the situation on the basis of what was reported to him by a member of the church in Corinth, he was able to give scriptural instruction on how to deal with the problem. Was Paul “pontificating”? Paul was a member of the church in Antioch in Syria and wrote his epistle to the Corinthians while at Ephesus. Yet, he was still able to make a long distance analysis of what went on at Corinth.

Paul was able to accurately analyze the situation at Corinth because he had received a report from the household of Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11). According to Jackson, such documents “may have been composed in a climate of considerable bias and be subject to diverse interpretations”. I wonder why Paul did not rebuke Chloe for broadcasting internal church problems throughout the brotherhood? In view of Jackson’s criticism of such actions today, may we not conclude that he would have rebuked those of Chloe’s household for reporting such internal congregational matters to the apostle Paul—especially since Paul put those internal problems in a letter to be circulated, not only among the churches of that day, but before any non-members then, now, and until the end of time. Then it will serve as part of the infallible standard by which all men will be judged by Jesus Christ.

It is interesting that some questioned Paul’s authority to correct the problems at Corinth. Perhaps they were of brother Jackson’s persuasion that “Some of our people are masters at taking words and phrases and twisting them to form an indictment alien to the meaning intended by the original author or authors.” *Again, we are left to wonder who are these people and what “words and phrases” are being twisted.*

Suggestion two: “Outside evaluations cannot take into account the personalities, motives, and attitudes of the principals who have been involved.” To this we simply ask, “Why not?” Of course we are commanded not to judge brothers or sister who have motes in their eyes while we have beams in our own eyes (Mat. 7:1). To do so is to be a hypocrite. If there is a beam, Jesus commands us to remove the beam and then render a righteous judgment—but render a righteous judgment we must because it is a necessary part of being faithful to God (Matt. 7:5; John. 7:24; Col. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:7).

A correct evaluation can be made when credible witnesses give their testimony, sermon tapes are reviewed, manuscripts and articles are read. Such evaluation must be made by preachers when they consider a new work, or by elders who are seeking to support a new work or employ a preacher. How else could one determine whether congregations or preachers are sound and worthy of fellowship and

(Continued Bottom of Page 14)

The Bible is Right

Lessons Learned From A Congregation's Division

Danny Douglas

“For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11:19). Those who hold to God's Word as the first authority in their lives and above their own wishes, are those who come forth as approved of God when heresies and factions arise among God's people. Moreover, church members who continue to accept the factious person(s) and do not deal with them Scripturally cannot be approved, and are in plain disobedience to the Word of God. Paul wrote: **“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself”** (Titus 3:10-11). The teachings of the Bible, the Word of God, again and again are proven to be right and conclusive as we go through various trials and persecutions in life. **“For the word of the LORD is right...”** (Psa. 33:4a).

Withdrawal and Turning Away from a Congregation Is Sometimes Necessary

The Scriptures are plain as to the action that the godly must take when other church members are involved in actions that are not according to God's Word. When a faction arises in opposition to the Truth, and strenuous efforts to bring them to repentance prove unsuccessful, a withdrawal must take place. God, in no uncertain terms, commands the faithful: **“from such withdraw thyself”** (cf. 1 Tim. 6:3-5); **“from such turn away”** (2 Tim. 3:5); and **“mark them...and avoid them”** (cf. Rom. 16:17-18). Thus, the faithful must withdraw from the disorderly (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6). When there are no elders, and a significant number in a congregation are practicing error, including the fellowshiping of it, and will not

repent, then the faithful must leave the congregation. Hence, the following withdrawal statement was read on October 7, 2007, in behalf of those who withdrew from the Chapel Hill congregation:

Statement of Withdrawal From the Chapel Hill church of Christ, 234 Chapel Drive, Gallipolis, Ohio, October 7, 2007:

At this time there exists a group of faithful members of the Lord's church, who are now withdrawing membership and fellowship from the Chapel Hill church of Christ. This decision has been made after much thought and prayer. We have concluded that we cannot in a good conscience and with true convictions based on the word of God, continue on as members of the Chapel Hill congregation.

In the past, we at Chapel Hill have failed to practice the withdrawal of fellowship from the disorderly, which God commands: **“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us”** (2 Thess. 3:6; cf. Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. ch. 5; Tit. 3:10-11; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:5). We confess our failure in this. We ask God's forgiveness in this matter. Furthermore, we seek to no longer be guilty of neglecting this command of God, and so we are now taking this action.

We cannot be a part of the following, which God is against: the spirit of Diotrophes (3 John 9-11); a faction

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which produces strife and seeks congregational control (2 Cor. 12:20-21; Gal. 5:19-21; 3 John 9-11); failure to observe the God-ordained role of men and women, as laid down in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 2:8-14; 1 Cor. 11:3); attitudes and efforts, including various forms of communication, which have served to undermine the truth, and have engendered rebellion toward it and those who uphold it (2 Tim. 3:8; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Prov. 6:16-19); disobedience to God regarding the contribution of the local church (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7); defending and upholding those who are walking disorderly rather than disciplining them (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 John 9-11); the defense of sin, and deceit in covering it up (Rom. 12:9, 17; Eph. 4:25); encouraging others to sin (Matt. 18:6; Gal. 5:9); and denial of the Biblical doctrine of guilt by association (2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:11). Serious efforts have been made to bring those involved in any or all of these errors to repentance, but they have not repented. We will continue to pray for their repentance. Indeed: **“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (Gal. 5:9).** Therefore, we are taking this action.

We desire to be a part of a congregation which respects all the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).

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 (2 John 9-11).

Although the doctrine of guilt by association has been denied by some, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures: **“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).**”

As a result of this action, some 25 members withdrew from the Chapel Hill congregation. The faithful group, known as the Gallipolis church of Christ, now meets at 259 Third Avenue, in downtown Gallipolis, and may be contacted c/o Herb Bush, P.O. Box 327, Gallipolis, Ohio 45631. Tel: 740-446-1618. Other faithful brethren there, who are also witnesses to the Chapel Hill situation are: Roy Spurlin (740) 446-2064 and Dwayne Jolley (cf. 2 Cor. 13:1; Matt. 18:16; 1 Tim. 5:19).

When a Congregation is Going in the Right Direction, Satan Will Oppose It

In March, 2007, the brethren at Chapel Hill made the decision not to announce a ladies event and a “Gospel Meeting” to take place across the river at the **Henderson church of Christ**, in West Virginia. The reason for this is: (1) **The local preacher at Henderson, George Topping, has gone on record as teaching that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are not a part of the New Testament.** How strange is the idea that the One Who shed His blood to make possible the New Testament, would not have the teaching He did on earth as part of His own Covenant (cf. Matt. 26:28; Heb. 10:29; 13:20-21). Yet, this is the teaching of Dan Billingsly, George Topping, and others (2) **Henderson has had 2 ladies to direct their Vacation Bible School.** (3) **Liberalism was represented in the assigned preacher for the Gospel Meeting: Ron Laughery, of the Belpre (Ohio) church of Christ.**¹

Later, it would come out in the May business meet-

ings that certain long-time members of the church were not pleased at this direction for the Chapel Hill congregation, in her stand against error in area congregations. Furthermore, the seeds of discord had already been sown as a result of a few ladies, who attempted to lead various activities and to implement changes. **(In fact, one these ladies had recently come from the Henderson congregation where women had been chosen to direct the Vacation Bible School.)** Such stirring of emotions against those standing for the Truth of the New Testament on the role of women were reminiscent of the Jewish opposition that Paul and Barnabas faced:

But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts...But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren (Acts 13:50; 14:2).

Paul warns:

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was (2 Tim. 3:6-9).

It is noteworthy, in view of this passage, that some within the leavening agent, did make house calls to various members trying to persuade them toward their agenda.

Defense of Error Produces Division

When men seek to defend error, it brings division into the body of Christ. On May 2, 2007, a special meeting was called following Wednesday night Bible Study to inform the brethren that certain problems had come to light involving the scheduled speaker for our June Gospel Meeting. As it turned out, brother **William B. Kughn**, was involved with a congregation (and had been for some years), the **Greenbrier church of Christ, Anniston, Alabama**, which was/is in fellowship with and support of: **“Sonshine/Children’s Worship Ministry,” Winterfest/Jeff Walling, Churches of Christ**

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Disaster Relief Effort, Inc., the unscriptural singing group **Acapella** (which makes mechanical instrumental sounds with the voice and performs at denominational functions), and **Buddy Bell** and the **Landmark church of Christ, Montgomery, Alabama**. Later we learned that **Greenbrier** was also promoting the *Gulf Coast Getaway*.² **Randy Harris** and **Rick Atchley of Richland Hills** [infamous for introducing **mechanical instrumental music into worship and serving the Lord's Supper on Saturday night**] had been featured speakers earlier in 2007 at the *Gulf Coast Getaway*.

Two long and controversial men's business meetings followed on May 6th and May 9th. Two of the men present, **Howell Lasseter** and **Lewis Mikell**, defended brother Kughn and insisted that he should come ahead and do the Gospel Meeting. In fact, these two brethren made lengthy speeches in opposition to the Biblical doctrine of guilt by association. However, this false teaching did not go unanswered. Such Scriptures as Ephesians 5:11 and 2 John 9-11 were used to convince brethren Lasseter and Mikell of their error, and to show the error of brother Kughn, but sadly none of them ever repented. The Bible teaches:

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them...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 (Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11).

Finally, the men decided to cancel the Gospel Meeting with brother Kughn, in spite of the effort to persuade the brethren to forsake their convictions and to compromise with error.

As a result of this and unsuccessful attempts to have a congregational meeting, in June brother Lasseter, with the encouragement of brother Mikell, mailed a packet of materials into the homes of the Chapel Hill members. Included in the packet, among other things, was an article casting suspicion on the Men's Business Meeting, a defense of brother Kughn, and *an article by brother Kughn teaching that guilt by association was acceptable based on the fact that Jesus ate with sinners, which is false doctrine (cf. Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11; Rom. 16:17-18). Clearly, this action divided the congregation.*³

The Diotrephean spirit Causes Discord

The spirit of Diotrephe has long been a plague on the Chapel Hill congregation. It has caused many to leave the congregation, and has produced much discord and many broken hearts. The apostle John said of Diotrephe:

I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephe, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church (3 John 9-10).

Those like Diotrephe today, also love to have the preeminence among the brethren. Such individuals will use various means and people to have control and power, and will even divide the church to do so. The late brother Guy

N. Woods stated:

The modern day Diotrephe, like the one of old, will also prate against faithful brethren with malicious words. The extent of Diotrephe's lordship over the congregation is seen in the fact (1) he prated (*phluaron*, to babble, to accuse idly and falsely) against John and his associates with wicked words, (not merely idle, but actually *evil* words); (2) he refused to receive the brethren which came from John; (3) he forbade others in the congregation to do so; (4) those who refused to bow to his will he expelled from membership in the congregation. [Gospel Advocate Commentaries.]

Indeed, a Diotrephe will use wicked, false and idle words to hurt the righteous, because he cannot validate his charges against them with the truth. *He will even stoop to digging up past sins of brethren, of which they have long since repented, to hold over their heads. He is willing to add many falsehoods and slanders in order to mischaracterize faithful brethren. He is not above speaking lies and malicious slander in his effort to destroy those who will oppose his error. Like the devil himself, whose name diabolos means slander, he falsely accuses faithful brethren (cf. Rev. 12:10).* Such an individual would not hesitate to go so far as to falsely accuse righteous men such as the late and faithful brother Guy N. Woods himself.

A Diotrephe will expend no little time or effort in formulating and executing a plan whereby to ruin his opponent, just as the wicked Haman attempted to destroy the righteous Mordecai for refusing to bow to him. Haman falsely accused the Jews, and was eventually hanged on the 50 cubit-high gallows that he had built for Mordecai. **“So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.**

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Then was the king's wrath pacified" (Esther 7:10). It is our prayer that those today or any time who are like Haman and Mordecai will repent of their sins so they will not be destroyed eternally. Indeed, their evil efforts will turn against them.

The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken...For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous" (Psa. 37:12-15, 17).

The righteous should not be surprised that dishonest men would speak falsely against them, because Jesus warned:

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:1-12).

Furthermore: **"...all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Rev. 21:8).**

Never the less, those like Diotrefes cannot have their power without help. After the warning concerning Diotrefes, John further states: **"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God (3 John 11).** Sadly, many are disobeying this injunction by continuing to follow a Diotrefes or other disobedient people in the church.

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Galatians 5:9)

Indeed, good brethren can be led astray by individuals who are clever in their manipulative tactics. When disobedience persists in a congregation, the Biblical principle that **"a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"** (Gal. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:6), is clearly manifested. *Thankfully, the disciplinary action and withdrawal that took place at Chapel Hill, was done in time to rescue several precious souls from the persistent and crafty work of the factious.* This was a major motivation for departing, that no more precious souls would be turned away from the Truth.

Although much pointed preaching and teaching was done to oppose wrong, even to the point of arousing anger, some members who had stood firm earlier in the year, flip-flopped, and became sympathetic with the disobedient. Sadly, these messages did not bring the guilty to repentance, but they did strengthen the resolve of those who had a mind to do right. One of the obvious aspects of evil leaven is the fact that it seeks to undermine the Truth. No less person than the apostle Paul warned:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4).⁴

Conclusion

We should be warned that God is aware of our actions when we are not dealing honestly of our brothers and sisters in the God's family, the church. Whether it be manipulative public statements made under the guise of a confession, attacks made in a business meeting when one is out of town and cannot defend himself, or other efforts to manipulate matters to a faction's advantage, God sees and knows all. **"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"** (Heb. 4:13). One day we will have to answer to Him (Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10). It is our prayer that all of those who are walking disorderly, including those in fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, will repent, so that they will not be lost in that last great day, when, as Paul said: **"God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel"** (Rom. 2:16).

Endnotes

¹ Documentation exists to verify these facts concerning George Topping and the Henderson church of Christ.

² These facts were taken from the Greenbrier website: www.greenbriercofc.org.

³ This packet is available for those who desire documentation.

⁴ The Bible teaches that at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established: "This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor. 13:1; cf. Matt. 18:16; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28). Faithful witnesses are available as to these matters that took place in the Chapel Hill congregation.

The Scriptures teach: **"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"** (2 Cor. 13:1; cf. Matt. 18:16; 1 Tim. 5:19). If anyone would like to verify what has been written about the situation at Chapel Hill, three faithful brethren (in addition to this writer) who were at Chapel Hill, but are now members of the Gallipolis church of Christ, may be contacted as witnesses: Herb Bush (740) 446-1618; Dwayne Jolley (740) 446-9782; and Roy Spurlin (740) 446-2064."

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Where has O'Donnell performed? From her web site, note her recent appearances and those slated for the remainder of 2008. We quote:

14-Jul-08 Pasadena, TX **First Baptist Church** Widow's Banquet

15-Jul-08 Houston, TX Preschool Teachers Adventure Conference, **Windwood Presbyterian Church**

10-Aug-08 The Woodlands, TX **The Woodlands United Methodist Church**

20-Sep-08 Alvin, TX **First United Methodist Church Ladies Prayer Breakfast**

11-Oct-08 Houston, TX **Abundant Joy Women's Conference**

24-Oct-08 Conroe, TX **First United Methodist Church Ladies Luncheon** (<http://www.sodonnell.com/HTML/schedule.htm>). [**Bold Mine—Editor**]

Clearly, Casandra Martin has no problem appearing with O'Donnell. And, *the Southwest Church of Christ elders have no problem with Martin speaking to the SW ladies.*

Continuing on with the line up for the *Abundant Joy*

Women's Conference for 2008, we come to the *Worship Leaders* for the conference. They are Melanie Simpson and Lisa McVey.

Melanie is the Worship and Children's Minister at Bering Drive Church of Christ in Houston. She holds a degree in music from Abilene Christian University. She has taught elementary music in Abilene, San Antonio, and Katy. **Her passion, however, is leading worship, and sharing the amazing love of God.**

Lisa worships at the Sugar Grove Church of Christ in Meadows Place where she sings with the praise team. She is a graduate of Abilene Christian University. She sang with the Acappella Chorus and His Singers while at ACU. (<http://www.abundantjoyconference.org/speakers.html>) [**Bold Mine—Editor**].

Does Martin have a problem with the Bering Drive Church's beliefs and practices? This is where the women take an active part in leading in the church (See: <http://www.beringfamily.org/pastoral.htm>), where they accept Edward Fudge's doctrine of no eternal Hell (Fudge is a member of said church) and who knows what else they practice and/or fellowship that is contrary to New Testament authority.

Obviously the Soutest elders see nothing wrong with Martin's involvement with these denominationalists and pseudo brethren. After all, they authorized her to speak to the SW ladies. Did the SW elders, as protectors of the SW flock, investigate Martin before the SW women invited her to speak to them. *If we could easily locate the information about Martin's involvement with Harding University, non-members (the woman pastor and the female comedienne) and the liberal crowd with which she readily and freely works and fellowships, why could they not do the same?*

*Because ye are turned away from the LORD,
therefore the LORD will not be with you
(Num. 14:43).*

GLENN COLLEY SPEAKS IN LIBERAL CHURCH

Regardless of what some brethren believe and teach, part of the fruit that helps to identify our true character is seen in those we fellowship and the works they support. The preceding fact is one reason our Lord said:

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Where fore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20).

Thus, according to our Lord one of the obligations God expects Christians to discharge in their walk of faith (Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7) is that of being a Scriptural fruit inspector (John 7:17; 1 John 4:1). Failure to do so is a sin of omission (James 4:17).

The previous salient Truths are conveniently overlooked by many. More times than not those same Truths are repudiated by many who think they are some of the best of God's people. But regardless of such rebellion on the part of some church members, the Truth taught in Matt. 7: 15-20 continues to be needed and will certainly be there on the Day of Judgment, with the whole system of faith, to condemn those who have spurned it (John 12:48).

With the previous New Testament Truths before us we now draw your attention to the following information. During August 13-16, 2008, the Sherrod Ave. Church of Christ, Florence, AL, presented a program they called *Shoal's Renewal 2008 "Jesus is Here!"* The local speakers were Charles Abernathy, Kenny Barfield, James Farris, Matt Heupel, Chris Kemp and Sonny Owens. The featured speakers were: Jim Gardner, Fresno, CA and Glenn Colley, Huntsville, AL.

Is it not true that we can discern much about a person's or a church's faithfulness to the divine pattern of New Tes-

tament Christianity by the people and works they support and advertise or, for that matter, those they do not support and advertise? That being the case, we urge you to get on the internet, go to the Sherrod Ave. Church of Christ web page found at the following web address: http://www.sherrodfamily.org/templates/_sherrodave/default.asp?id=36309, and observe for yourself what these brethren advertise. Having gone to the preceding web address, click on the *Resource* button. On the *Resource* page click on *Links* to see what the Sherrod Ave. church's elders, staff and members think are good resources for Christians to use to better help them to serve the Lord.

How could someone such as Glenn Colley, author of "Loose Change", a book about liberalism, join himself to such brethren to help them in their efforts? Let it be once again noted that at least since Colley and those brethren with whom he has partied have feverishly worked to justify themselves in their support of Dave Miller, they are now evidencing how far they are willing to go in clasping hands with brethren who make no distinction between the faithful and the unfaithful. Lack of space will not allow us to examine the various "resources" advertised by the Sherrod Ave. church. Suffice it to say that some of the rankest liberal resources are found in this church's recommended resource list. Further, some of these so-called resources are denominational works. Shades of Rubel Shelly and Max Lucado's "Unity in Diversity." Consider the following:

Resources For Life

Campus Ministry
 Campus Branch - Campus Ministry Resources
 Campus Crosswalk - Campus Ministry Info & insight
 CampusMinistryUnited.com - Uniting Campus ministry resources
 Christian Colleges and Campus Ministry Links
 Intervarsity - Campus Ministry Resources
 Ivy Jungle - Campus Ministry Network & Conferences
 Gulf Coast Getaway - More than a campus ministry conference. It's a body of people undergoing radical transformation as we seek the ways of God.

Family Ministry

Focus On The Family - Parenting & Spiritual Growth Resources

Financial

Crown Financial Ministries – aimed at providing a Christian perspective on debt management, budgeting guides and help with personal finances
 Money Matters for Kids - helping parents teach children about money matters, from Larry Burkett and Christian Financial Concepts.
 Financial Peace University (Dave Ramsey)—A 13-week video series designed to teach families to get out of debt and stay out of debt

Magazines

Radiant - Life from the inside out. A magazine for "young adult" women.
 Relevant – A magazine for the "20something" crowd that addresses issues on God, Life and Progressive Culture.
 Wineskins - An online magazine for the spiritual seeker interested in broadening the understanding of contemporary culture and learning as impacted by issues of the modern world.

Marriage

Family Dynamics Institute - Interactive marriage-enrichment ministry that teaches people how to have healthy marriages and families, and how to lead others to have the same.

Media

Heartlight - Devotionals, E-cards, PowerPoint Backgrounds, & more
 Highway Videos - Christian Videos for Teaching & Worship Settings

Searching For Truth: 6 Lesson Evangelistic Tool
 World Video Bible School: www.wvbs.org

Missions/Humanitarian/Service

The Invisible Children - Invisible Children, Inc. changes culture, policy, and lives through collisions of poverty and power. The Mission is the ultimate goal of Invisible Children—the resources, skills, and funds that hit the ground in Uganda, providing healthcare, safety, employment, and education.
 Habitat For Humanity - Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness worldwide and to making adequate, affordable shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat is founded on the conviction that every man, woman and child should have a simple, decent, affordable place to live in dignity and safety.
 Mission Alive - Church Planting Conferences & Resources
 Voice of The Martyrs - A non-profit, interdenominational organization with a vision for aiding Christians around the world who are being persecuted for their faith in Christ
 World Religion Index - Understanding World Religions
 World Relief –Equipping churches and communities to help victims of poverty, disease, hunger, war, disaster and persecution

Parenting/Personal Growth/Real Life Resources

ChristianToday.com - Serves to provide direct, and current news information to the general Christian public.
 Crosswalk - The intersection of faith and life
 Exodus International - The largest info. and referral ministry addressing homosexual issues.
 XXX Church - A ministry to those struggling with pornography
 Youth Suicide Prevention

Student Ministry

Egad Ideas - Youth Ministry Ideas Adaptable to Young Adult
 Every Student - Answers to Students' Questions
 Battle Cry - an online community and resource for Christian teens, churches, youth groups, and leaders
 Boundless - Articles for College Students
 Mars Hill Bible School - Florence, AL
 Youth In Action – A Youth Rally for spiritual growth and renewal
 Winterfest – A retreat in Gatlinburg, TN to inspire deeper faith and commitment

Study/Teaching Resources

Bible Gateway - Scripture Search & Index
 Elbourne - Sermon Illustrations
 Nooma - Postmodern Christian Videos for Teaching (Rob Bell)
 Sermon Spice - Christian Videos for Teaching & Worship Settings
 Zondervan Church Resource -
 Searching For Truth- 6 Lesson Evangelistic Tool
 World Video Bible School- www.wvbs.org - great Bible study tools

Worship

Just Worship - Worship Resources
 Worship.Com - Worship & Spiritual Growth resources
 Zoe Group - Worship Team & Annual Conference Info

When we clicked on the button for their recommended *Colleges and Campus Ministries* site we found listed sixteen colleges and universities. Then, under *Campus Ministeries* 39 are listed. *The Sherrod Ave. Church advertises these educational institutions without any effort on their part to qualify their recommendations.*

We may only and correctly conclude that Glenn Colley and the rest of the speakers on 2008 *Renewal* program concur with the Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ's recommendations. —DPB



They would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods. (Judges. 2:17)

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always. (Deut. 5:29)

HOW TO FELLOWSHIP FALSE TEACHERS AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT

The unscriptural and illogical defence that the schools of preaching, their supporters, et al., continue to employ in their efforts to defend, support and fellowship Dave Miller and other false teachers is found in a twisted view of 2 John 8–10. They teach that the passage only applies to the person who directly bids God speed to a false teacher. Thus, they erroneously conclude that the apostle John did not forbid Christians from fellowshiping those who bid God speed to false teachers, although they do not believe, teach and/or practice what the false teacher does. Thus, they readily appear on lectureships, with churches and associate with brethren who fellowship those who bid God speed to false teachers.

For example, Larry Powers, the preacher for the Sharon, TN Church of Christ, does not believe, and he teaches against Miller's false doctrine—the R&R of elders. But Powers is in full fellowship with those who bid God speed to Miller—such as his *alma mater*, *The Memphis School of Preaching*, etc.

They accuse us of teaching what they call, “A to Z fellow

ship.” By this they mean we are wrong when we refuse to bid God speed to those who remain in fellowship with brethren who bid God speed to false teachers, i.e., Miller et al.

The truth of the matter is this: *There is no such thing as “A to Z fellowship.” Those who bid God Speed to a false teacher are, before God, as guilty as the false teacher. Thus, to fellowship one who bids God speed to the false teacher and those who are in fellowship with him is to partake of his evil deeds (2 John 9-10).*

However, the same “arguments” that are being used in an attempt to justify fellowshiping Miller, et al., will also “justify” the S. W. Church’s use of Casandra Martin and Glenn Colley’s fellowship of the Sherrod Ave. Church previously noted in this issue of CFTF. In their attempts to justify their conduct these brethren have opened a Pandora’s box, the terrible consequences of which are only now beginning to reveal themselves.

—DPB

(Continued From Page 7)

and support? Jesus warned,

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Mat. 7:15-20)

False prophets can be identified by their fruit. The same method can be used to identify a false congregation.

Suggestion three: “Some situations pertain to areas of opinion and the exercise of judgment, and long-distant critics are incapable of handing down dictums to be bound upon other churches—not to mention the absurdity of demanding such.” Since when did situations pertaining to areas of opinion and the exercise of judgment become a “church controversy”? *Opinions and the exercise of judgment become sinful (controversial) only when they are being bound on others as necessary to one’s salvation (obligatory).* Such sin must be made known to other congregations because of fellowship issues. We must not bid God speed to anyone (individual or congregation) that teaches error, **“For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John. 9-11).**

Suggestion four: Brother Jackson raises the question, “What about the issue of credibility?” He refers to those who discuss internal church problems as, “lathered-up radicals,” “rabble rousers,” and “misguided zealots.” Jackson’s personal attacks are becoming commonplace among those who get very bent out of shape at others who describe Jackson and friends in graphic, vivid and apt terminology, but they see no inconsistency on their part in using them to describe the people they oppose. Such attacks prove nothing except the desperation and inconsistency of those who make them. What about the credibility of those of Chloe’s household who brought the information about the problems in the church at Corinth to the apostle Paul? Were those of the house of Chloe “lathered-up radicals,” “rabble rousers,” or “misguided zealots” when they informed Paul of the “church controversy” at Corinth? Certainly not! They were considered by

Paul to be credible witnesses. Irrefutable evidence presented by credible witnesses must be accepted. But, sadly today, adequate evidence and credible witnesses mean very little to nothing with some who, in their intellectual snobbery and excelled spirituality, do not need such anymore before they pontificate against what their human wisdom has deemed to be pontification.

Conclusion

Brother Jackson’s final words state, “Sometimes there are nation-wide conflicts that need to be engaged (e.g., changing the nature of worship or altering the elements of the plan of salvation), but many ‘fights’ are not of this nature and should be left alone.” Does our brother really believe that the only errors worthy of a “nation-wide” conflict are those pertaining to worship and the plan of salvation? I know he does not, because he has written on other brotherhood issues relating to morality, creation/evolution, the church, etc. One only needs to search Jackson’s paper over the years to verify this.

He finally states, “Jesus pronounced a blessing upon the peacemakers, not upon the strife-causers.” Jackson would do well to remember that a peacemaker does not ignore problems, he confronts them and strives for a scriptural solution. Unfortunately, like many others, Jackson confuses the “peacemakers” with “strife-causers.” This problem is not new. **“When Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” (1 Kings 18:17).** Sometimes “peace” can only be enjoyed after the battle is fought. It is my sincere hope and prayer that brother Jackson will reconsider his article and publicly repent of his error.

—925 Fish Hatchery Rd.
Huntsville, TX 77320-7009

*The Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by His actions are weighed. (1 Sam. 2:3)*

*I understand more than the ancients,
because I keep Thy precepts. (Psa. 119:100)*

REMEMBER SHILOH

Martha Bentley

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"** (Josh. 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..." (Josh. 23:12, 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; Also see 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 Peter 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!

—8305 S. Burchfield Dr.
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Directory of Churches...

-Alabama-

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

-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. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

-Florida-

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

-South Carolina-

Belvedere (Greater Augusta Georgia Area)—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, www.belvederechurchofchrist.org; e-mail belvecoc@gmail.com, (803) 442-6388, Sunday: 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Evangelist: Ken Chumbley (803) 279-8663

-Oklahoma-

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

- Tennessee-

Murfreesboro—Church of Christ, 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. 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. Sunday: 9:30, 10:30, 6:00; Wednesday 7:00. Contact: Dub McClish: 940.323.9797; 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.

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.

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

New Braunfels—225 Saenger Halle Rd. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

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

-Wyoming-

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

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