

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR ELDERS, PREACHERS, TEACHERS, AND CONCERNED CHRISTIANS

## MAC DEAVER'S DUPLICITIOUS DIATRIBE

Michael Light

Much has been said and written about Deaver's position on the alleged direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the inward man or spirit of the Christian. And, many of our readers have probably read or at least heard about the spring 2004 special issue of *Biblical Notes Quarterly* (hereafter *BNQ*). In this article I will address that special issue of *BNQ* as a whole and point out the plethora of illogical, dishonest and duplicitous assertions set forth by Mac Deaver.

### WHO IS TO BLAME?

The title and theme of that special issue of *BNQ* is, "Setting Brother Against Brother." It is in truth, Mac playing the "it's not my fault" game to the best of his ability. To borrow a phrase he often uses to express his disdain for something, the special issue of *BNQ* is "pitiful, just pitiful."

In that special *BNQ* Mac attempts to judge motives by saying, "They thought that we would not be able to respond..." It is true that several journals coordinated their efforts to present as much material on the subject (which Mac had been encouraging for years) as they could, but whether or how he would respond was never a consideration (at least not to the editors of *Seek Ye First* [Tom Moore; Jeff Sweeten and Michael Light] or *CFTF* [David P. Brown]). In fact, I do not know of any of the editors who coordinated their efforts in their respective papers who thought otherwise.

In his second paragraph he says, "Let the reader again be advised that we have never made the Holy Spirit issue a matter of fellowship." Notice the arro-

gance in this statement. He acts as if it cannot be a matter of fellowship simply because he is not willing to allow it to be so. The line of fellowship is not his to draw. God gave us the truth that is the standard for our beliefs and practices. And, all who stray from it are to be "marked and avoided" (Romans 16:17, 18)—whether the one withdrawn from likes it or not.

Mac then accuses his opponents of pressing the matter. This simply will not pass the "smell test." In the early days of his evolution regarding this issue he was warned, asked and begged not to press this issue, yet he refused. He is the one who challenged any and all comers to debate.

He asserts (and has for years) that no one has been able to disprove his position. Such is simply not true. He reminds me of denominational preachers that our brethren have debated. After having been thoroughly whipped on the issue (for example, the essentiality of baptism) sometimes some of them concluded the debate by claiming they had won the debate. Mac acts as if he alone has the wherewithal to determine when a position has been proven true or defeated, as the case may be. His paranoia (no I do not believe that to be an overstatement) rears its head as he again plays the poor person who is "blamed for everything."

He sees a great brotherhood "conspiracy" and claims that "religious politics are being played." This assertion is a slap in the face of every Christian who opposes his view. Again, he seems unable to admit (even to himself) that we reject his teaching because it is simply false.

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# Contending FOR THE Faith™

David P. Brown, Editor and Publisher  
jbrow@charter.net

Michael Light, Assistant Editor  
mclight@bwoodtx.com

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

# SEASON'S GREETINGS

At this time of the year we at *Contending for the Faith* take this opportunity to wish our readers a happy peaceful season of good things. As we assemble with our families and dear friends to enjoy what God in his gracious providence has bestowed upon us, let us count our blessings. In doing so let us not forget to thank God for them. As James wrote: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

The freedoms and material wellbeing that the great majority of us in these United States experience, but all too often take for granted, continue to be unknown by most of the people on this planet. Besides the material things, to be a Christian in such surroundings and security should cause all members of the Lord's church to humbly approach the throne of God's grace with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving for the spiritual blessings we have in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

As we rightly rejoice in God's providential care, let us realize that along with these privileges comes responsibilities of equal proportion (Luke 12:48). God expects us to use what we have and are to spread and defend the gospel (Mark 16:16; II Timothy 2:2; Jude 3). Indeed, we are to practice “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father” by “visit[ing] the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep [ourselves] unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). In whatever time we have left on this earth, may we seek to use it as Christ taught in Matthew 6:33. With these points in mind *CFTF* wishes everyone a season full of joy and a happy new year.—DPB

## Attention!

As of January 2005 *Contending for the Faith* will be available on the internet in PDF format. We decided to offer the paper via this medium (1) to give our subscribers the choice of receiving *CFTF* in its paper format or in its PDF format over the internet and (2) to allow those subscribers with internet access outside the United States to receive it as quickly as those subscribers in the United States (at times more quickly than in the U.S. because of the U.S. mail delivery system).

We will adjust the amount of our U. S. dollar subscription to the rate of exchange in the currency of the country where the subscriber is a citizen or resides. When one subscribes for the PDF format of *CFTF* that person will receive a code that is good for as long as he/she is a paid subscriber. To use the code one may go to [churchesofchrist.com](http://churchesofchrist.com) and choose the button for *Contending for the Faith*. When one reaches the *Contending for the Faith*, page the directions found on the page will direct you to where you may enter your code and thereby gain access to the PDF format of the paper. We will have more to say about receiving *CFTF* over the internet in our January issue. If you have questions about subscribing to *CFTF* over the internet please fill free to email me at [jbrow@charter.net](mailto:jbrow@charter.net).—Editor

### Editorial...

## LEST WE FORGET

With this November/December issue of *CFTF* we find another year quickly drawing to a close. Thus, as is true with every passing day, we are closer to that final, complete, great and terrible Judgment Day. Yes, if our Lord does not come back first, we must die (I Thessalonians 4:15-18). However the Hebrews writer reminds us—“**but after this the judgment**” (Hebrews 9:27). Following our Lord’s appearance in the clouds when “**every eye shall see him,**” he “**shall judge the quick and the dead**” (Revelation 1:7; II Timothy 4:1b; II Thessalonians 1:7-10). Indeed, on that day all of us shall

**stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God** (Romans 14:10b-12).

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Those who lived under the laws of Patriarchy and Moses will be judged by those standards of Godly conduct. We who live under the authority of Christ shall be judged according to the New Testament (John 12:48). As the inspired James, Paul and Peter wrote:

**So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead** (James 2:12 [see also James 1:21-25]; Romans 2:16; I Peter 4:5, respectively.)

Thus, the apostle John wrote:

**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works** (Revelation 20:12).

From of old this great and notable day was declared. As Solomon wrote: **“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”** (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Also see 11:9; I Peter 1:16, 17).

**Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish** (Psalm 1:5).

#### **SENTENCED TO DEATH OR LIFE**

All should understand that the final Judgment is *not* a time and place whereby it is determined that men are saved or lost. One’s condition at the judgment will be the same condition in which one is found at death or at the return of Christ (I Corinthians 15:58; Luke 16:19-23; Revelation 2:10). It is in this life that we prove to God by our obedience to the gospel and faithful adherence to his cause that we love, trust, and believe in him, his Christ and the New Testament System of salvation or we do not. On that day the Lord will sentence men to eternal glory or eternal doom based on their words and deeds while on earth (Matthew 25:34, 41; 7:21-23).

When the proceedings of that majestic and dread tribunal are forever closed, the resurrected righteous shall enter Heaven to experience and fully enjoy glory, honor, majesty, peace, happiness, contentment and love. Indeed, this is life eternal that no mortal mind can grasp and no fleshly tongue can express (Matthew 25:31-40; I Corinthians 15: 35ff, II Corinthians 5:1-6; I John 3:1-2).

#### **DYING OUTSIDE OF CHRIST**

But, what of those who die in sin and by it are separated from God (Romans 3:23)? By their repu-

diation of the gospel of Christ, they spurned God’s love, saving grace and mercy. The shameful, agonizing, ignominious and vicarious death of the sinless Son of God on Golgotha’s tree to make forgiveness of man’s sin possible for mankind meant nothing to them. Hence, for these loathsome characters there is no escape from the damnation of a devil’s hell. Into outer darkness the Lord of glory shall sentence them. And, into that abyss of blackness they will forever go. Therein they will suffer eternally the consequences of dying in a lost condition, guilty of sins they loved to commit (I John 3:4; James 4:27; II Thessalonians 2:12). Upon their minds will be the full reality that they could have used their sojourn on earth to find God, his Christ and his truth. Thereby they would have found the salvation that comes by doing the will of Christ—but they did not because they would not (Joshua 24:15; Matthew 7:7; 23:37; Luke 16:31; John 8:31, 32; Acts 17:27; 28:24-28). And, in that total eternal absence of light they will experience intense pain, anguish, shame, remorse, and contempt. Furthermore, there will be no hope (expectation) of relief from their excruciating misery. Such are the dreadful and eternal consequences of entering eternity having lived one’s life in rebellion to God. This is hell, the second death—eternal separation from God and all that such a separation implies (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 22:13; 25:30; Jude 13). They will be tormented day and night with only **“the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars”** for their companions (Revelation 14:11). Their worm will not die nor will the fire tormenting them be quenched (Mark 9:44). Therein is found no particle of peace, happiness, joy, contentment or the possibility of any attribute of goodness in that **“lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”** (Matthew 25:41-46; Revelation 21:8). **“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever and they have no rest day or night”** in that **“furnace of fire.”** And, to accompany their ascending smoke, hell’s cacophony—the phantasmagoric **“wailing and gnashing of teeth.”** It is the “music” of wretched lost souls, devoid of all hope. This hellish racket in the pit of outer darkness forever evidences God’s vengeance of which our loving Lord and the Hebrews writer warned (Revelation 14:11; Matthew 13:42; Matthew 10:28; Hebrews 12:29). As Paul wrote:

**...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance**

**on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power:** (II Thessalonians 1:7-10).

#### **DYING UNFAITHFUL TO CHRIST**

And, what of those who believed and obeyed the gospel in being baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins (Romans 10:17; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26, 27) who for a time lived the Christian life, but who were overtaken in a trespass (Galatians 6:1)? The apostle Peter tells us.

**For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning** (II Peter 2:20).

Of those who once knew the New Testament system of salvation, but turned from it, the Hebrews writer warned:

**For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, and unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.** (Hebrews 10:26-31).

Thus, we are again reminded of God's truth concerning death, the judgment, eternal life and eternal damnation. We who have obeyed the gospel are God's children, his soldiers, members of the body of Christ, citizens of the kingdom of heaven and the elect of all the earth. We would do well to allow the implications of our relationship to God and what transpired to bring it about to sink deeply into our being as we consider our ways.

#### **IN VIEW OF THE JUDGMENT WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**

In view of these great truths about the judgment and the eternity to follow, why are we not more...

1. Determined, steadfast and vigilant in our efforts to hold tenaciously to the truth of God on all matters?
2. Fervent and zealous in teaching the truth of salvation to those lost in sin?

3. Resolute, honest and objective in opposing error in our own lives?
4. Diligent and fair toward all in our examination and refutation of error and ungodly living—no matter who teaches it or the personal costs to us in refuting it?
5. Resolute in marking false teachers and avoiding them, no matter their popularity and relationship to us or our friends?
6. In love with the brethren—the elect of the earth, God's family, his army, the saved and God's trophies?
7. Concerned about practicing corrective church discipline—if necessary the faithful withdrawing fellowship from the erring children of God who reject and repudiate all efforts to bring them to repentance?
8. Thankful and humble before God because of his goodness toward us?
9. Godly in our daily living and in our dealings with all people?
10. Bold, confident and contrite in our supplications and prayers to God?
11. Sacrificial in giving of our lives and possessions in service to God?
12. Full of reverential awe as we approach God for the purpose of worshipping him?
13. Compassionate for the orphans and widows in their afflictions?
14. Firm in our commitment to do good unto all men, especially the children of God; in everything careful to allow the Bible to teach us the meaning of "good" and how to practice it?

Why do some of us, certain preachers and elders included, cower in the face of Satan's pack of snarling wolves as they go about their wicked work of ravishing the flock of God? Do some of us practice respect of persons in our proclamation and defense of the whole council of God? Do some of us lie? Are some of us guilty of practicing hypocrisy? If such is the case, we must repent of such sins (as well as all other sins). Then, without fear, favor or respect of persons, we must apply God's truth fairly and equally to ourselves, our friends and foes alike.

All opportunities for us to change for the good will end when we die. Therefore, in this vapor like life is found the only time for us to prove to God that we love him, have faith in him and his system of salvation (James 4:14; Romans 1:16; Jude 3). With the pre-

ceding points in mind we will touch on several matters of concern to all of us regarding certain people's activities within the body of Christ.

#### **HERB ALSUP AND THE WOODBURY, TENNESSE CHURCH**

In our May 2004 issue of *CFTF* (pages 21, 22), we printed an article by **Kent Bailey**. In his article Bailey dealt with some of the inconsistencies between what **Malcolm Hill** teaches and what he practices. Bailey pointed out that while Hill complained about certain preachers appearing on programs with false teachers, he was guilty of not practicing what he preached. One example of Hill's inconsistency cited by Bailey was Hill's use of Herb Alsup to speak on the *Tennessee Bible College Lectures*. Alsup is the preacher for the Woodbury, Tennessee Church of Christ. Bailey pointed out that Alsup was in fellowship with and a friend of **Paul Rogers** of the liberal Centerville, Tennessee Church of Christ. Rogers was a supporter of the now defunct and spiritually corrupt *Nashville Jubilee*. Bailey also noted that the Woodbury church had endorsed Easter Sunday and some of her members had practiced baby dedication.

#### **AN OPEN LETTER FROM HERB ALSUP**

In response to Bailey's previously mentioned article in *CFTF* Alsup replied in an "Open Letter" to *CFTF* and *Living Oracles*. (*Living Oracles* is one of Hill's publications). Alsup also wrote a letter to Kent Bailey. The letter to Bailey contained the same material as did Alsup's "Open Letter" sent to the previously named papers. Alsup's "Open Letter" appeared in *Living Oracles*, but Bailey's letter replying to it was not printed. However, Hill had Bailey's letter in plenty of time to include it in the same issue of *Living Oracles* in which Alsup's "Open Letter" appeared. The following is Alsup's "Open Letter" just as we received it.

#### **OPEN LETTER TO THE READERS OF "CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH" AND "LIVING ORACLES"**

In the May, 2004 issue, Kent Bailey, in his "Last Word..." — "Malcolm Hill, The Holy Spirit Controversy, and Special Pleading," made several charges against me and the Woodbury Church of Christ. For the readers' information, I do not know Mr. Bailey, and as far as I know, he has never been to Woodbury to worship, or to Cannon County. How he has received his false information I do not know. I do, however, challenge him to demonstrate that his charges are true or repent.

For the readers information, I state the following as true:

1. I **do not** endorse the "concept of Easter Sunday" and never have, if by "the concept of Easter Sunday Mr. Bailey means having special Easter services, sunrise services, etc. I do believe that I preach the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4), and believe it is right to "preach Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). If following the path of the Apostle Paul is wrong, I plead guilty. However, I do not believe it is wrong, and Bailey is wrong to contend that it is.

2. The *Nashville Jubilee*. The Woodbury Church of Christ and I have never supported this Nashville event. I have checked our bulletins and our announcement sheets all the way back to 1990, and Bailey can come and do the same. This event has never been publicized, or announced. I have personally never attended this event.

3. Paul Rogers. Paul and I are friends. About 20 years ago, he conducted a gospel meeting for the Woodbury Church and I have spoken at Centerville. Through the years I have received his bulletin and he mine. We have encouraged each other, challenged each other, and I have learned a great deal about "building" the Lord's church in a small town, humanly speaking. There are some issues that I have discussed with him on which we disagree.

4. Dedicating babies. The Woodbury Church of Christ has never had a baby dedication.

5. Foot washing. In a Bible Class, a teacher thought he was doing a "good thing" by giving a demonstration of foot washing when studying John 13. It is sad how church gossipers have taken this and made more than was ever intended. I will also say to Mr. Bailey that footwashing as a religious practice will never be done on my watch.

Brethren, Kent Bailey has drunk deep and long from the devil's cesspool of gossip, lies, rumors, and has taken them and now spread them maliciously. He himself has now become a liar, a gossip, a rumor monger. I have asked him to come to the Woodbury Church personally and repent and to use his column to repent. I have asked his elders to send him.

You will know and I will know soon if he has the heart and the spirit to do what is right or if he will remain in his unsaved condition. I will also say that on any "rumor" or "gossip" that Malcolm Hill has ever heard, he has always called to verify the information.

Herb Alsup

Woodbury Church of Christ  
100 East Water St.  
Woodbury, TN 37190

**BAILEY'S REPLY TO ALSUP**

**CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PHONE: (865) 986-5698  
PO BOX 292  
LENOIR CITY, TENNESSEE 37771  
KENT BAILEY, EVANGELIST**

August 12, 2004

Herb Alsup  
Church of Christ at Woodbury  
100 East Water Street  
Woodbury, Tennessee 37190

Dear brother Alsup:

In response to both your open letter to the readers of *Contending For The Faith* and *Living Oracles* as well as your personal letter of August 6<sup>th</sup>, I make the following response:

You have requested that I travel to the Woodbury Church and make a trip down the aisle in order to repent and make a confession of sin. Well Herb, that is not going to happen due to the fact that I have not sinned and have accurately reported the facts at hand. The truth of the matter is that you and the brethren at Woodbury need to repent of the error in which you are involved. For your information I have spent a few days in Cannon County. Back in April I preached in a meeting with the Midway Church of Christ and stayed in the home of Paul Curless, the Midway preacher, who happens to live in Cannon County. I admit that I have not attended a worship assembly at the Woodbury Church, but that has no bearing at all regarding this issue. I have preached a number of sermons about Hell. Surely you do not think I need to first of all go there to personally experience the heat before I am qualified to speak on the subject do you?

You have stated that you *do not* and *never have* endorsed the concept of Easter Sunday. Well, let's see about that. In your own bulletin, *The Watchman*, the April 6<sup>th</sup> issue in your own personal column you wrote:

**Sunday, Easter Sunday as it has become known—truly a remarkable day in the history of the world—the Lord Jesus came forth from the grave—alive forever, the Saviour for all mankind! So,**

**I'm looking forward to seeing each of you, plus many visitors who will be here, this Sunday!**

Brother Alsup, if you do not and never have endorsed the *concept* of Easter Sunday, then why did you refer to the day that our Lord was raised as Easter Sunday? I never stated that you brethren had a sunrise service, or a different type of assembly. I showed that you endorsed the *concept* of Easter Sunday in advocating that as the day of Christ's resurrection. You attempted to throw up a smoke screen and pull a flanking movement on me, but it will not work!

I certainly have no problem preaching "Christ and him crucified". That's not the issue. The issue is did Christ arise from the grave on Easter Sunday?

Indeed he arose on the first day of the week, however that does not make it Easter Sunday. The resurrection occurred prior to that Catholic "holy day."

You stated that you never supported or attended the Jubilee. You also indicated that you have looked through the back issues of your bulletin and announcement sheets dating back to 1990 and have found no endorsement of this event. May I suggest that you look a bit more diligently. You may want to go back to 1989, the year Jubilee originated. I have found that many things can happen to bulletins. There are times when they can be misplaced, or accidentally thrown away. Herb, one of your former members, brother Arnold Cook, informed me that an announcement was made in the worship assembly and did appear in the bulletin endorsing this apostate gathering, and that he both heard and saw such. The fact that you brethren have had Paul Rogers, a noted Jubilee speaker and promoter, preach at Woodbury and also because you have gone to speak at Centerville lends strong credibility to brother Cook's charge against you brethren. While we are on the subject of the Nashville Jubilee, do you agree, or disagree that Nashville Jubilee was a sinful and apostate gathering, and that those who endorsed, promoted, and supported such were guilty of sin? Now Herb, don't pull another flanking movement on me, just answer the question as to whether or not you agree, or disagree with my assessment. You have indicated that the readers of both *Contending For The Faith* and *Living Oracles* have the right to know the facts regarding this controversy. I am in full agreement with you on that, so please don't beat around the bush

and say that there are some things at Jubilee that you did not endorse. Please tell us plainly as to whether or not you believe that the Jubilee was an apostate sinful gathering and those who were associated with such are guilty of sin.

You made a defense of Paul Rogers and sought to justify having him preach at Woodbury in addition to your preaching at Centerville. Within the April 13<sup>th</sup> issue of *The Watchman* you wrote:

**Centerville, TN—a bright and shining light for Jesus Christ. What a privilege was afforded me last Sunday night to be with this good church and her preacher, Paul Rogers. Brother Paul has been a great inspiration to your preacher and a great encourager in our work here. This great church is gearing up for a great push forward to grow the kingdom of God in Hickman County!**

Herb, do you agree, or disagree with my assessment that brother Rogers sinned in his promoting and participating in Jubilee? Again, don't pull a flanking movement, or throw up a smoke screen. Just tell us precisely where you stand. If brother Rogers sinned in participating in Jubilee, why do you speak of him in glowing terms? If he did not sin then why don't you come on out and admit that you had no fellowship problems with Jubilee, or those identified with such? You cannot have it both ways. Just saying that you disagree with Paul on some issues does not address the fellowship question. And while we're on the subject of brother Rogers; do you agree with his stance on endorsing David Lipscomb University? What about it, Herb? The readers of *Contending For The Faith* and *Living Oracles* have the right to know where you stand. Do you agree, or disagree that endorsing the current situation at David Lipscomb University is sinful?

You deny that the Woodbury Church has ever had a baby dedication, however brother Arnold Cook stated precisely to me that you brethren *did that very thing* and that such occurred in an assembly of the church with your associate preacher, Al Bugg, Jr. leading the prayer of dedication. Since you deny this please allow me to raise another question. Do brethren sin when they, either distributively or collectively in the local church dedicate babies to the Lord? Now don't beat around the bush, tell us plainly as to whether or not you believe that such dedications are either sinful, or non-sinful. After all, the readers of *Con-*

*tending For The Faith* and *Living Oracles* have the right to know.

Then there is this matter of religious foot washing. You deny that such a practice occurred saying that such would never be done on your watch; then you turn right around and admit that such did occur in one of your Bible classes as they studied John 13. You attempted to extricate yourself from the horns of this hopeless dilemma by saying that some had made more out of it than was ever intended and said it was only a demonstration, or an object lesson. You have a problem here Herb. In light of I Timothy 5 we are not to practice foot washing in a religious context, or even as an object lesson, but rather in a domestic context to relieve a physical need. To practice foot washing as a demonstration within a Bible class arrangement today is to engage in religious activity. If you deny that it is a religious act, then you are admitting that you have a non-religious act going on as a component of Bible study. Herb, you can really wiggle yourself into some serious problems with your present form of reasoning, and by the time we are finished with this controversy you're going to graduate from wiggling to squirming. One other thing. Brother Cook was an eyewitness to a foot washing being used as a "demonstration" during one of Al Bugg's sermons at a Sunday evening worship assembly.

I found some interesting material in your bulletin regarding those whom financial support is given: Juan Monroy, noted for his work with the liberal Herald of Truth Ministries, the human institution known as *Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Agency*, designed to centralize and supplant the work of the church by rejecting the New Testament pattern for a human agency. You brethren have some significant problems with liberalism.

You have accused me of drinking deeply from the devil's cesspool of lies, gossip, and rumors. Herb, this is not the case at all. You have taken the typical liberal approach in denying the obvious, then attacking those that expose the problems.

If that is the course you choose to pursue, then have at it! All of the denials of the obvious you may desire to make, and all of the personal attacks you will mount will not stop those of us who are set for the defense of the gospel and earnestly contend for the faith.

Sincerely,



(Signed)  
Kent Bailey

cc: Elders at Lenoir City; Elders at Woodbury;  
David P. Brown; Malcolm Hill

**LENOIR CHURCH CHRIST ELDERS'**  
**REPLY TO ALSUP**  
**Church of Christ**  
**phone: (865) 986-5698**  
**PO Box 292**  
**Lenoir City, Tennessee 37771**

August 11, 2004

Herb Alsup  
Church of Christ at Woodbury  
100 East Water Street  
Woodbury, Tennessee 37190

Dear brother Alsup:

We are writing in answer to your letter to us as dated August 6 in addition to your "Open Letter" addressed to *Contending For The Faith* and *Living Oracles*. Please note our response to the points you have raised.

1. You deny that you endorse "the concept of Easter Sunday", however in reading your column in the April 6<sup>th</sup> issue of *The Watchman* that is exactly what you did. You referred to the day that Jesus arose from the grave as **Easter Sunday**. Your emphatic denial is useless.

2. It is beside the point as to whether or not you personally ever attended the Nashville Jubilee. One of your former members, brother Arnold Cook has indicated to Kent Bailey (the preacher and one of the elders here) that an announcement was made both in the assembly and in the bulletin at the Woodbury Church regarding this event. Brother Bailey telephoned Brother Cook to make sure that he was willing to stand by this report and he strongly insists that he heard the announcement made in addition he also read it in your bulletin. The fact that Paul Rogers, a well known promoter and speaker at the Nashville Jubilee, has preached at Woodbury and you have preached at Centerville lends credibility to this charge.

3. You indicated that you do not agree with Paul Rogers on certain issues and have discussed those areas of disagreement with him. Please specify to us the areas in which you and Paul differ. Obviously, according to the praise that you gave Paul Rogers, both you and the Woodbury Church

are in fellowship with him.

4. You deny that you brethren have ever had a special baby dedication service. Again, brother Cook indicated to Kent Bailey that he was an eye witness to such taking place. It may not have been conducted in a special service, however, brother Cook indicated that he actually saw such take place with your associate preacher, Al Bugg, Jr. leading the prayer of dedication in a worship assembly.

5. You deny that the Woodbury Church has ever engaged in the practice of foot washing as a religious act; then you admit such did occur in one of your Bible classes. You indicated that such was a demonstration of foot washing as recorded in John 13. Brother Alsup you have contradicted yourself. How could engaging in such a practice in a Bible class as a demonstration in John 13 not be a religious act? Do you brethren actually allow non-religious acts to be practiced in either your Bible classes or worship assemblies?

There are some additional practices of the Woodbury Church that we would not endorse that have been reported in your bulletin. Brother Bailey will address them in his letter to you.

We see no value in traveling to Woodbury for a meeting with both you and the elders there for two reasons: (1) Kent Bailey has not misrepresented you and is not guilty of lying about you or the Woodbury Church. (2) When one plainly writes something then either denies it, or contradicts it there is no value in expending funds for travel to even attempt to have a face to face meeting.

If you desire to continue this discussion in writing with Kent Bailey, then by all means do so.

Sincerely,

The Elders of Lenoir City Church of Christ:

(Signed) (Signed)

Bill Johnson Mac D. Tritt

(Signed) (Signed)

Barry Simmons Kent Bailey

cc: Elders at Woodbury; David P. Brown; Malcolm Hill

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING TWO  
BULLETINS ON PAGES TEN AND ELEVEN  
FROM THE WOODBURY, TENNESSEE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**



**THE WATCHMAN**  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**at WOODBURY**  
 100 East Water Street \* Woodbury, TN

Vol 104 no. 15  
 April 13, 2004

E-mail: [wcoc@dtccom.net](mailto:wcoc@dtccom.net)



**Herb  
 Sez**

Herb Aisup

*My, my what a Sunday in the Lord's House!* We began with the announcement of two precious souls being baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ - **Julie Reed and Mac Todd**, and the restoration of two souls - **Phillip Reed and Jason Couch!** How we praise God for the blessing of salvation!

*And what a crowd assembled in God's House* to praise His Holy Name and to rejoice that Jesus arose - He arose, Hallelujah, Christ arose!!! **846** God loving people shared that Hallelujah chorus Sunday!! **462** were in the study of His Holy Word, and **292** returned Sunday night.

*Centerville, TN* - a bright and shining light for Jesus Christ. What a privilege was afforded me last Sunday night to be with this good church and her preacher, **Paul Rogers**. Brother Paul has been a great inspiration to your preacher and a great encourager in our work here. This great church is gearing up for a great push forward to grow the kingdom of God in Hickman County!!

*We, too, must "gear up!"* Our spring revival is just around the corner - **Kirk Brothers** will be our guest speaker - You will be blessed and inspired with his preaching of the gospel .. Set your calendar - **April 25-28!!**

*See You Sunday, Bible in hand, message of God on my heart!*

# Spring Revival

## April 25-28

with

# Kirk Brothers

Gospel Preacher  
 Graymere Church of Christ  
 Columbia, Tennessee



**THE WATCHMAN**  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**at WOODBURY**  
 100 East Water Street \* Woodbury, TN

Vol 104 no. 14  
 April 6, 2004

E-mail: [wccoc@dtccom.net](mailto:wccoc@dtccom.net)



**Herb  
 Sez**

**Herb Alsup**

*Wonderful, Wonderful, Jesus is to me!* So says the song we sing from time to time! This past week, Alex Davenport was baptized into Jesus Christ! Praise God! That same Wednesday night, Alex's dad, Corey Davenport, and also Jeff Smith asked our prayers as they rededicated their lives to the Saviour! How we thank God for the wonderful increase!

*Great Start for the meeting* with the Pleasant Hill congregation in Nashville. Their building was about full for both services Sunday. And, they announced their plans to relocate onto Bell Road near the Elm Hill Marina. Their present location near the airport has become mostly commercial.

*Our friend, Gerald McAllister*, formerly an elder at Emerald Beach, Panama City, has moved to Franklin, TN, working in the prison ministry - reports 30 baptisms through that ministry, plus 5 of the inmates family members baptized! Keep up the good work, brother!

*Sunday, Easter Sunday* as it has become known - truly a remarkable day in the history of the world - the Lord Jesus came forth from the grave - alive forever, the Saviour for all mankind! So, I'm looking forward to seeing each of you, plus many visitors who will be here, this Sunday!



*They that wait  
 upon the Lord  
 Shall renew their strength.  
 They shall mount up with  
 wings like eagles;  
 They shall run  
 and not be weary;  
 and they shall walk,  
 and not faint.  
 Isaiah 40:31*



Anyone who is capable of looking at and recognizing a picture as well as being able to read English can readily see that the preceding two bulletins are from the Church of Christ at Woodbury, Tennessee. In examining them one notices the column headed with Alsup's picture and entitled "Herb Sez." His name, Herb Alsup, is attached to each column in each bulletin, identifying who wrote each column in each bulletin. The first bulletin is designated as Vol. 104, no. 14, April 6, 2004 and the second bulletin is Vol. 104, no.

15, April 13, 2004. To put it mildly, Alsup's "Open Letter" just does not "square" with what he wrote in his bulletin.

#### THAT'S NOT ALL FOLKS

The announcement for the "Homecoming at Cripple Creek Presbyterian Church" with "Special music by *The Watchmen*" appeared in the *Cannon Courier* on August 26, 2003. Following the Presbyterian advertisement is a picture taken in the summer of 2003 of the Goosepond United Methodist Church's sign and marquee. The message on the marquee reads: "HOMECOMING JULY 13 BY FAITH WATCHMEN"



#### MY "OPEN LETTER" TO HERB ALSUP

In view of the previous public advertisements from the Presbyterians and Methodists regarding the singing group, *The Watchmen*, appearing at their respective homecomings, as well as other matters dealt with by Kent Baily and Herb Alsup in their exchange of letters, I am posing the following questions for Herb Alsup to answer. And, since in his reply to Kent Bailey he informed him that he keeps the Woodbury elders informed of all he does, then Alsup may ask them to answer the same questions or at least seek their help in answering my questions. Please answer true or false to the following statements.

1. **T F** Millard Young is a member of the singing group, *The Watchmen*?
2. **T F** Millard Young is a member of the Woodbury Church of Christ
3. **T F** Millard Young leads singing for the Woodbury Church of Christ?
4. **T F** Some members of *The Watchmen* are members of the church of Christ?
5. **T F** Some members of *The Watchmen* are members of the Woodbury Church of Christ.
6. **T F** All members of *The Watchmen* are members of the Woodbury Church of Christ.
7. **T F** In appearing as advertised at the Presbyterian and Methodist homecomings *The Watchmen* sinned.



- 8. T F** Paul Rogers is a faithful gospel preacher.
- 9. T F** As A Christian, I, Herb Alsup, am in full fellowship with Paul Rogers.
- 10. T F** I, Herb Alsup, was so upset and offended by Paul Rogers' involvement with the now defunct *Nashville Jubilee* that I wrote a letter to him in which I used the same language to expose him for his liberalism that I used in attacking Kent Bailey for writing what he did about the Woodbury Church of Christ.
- 11. T F** As a Christian, I, Herb Alsup, am in full fellowship with Malcolm Hill.
- 12. T F** I, Herb Alsup, know as Christians that Malcolm Hill and Paul Rogers are in full fellowship with each other.
- 13. T F** As a Christian, Malcolm Hill is in full fellowship with me, Herb Alsup.
- 14. T F** As a Christian, Garland Elkins is in full fellowship with me, Herb Alsup.
- 15. T F** As a Christian, Curtis Cates is in full fellowship with me, Herb Alsup.
- 16. T F** Arnold Cook, a longtime Gospel preacher in Middle Tennessee, is a liar when he declares that "foot washing" was practiced by anyone in a Bible class of the Woodbury Church of Christ.
- 17. T F** Arnold Cook is a liar when he declares that "foot washing" was practiced during an evening worship service of the Woodbury Church of Christ.
- 18. T F** Arnold Cook is a liar when he declares that he was present in a Woodbury Church of Christ assembly in which a baby dedication service was conducted.
- 19. T F** The Woodbury Church of Christ financially supports the Herald of Truth Ministries.
- 20. T F** The Woodbury Church of Christ fellowships the Herald of Truth Ministries.
- 21. T F** The elders of the Woodbury Church of Christ have read the transcription of the 1973 Memphis Meeting concerning the Herald of Truth.
- 22. T F** I, Herb Alsup, have read the transcrip-

tion of the 1973 Memphis Meeting concerning the Herald of Truth.

**23. T F** "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort" organization is authorized by the New Testament.

**24. T F** "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort" organization is the official arm of benevolence for churches of Christ.

We have printed Alsup's "Open Letter." Will he answer the previous twenty-four True/False questions so we can print his answers in *CFTF* as we did his "Open Letter"? I would be more than happy to print his efforts to show that the Herald of Truth Ministries as they exist and teach today are authorized by the New Testament. Also, I would be glad to do the same if Alsup desires to attempt to defend "Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort." Furthermore, the same is true regarding any efforts Alsup might make in an attempt to prove that Paul Rogers had New Testament authority to support the *Nashville Jubilee*. And, that he, Alsup, had New Testament authority to fellowship Rogers while he (Rogers) was supporting and participating in the *Nashville Jubilee*. Is it not strange that Malcom Hill can write what he does about who should and should not be in fellowship and then do as he has done? Indeed, his conduct is amazingly amazing, but not surprising.

—David P. Brown, Editor

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# Providence, Prayer, and a College President

Daniel Denham

I was surprised to see on the front page of the March 2004 issue of *Living Oracles* out of Cookeville, Tennessee that according to **Malcolm Hill**, president of Tennessee Bible College, I do not believe in “the real Biblical view of providence and prayer.” As to how Malcolm could “divine” that conclusion I have no idea. His article in which the accusation was made ostensibly was dealing with the February 2004 issue of *The Gospel Journal*. The material that I wrote for that issue was in opposition to the doctrine that there is a present baptism of the Holy Spirit. Are we to assume from Malcolm’s tirade that to oppose present day Spirit baptism is tantamount to rejecting “the real Biblical view of providence and prayer”? Is Spirit baptism essential to God’s working in the realm of non-miraculous providence? If so, then did such providence only come into existence as of Pentecost in Acts 2? If Hill asserts that he reached his conclusion relative to my view of these matters on other grounds, then I challenge him to set them forth. I suggest that our brother is either guilty of assuming his case or else of claiming implicitly omniscience in the matter.

## **MALCOLM’S ABUSE OF AUTHORITIES**

Malcolm has stated in other issues of his paper that **Guy N. Woods, Gus Nichols, Franklin Camp, Thomas B. Warren**, and other such noteworthy men would endorse his current defense of **Mac Deaver’s** speculations on the Spirit or, at the very least, not oppose them. It would be interesting to have these men actually able to speak for themselves, especially since they have written so much in opposition to present day Spirit baptism, which M. Deaver to the contrary is now defending with vehemence.

I suppose that we must now conclude that these good brethren really never believed in “the real Biblical view of providence and prayer” either. What can Malcolm say to the contrary, given his own writings? These men would not set foot on the campus at TBC as long as such nonsense is being promoted by her current president and faculty. I personally knew **G.K. Wallace, Franklin Camp, and Guy N. Woods**. I am certain where their sentiments would lie in this matter, and there are numerous others who can attest to the same relative to these men in particular. Any affirmation of a present day baptism by the Holy Spirit by a member of the church would be taken as a sure sign of complete

apostasy on the teaching he is doing relative to the work of the Spirit. The writings of all of these men, including Thomas B. Warren and Gus Nichols, show that they would be opposed to this heresy being promoted by Mac Deaver and now implicitly endorsed by Malcolm Hill.

## **MALCOLM ON PROVIDENCE AND PRAYER**

As to Hill’s meanderings on providence and prayer, several observations are in order. First, it is clear that Malcolm is not clear in his own mind as to what he believes relative to providence and prayer. He asserts that he is not contending for anything miraculous but then so defines the parameters of God’s providential work in such a way as to include any “direct” action by God. Such a broad definition for non-miraculous providence renders the term “miracle” meaningless and incoherent.

Hill needs to define what he means by the word “miraculous,” when his use of the term is so limited that virtually any action of Deity falls outside its parameters. It is almost as though his view of miracles involves operations *outside* the realm of divine activity. Everything God does or has ever done is thus defined as being limited to the natural realm. With this kind of approach the Resurrection of Christ ceases even to be a miracle. All of this is useless tripe on Malcolm’s part designed to justify the unjustifiable position of present day Spirit baptism and some how smuggle it in under the cloak of providence.

## **“DIRECT OR NOT DIRECT?” – THAT IS THE QUESTION**

Second, arising from the foregoing is his problem with the word “direct” itself, as he employs it relative to divine actions. If Hill is correct in his use, then there exists no real distinction between any two actions involving divine causality. Every action is as equally miraculous as any other action, or non-miraculous for that matter, because the definition of a “miracle” itself has been rendered meaningless. Hill, like M. Deaver, then needs to define the term “direct” more clearly in his employment of it. It seems that Hill is using it in the sense of distinct from means at times but then of employing means at other times, which indicates equivocation. For example, at the close of his article he observes:

Another statement about the word ‘direct.’ When we talk about God working in a direct way we are not talking about seeing the work done. When we say God works in a direct way we are not saying that we can *see* the work He is doing. The cutting part of an axe may cut down a tree but the man at the end of the axe handle has a direct effect on the cutting down of the tree (emphasis his, DD).

Given this latter definition, everything then that God does is “direct,” which therefore effectively renders the word meaningless, because its antonym “indirect” is meaningless. Hill’s position then is incoherent. Whether one uses the axe or does not use the axe, it is still “direct,” according to Hill’s warped definition. The man utilizing the axe in order to effect the cutting of the tree, however, is acting *indirectly* relative to the point of contact at which the actual work is done. This implies that the action is indirect, not direct. The use of means (e.g., the axe) implies indirect action. For the man to effect the cutting of the tree directly would require him to use his own body directly *at the point of contact* with the tree. I would give real money to see Hill try to clear acreage with this approach!

He further illustrates his view of the term “direct” by writing:

A bullet shot through the heart of a man may kill him, so, in a sense we may say that the man died of a bullet wound. But the man that had the gun in his hand and his finger on the trigger will go to prison. Why? Because he is directly connected with the murder. Even so, God is directly connected with many events which take place in this life. The days of miracles have ceased but God has not ceased to work in His own given way and in whatever He chooses.

But the man who pulls the trigger uses *means* to accomplish the act of killing. He acted directly relative to pulling the trigger, but which action itself involved an indirect operation on the action of the bullet. The man thus acted *indirectly* as concerns the effect of the bullet striking the heart. *At the point of actual contact* with the victim, the action is indirect as concerns the agent. That is why “means” is a key element in establishing culpability for a crime. Means connects the perpetrator of the action, who is the ultimate or primary cause, to the crime. He may personally, directly have held the gun and pulled the trigger, but *at the point of impact*, where the effect aspect of causality is concerned, it is the bullet that is the focal point of the work. The man did not directly, viz., with his naked hand, put the bullet in the heart. He did it indirectly through the *instrumentality* of the gun. This does not absolve him of the crime. It serves to establish means.

Hill’s last sentence, “The days of miracles have ceased but God has not ceased to work in His own given way and in whatever He chooses,” is totally incoherent as well. If God acts as he has always done or

“chooses” to act in whatever way he has always acted, then the days of miracles have not ceased. It is absurd even to suggest such given Hill’s view. But if miracles have ceased, and they indeed have (I Corinthians 13:8-13), then Malcolm’s definition of “direct” is terribly flawed and his entire concept of divine activity needs serious rethinking.

### **DOES THE USE OF MEANS RULE OUT AGENCY?**

Third, Hill and M. Deaver, interestingly, also misuse the term “personal,” but in the *opposite* direction. It is asserted by these brethren that if one holds that the Holy Spirit executes a particular work through means then he is not in any real or meaningful sense doing the prescribed action. This is especially the case in their discussion of the Spirit’s indwelling, as well as in other areas of activity. Somewhere along the way, it is averred, the actions of the Spirit must be “direct,” in the sense of “without means,” or the Spirit is not really doing anything in any real or meaningful way. But the logic of the position is patently absurd. When a plumber uses the wrench to dismantle a pipe in order to effect repairs on plumbing, does it mean that the plumber did not in any real or meaningful way operate in the prescribed action? Perhaps, for some a position like this might appear a reasonable way to beat the plumber out of his fee for labor costs, but I do not believe the plumber will view it in quite the same way. Neither will his union nor the judge who adjudicates the inevitable lawsuit! When a man with malice of forethought shoots and murders another man in cold blood through the means of a rifle, does it follow that the man did not do anything in any real or meaningful sense relative to the prescribed action? Ask the dead man’s family for a perceptive answer. Was the shooter personally involved in the action? Or does the use of means rule out genuine agency and hence culpability? Hill implicitly shows by his own illustration that it does not. Now watch the next point carefully! If means establishes culpability or responsibility, the agent is indeed doing the prescribed act. The use of the term “personal” by these brethren, like their use of the word “direct,” becomes therefore meaningless and once again their position is logically incoherent.

It is ludicrous to contend explicitly or implicitly that means rules out agency, but that is where the Deaver doctrine finds itself. Hill must decide whether or not the proposition of the Spirit doing anything in actuality in any real or meaningful sense is at odds with the proposition that the Spirit does certain things, such as answering prayer in providence, through means. At present he appears to be rejecting the latter proposition as inconsistent and incongruent with the former.

### **MALCOLM’S DILEMMA**

Fourth, in his speculations Hill needs to some-

where along the way demonstrate beyond dispute a clear case where the Spirit “directly,” in the proper sense of “without means,” actuates a particular event or action in response to scriptural prayer. But he cannot do even this much. As he himself observes, much of what we are dealing with in the realm of providence as it pertains to divine activity involves matters “behind the scenes.” Is Hill going to compel God always to operate in a direct–without means–fashion? M. Deaver seems to be headed in that direction, especially when he takes the position that “**the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**” (Ephesians 6:17) concerns only that which the Spirit gave the saint to use, but is not used by the Spirit! Read M. Deaver’s discussion of Ephesians 6:17 in his most recent article on Spirit baptism in the Spring 2004 issue of *Biblical Notes Quarterly*, pages 15-16!

Fifth, any number of secondary causes may actually stand between the agency of Deity and the recipient of the providential answer that any one of which implicitly rules out the idea of a direct operation on the heart of that party. When Hill asks such patently vacuous questions as, “Should we ask God to give us a safe

journey when we travel? Does God in some way do this in a direct way along the line? Yes No,” it is evident that he does not grasp the most basic cusp of the entire issue. Mac Deaver’s view of providence was designed to justify his notions of a direct–without means–operation of the Spirit in the heart and life of the saints of God. Any indirect operation anywhere along the line of the chain of events (secondary causes), which may in fact be myriad, that may be employed (and thus necessary) in accomplishing the ultimate prescribed action rules out **BY DEFINITION** a direct–without means–operation on the heart and in the life of the saint! Perhaps, this is why Hill has come up with his warped definition of “direct”!

Even prayers for help relative to the aiding of our memory, for example, actually involve a number of considerations—and many, without doubt that are unseen or unknown, in turn involving matters of a secondary causal nature that are indirect as far as the divine activity is concerned. Perhaps, there are distractions that must be in some way dispatched or neutralized involving natural means, or some physical malady in the saint himself that requires a special medical treatment or such

like, or other natural factors (like diet, exercise, etc.) to be dealt with in order for the prayer to be realized and the effect to be produced. It may require, and probably does, a lot more time than we realize to bring about the desired effect when such prayers are even made. In fact, if the one praying such a prayer is expecting a direct, immediate intervention that is contrary to some or even all the physical laws governing the case, then he is clearly expecting a miracle to be performed. Such a prayer should not then be prayed today. It is at odds with God’s expressed will in the matter (cf. I Corinthians 13:8-10).

#### SCRIPTURAL PRAYERS

It should then be realized that simply because one may pray for something, like a “ready recollection of the things studied,” it does not follow that God must or will grant it, or even that the divine economy is so constructed as to include the specific thing for which we have prayed. Be mindful that prayer must be offered in keeping with the will of God (I John 5:14-15) in order to be acceptable. This involves, at least in part, praying for those things God has authorized—things that God has promised. Because we may utter a prayer for something does not obligate God to grant that prayer, and especially if he has not promised, even contingently, that for which we are praying. The efficacy of prayer is dependant upon a number of factors, one of which is that our prayers must accord with the


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word of God. This is essential for it to be offered in faith (James 1:5-6; Hebrews 11:6) for faith itself comes by the word of God (Romans 10:17). The efficacy then is not simply in the desires of the one praying. In the case of the “ready recollection” prayer, for example, if one is praying for something in this regard that the recipient could not otherwise do or would not do aside from a direct and immediate infusion of divine power, then it must be the case that the supplicant is asking for a miracle to be performed. Most brethren do not hold this particular idea relative to the wording of this prayer, but Malcolm and Mac’s position depends upon it, though they eschew to call an affirmative answer from God to it in this manner a “miracle.”

Let Mac Deaver and Malcolm Hill therefore show that some of their examples of prayer, as expressed in Hill’s questions (and Deaver’s as well), have a scriptural basis. They should also demonstrate or define the parameters of the prayer being offered. In the case of praying that God’s will be done, for instance, there was a time in which the will of God involved miraculous activity. Is this included in the scope of their illustrative examples of prayer? We take it from their professed rejection of present day miracles that it is not, but then I never thought they would accept the notion of present day Spirit baptism either!

#### MALCOLM’S DEFEAT

But returning to the key problem facing Hill, it should be remembered that even if he could show one case where a response initially was actuated directly by Deity but where even one subsequent event (much less a chain of events) was indirectly actuated, he still fails to prove his case. All intervening actions rule out direct contact between the primary cause and the ultimate effect in the heart and life of the Christian. If the ultimate effect involves in its last connection an indi-

rect action, the doctrine falls. So then the providential answer to prayer does not really get Mac and Malcolm where they want to go in order to establish their direct operation theory. Note this carefully. Any admission of any indirect-through means— operation of Deity to accomplish the prescribed action at any point in the process rules out *by definition* the idea of a direct-without means—operation in any real or meaningful sense. At the point that any indirect means is employed direct operation must then by definition cease.

Let Hill and Mac Deaver speculate and theorize all they wish about providential answers to prayer. Such does not avail their position. They cannot through that “means” arrive at a direct operation of the Spirit from point A to point Z into the heart and life of the Christian by such a view. Every action must be a direct—without means—action actuated by the Spirit himself in order for there to be a direct operation from the primary cause to the ultimate effect. Any action *naturally* contingent upon any prior action or any action that is not actuated in a direct, immediate fashion by the Spirit and yet is necessary to bring about the ultimate desired effect rules out direct operation from the primary cause, namely the Spirit, and the ultimate effect in the heart and life of the saint.

This is less complicated than it sounds. The line of argument being followed by Hill in his questions is the theological equivalent of trying to establish the existence of a four-sided triangle in geometry. Surely, a college president should realize the absurdity of the latter activity! But then Hill’s article is evidence that having a “doctorate” and being a college president are no assurances of themselves against one holding to an asinine doctrine.

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# MAC DEAVER'S DUPLICITOUS DIATRIBE

(Continued From Page 1)

Personally, I like Mac Deaver. He was about the best instructor I ever had while in preaching school. I learned most of what I know concerning logic, philosophy and debate from Mac. He trained me (and many others who studied under him) to weigh the evidence and draw only the conclusions warranted by it. His arguments and actions over the past ten years on this matter of the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian have failed and continue to fail miserably. It has been painful to watch this once great man destroy himself unnecessarily.

## THEY NEVER ARTICULATED THE DOCTRINE OR ACTED AS MAC HAS

He then attempts a little revisionist history, basically asserting that he is being persecuted for doing the same thing as certain other preachers. Again, Mac's assertions fall short of proving his contention. He repeatedly claims that certain men in the past (**Roy Deaver, Thomas Warren, Andrew Connally, Gus Nichols** and others) held his position on the direct work of the Holy Spirit and they were received with open arms by faithful brethren. This is simply false. There are quotes available from these men denying the very position (direct help, direct illumination, and the like) that Mac claims to hold. And, these quotes we can supply if anyone desires them. In fact about eight years ago I presented a lecture in Spring Texas covering this fact, and to date (as far as I am aware) Mac has said nothing about it.

But even if we grant his assertion (which we do not), these men did not do with their belief in the personal direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian what Mac has done with it. Again, I studied at the feet of Roy Deaver, Mac's father. *Not one time did he begin: at times more quickly than in the U.S. because of the U.S. mail delivery system to teach what Mac is now affirming and for which he is crusading.* Then again, Mac attempts to lay blame on everyone but himself for the problem arising from his Holy Spirit doctrines. He reminds me of a spoiled child who throws a tantrum because he cannot get his way.

## THE MAC ATTACK

The bulk of the rest of this special issue of *BNQ* is comprised of attacks on twelve different men. Mac sees these men as mean spirited perpetrators of a conspiracy against him. The men he attempts to smear include: **Dub McClish, David Watson, B. J. Clarke, Robert Taylor, Terry Hightower, Daniel Denham, Jerry Moffitt, Wesley Simons, Gary Summers,**

**Curtis Cates, Garland Elkins and Keith Mosher.** Let us examine some of Mac's accusations and attempt to determine "who is setting brother against brother."

Mac expresses his opinion (his guess) as to that for which he thinks Dub was "hoping." And, of what did Dub's "hope" consist? According to Mac, it was that he (Mac) would not attempt to answer the concerted effort of the various papers that opposed Mac's Holy Spirit doctrines. I guess Mac's mind-reading skills have sharpened over the years. He used to teach that attempting to ascribe motives to a person without adequate evidence or credible witnesses is illogical, thus absurd. But it seems he has changed his mind on that position also.

Mac sounds like a broken record throughout the special issue of *BNQ*. For one thing, he has debate on the brain. He tells us that he wrote Dub seven letters challenging him to a debate. Then he affirms that he had not received one response. I applaud Dub for not answering him according to his ways.

Again, Mac cries out continually—debate, debate, debate! Now, who is really causing division and pushing the issue? Seven letters to Dub challenging him to debate—the man seems possessed by this one issue. Mac is upset with Dub (to say the least), not understanding how Dub can justify his refusing to debate him since he views Mac as a false teacher. Well, I have received letters from the Pearl Street Church of Christ elders calling Mac's position false. And, Mac does not deride them for not debating him. In this same section (page 3) he accuses Dub and Gary both of sin. Then, he accuses Dub of not knowing what he is saying. And, with almost the same "stroke of the pen" he declares this is not a matter of fellowship.

This assertion by Mac that honor demands we debate him is simply not true. One reason right thinking men should shy away from debating Mac is because of his doctrine regarding deceit. He has argued (as did the late **Bob Berard**) that the Bible affirms "authorized biblical deceit." This makes it difficult to debate a man who will say whatever he needs to say or leave them unsaid whenever it serves his purpose, no matter the hurt done by such misinformation to the person he is debating or the audience attending the debate.

His debate with **Bill Lockwood** (who is presently living in sin) is a case in point. Mac was able to move the focus of the debate from the proper topic to the providence of God. But (1) providence was not the issue and Mac knew it. He knew the "direct opera-

tion” aspect of his teaching was (and still is) the point of contention (and now along with it his doctrine on the continuation of Holy Spirit Baptism for man today). (2) There is more than one way to oppose error. Most of the congregations where Mac has debated (spread his venom) have experienced *needless* difficulties or division as an apparent result of his efforts.

#### **IT IS NOT A FELLOWSHIP MATTER—REALLY?**

As we read this section of that special 2004 *BNQ* we come to what Mac repeatedly considers the most important doctrine. He speaks of the kingdom hanging in the balance, yet he wants to say it is not a fellowship matter. He refers to those who oppose him as radicals (this I guess is loving, fellowship maintaining language). He gets upset because his position is referred to as the “Deaver Doctrine.” He wants us to think he disdains such labels. This is the same man who taught me about (and how to defeat) the “Bales Doctrine.” What hypocrisy. He also taught me that false teaching comes from false teachers. Whether he likes it or not, Mac Deaver is the most prominent defender of this erroneous position of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. I know of no one else who has debated it over and over and over as Mac has done. Mac’s tirade against Dub could be boiled down to the following proposition: “All non-debate tactics to defeat any error are sinful.” I doubt he would sign that, but in view of his hysteria regarding the direct work of the Spirit on the inward man of the Christian, I am made to wonder.

#### **“...ONLY THE BIBLE IS NEEDED”**

Next, Mac goes after David Watson. He writes: “Nowhere does Paul or any other New Testament writer subscribe to the position that all we need is the Bible.” Mac knows that no one has a problem with recognizing the need for help from the church, individual Christians, prayer, providence, and so on.

He also says the Bible is all-sufficiently inspired source material. We ask Mac where the verse is that speaks of the Bible as only source material? We do know that the word of God is referred to as spirit and life (John 6:63). The late Thomas B. Warren wrote a book (*The Bible Only, Makes Christians Only, and the Only Christians*). I suspect Mac does not like that title anymore. There is a section (page 37) entitled “Thus, the Bible makes clear that only the Bible is needed.” Poor ignorant man, Warren should have lived longer so Mac could correct his “careless use of language.” Mac’s quote at the beginning of the paragraph is a straw man. He charges that when one admits there are multiple sources of spiritual strength for a Christian, that, by such an admission, one is implying a direct operation of

the Holy Spirit on the Christian’s inward man. But, Mac’s charge constitutes nothing less than a gross misuse and abuse of the laws of valid inference; for such a conclusion does not necessarily follow.

#### **QUOTES FROM THE LATE GUS NICHOLS**

Next, B. J. Clarke is placed in Mac’s cross-hairs. I have several quotes by Gus Nichols, other than those quotes brother Clarke used, that oppose Mac’s view on the direct work of the Spirit on the heart of a Christian. Mac is totally inept if he thinks he can claim B. J. is a false teacher relative to Nichols’ position on the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian.

Mac does not like the following quote from Nichols regarding what, if anything, the Holy Spirit does to the Christian by his personal indwelling in the Christian’s inward man. That quote from Nichols is: “There are no direct ideas.” (Mac denies this—a fact he cunningly omits in his diatribe in *BNQ*). Mac responds, “I have disclaimed whispering and nudges and empirical perception of the Spirit’s help.” The question of “What is left?” comes to mind.

Mac says he disagrees with the remainder of Nichols’ quote. It reads: “But when you imagine the Spirit in some direct way encourages you, how would He do it? What sort of thought would He present? How much more could He say than has been said?” No, Mac, the previous quote from Nichols is correct. And, we have traditionally opposed all who disagree with it. But, Mac declares that we are the ones “who troubleth Israel.”

Mac then goes into his stale arguments on prayer. I have never understood his insistence that the Holy Spirit must be directly involved with the inward man of the Christian for God to answer prayer. Mac also says, “I have never said that Nichols completely agreed with me.” No, as a matter of fact, Nichols left Mac at the word “direct,” as Mac uses it to describe the Holy Spirit’s work on the inward man of the Christian. And, we too leave him at the same point Nichols did.

#### **“NOVEL DOCTRINES REQUIRE NOVEL DEFINITIONS”**

After presenting 37 questions, Mac lectures us on the need for more precision in our language. Just here it seems appropriate to quote one of the things Mac taught us while we were in school, “Novel doctrines require novel definitions.” Yes, Mac taught me this important point when referencing and refuting **Rubel Shelly’s** “big F little f” fellowship doctrine. However, at the time he was teaching it to us, I never thought that some day it would be correctly applied to him.

Then Mac goes after Robert R. Taylor, Jr. Mac shows virtually no respect for this man who has la-

bored tirelessly in the kingdom. In getting after Taylor, Mac runs back to Freed-Hardeman College lectures (1967). He holds up Thomas B. Warren as the victor in a discussion on the manner or mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that he had with Guy N. Woods in one of the Open Forums of the 1967 lectureship. While in school (based on Mac's influence), I had the idea that Warren just demolished Woods' position on the indirect indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian via the word of God. However, once I obtained a copy of the audio tape of that forum, I believe brother Woods did quite well. I also do not believe we are under any kind of obligation to let the opposition define our terms. Woods would not let Warren do it, and we will not allow Mac to do it. Who does he think he is to insist on his "redefinition" of terms?

Mac goes through his "fruit argument," having to do with the indwelling Spirit directly producing the "fruit of the Spirit." This argument has been disproved (whether he accepts it or not). Mac basically accuses brother Taylor of being a coward for not debating. He acts as if we could all get along if we could just swap pulpits a few times. This is reminiscent of other liberals swapping pulpits with sectarians. Such is sin. Mac should be given no opportunities to seduce people with his ideas.

#### **"...LOGICAL MISTAKES THAT I HAVE MADE"**

In the next section Mac turns his attention to Terry Hightower. He begins with, "I regret the course that Terry has taken." Well, Mac, here is one right back at you—we regret the course you have taken too. He acts hurt that Terry would oppose him. As far as I know, all faithful preachers oppose error regardless of the source (you would think Mac could figure this out).

After admitting that Terry had caught him in some logical mistakes, Mac states, "I have never claimed to be an expert in logic or anything else." The last ten years has born out the truthfulness of this statement. Mac then says, "But my opponent attempts to weaken the impression of what we teach by calling attention to logical mistakes that I have made." How else do you do it? And, has not this been one of the ways that Mac has attempted to weaken and expose his opponents who he believed to be teaching error?

There is much material available on the "fruit of the Spirit" argument that comprises most of this section. Again, by his constant appeal to Terry to debate him, Mac proves he has debate on the mind. The letters in this section show Mac's attempts to dictate who, where, when and how he will debate this matter. He allows himself the liberty to dictate such limitations, but he is highly offended when others exercise the same liberty in these areas.

#### **HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM IS FOR US TODAY**

In the section dealing with Daniel Denham, Mac affirms that Holy Spirit baptism is for today. Now, for all of Mac's confusing talk on the issue, this is very clear. After reading page 15 in the special issue of *BNQ*, I wrote this note (along with several others): "If this is true, then no one has taught the truth on baptism for the past two centuries and all are lost." Of course, just because we have taught (or failed to teach) something does not make it right. But Mac is saying all who preceded his illumination on this doctrine were wrong on baptism and therefore lost (by implication). One cannot be taught wrong and baptized right. Yes, this is a fellowship matter.

#### **DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO**

As we read pages 16 and 17, we can almost hear Mac say, "Everyone is confused but me." The truth is that the confusion is caused by him. Mac gets worked up and says it is not fair to accuse him of believing in miracles. But he does not mind labeling those who oppose him on this matter to be Deists. The legs of the lame are not equal.

It is Jerry Moffitt's name that serves as the heading of the next section of the special issue of *BNQ*. I want to look at a quote from the letter on the bottom of page 20. Mac says, "However, your material contains errors that are serious, but I will not debate you again." Why not? I thought Mac's answer to everything was debate, debate, debate. On page 21 Mac affirms that most brethren believe what he does. To use another of his favorite exclamations I answer him with, "Hardly."

And, why does Mac insist on debating some of us if we already agree with him? He asserts, relative to those who oppose him (page 22): "They are the ones who are helping to destroy the church by teaching us not to count on God at all." (1) Mac knows this is false. This is one of his comments the design of which is to deceive others. And, he does not mind using it in an attempt to score points for himself. (2) If we are destroying churches, how can he say this is not a matter of fellowship for him? Now, regarding the previous quote from Mac in this paragraph, Mac has lied or is a coward. This is strong language, but he is either spending much time and effort in "much ado about nothing" or he thinks he is advocating what he believes to be biblical truth in his (direct operation of the Spirit on the inward man of the Christian) doctrine. Which is it?

Next, he turns his attention to Wesley Simons. Again he whines and cries about brother Simons' refusal to debate. Mac is not an honest opponent. He accuses Wesley of "not practicing the ethics of Christ," and "engaging in religious power politics." Mac then speaks of being disappointed. Well, I for one am disap-

pointed in Mac Deaver. But all that aside, he is the one who chose to believe and do as he has done and is doing. And, he is still wrong.

### **WHO IS IRRELEVANT TO THE CHURCH?**

He then says if we do not change we are going to become a group irrelevant to the church. This comment is nothing more than Mac parroting the liberals among us and magnifying his own importance. He again decries being shot at from a distance. I live in the country. And, I will tell you now, if a mad dog gets on our place, I would rather shoot him with a rifle than cut him with a knife. Although debating is one good way to expose error; it is not the only way.

Let Mac circle **True** or **False** regarding what he believes about the following sentences. (1) Debating is the *only* way to defeat a false teacher. (2) There are other ways, besides debating, to defeat a false teacher. (3) Under certain circumstances it is unwise to debate a false teacher. (4) I, Mac Deaver, refuse to engage in a certain kind of debate regarding the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. (5) Under any and all circumstances I would engage in an oral debate on the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the inward man of the Christian. (6) I, Mac Deaver, have set conditions that must be met before I will agree to debate a matter. I will be so bold as to answer for Mac True or False to the previous questions—(1) **False**, (2) **True**, (3) **True**, (4) **True**, (5) **False**, (6) **True**. If Mac does not like the answers I have given for him, let him change the answers and we shall bring up some other matters relating directly to his changed answers. There is no good reason to give Mac the opportunity to harm members with his sophistry.

### **IN FELLOWSHIP OR OUT —WHICH IS IT?**

This section has Mac telling us we do not have to “know” the whole truth on baptism; we can learn this later (it is a wonder where he gets these revelations). Mac reminds me of denominationalists in this section concerning fellowship. Baptists do not make anything we teach a test of fellowship, but it still is. The same is true of Mac’s teaching. Mac calls Wesley a factious brother, but continues to desire to fellowship him. Believe it, who can? On page 25 he says, “I want Wesley to repent, and I would gladly fellowship him again.” Now that sounds like broken fellowship. Yet, we ask who is “Setting Brother Against Brother?”

### **DID HE RESIGN OR WAS HE FIRED?**

Gary Summers also made Mac’s hit list. In the

first page of the publication Mac said that Gary was fired, in this section he says that Gary resigned. Which is it?

We, as does Summers, agree with the Guy N. Woods’ quote found on page 27. On page 29 Mac defines the word “directly” and includes “...the Holy Spirit affects the human spirit immediately.” This is false. He then complains when Gary accused him of holding some form of Pentecostalism.

Mac again brings out the “in conjunction with the word” material. This is a smoke screen he must retain to have plausible deniability when it comes to the accusations aimed at him declaring that his doctrine is Pentecostalism, but the result is the same. Mac complains when Summers claims that Mac’s position leads to subjectivism. However, Mac’s actions seem to bear this out.

Summers quotes **Franklin Camp**:

as long as we agree that the Holy Spirit convicts leads directs and edifies only through the word of God, whatever differences there may be on the subject ought not to have the least effect on the question of fellowship.

Mac takes exception with Camp’s comment (a fact that is very telling). So I assume he disagrees with it.

Mac finishes with a flurry, lumping three men under the same section—**Curtis Cates**, **Garland Elkins**, and **Keith Mosher**. Just a few lines after imploring elders to study for themselves and not be swayed by editors on this issue, he (an editor) calls on them to read an issue of *BNQ*, which issue deals with the Memphis School of Preaching in a most uncomplimentary manner. He is inconsistent to say the least. This reminds me of **Bill Clinton’s** statement, “It depends on what ‘is’ – ‘is’.” I scarcely see why Mac addresses these three brethren whom he characterizes as ignorant fellows who are without a clue about the work of the Holy Spirit. These are mighty tough charges.

### **WHO HAS MOVED?**

Because we teach that the Holy Spirit only operates on the inward man of the Christian through the word of God, Mac calls us new “antis.” Thus, he accuses us of creating a faction. Of course, by labeling us “antis” he is saying we are binding on brethren that which the word of God does not bind. Well, it seems to me we are where we have always been. Now, who has moved and in what direction?

I will not give much space to the next part of his diatribe in the last *BNQ*. He conjures up this doctrine. He writes on it. He debates it. He calls those who oppose him ignorant. He calls those who will not debate him cowards. He says those who oppose him are killing churches (thereby damning souls). Then he has the audacity to say that we have caused the faction—the man is off his rocker. Again, he whines, “Everyone is to blame but me.” He calls these men incompetent cowards and

says he is watching their honesty fade. But he would have us believe it is not a fellowship matter.

#### **"THE SKY IS FALLING"**

Mac's last paragraph on page 31 states: "I close this literary effort and send it out in prayerful hope that it will help a brotherhood in disarray, and I pray for a better day in the kingdom." Again, I say the man is paranoid and irrational; a veritable "Chicken Little." (In the story when Chicken Little was hit on the head by a falling acorn, he ran all over the place crying out that the sky was falling.) The brotherhood is in as good a shape as it was ten years ago when Mac appeared to be with us. It is Mac who is in a mess, but the faithful brethren are fine.

#### **THINKING OF MAC DEAVER**

Yes, Mac and his erroneous teaching are thought of—thought of as the faithful over the years have thought of the likes of the late **Carl Ketherside**, the late **Reul Lemmons**, the late **James D. Bales**, **Max**

**Lucado**, **Rubel Shelly**, **F. LaGuard Smith** and other persons of like beliefs. Yes, he is thought of, sometimes with tears in our eyes and as we pray to God. But, in view of his deliberate decisions, we take him in stride just as we have had to do with many other brethren who have gone out from us. If he only knew how little (often) he is thought of from the standpoint of it hindering our other efforts for the Lord, it might shock him. Life goes on without him. The truth is taught, souls are won, other battles are fought and congregations edified. We are following Paul's example in fighting the good fight of faith and attempting to finish our course.

As we press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, there are some speed bumps. Deaver and his doctrine make up just one more bump in a long series of them. And, his bump will not be the last one with which we must deal.

—P. O. Box 158  
Bangs, TX 76823

## **MARRIAGE, "ONE FLESH," AND "DISTANCING"**

Gary W. Summers

Those intimacies that are moral within marriage are immoral outside of marriage. If we are uncertain about where God has drawn the line for marriage, then we are uncertain about the line between morality and immorality, because it is the same line.

These words are true and were part of the introduction given at a recent lectureship. Unfortunately, much that followed was not in harmony with the scriptures. The brother who made the remarks about to be examined is—to my knowledge—a sound gospel preacher in every other respect, but he has misspoken in this case. I do not wish to name him, therefore, in the event that he is still studying the issue and is open on the subject. The contents of the speech do deserve a reply, however, since they were made publicly and distributed in outline form.

#### **"ONE FLESH"**

The first point in this presentation (and which is an integral part of the affirmations which follow) is that two expressions in Genesis 2:24 refer to sexual union. The verse reads: **"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his**

**wife: and they shall be one flesh"** (KJV). The argument made on the tape was that one flesh refers to sexual union, as does the term cleaving. To illustrate this point, I Corinthians 6:16 was cited: **"What? know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."**

The speaker admits, "Sexual union alone does not make a marriage," but then he fails to see the way in which he contradicts himself. If one flesh refers solely to the physical act, then why is a young man who contracts with a prostitute not "married" to her? In fact, if he, over a period of time, engages twenty harlots, then why has he not been married (briefly) twenty times? If this seems farfetched, it is based on his definition.

Consider a less extreme case. Suppose a man visits the same prostitute twice a week for a year. If one flesh refers to the sexual union, why are they not married? Better yet, consider one of the 5.5 million couples living in fornication. Neither has been married before and they are living together, enjoying the sexual union as though they were married. Are they? By the

definition assigned to Genesis 2:24 they are. Well, how can they be guilty of fornication if they are married?

Did the speaker really say what I have reported? Below are his exact words, in which he is examining the Lord's citation of Genesis 2:24:

With his reference to Genesis 2, Jesus is referring *only* to the physical joining between the man that God made and the woman that God had made for that man.

The simple principle is this—that when God brought the woman to the man, he joined them in a physical one-flesh union—a union that was not to be disrupted.

This definition of *one flesh* is too restrictive. The *Pulpit Commentary* says, “literally into one flesh,” and then adds: “The language points to a unity of persons, and not simply to a conjunction of bodies, or a community of interests, or even a reciprocity of affections” (1:52). One ought to be able to observe this fact from the text itself. God opened Adam's flesh removed a rib, and made Eve (Genesis 2:21-22). Adam said: “**This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh**” (v. 23). When the text says the two shall be one flesh, it is in the larger context of the passage—not merely sexually.

Woman was taken from man; they were one flesh originally. Now they are two separate beings who are different, yet they complement each other. Their goal in marriage is to be the one flesh they originally were, which includes sexuality, but includes mind and spirit.

### “CLEAVING”

It was alleged that *cleaving* is also a sexual term, but a quick check of its usage demonstrates that this claim is false. The word translated “cleave” in Genesis 2:24 is listed as #1692 in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, which he defines primarily as “to *impinge*, i.e., *cling* or *adhere*.” No strictly sexual connotation is mentioned. Gesenius devotes more than three columns to defining the word (185-87) and likewise does not specifically mention sexual intimacy.

The word is found most frequently in the book of Deuteronomy seven times—not one of these refers to sexual intercourse. Israel was to fear God and cleave to him (Deuteronomy 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20). The people were *not* to cleave to any accursed thing (13:17). If they were disobedient, the Lord would cause pestilence to cleave unto them (28:21) and all the diseases of Egypt (28:60). Nothing in these references (or any others in the Old Testament) suggests a sexual connotation. The claim concerning this word is not accurate.

### “SEPARATING”

The second main hypothesis of this speech was that *separation* constitutes the termination of a mar-

riage. The word translated “put asunder” in Matthew 19:6 does refer to separation in general and is used in I Corinthians 7:10-11,15, where it is translated “depart.” It is also translated “depart” in Acts 1:4, 18:1-2, and Philemon 15. In Romans 8:35, this Greek word (*choridzo*) is translated “separate,” as in “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” This preacher, however, makes an unwarranted assumption about this word, and that it is that *choridzo* always refers to the dissolution of a marriage.

When you enforce space between, when you put room between, when you enforce a separation distance between a man and a woman, you have *choridzoed*, you have put asunder, you have defeated the physical union that they are supposed to have.

The physical union being interrupted does not constitute the termination of the marriage. This brother does cite the exception of “mutual consent,” but this caveat scarcely covers all situations. Men were often gone to war for months at a time. Was that by mutual consent? The speaker frequently said that we should not look at things through 21st Century glasses; okay. Suppose a merchant needed to make a business trip, and his wife said, “Don't go.” If she did not consent, had he *choridzoed* the relationship? Suppose a husband was injured in a battle and could no longer contribute to the sexual union. Has the marriage been put asunder? It has been if being “one flesh” is purely sexual. Or what if age itself prevents one or both parties from intimacy? In those days they had never heard of Viagra or Cialis or Estrogen Replacement Therapy. Are elderly couples therefore unmarried? This is the problem with imposing definitions not in the biblical text.

Or maybe it leads to the kind of thinking that one elder in Northern Illinois expressed two decades ago. “My wife is old and incapable of a sexual relationship any more; so I'm leaving her for a younger woman because I think God wants me to be happy.” According to the position taken in this speech, the elder would have been within his rights, because she had *distanced* herself from him.

In I Corinthians 7:10-11, Paul taught that, if a wife departs from her husband, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled. The speaker concludes that the use of the word *unmarried* proves that the separation has dissolved the union, which is not true. They are unmarried for all practical purposes, because they are separated, but they are not unmarried, period. If they were, they would need to be married again—not reconciled. Reconciliation is a restoration—not a re-formation. A husband and wife can restore their marriage (reconcile) when they have been separated; they

would have to re-form their marriage (marry again) if they were no longer wed.

### AVAILABILITY

The speaker combines Matthew 19:6 with I Corinthians 7:3-4 in an interesting manner. If a wife withholds herself from her husband (or vice versa)—not by mutual consent, but deliberately—then she has put distance between them, and he can terminate the marriage. This view would be particularly appealing to some (the aforementioned elder, for example). Although depriving someone is a sin (provided there is not a sufficient reason for doing so), it is not grounds for putting someone away. The person who behaves in this manner should realize that she, or he, is violating a command of God.

There may be a legitimate reason to “deprive someone,” however. Suppose a man has become physically abusive to his wife. He may be irrational; he may be on drugs; he may be an alcoholic. For her safety (and the children’s, if they have any) she leaves until he regains a measure of sanity and can behave like a reasonable adult. His deprivation is due to his own behavior, and the wife could hardly be blamed in such a matter. Or suppose that the husband has admitted being with a prostitute or having “had an affair.” In this day of AIDS, HIV, and other assorted diseases, the wife would be justified—if she is willing to forgive him—in making certain that she does not partake of his affliction.

The mistake made in this speech is that the speaker assumes that *separation* means the end of the marriage—when it may only mean the obvious—a brief separation due to extenuating circumstances. It is important that we not read into the scriptures more than what may be intended by them. Before we decide that a certain verse definitely means a particular thing, we must test the hypothesis with various examples, as has been done here, and compare our conclusions with other verses. Marriage is about more than sexual union, and divorce is about more than “distancing.”

### CAN ADULTERY OCCUR AFTER SEPARATION?

When two people separate and one of them commits adultery, does the other have a right to obtain a legal divorce? The brother presenting the lesson under review answers, “No.”

If Bill *apoluos* (“puts away”) Jane in 1996 for the wrong reasons, Jane cannot come back in 1999 and *apoluo* Bill for the right reasons.

Jesus teaches in these verses that one who causes the distancing between spouses that disrupts their physi-

cal union—independent of any legal actions that may or may not occur—the person who introduces that distance has *apoloed* the two, and he has *choridzoed* their relationship.”

The thesis seems to be, “If a married couple separates—and then one of them commits adultery, the other is not qualified to obtain a legal divorce. The adultery, in other words, must lead to the separation and not the separation to the adultery. This interpretation may sound good—in theory; however, people’s lives are hardly ever theoretical.

Suppose that Bill and Jane are Christians. Bill really likes Sue and is tired of Jane. He decides to move out of the house and get his own apartment. Jane does not understand; she asks him to go to counseling for their obviously troubled marriage, but he says he does not need help—primarily because he has already decided that he really wants Sue, who is not a Christian, and is willing to consider moving in with him because “his wife doesn’t understand him.” So, Bill refuses to cooperate and moves out. She is stunned and does not know what to do. She may decide that “all men are jerks” and that she never wants to be married again. Eventually, however, she files for a civil divorce. Bill was “faithful” to her when he moved out of the house; so the separation came before the adultery. Does Jane really have no scriptural grounds to remarry? Brethren, this interpretation goes far beyond what the Bible teaches.

Most preachers have had to deal with people in this situation. The victim never agreed to a separation or to a legal divorce. She was faithful in her marriage and has not committed fornication since the separation. Yet some would insist that this individual was somehow guilty of something and denied the privilege of remarriage. Although we understand fully why those who ignore God’s teachings on marriage have lost the blessings of God to remarry (that they lack authority from God to do so), surely the scriptures do not intend for us to believe that those who have scrupulously maintained their moral purity and integrity have lost that right.

The key to this dilemma is to determine whether one or two people have disrespected God’s law of marriage. If both parties agree to an unscriptural divorce, both are disqualified from remarrying. If both commit adultery, the same result occurs. If one does not consent to the “separation” (but has no choice), that wronged individual remains eligible to marry again.

—5410 Lake Howell  
Winter Park, Florida 32792



# 2005 Spring *CFTF* Lectures

FEBRUARY 27 — MARCH 2, 2005

## “MORALS—FROM GOD OR MAN”

David P. Brown, Director

### ~~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27~~

9:30 A. M.	“POSITIVE & MORAL LAWS IN THE BIBLE”	Tom Wacaster
10:30 A. M.	“COVETOUSNESS IS IMMORAL”	David P. Brown
	NOON MEAL PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION	
4:00 P. M.	“GODLY MORALS & THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE”	Jim Nash
5:00 P. M.	“A REVIEW OF THE WARREN-BARNHART DEBATE”	Gary Grizzell
6:00 P. M.	“DRESSING MODESTLY IS MORAL”	Billy Bland

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28

9:00 A. M.	“WHEN DOES GOD APPROVE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE?”	Kenneth E. Ratcliff
10:00 A. M.	“THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICING CORRECTIVE CHURCH DISCIPLINE”	David Baker
*10:00 A.M.	“THE AGED WOMEN LIKEWISE... I”	Carole Moore
11:00 A. M.	“MORALITY & THE NATURE OF MAN”	Steve Wiggins
1:30 P. M.	“GAMBLING IS IMMORAL”	Don Walker
2:30 P. M.	“HETEROSEXUAL FORNICATION IS IMMORAL”	Tim Kidwell
3:30 P. M.	“MARITAL SEX IS MORAL”	Bobby Liddell
	DINNER BREAK	
6:30 P. M.	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 P. M.	“CIVIL LAW & ITS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD’S LAW”	Lynn Parker
8:00 P. M.	“STEALING IS IMMORAL”	Ronnie Hayes

### TUESDAY, MARCH 1

9:00 A. M.	“LYING & BEARING FALSE WITNESS ARE IMMORAL”	Lester Kamp
10:00 A. M.	“THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF MORALITY”	Tom Moore
*10:00 A.M.	“THE AGED WOMEN LIKEWISE... II”	Carole Moore
11:00 A. M.	“GOD EXISTS & MAN CAN KNOW IT”	Michael Light
1:30 P. M.	“MORALITY & THE NATURE OF ANIMALS”	Terry Hightower
2:30 P. M.	“THE INFLUENCE OF MODERNISM & POSTMODERNISM ON MORALITY”	Jerry Murrell
3:30 P. M.	“NOT PROVIDING FOR THOSE IN NEED IS IMMORAL”	John West
	DINNER BREAK	
6:30 P. M.	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 P. M.	“HOMOSEXUALITY IS IMMORAL”	Geoff Litke
8:00 P. M.	“DANCING & OTHER LASCIVIOUSNESS ARE IMMORAL”	Harrell Davidson

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

9:00 A. M.	“MURDER IS IMMORAL”	Keith Mosher
10:00 A. M.	“IDOLATRY IS IMMORAL”	Paul Vaughn
11:00 A. M.	“BEVERAGE ALCOHOL & THE RECREATIONAL USE OF OTHER DRUGS ARE IMMORAL”	
1:30 P. M.	“THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CONTROL IN LIVING A GODLY LIFE”	Dan Cates
2:30 P. M.	“PROFANITY & OTHER ABUSES OF THE TONGUE ARE IMMORAL”	Rick Popejoy
3:30 P. M.	“PORNOGRAPHY IS IMMORAL”	Michael Hatcher
	DINNER BREAK	Gary Summers
6:30 P. M.	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 P. M.	“MORALITY WITHOUT GOD IS IMMORAL”	Kent Bailey
8:00 P. M.	“ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA ARE IMMORAL”	B. J. Clarke

\*LADIES ONLY

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# THE DEMOCRACY OF THE DEAD

Dr. Joseph Graham  
President, Texas Right To Life

“By killing their young, the Democrats are not replenishing their stock”

*[As is obvious the following article was written prior to the 2004 elections. It concerns abortion. And, that is no novel subject. However, what the article's author, Dr. Joseph Graham, points out is most arresting. It is this—the absence of 6,000,000 voters in the extremely close 2000 presidential election. They were absent because they were dead—murdered in their mothers' wombs. Now guess—and only one guess is needed—which political party in 2000 stood to benefit most from these aborted potential voters? And, what about the presidential elections of 2004, 2008, 2012, and all the other elections for other political offices? This is political suicide in more than one way.—D.P.B.]*

In the year 2000, the Presidency of the United States was decided by a total of 537 votes. That was the number of votes that yielded Florida's 25 electoral votes to **George W. Bush**, accompanied by the 271 total electoral votes required to make him President of the United States. The rage and frustration of the Democrats that continues to this day is fueled by the knowledge that despite all their efforts to mobilize the Democratic vote, nearly half of all eligible Democratic voters did not cast a ballot. If they had been able to persuade only 538 more eligible Democrats to vote in Florida, **Al Gore** would be President. Unfortunately for Gore, only ballots actually cast are counted in the final election results. Nevertheless, those who could have voted and for whatever reason did **not, also affect the result.** Those additional 538 Democrats, who could have voted but did not, delivered the Bush presidency.

## ABORTION EFFECTS ON ELECTIONS

Endless studies aimed at discovering why the 2000 Presidential election produced such results have been commissioned. In a very recent study, **Larry Eastland** drew conclusions as to what effect the legalization of abortion has had on recent election results (“The Roe Effect” *Wall Street Journal* Monday, June 24, 2004). Eastland discovered some facts of interest to all Pro-Lifers. Since the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, approximately 1,600,000 babies have died annually as the result of abortion in the United States. In very recent years, those numbers have declined somewhat but still remain well over 1,300,000. There have been over 45,000,000 abortions in America since 1973.

By the year 2000, according to these numbers, 12,786,000 Americans would have been aborted who, if allowed to live, would have reached their 18th birthday and hence would be eligible to vote. Since only 51% of all eligible voters in 2000 actually voted, this

percentage would apply to the missing aborted as well. Therefore, in the year 2000, an additional 6,000,000 people would have voted except for one crucial and tragic fact: They were all killed by abortion before they could see the light of day.

The next important question considered by Eastland is how these missing aborted would have actually voted. Extensive studies of youth behavior patterns show them to be strongly influenced (and often solely influenced) by parental behavior. As an example, parents who smoke tend to have children who smoke. Similarly, children of Democratic voters tend strongly to vote Democratic when they come of age. Likewise, the children of Republican parents tend to vote Republican. There is no reason to doubt that the missing aborted would have also followed a similar voting pattern. Most likely then, the aborted, if they had lived to vote, would reflect the political commitment of their parent(s).

Eastland's research concluded that Democrats have on average 30% more abortions than Republicans. This statistical imbalance towards Democrats is not surprising since the Democratic Party supports legal abortion and insists that abortion solves any pressing medical, financial, or social problem. (African-Americans, who vote 90% Democratic, abort their unborn at a rate three times the national average.) The Republican Party has historically and correctly opposed abortion as the immoral taking of an innocent human life. The actual percentages of those having abortions are 15% Independent, 35% Republican, and 50% Democrat. Eastland assumes that the missing aborted would have voted according to the same ratios.

## STARTLING RESULTS

When these percentages are applied to the total of the 6,000,000 aborted potential voters, the results are startling indeed. 2,000,000 of the missing would have been Republican voters while 3,000,000 would have voted Democratic in the 2000 election. The net result of 27 years of legal abortion in the United States is that Democrats lost 1,000,000 more voters than did the Republicans. This disparity will continue to grow with each passing year because the damage was done years ago and cannot be immediately remedied. A woman who aborted her child eighteen years ago cannot give birth to an eighteen-year-old child today to compensate—or to vote. This disparity has already profoundly impacted the presidential election of 2000. If all the

Florida missing aborted voters in the year 2000 had actually lived to vote, the Democrats would have had a net increase of 45,000 votes. Gore would have won Florida's 25 electoral votes easily and consequently, the Presidency. The great war of the famous hanging chads would never have occurred because the margin of victory would have been indisputable.

What portent do these figures have for the upcoming 2004 elections? While predictions in any particular race are impossible, some variables are certain. Since the year 2000 an additional 6,000,000 people would have reached the age of 18 and would be eligible to vote except for the tragic fact that abortionists killed them in the womb. According to Eastland, of this number, approximately 50%, i.e., 3,000,000, would actually vote in the 2004 elections. With Democrats undergoing 30% more abortions than Republicans, Republicans will lose an additional 1,000,000 voters because of their additional aborted would-be constituents, but Democrats have lost another 1,500,000 voters by way of abortion since the year 2000. The net loss for the Democrats in that four-year period is an additional 500,000 missing over and above the Republican losses plus a total of 1,500,000 overall since 2000. Democrats must somehow overcome this handicap if they are ever to win.

Because of the variables involved one cannot predict the future, but one point can be made. In the seven closest states in the 2000 presidential election, Democrats won four of them by margins ranging from 366 in New Mexico to 6,765 in Oregon. They won 30 electoral votes in these states, but all are now within range of being captured by the Republicans because of Democratic abortion losses experienced since 2000. A further undisputable fact is that the massive erosion will continue. The 1,600,000 humans missing from the voter registration rolls this year all died eighteen years ago. Each year into the indefinite future, these losses will continue at a similar rate. Democratic annual losses continue to exceed those of the Republicans by 30 percentage points, as Eastland's article makes clear. This huge disparity will not change and will have unfathomable repercussions. The accumulation over time becomes exponential.

#### **A SHIFT IS TAKING PLACE**

There are some indications that the shift is indeed taking place. *Investor's Business Daily* (Friday, August 20, 2004) reported the results of a recent survey of new voters registered since the year 2000. The poll produced results surprising even to the pollsters. Sponsored by Pace University and MTV's "Rock the Vote" (no friend of the Republican party), the survey revealed that more new voters identified themselves as conservative rather than liberal. This was considered particularly significant because young voters traditionally tend to be more liberal than their elders.

Most significantly for us, 54% of these new vot-

ers identify themselves as opposed to abortion. A large percentage of the 18-25 group, 37%, identified themselves as conservative Christians. In the population as a whole, only 26% so identified themselves. Churchgoers historically engage in civic responsibilities more seriously and are thus more likely to vote. Two important points can be made based on these figures. The first is that those conducting the poll were surprised by the results: The youth polled defied the expectations of the pollsters' preconceived expectations about young peoples' voting habits. Secondly and more important: The results of this poll buttress Larry Eastland's thesis. Moreover, the more voters MTV registers, the worse the effect for the Democratic party. These are strange, wondrous days...

The state of Texas is a classic case in point. Thirty years ago, Democrats held every statewide office and controlled the legislature and the judiciary, **Bill Clements** was the first Republican governor since Reconstruction, and his election was regarded as a fluke- soon to be forgotten. The move towards today's Republican majority came slowly, but with each successive election, the pace quickened. Today, all statewide elective offices are in Republican hands. Both United States Senators are Republican, and Republicans now control both houses of the Texas Legislature.

As confirmed by Eastland, not surprisingly, liberal Democrats seek by far the highest rate of abortions, and Republicans, whose values are more conservative and traditional, seek the fewest. Those espousing these conservative values consequently grow in numbers and influence while radical liberal and secularist politics decline for lack of support. The conclusion: By killing their young, the Democrats are not replenishing their stock. Pro-Lifers will continue to widen the chasm as they have large families.

The Texas Legislature has become increasingly conservative, reflecting a broad range of Christian values held by a growing majority of Pro-Life Texans. In the last session of the legislature, Texas Right to Life worked with a dedicated majority of Pro-Lifers to secure passage of the most solid body of Pro-Life legislation that has been enacted since the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision. In 2003, Texas was rated by Americans United for Life as the most improved state in the nation as the result of the spate of Pro-Life measures signed into law.

#### **CREATING A "NEW MAN"**

American voters have become increasingly polarized, which is to be expected given this "missing aborted" disparity. Democrats initially regarded the loss of control of the United States House of Representatives and then of the Senate as anomalous (Remember **Peter Jennings** throwing his own temper tantrum by stating, "The voters had thrown a temper tantrum" on election night in 1994?), but with each succeeding elec-

tion, the possibility of recapturing control seems increasingly elusive for Democrats. Modern Democrats have viewed themselves as agents of social change as well as the chosen custodians of the future; that role is possible only so long as they control the institutions and the levers of change.

From the beginning, legalized abortion was seen as an essential stage in the long-term goal of creating a new man in accord with the vision of modern science. Thus, the issues that divide Republicans and Democrats are matters of fundamental morality with little room for compromise. If the unborn child is a human being from the moment of fertilization, then the law must protect that human life. Each human being is a unique creation of God, made in the image and likeness of him.

**NEVER LOSE HEART**

Above all, there is one message to derive from

Eastland’s remarkable work. As defenders of innocent human life through all stages, we must never lose heart! The future does indeed belong to the living, but the dead will also have their say. Legal abortion through nine months continues in America because Democrats have aggressively resisted every effort to eliminate the vile practice. Ironically, their arguments in favor of abortion have proven most successful only with their fellow Democrats. In fatal consequence, as Eastland so forcefully points out, as a direct result of abortion Democrats lose 120,000 more voters at the polls each year than do the Republicans.

The figures are inescapable, and the longterm results are already being proven as earthshaking and the trend unchangeable.

I have fought in the trenches with you for over 35 years. I can finally say with confidence that the future belongs, as it should, to the ProLife movement. *[via the Texas Right To Life News]*

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*theme: “PROFILES OF COURAGE”*

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- 1:00 PM Board bus at Comfort Inn, depart for Pleasant Hill Shaker Community
- 1:30 PM Arrive and pick up tickets at ticket booth  
“Welcome” & begin self-guided tour & shop in Village Craft Stores
- 3:00 PM Shaker Music performance in Meeting House
- 4:00 PM Meeting in West Family Wash House, Meeting Area “C”
- 5:15 PM Supper in Trustees’ Office Dining Room
- 6:45 PM Return to “C” to continue Meeting
- 8:00 PM Depart for Comfort Inn

**Friday, May 13, 2005**

- 8:30 AM Depart for Lexington Cemetery (833 W Main St)
- 9:30AM Board bus, depart for “Ashland” the Henry Clay Estate (120 Sycamore Road)
- 11:15 AM Board bus
- 11:45 AM Lunch at The Chop House which is included with the trip located at 2640 Richmond Rd
- 1:00 PM Board bus for Lexington Theological Seminary located at 631 South Limestone Street
- 2:30 PM Tour Midway KY
- 3:45 PM Tour Georgetown KY
- 5:30 PM Arrive at the Comfort Inn
- 6:30 PM Dinner at Bob Evans Restaurant (included with the trip) located at 2341 Buena Vista Road

**Saturday, May 14, 2005**

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# MORALS OR ECONOMICS

Jeff Sweeten

*“America will cease to be polarized when we return to God and perversion returns to the closet; or better yet, when the perverse repent.”*

A recent report from Washington ran in the *Odessa American* (11/7) dealing with the polarization of American voters about which so many post-election prognosticators seem to be worried. Drawing from data collected in part from Associated Press exit polls of voters as they left polling places, this detrimental division rankling the political watchdogs is based in divergent perspectives on morality and economy. Bemoaning the fact that Bush’s win came from a moral majority and Kerry’s loss credited to a monetary-conscience minority, they point out Kerry’s supporters are for “gay (homosexual) marriage,” pro-abortion, and overwhelmingly concerned with the economy. On the other hand, Bush’s supporters, while concerned about terrorism, economy, and so on, are more concerned about moral issues. Ironically, the article points out these divergent tendencies without dealing with the real source of angst: economies are elastic but morals are not malleable.

*First*, as an aside, I was pleasantly surprised to hear what appears to be an unbiased report from AP on a value issue in America. It seems the press revels in spinning news to promote a political agenda. Whether the attitude of this report is a subtle response to unfavorable election results or a veiled attempt to foment mobilization among the defeated is still a mystery, but it seems to be an indicator that the elections are really over. *Second*, the issue of morals is an important one. The tacit admission that more Americans care more about the killing of babies than driving the latest model Jaguar seemingly came as a shock to the AP pollsters and reveals the ever-widening gap between the press and mainstream America, an issue mentioned in this article. Analyst **Steven Waldman** admitted, “Many evangelical Christians believe that they are held in contempt by the mainstream media....” Go figure! Hollywood’s blatant mainlining of gratuitous illicit sex, foul language, and graphic violence, injected into popular programs from sit-coms to feature films, is addictive, destructive, and deadly to the social fiber of our nation, not to mention anti-biblical. Where is the media version of Reader’s Digest when you need them?

*Third*, the real biting realization by thinking “liberals” (if that is not an oxymoron) is that economies change, and can be changed; morals cannot! What is worrisome to proponents of abortion, homosexual “marriage,”

and government-subsidized, welfare economics is that these are issues that do not swing with the tide of culture. It is always wrong to kill unborn children (Exodus 21:22-23). It will never be right for two men to “marry” (Leviticus 22:18). And, a government’s role has never been, nor should it ever be, to play the role of sugar daddy full of “free” handouts: **“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat”** (II Thessalonians 3:10). So, while the economy may fluctuate, particularly in a free market economy, morals are static. ***When God says something (like one of the preceding issues) is wrong, then it is wrong*** and all the political prevarication in the world does not change this fact.

The recent election results may have been scary for those who attempted to vote into the office of president of the United States a man who has countless times voted to abort children, promotes the homosexual agenda, and would quite possibly send this country reeling into socialism. If this country is to overcome its polarization, its people must wake up to the realization that moral values are more important than economics. It would appear, according to election results, that the majority currently shares this view. However, with the line in the sand clearly drawn now, it is critical that Christians gird themselves for the fight, for the battle is not done.

Now that it has become obvious that the majority of Americans would like to see the morality pendulum swing from the extreme suffocation of perversion to the dignity of “One Nation Under God,” stand by for persecution. Do not think for a minute that smut peddlers will go quietly into the night; no, now they will use the very freedoms of a country they incessantly undermine to strike out. Ill-defined and absurd “hate crimes” will be assigned to the “homophobic,” the “anti-choice,” and anyone who is foolish enough to believe third-generation government charity is morally wrong. America will cease to be polarized when we return to God and perversion returns to the closet; or better yet, when the perverse repent. **“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people”** (Proverbs 14:34).

—807 East 21st Street  
Odessa, Texas 79761

## *Restoration Reflections...*

# THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HANCOCK COUNTY, KENTUCKY

Paul Vaughn

Hancock County, Kentucky is located in the Western Coal Field region of the state. The county was formed on January 3, 1829, from parts of Breckinridge, Davis and Ohio counties. It was named after **John**

to help establish the church. The first meeting was Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. There were 125 present at the first worship service, most were members of sister congregations in neighboring counties. The Hawesville Church of Christ started with sixteen. Three teenagers, three young people under twelve and ten adults. We met in the Keneragy (electric company) meeting room in Hawesville for the first ten months and on Wednesday evening, in a office building in Lewisport. During the first five months, **David Brown** visited the congregation and brought the Wednesday evening lesson. We had ten in attendance in a room about the size of 7 by 10, it was extremely crowded. Looking from the positive side, David could say that when he spoke, the room was full to overflowing.

The Henderson Church of Christ in Henderson, Kentucky bought 4 acres of land for the new congregation. With the help of many other congregations we were able to start a building and be in it on December 10<sup>th</sup> 2000. The building cost \$168,000 and we had to borrow \$98,000. Today we owe \$42,500 on the building.

**Hancock**, president of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The county was first started to be settled about 1799 when pioneers arrived on flatboats going west on the Ohio River or by trails from Louisville and Elizabethtown, Kentucky. They grew to about 6,000 in population in 1860. The county seat, Hawesville, suffered during the Civil War from guerilla raids and Union blockades.

The regrettable history of the county is that the church of Christ was not established until year 2000. 171 years after the county was formed. However pioneers of the Restoration did come through the area, **John Rogers** and his brother **Samuel** toured Southern Indiana, speaking in Spencer County, Indiana that is located across the Ohio River from Hancock County.

It was January 2000 that my wife, **Ricki**, and I moved to Hancock County

The church has grown during the past four and a half years. Our average attendance for Sunday morning worship service for the past eight weeks was 48. During the past four years 19 people have obeyed the gospel, putting Christ on in baptism. We have had some very faithful men preach in gospel meetings and on lectures. Some of them are **Jimmy Young, Rob Whitaker, HalliBurton Greer, Gary Puryear, Michael Hatcher, David Brown, Charles Crouch, and Dub McClish.**

The work is going great and we thank God for the wonderful success of the congregation. But, as it is with many mission works, difficulties do arise. During the next two years we are losing most of our personal support. The Hawesville Church of Christ is doing marvelously for the short period of time from the establishment of the congregation, but it will take 4-6 more years before we can be self-supporting. It is our goal to be self-supporting as soon as possible. The Shipp's Bend Church of Christ, Centerville Tennessee will be our

sponsoring congregation until we can be self supporting. They have two very good elders, **R.T. Rivers** and **Grady Atkinson.** The Shipp's Bend congregation is a small congregation less than 100 members but they will not let numbers stop them from doing a good work. If you or the congregation where you worship is considering helping a mission work, please think about the Hawesville Church of Christ. If you wish to contact the Shipp's Bend Church of Christ by phone, their number is 931-729-3413 or you may write them at Shipp's Bend Church of Christ, C/O Grady Atkinson 733 Grinders Switch Rd., Centerville, Tennessee 37703. If you have any other questions please contact the Hawesville Church of Christ at 270-927-9701. We do ask that you pray not only of us but all who are faithfully seeking to build up the church of Christ throughout the world.

—1415 Lincoln Rd.  
Lewisport, Kentucky 42351

## CONFRONTATION BETWEEN A PROVOKER AND A PROPHET

Jerry Joseph

**And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim (I Kings 18:17-18).**

During the Bible period of the divided kingdom we see that all of the kings in the Northern Kingdom, Israel, were wicked. King Ahab, the seventh king to reign in the Northern Kingdom was the most wicked. **“And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him”** (I Kings 16:30). In I Kings 16:33 it was said of him that he **“did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.”**

In I Kings 18:17, King Ahab, the provoker of God, confronts Elijah, the prophet of God. In this confrontation, the provoker of God made a charge against the prophet of God, **“Are thou he that troubleth Israel?”** He accuses Elijah of bringing trouble to Israel;

Ahab thought that Elijah was nothing but a troublemaker. Just because one is accused of causing trouble does not mean that it is true. And it certainly was not true in this case. Have you ever been charged with causing trouble in the church?

When we look at some of the things happening in the church today, who is the cause of the trouble? Unbelievable as it may sound, the faithful child of God as he declares, demonstrates, and defends the Truth is charged by some as being the “troublemaker”. Let us see who the real troublemaker is:

### WHO IS THE TROUBLEMAKER IN THE CHURCH?

1. It is the one who CONFORMS to false doctrine, not the one who CEASES it (Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:19-23).

2. It is the one who COMMENDS false doctrine, not the one who CONDEMNNS it (Ephesians 6:10-17).

3. It is the one who CONDONES false doctrine,

not the one who CRIES OUT against it (Acts 20:27-31).

4. It is the one who CONTINUES in false doctrine, not the one who COMES OUT of it (Romans 12:21).

5. It is the one who COVERS UP false doctrine, not the one who CORRECTS it (II Timothy 4:2-4).

6. It is the one who COMPLIMENTS false doctrine, not the one who CENSURES it (Titus 1:9-11).

7. It is the one who is CONTENT in false doctrine, not the one who CONTENDS against it (Jude 3).

8. It is the one who CONTRIBUTES to false doctrine, not the one who CONFUTES it (Ephesians 5:11).

9. It is the one who CHEERS false teachers, not the one who CHECKS OUT false teachers (I John 4:1).

10. It is the one who CHOOSES to sit at the feet of false teachers, not the one who CALLS the names of false teachers (II Timothy 2:17-18).

11. It is the one who COMFORTS the false teacher, not the one who CAUTIONS others about the false teacher (Matthew 7:15).

12. It is the one who CALLS the false teacher sound, not the one who CALLS upon the false teacher to speak whereof he stands (I Peter 3:15).

Following the charge by Ahab, Elijah the prophet corrected Ahab, the provoker. **“And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s**

**house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim”** (I Kings 18:18). People who make false charges need to be corrected. When people make false charges against Christ, his commands, or his church we must correct them by **“speaking the truth in love”** (Ephesians 4:15). We must stand ready always to **“speak as the oracles of God”** (I Peter 4:11). We must be **“ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”** (I Peter 3:15).

Elijah correctly directed Ahab to the real cause of the trouble in Israel. They had ceased following God’s word and had commenced following godless ways. When we turn from God’s way, trouble will always be there because we will be in that godless way. Whenever we are confronted about spiritual things let us have the courage to do what the Bible commands and to call upon others to do the same. Let us be careful and cautious lest we become “trouble” in God’s sight.

—3 Windstream Court  
St. Peters, Missouri 63376

## One Woman’s Perspective...

# Wishing God Away

Annette B. Cates

Our toddler grandson, Conor, closes his eyes when he is doing something he knows is wrong. He figures that if he cannot see, neither can his parents. This is cute when it is done by a little child; it is sad when adults think the same way in regard to God. In essence, they are wishing God away, hoping that if he does not see nor care, or if he does not exist, their actions will have no consequences. Since God’s wrath is not immediately forthcoming when one does that which is wrong, people tend to think that they have gotten away with the sin. **“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil”** (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Religious people can wish God away by believing that God accepts them simply because at some point their names were added to a church role or because they once “named the name of Jesus.” Some say that they believe in God, but live as if there is no God. Our mentality has

been contaminated with the “I’m ok; you’re ok” philosophy. We tend to judge by our personal feelings and assume that God thinks the same way. We may have taken a stand on an issue in the past, but change when a loved one becomes involved. The **“ancients of the house of Israel”** thought that God did not see them in their evil (Ezekiel 8:12). God DID see, however, and responded, **“Therefore will I also deal in my fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity...”** (Ezekiel 8:18).

Atheists wish God away by choosing to deny the existence of God, the ultimate authority to whom all must answer in the Day of Judgment. They believe all of the natural wonders and complexities of the universe came about by mere chance. As a part of the process of evolution, primitive man wished God into existence. The conjecture is that man felt powerless as he faced his enemies in conflict; thus,



he invented someone stronger than he was who would help him fight his battles. Further, man wondered why there were natural disasters that would destroy life and property. The result was that he dreamed up an angry god, or gods, that would take away the terror if properly appeased through sacrifices, including human sacrifice. For one who does not want to be accountable to God, this explanation of religion might be logical. To the atheist's dismay, there is THE God in Heaven (Daniel 2:28). The day will come when all of us will answer to him, and be judged on how we have responded to his word (Revelation 20:12).

The result of wishing God away is immorality (Romans 1:20-31), including the acceptance thereof (Romans 1:32). This country is rife with drug and alcohol abuse, abortion, sexual perversion, and any and all of the sins of the flesh mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21.

"Experts" attempt to excuse many of these with the umbrella of "disease," or blame some unfortunate experience early in life. Any pretext will do as long as one does not have to accept personal responsibility for his actions. By convincing oneself that either God does not exist, or else he is accepting of us regardless of how we live, then that person feels free to do as he

pleases. However, all must believe that God is and must diligently seek him, for only those who do so will be rewarded by him (Hebrews 11:6). "Diligently seek" includes obedience to the will of God. God does not take sin lightly (Ezekiel 8:17). **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Romans 6:23).

Wishing God away will benefit no one, for he cannot be denied. **"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord"** (Jeremiah 23:24). The fact that God is real brings me strength and comfort (Psalm 34:4, 15, 18, 22). If he is real, then he created all things (Genesis 1:1). If he is real, then he has the power to accomplish whatever is within his will (Daniel 4:25). Since he is real, I can trust him to see me through the green pastures, by the still waters, and through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23). Knowing all of this, why would someone want to wish God away?

—9194 Lakeside Drive  
Olive Branch, Mississippi 38654

## *The Last Word...*

# Herb Alsup's Open Letter

Kent Bailey

In the this issue of *Contending for the Faith* you will note an *open letter* written by Herb Alsup, preacher for the Church of Christ that meets in Woodbury, Tennessee. Alsup wrote this letter in response to my article entitled, *Malcolm Hill, The Holy Spirit Controversy, And Special Pleading*. Alsup in the strongest of terms took issue with my statements concerning his endorsement of **Paul Rogers**, preacher at Centerville, Tennessee, as well as certain practices of the Woodbury Church.

Also in this issue of *Contending for the Faith* you will note my personal response to Alsup's open letter in addition to a response from the Elders of the Lenoir City Church of Christ, as well as various printed material submitted to *Contending for the Faith* by Paul Curless, preacher for the Midway Church of Christ, sustaining the charges of liberalism set forth in my May 2004 article. In reading this material please note the

following:

Herb Alsup denies that he endorsed the concept of Easter Sunday, yet he is the one that used this very term in his April 6th issue of *The Watchman* in reference to the day Christ arose from the grave.

Herb Alsup denies any endorsement, or approval of *Nashville Jubilee* yet in the April 13th issue of *The Watchman* endorses Paul Rogers, a noted Jubilee speaker as being a "great inspiration" to him as well as being a "great encourager" to the Woodbury Church. We wonder how one can reject the *Nashville Jubilee* and endorse those who both promoted and participated in such?

Herb Alsup denies that a baby dedication was ever conducted at the Woodbury Church, yet Arnold Cook, a longtime gospel preacher in Middle Tennessee, and a former member at Woodbury stated that he was present in the very assembly when such took place.

Herb Alsup denies that any type of religious foot washing was ever practiced at the Woodbury Church, but admits that such did occur in a Bible class as an object lesson. Arnold Cook also affirms that such a practice also took place in a Sunday evening worship assembly during one of the associate preacher's sermons. Brother Cook was an eyewitness to this event.

The Woodbury Church also advertises that they give financial support to **Juan Monroy**, a noted liberal preacher in Spain. Monroy has had a long association with the liberal Herald of Truth Ministries. They also are financial supporters and promoters of the liberal human institution known as Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort. This agency was designed to centralize and supplant the work of the church by rejecting the New Testament pattern for a human agency.

Some of the material sent to *Contending for the Faith* for publication deals with **Millard Young**, one of the current song leaders for the Woodbury Church. In noting this material it must be pointed out that Young

sings with a group known as "*The Watchmen*." This group is noted for singing religious songs with either the usage of mechanical instruments of music and/or audio taped sounds of mechanical instruments of music at various denominational churches. Although this particular error was not addressed in my May article or in my letter to Herb Alsup, such was brought to our attention just in the last few weeks and is now dealt with in this particular article.

Rather than addressing these issues, Alsup has taken the typical liberal approach in attacking my personal credibility. There is one thing that Alsup has obviously forgotten—acts are very stubborn and will not go away, and we intend on pressing them for all they are worth. As of yet Alsup has not responded to either the elders of the Lenoir City Church, or to me personally. To be quite honest about the entire matter, I seriously doubt that he will respond due to the fact that the more he writes he will find himself getting into deeper trouble.

It is also interesting to note **Malcolm Hill's** connection to all of this. Hill continually boasts of his willingness to debate, yet he lacked the courage to publish my response to Alsup in the September issue of *Living Oracles* while publishing Alsup's open letter in the same issue. Indeed, *Living Oracles* is **MALCOLM L. HILL'S** publication and being the editor he is at liberty to either publish or reject material sent to him; it nonetheless demonstrates his warped view of debating. The only type of discussion Malcolm is interested in is a one-sided debate where he can dictate a loaded proposition to his opponent and have him under total control.

—124 Executive Meadows Dr  
Lenoir City, Tennessee 37771  
KBailey385@aol.com

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## Grangerland Saturday Lectures

**Saturday, January 29, 2005**

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9:00 A.M.	Work of the Church	Geoff Litke
10:00 A.M.	The Need for Leadership	Buddy Roth
11:00 A.M.	Worship of the Church	David P. Brown
12:00 P.M.	Lunch provided by the congregation	
1:30 P.M.	New Testament Salvation	Lynn Parker
2:30 P.M.	The Need For Discipline	Kenneth Cohn
3:30 P.M.	Where Are We Headed?	David P. Brown

Leon D. Schrei is director of the Saturday Lectures and gospel preacher for the Grangerland Church of Christ. Email: ldschrei@ev1.net Cell Phone: (713) 208-3115

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## -Alabama-

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

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

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

## -England-

**Cambridge**-South Cambridge Church of Christ, Brian Chadwick, 198 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge. Publishers of "Oracles of God". Tel: (01223) 501861, e-mail: brian.chadwick@ntlworld.com

**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-

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

## -Georgia-

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

## -Indiana-

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

## -Louisiana-

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

## -Massachusetts-

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

## -Michigan-

**Garden City**-Church of Christ, 1657 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI (Suburb of Detroit), Sun. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Dan Goddard, Evangelist. (734) 422-8660. www.garden-city-coc.org

## -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.

## -Tennessee-

**Memphis**-Forest Hill Church of Christ, 3950 Forest Hill-Irene Rd., Memphis, TN 38125. Sun. 9:30, 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. (901) 751-2444, Barry Grider, Evangelist.

## -Texas-

**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 Spring Bible Institute and the SBI 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, Evangelist; djgoines@writeme.com.

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

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

**Lubbock**-Southside Church of Christ, 8501 Quaker Ave., Box 64430, Lubbock, TX 79464. Sun. 9:00, 9:55 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m. Sunday worship aired live at 10:15 a.m. over KFYO 790 AM radio. Tommy Hicks, Evangelist. (806) 794-5008 or (806)798-1019.

**New Braunfels**-1130 Hwy. 306, 1.5 miles west of I-35. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Wed. 7 p.m. Lynn Parker, Evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

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

**Roanoke**-Church of Christ, Corner of Rusk and Walnut, Roanoke, TX 76262. Sun. 9:45, 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7:30 pm. (817) 491-2388.

**Schertz**-Church of Christ, 501 Schertz Pkwy., Schertz, TX. (210) 658-0269. Sun. 9:30a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m., take Schertz Pkwy. Exit off I-35, NE of San Antonio, Kenneth Ratcliff and Stan Crowley, Evangelists.

## -Wyoming-

**Cheyenne**-High Plains Church of Christ, 421 E. 8th St., Cheyenne, WY 82007, tel. (307) 638-7466, Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m., Gerald Reynolds, Tel. (307) 635-2482.

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