

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

"I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT TGJ BOARD HAD DONE NO 'WRITING ON THE WALL'"

David P. Brown

David B. Watson originally compiled the material from which we are getting much of the following information in what he called "Summation 1, 2, and 3." We have altered no fact in Watson's material. We have changed the format and wording in some cases to fit into our way of doing things in *CFTF*. We have also made our own comments. That we made **only** these changes to Watson's "Summations" may be verified by contacting David Watson and requesting the original "Summations 1, 2, and 3." You may reach him at the following e-mail address: dwatson@swbell.net. Or, contact him at the following U. S. Mail address:

David B. Watson
Lee & Walnut Church of Christ
P.O. Box 690
Sapulpa, OK 74067

WHY WOULD ANYONE DESIRE TO BE SECRETIVE ABOUT THESE MATTERS?

How is the cause of truth served by withholding information from the brethren? McClish and Watson, as is true of *CFTF*, do not intend to hide or be secretive in the case of McClish/Watson versus *TGJ* Board and their fellow travelers. Along with McClish and Watson we are open and above board. We only want the truth about this matter to come out. Whether it is Apologetics Press, *The Gospel Journal* Board, Memphis School of Preaching, *CFTF* or what and whoever, why would we not want the brethren to know all that has gone on in these matters? After all, we beg and plead with brethren to support us with their money, prayers and good will. How can they be ready unto every good work (II Thessalonians 2:17) if they are hindered by the lack of a full disclosure of information pertaining to such matters (I Thessalonians 5:21; Galatians 6:4)?

We do not have any folders of material that we will let you read, but will not allow the contents thereof to be reproduced or placed in the public's hands. We are not "working the phones" so that we can construct our remarks to fit a person's particular slant and/or bias. We are not about to tenaciously hold on to old friends, family or anyone else when they have conducted themselves in life and/or doctrine contrary to the teaching of the New Testament and refuse to repent of their error(s). This is because we have always made it our goal to establish and maintain friendships with brethren solely on the basis of the fruit borne out in their lives, which fruit indicated they were willing to make any sacrifice to keep their integrity and abide in the Truth of the New Testament. When it has become obvious by the fruit they bear that they are not conducting themselves in life and/or doctrine according to the teaching of the New Testament and they are not about to repent, then we have no other choice, if we are to remain faithful to God, but to cease our involvement with them immediately and rebuke them accordingly. This has been our course of action for over forty years of preaching the gospel. Obviously some did not know that to be the case with us, but now they do. We say to them as **Alexander Campbell** said to the Baptists who were glad to see someone champion baptism to be a burial in water. Following his debate on Baptism with **John Walker**, Campbell stated to the happy and jubilant Baptists: "If you knew me better you would love me less." We desire our friends to be persons who at all costs in life and teaching are determined to abide by the authority of the New Testament (Colossians 3:17). Does anyone know of any other basis on or standard by which we should determine those

(Continued on Page 8)

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

COMMUNICATIONS received by Contending for the Faith and/or its Editors are viewed as intended FOR PUBLICATION unless otherwise stated. Whereas we respect confidential information, so described, everything else sent to us we feel free to publish without further permission being necessary. Anything sent to us NOT for publication, please indicate this clearly when you write. Please address such letters directly to the Editor-in-Chief David P. Brown, P.O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383. Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES

Single Subscriptions: One Year, \$14.00; Two Years, \$24.00. Club Rate: Three One-Year Subscriptions, \$36; Five One-Year Subscriptions, \$58.00. Whole Congregation Rate: Any congregation entering each family of its entire membership with single copies being mailed directly to each home receives a \$3.00 discount off the Single Subscription Rate, i.e., such whole congregation subscriptions are payable in advance at the rate of \$11.00 per year per family address. Foreign Rate: One Year, \$30.

ADVERTISING POLICY & RATES

Contending for the Faith was begun and continues to exist to defend the gospel (Philippians 1:7,17) and refute error (Jude 3). Therefore, we are interested in advertising only those things that are in harmony with what the Bible authorizes (Colossians 3:17). We will not knowingly advertise anything to the contrary. Hence, we reserve the right to refuse any offer to advertise in this paper.

All setups and layouts of advertisements will be done by Contending for the Faith. A one-time setup and layout fee for each advertisement will be charged if such setup or layout is needed. Setup and layout fees are in addition to the cost of the space purchased for advertisement. No major changes will be made without customer approval.

All advertisements must be in our hands no later than two (2) months preceding the publishing of the issue of the journal in which you desire your advertisement to appear. To avoid being charged for the following month, ads must be canceled by the first of the month. We appreciate your understanding of and cooperation with our advertising policy.

MAIL ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADVERTISEMENTS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357. COST OF SPACE FOR ADS: Back page, \$300.00; full page, \$300.00; half page, \$175.00; quarter page, \$90.00; less than quarter page, \$18.00 per column-inch. CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line per month. CHURCH DIRECTORY ADS: \$30.00 per line per year. SETUP AND LAYOUT FEES: Full page, \$50.00; half page, \$35.00; anything under a half page, \$20.00.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH is published monthly. P. O. Box 2357, Spring, Texas 77383-2357 Telephone: (281) 350-5516.

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

Editorial..

"ELDER EVALUATION AND THE BROWN TRAIL CHURCH OF CHRIST"

The title of our editorial is from an undated letter written by and from the Brown Trail (hereafter BT) Church of Christ elders and signed by them. The title of the letter makes the subject of the letter clear. This undated letter made its appearance over a year ago. We have reproduced it in this issue of *CFTF* following this editorial.

In more than one issue of *CFTF* we have publicly opposed the BT elders' erroneous action of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. We have also opposed their false position on MDR as it relates to the **Everett Chambers** case—a false doctrine of which they have never given any indication of repenting. Though we had thus openly and publicly stood against their false doctrines, the BT elders did not send us the letter, which some claim is an indication that they repented and confessed their sin of teaching and practicing elder re-evaluation and reaffirmation. We received our copy of the previously noted letter second hand from a copy given by the present Director of the Brown Trail School of Preaching to **Bobby Liddell**, Associate Director of MSOP. Liddell was handed the letter after he had exposed and refuted the false doctrine in his lecture at the Spiritual Sword Lectures last October. Also, over the last year or so we know that others received the BT elders' letter in a haphazard manner as well. For a letter that purports to be a confession of a very public and publicized sin, there seemingly was little effort on the part of the BT elders to make their alleged confession of sin as prominent and public as their teaching and practice of it.

OF WHAT DID THE BROWN TRAIL ELDERS REPENT AND WHAT WAS THE SIN THEY CONFESSED?

For whatever reason, what some have failed to see is this: **there is no statement anywhere in the previously noted undated letter that says that the BT elders committed sin in advocating and practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders.** Furthermore, there is no indication in the letter that the BT elders had repented of and confessed that specific sin. Now if anyone thinks they have found in the previously noted BT elders' letter where they con-

fessed that the doctrine and act of re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders is sinful as they practiced it, and that specifically and directly they are repenting of such, we ask our readers to please cite the words in the letter where they precisely say as much.

WAS IT ONLY AN OPTIONAL MATTER?

What the Brown Trail elders **did** write in the previously noted letter relegated their practice of re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders to the category of options. Thus, they think it was not sinful, but only a bad “judgment call” on their part when they chose to use the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders to accomplish their desired ends.

According to the undated document put out by the BT elders, what they specifically confessed before the Brown Trail congregation was that in advocating and practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders, “**mistakes were made.**” Notice please that the Brown Trail elders did not say that the practice of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders was a sin, but in the process of practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders they **made some mistakes** of which they say they repented and confessed before the BT Church on July 28, 2002.

It would be very helpful in getting at the truth on any subject if people would learn to read what is actually written and not read into it what they desire to see in it. Could it be possible that the BT elders knew that most brethren would “read into” their undated letter what they (i.e., certain brethren) desired to see in it? And, thus these elders wrote it in the manner that it is written. Again note what they actually wrote:

In doing so mistakes were made and lessons were learned. For the mistakes made the present elders have asked forgiveness of the congregation through public confession and request for prayer on July 28, 2002.

Specifically on the preceding date, did the BT elders confess that they sinned in twice advocating and practicing a false doctrine—the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders? Nowhere in their undated letter do they frankly, candidly and specifically say so. Again, for emphasis we say, if anyone thinks he has found in the undated letter where the Brown Trail elders candidly say they have sinned, please show us that part of their letter that in no uncertain terms says so.

SOME VERY INTERESTING DATES

It was November 20, 2002, nearly four months

In This Issue...

“I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT TGJ BOARD HAD DONE NO ‘WRITING ON THE WALL.’” David P. Brown	1
<i>Editorial..</i> “ELDER EVALUATION AND THE BROWN TRAIL CHURCH OF CHRIST”	2
LETTTER AND SURVEY TO MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING FROM LENOIR CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST	19
<i>The Last Word..</i> THE LENOIR CITY SURVEY, CURTIS CATES, AND MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING Kent Bailey	22

“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed” (Galatians 2:11).

after the previously noted alleged confession of sin by the Brown Trail elders, that **Maxie Boren**, the BT preacher at the time, wrote his nine page “Open Letter” in an attempt to defend the BT elders’ actions in their re-evaluating and reaffirming of elders. It was a strange “repentance” on the part of the BT elders on July 28, 2002, in view of the fact that four months later **Maxie Boren** continued to defend the BT elders’ re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. He was not in the least bit penitent. But, in their undated statement it is obvious that they desired for everyone to think they had repented of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders—**but, I say again, no where in that undated letter do the BT elders actually say that.** Or, is it possible that Maxie Boren, did not know that on July 28, 2002 that the BT elders had repented of their sinful actions of re-evaluating and reaffirming elders at BT? Now, who can believe that Boren did not know what the BT elders did on July 28, 2002? Furthermore, **CFTF** commented on these previously noted sinful activities at BT in our October 2002 issue (this was almost three months after the BT elders’ alleged confession of sin). However, we did not get into “high gear” in exposing this erroneous action by the

BT elders until the January 2003 issue of *CFTF*. This was almost six months after the date (July 28, 2002) given by the BT elders in their undated declaration wherein they declared they had confessed their “mistakes” (whatever they were) before the BT congregation.

Following our January 2003 issue of *CFTF* we received around ten burning phone calls and one hot letter from irate BT members who denounced our opposition to BT’s practice of elder re-evaluation and reaffirmation. Furthermore, these callers and letter writers defended BT’s practice of re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. Moreover, **Mac Deaver** wrote us offering to debate the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders by defending what the BT elders did in advocating and practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders (a complete reversal of his attitude toward the BT procedure in 1990 [see 1997 Bellview Lectures book, *Leadership*, pp. 95, 100]). Evidently Deaver did not know the BT elders had repented of it.

What in actuality happened at BT regarding this matter? What must we conclude about the undated declaration of the BT elders? Simply this: If the BT elders, **Guy Elliot**, **Eddy Parker**, **Phil Pope** and **Bobby Watts** had confessed before the BT Church on July 28, 2002 that they had sinned in advocating and practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders, (1) how, some months after the fact, could certain BT members evidently not know about it; (2) how, some months after the fact, could Maxie Boren write a defense of it as well as attack those who opposed BT in this erroneous action; and, (3) why, some months after the fact, did Mac Deaver offer to defend the BT elders’ actions in the matter in a public debate?

Furthermore, *CFTF* again dealt with the matter in our March 2003 issue—eight months after the BT elders allegedly confessed their sins of practicing the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. But, once again we emphasize, one will search in vain to find in the undated letter put out a year or so ago by the BT elders where they declare that they sinned in the practice of re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. If they did confess such sins on July 28, 2002, a whole crowd of BT members did not know it—including their own preacher, Maxie Boren.

All one has to do to see the truth of these matters is: (1) get the particular back issues of *CFTF* and take note of the documentation contained therein regarding the matters addressed in this email and, (2)

note that what the BT elders **said** about the subject under consideration, and what they actually **did**, are two completely different things.

WHAT SOME ARE SAYING THE BT ELDERS’ UNDATED LETTER DECLARES

Besides the fact that **Dave Miller** (see the 2005 August *CFTF* regarding Miller’s position on elder re-evaluation and reaffirmation) continues to be a part of **Apologetics Press** (hereafter AP) the following e-mail, received by one of our readers and sent to us, is another reason we have once again addressed this false doctrine—especially the undated letter from the BT elders wherein they are alleged to have repented of and confessed the sin of the previously noted false doctrine.

The following e-mail concerns an effort to start a Brown Trail School of Preaching Alumni Association. It was written by a new graduate of the school to an older alumnus for the purpose of answering the older alumnus’s concerns about the BT elders’ teaching and practice of the false doctrine of re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders.

In part the e-mail reads:

Here is the letter that the Elders each signed personally showing what they have done to try and make this right. I also sent a copy of the bylaws just in case you have any suggestions or that maybe you will be interested in joining us now. It does need to be noted that we have someone that was there during this time that would be willing to tell you what was being taught in the classrooms. I also, as seen in the Bylaws, want you to know that the alumni is [sic] separate from the school “if” it was to start teaching false doctrine, which is not being anticipated, and thus would begin helping preachers in other ways [sic meaning unclear—editor].

Bob Stapleton (Director of the Brown Trail School of Preaching: hereafter BTSOP—Editor) is willing to talk with anyone to show that the school is teaching everything right down the line. He will not back down from any question I can promise [sic]. I to [sic] will answer any questions that you might have about the school now.

I would like to point out that Dave Miller is not there anymore, whether right or wrong, the elders have repented and thus the school is worthy of support if it is teaching truth [sic]. The school as an institution cannot ask for forgiveness only people can and the school is right down the line as are the teachers in it. Ask Bob for the questioner [sic] that all teachers must not only answer but answer according to the Bible. If they do not they are not

allowed to teach there any longer. There already have been teachers that have not been allowed to come back and teach. Just for some background on how things are going now. I am eager to here [sic] your response.

Please note the following observations:

1. Earlier we have clearly shown that the BT elders' undated letter that is over a year old **does not say** what people are declaring that it says—that the BT elders have repented of teaching and practicing **the false doctrine** of elder re-evaluation and reaffirmation as they taught and practiced it at least twice at the BT Church.

2. Although important, the question is **not** what the present director of BTSOP believes and teaches on re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders.

3. The question is **not** what the present faculty of BTSOP believes and teaches regarding the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders.

4. The question is **not** whether or not the practice of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders is in the area of options and, therefore, was only an unwise **option** that the BT elders chose in order to carry out or discharge an **obligatory** matter (This seems to be what the BT elders would have us believe about the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders).

5. The sin-problem with the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as taught and practiced by Dave Miller (while with BT and now with AP), Maxie Boren, the BT elders et al., **is** that it violates the authorization of the New Testament, which delegated authority belongs only to faithful elders. Therefore, the question is: **Did the BT elders repent of teaching and practicing a false doctrine that placed authority into the hands of the church, which authority God only put into the hands of qualified and faithful elders?** The answer is, yes, the BT elders, Dave Miller, Maxie Boren, et al., **did that very thing** and they have never repented of it. The undated letter referred to and examined over and over again in this editorial does not evidence in any way whatsoever that the BT elders repented of teaching and practicing a doctrine that placed into the hands of the congregation, authority that God does not, in the last Will and Testament of His Son, authorize it to possess. **At best all that may be garnered from the undated letter herein considered is that the BT elders apologized for making some truly unwise decisions in the process of practicing the false doctrine of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders. A moot point if there ever was one.**

The BT elders' undated letter reminds us of certain brethren who try to pacify the church with a "con-

fession" of sorts, while at the same time actually not admitting to a specific wrong doing (sin) on their part. These so-called "confessions of sin" are prefaced with "If I have sinned..." or "If I have offended anyone..." Such brethren either did sin or they did not sin. They know they either did sin or they know they did not sin. And, they either know what the sin was or they do not know what it was. Regarding the BT elders, specifically what sin did they commit? Of what sin do they need to repent and confess to the church? It certainly was not what the BT elders said they confessed on July 28, 2002 in that undated year old (or more) letter. How do I know what I just wrote? **Answer:** Because, I can read and understand my own mother tongue. And, in that undated letter the BT elders never said that they were repenting of the actual teaching and practice of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders because it was a false doctrine that, when practiced, placed into the hands of the church authority God only intended for the elders to have and exercise.

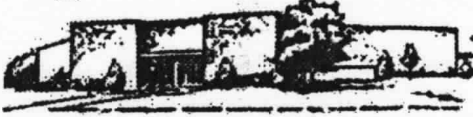
—David P. Brown, Editor

Dave Miller recently released an article designed to "explain" his position on re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as practised the first time in 1990 by the Brown Trail (BT) Church of Christ, Bedford, Texas. In our August 2005 *CFTF* we printed Miller's complete sermon on this subject. He preached this sermon at BT on April 8, 1990. Evidently some think that Miller could more thoroughly explain his position in his recent brief article (about a page is used to address his doctrine), than he could accomplish in his 1990 sermon. The transcription of that sermon took more than four 8-½ X 11 inch pages, in 11 point type to print it in *CFTF*. *We predict that in the coming weeks we will hear much about his brief "explanation," but little or nothing about his 1990 sermon.*

Also, in his article of "explanation" Miller attempts to explain his views on MDR as they relate to the **Everett Chambers** case that transpired at BT while he was directing the BT School of Preaching. He used about the same amount of space to "explain" his position on the Chambers MDR matter as he used to "explain" his re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders doctrine.

Suffice it to say, if the Lord permits, we will thoroughly examine in *CFTF* this most recent article of "explanation" from Miller in the light of God's Word and of his 1990 BT sermon. -Editor

Brown Trail Church of Christ



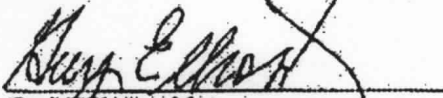
LOCATION: 1801 BROWN TRAIL ♦ BEDFORD, TEXAS 76021
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 210667 ♦ BEDFORD, TEXAS 76095
817/282-6526 or 817/268-3222

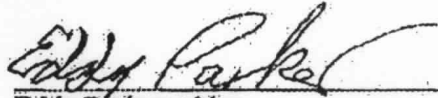
ELDER EVALUATION AND THE BROWN TRAIL CHURCH OF CHRIST


From time to time things happen that pose a problem for men to handle that would take the wisdom of Solomon to properly understand and handle. Such a matter confronted the elders of the Brown Trail church of Christ approximately three years ago. The elders were faced with an issue that resulted in them using all of the wisdom that they could muster, but, as we know, man's wisdom sometimes comes up short. In order to prevent a further split within the congregation the elders deemed it best to allow the membership to assist in determining which of the existing elders would continue as Shepherds over the flock. In doing so they realized they could not cite Scripture that would direct them in the removal of elders who refused to step down for the benefit of the congregation. They also realized that neither could others cite Scripture in so far as the way in which elders are to be installed. Fearing the worse for the congregation, if the internal conflict within the eldership continued, the elders sought to eliminate the problem the best way they could. Brethren, it needs to be understood that no elders were dismissed as a result of the evaluation. Two of the then existing elders resigned before the evaluation results were known, but none were dismissed due to the evaluation.

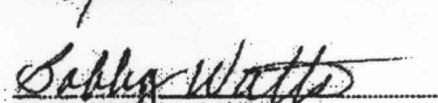
In doing so mistakes were made and lessons were learned. For the mistakes made the present elders have asked forgiveness of the congregation through public confession and request for prayer on July 28, 2002. As to the lessons learned the present elders have determined that so long as they are the overseers of the Brown Trail congregation such actions will never be conducted again. It is not our belief, and never has been, that congregations should conduct periodic affirmation/evaluation of the eldership in view of dismissing some or all of the elders. We do not believe that such is in accord with the Scriptures. Brethren, if we could go back three years and start the process all over again we would clearly do things differently! We are sorry that wrongs were committed and people were hurt! Even more so we are sorry that the congregation has been looked down upon! This is all that we know to say and do.

Given the fact that numerous brethren have said they would like to know where we stand on this matter the above brief statement of our belief is set forth for your consideration. The Brown Trail church has stood for the Truth through the years and we do not intend for it to be any other way. All of the works of the Brown Trail congregation are for the purpose of bringing glory to God, and that is exactly the way it should be. We ask your prayers and support as we work for His Cause.


Guy Elliott, elder


Eddy Parker, elder


Phil Pope, elder


Bobby Watts, elder

"Speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15)

2006 SPRING

Contending for the Faith

LECTURESHIP

FEBRUARY 26-MARCH 2, 2006

THEME:

"ANTI-ISM—FROM GOD OR MAN?"

Eddy Craft	"Saints Only Doctrine"
Rick Popejoy	"Anti-Bible Classes Doctrine"
Wesley Simons	"A Review of the 'Bingham-Highers Debate'"
Jason Rollo	"Examples of 'Anti-ism' in the New Testament"
Darrell Conley	"Congregational Cooperation and the Sponsoring church Doctrine"
James Cossey	"Are We 'Institutional Brethren'?"
David P. Brown	"A Failure to Understand How to Ascertain Bible Authority Can Produce Anti-ism—The Difference in Obligations and Options"
Michael Hatcher	"Anti-Located Preacher Doctrine"
Dub McClish	"A History of 'Anti-ism' Since the 19 th Century to the Present"
Geoff Litke	"Anti-Located Preacher Doctrine"
Terry Hightower	"Some Implications of 'Anti-ism'"
John West	"A Review of the 'Britnell-Woods Debate' —Orphan Homes"
Lee Davis	"Anti-Woman Teacher Doctrine"
Lynn Parker	"Why is 'Anti-ism' Sinful?"
Roelf Ruffner	"Is There Biblical Authority to Eat in the Church Building and if there is Such Authority, Does that Same Authority Authorize Gymnasiums and the Like?"
Danny Douglas	"A Review of the 'Cogdill-Woods Debate' — Orphan Homes and Cooperation"
John Brown	"A Review of 'Lectures On Cooperation' by Thomas B. Warren"
Clifford Newell, Jr.	"Anti-ism is Not God's Answer to Liberalism"
Paul Vaughn	"The Anti-Orphan Home Doctrine Refuted"
Jerry Murrell	"The 'Hats and Hair' Doctrine Refuted"
Lester Kamp	"Are We Practicing 'Anti-ism' Because We Will Not Fellowship the Denominations?"
Bruce Stulting	"A Review of the 'Whitten-Lanier Debate' —A Discussion Involving Classes and Woman Teachers"
Jim Nash	"A Review of the 'Porter-Waters Debate' —Number of Cups in the Lord's Supper"
Tim Kidwell	"A Review of the 'Wallace-Ketcherside Debate' —Located Preacher"
Dave Watson	"Are We Holding A Form of 'Anti-ism' Because We Oppose False Doctrine and False Teachers in ACU, OCU, Harding U., FHU, Lipscomb U., and The Like?"
David Smith	"The 'One-Cup' Doctrine Refuted"
Kent Bailey	"Are We Occupying an 'Anti' Position When We Oppose 'The Church of Christ Disaster Relief Agency'?"
Jerry Brewer	"Opposing Support for Colleges Out of the Church Treasury is Not 'Anti-ism'"

THERE WILL BE AN ALL DAY LONG OPEN FORUM ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28 CONCERNING FRANK CHESSER, BERT THOMPSON, DAVE MILLER, APOLOGETICS PRESS, THE GOSPEL JOURNAL BOARD VERSUS DUB MCCLISH/DAVE WATSON, ET. AL

Spring Church of Christ
1327 Spring Cypress Rd., • P.O. Box 39 • Spring, TX 77383
281-353-2707 • scoc@swbell.net

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT *TGJ* BOARD... (CONTINUE FROM PAGE 1)

we may fellowship? If they do, please let us know what it is.

We are glad to have witnesses to what we say, write and do in such matters. Furthermore, we are not attempting to keep back the “other side.” In fact, all should welcome an open forum in which all may in an orderly fashion ask questions of and receive answers from **Dub McClish** and the Spring, Texas elders who are now overseeing his work as well as McClish’s former overseeing elders of the Roanoke, Texas Church of Christ and their preacher **Bryan Braswell**), **David B. Watson** (and the Sapulpa, Oklahoma elders), **Michael Hatcher**, former *TGJ* Board member (and the Bellview elders, Pensacola, Florida), *TGJ* Board members: **Curtis Cates** (and the Forest Hill elders, Memphis, Tennessee) **Joseph Meador** (and the Southwest elders, Austin, Texas), **Tom Hicks** (and the Southside elders, Lubbock, Texas), **Kenneth Ratcliff** (and the Schertz elders, Schertz, TX) **Barry Grider** (Forest Hill preacher), **MSOP** faculty, **Frank Chesser** (Panama Street Church of Christ, Montgomery, Alabama [no elders]), **Dave Miller**, (Executive Director of Apologetics Press, **AP** staff, **AP** Board, Palm Beach Lake Church of Christ elders (West Palm Beach, Florida, who are represented as overseeing AP).

With the matters of the previous paragraph in mind we have set aside Tuesday, February 28, 2006 during the Spring *CFTF* Lectures to conduct an open forum concerning Apologetics Press, **Bert Thompson**, Dave Miller, Frank Chesser, *TGJ* Board, Dub McClish, David B. Watson, et al. Formal invitations will be sent out to all on the previous list. The forum will begin at 9:00 a.m., break for lunch at 12:00 noon, begin again at 1:30 p.m. and close at 4:30 p.m. It will be open and conducted decently and in order as becomes faithful members of the Lord’s church. All lessons will be recorded and made available.

We understand that the present *TGJ* Board is going to meet with some brethren during the Southside Church of Christ Lectures in Lubbock this year. Will they invite McClish, Watson, and/or Hatcher to be a part of this meeting? Will the Director of the Southside Lectures, Tom Hicks (*TGJ* Board member “at large”), and/or the *TGJ* Board allow such a meeting to be video and/or audio taped? In this meeting we trust that those in charge will not adopt the attitude conveyed by the title of the classic country song, “When We Get Behind Closed Doors.”

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

The *Gospel Journal* Board expects brethren to believe them when they tell us that before July 20, 2005

no one on *TGJ* Board had any idea of removing of **Dub McClish** and **David B. Watson** from their positions with *TGJ*, or that the board had any idea that they would “resign” from *TGJ* on the aforementioned date. To hear *TGJ* Board tell it, not one board member desired for McClish and/or Watson to cease being a part of *TGJ*. Do the facts in this case testify to the veracity of *TGJ* Board’s account of this matter? In other words are they telling it like it was? Let us present the facts, examine them, and see if there is any veracity to *TGJ* Board’s story.

We now note the facts necessary to understand what led up to and caused the “resignation” of McClish and Watson from *TGJ*. Watson recorded:

On May 24, 2005 Bert Thompson was fired from Apologetics Press (AP). Dub McClish wrote a “Summation of Information Relating to Apologetics Press Scandal” after having phone conversations with brethren **Darrell Conley**, **Dan Jenkins**, **Frank Chesser** and **Wayne Jackson**. McClish had also received a packet of material that had been mailed out by the Palm Beach Lakes Church of Christ (PBLCO) in West Palm Beach, Florida, the congregation having oversight of AP. It contained: (1) an “Open Letter to Contributors and Friends of AP” from the elders of the PBLCO; (2) an “Open Letter to the Brotherhood” by Thompson; (3) an “Open Letter to Friends of AP” by Miller, listing “Dave Miller, Ph.D.” as “Executive Director”; and (4) a “Statement of Support” for AP. By the time the “Statement of Support” was mailed, Miller had been appointed the new “Executive Director” of AP. The “Statement of Support” was signed by many brethren, two of whom were brethren Curtis Cates (President of the Board of *TGJ*) and Joseph Meador (Vice-President of *TGJ* Board).

On June 8, 2005 McClish sent his “Summation” to twenty-three persons (including all *TGJ* Board members and other interested brethren, some of whom had requested information concerning the AP scandal). He sent a cover sheet asking the recipients not to circulate the “Summation” without his permission. To *TGJ* principals he said, “I request that this attachment not be circulated, except with great discretion on your part.” On page 1 of his “Summation” McClish stated:

I have known brother Thompson for twenty-three years. We have spoken on the same lectureships. Our publications company likely sold thousands of dollars worth of AP books through the years. I have admired his scholarship, his ability, and his accomplishments. I have attended Bert’s seminars. I have learned from him. I will continue to learn from him through the books he has written. I certainly am not his enemy and it brings me only profound sorrow to learn of his “personal sins.” I have been praying and

will continue to pray for him and his family.

Nor am I the enemy of Apologetics Press. Without question, this vital work needs to continue and grow. I would rejoice to be able to endorse and encourage it without reservation, as I was able to do for many years. I deeply regret that, however, under its present leadership, I cannot do so.

On June 10, 2005, Michael Hatcher (Secretary of **TGJ** Board) also responded to the AP “Statement of Support” and to the letters the PBLCOC and AP mailed requesting continued financial support by writing the following statement and sending it to the elders of the PBLCOC and to several others:

Apologetics Press has been a great work which needs to continue. However, it must have the right people associated with it to be worthy of faithful brethren’s support. When Apologetics Press began, I supported it a little bit financially and also by prayers and encouragement. This support continued until Bert Thompson hired Dave Miller. It has been documented that Miller teaches the false doctrine of reevaluation/reaffirmation of elders (which destroys any oversight the eldership might possess) and that he teaches error regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage (that one can claim there was no intent of marriage for the correct reason and, therefore, God did not join the two in a Matthew 19:6 marriage; thus, following a civil divorce, either party is free to remarry with God’s approval). Because of Miller being associated with Apologetics Press, I, unfortunately, had to end my support of this good work. As long as Miller holds these positions and does not repent for publicly teaching and practicing them, faithful brethren should not support a work which is good within itself. It is my prayer that Miller will repent of his false doctrines which he [h]as taught, but if not that he will be removed from Apologetics Press.

Also, on June 10, 2005 McClish wrote an e-mail message to Cates stating in part:

I know you are aware of all of the stir about the AP/Thompson scandal. I have sent you and the other **TGJ** Board Members a summary of the information that has come to me, along with some of my reactions to that information. I did not put this together for distribution, but to make notes on these sad events while they were fresh. I have sent my summary to only a very few, with the request that they not distribute it. I am not on any sort of crusade to hurt AP. In fact, I believe it to be a good and necessary work. However, there is no way that I can support AP under the present circumstances, for with Miller at its head, “there is death in the pot” as far as I am concerned. I note in the “explanation packet” that AP has mailed to supporters (past and present) that your name and the name of Joseph Meador appear on the “Statement of Support” list....

I am confident that you are aware that Miller was one of the principals (he was Brown Trail preacher at the time) who pushed Brown Trail’s first elder reaffirma-

tion debacle in 1990, which I documented fully in my chapter in the 1997 Bellview book. He was still there when Brown Trail did its second elder reaffirmation in 2002, and although he was not the Brown Trail preacher by this time (he was Director of the SOP), Dave defended its recurrence. (**Marvin Weir** documents Dave’s involvement in his article in **TGJ**, October 2002, pp. 25-26.) If Dave has changed his tune concerning these procedures, he has kept it very quiet. He has now had several years in which to do so. Yet he did not keep his support of them quiet at all. Further, Dave defended the mock marriage of a Jamaican student to a cousin, the purpose of which was to gain entry to and residency privileges in the U.S., fully intending to legally dissolve the marriage upon gaining entry and resident status, which he did (**D. Brown** wrote a lengthy article in **CFTF**, April 2004, pp. 7-10, describing and exposing that which **Everett Chambers** did and which Dave defended, even in BTSOP classes, among other places). Miller even promoted Chambers to be his assistant director of the school, which act produced all kinds of turmoil and almost destroyed the school altogether.... Before he moved on and became Bert’s great prize catch for AP, Dave ended up having secret meetings with only a few of the elders and engineering the ouster of those who dared question him. These form the “legacy” of Dave’s work in our area that hang as a heavy cloud over what good he did in the twelve or thirteen years he was at Brown Trail. I know that Joseph was well aware of Dave’s behavior near the close of his tenure at Brown Trail, because some of the Brown Trail folk (including at least one BTSOP instructor) talked to him about it, and Joseph discussed these matters freely with me at the time they were occurring....

Now I am in a bit of a quandary. **TGJ** has carried an expose of some of Miller’s serious doctrinal problems. As editor, I stand behind this expose because I know it to be factual. All kinds of pressure was put on me by some of my then fellow-elders to write a statement of disclaimer concerning the article, which I steadfastly refused. The Brown Trail elders also hounded me, with more than one phone call from one of them, both to me and to **Joe Chism**, demanding a meeting of the elderships or at least with me, in attempts to force a retraction. Again, I withstood them all because I knew that what Marvin wrote was the truth. While the material exposing Dave Miller’s weird (and convenient) MDR position relative to Everett Chambers did not appear in **TGJ**, nonetheless, it is a part of the public record in **CFTF**. I have not kept it a secret that I believe Dave Miller is a false teacher. So, on one hand, we have the editor of **TGJ** involved in opposing Miller and unable to support AP under his direction, but on the other hand we have the President and Vice-President of **TGJ**’s Board appearing to endorse Miller by signing the “Statement of Support.” This circumstance is one of apparent contradiction, as you can see, and it will doubtless become apparent to others, if it has not already. In fact, if one thinks about it very much,

the appearance of your and Joseph's names on the "support" statement implies that brethren should ignore what *TGJ's* editor has printed about Miller's conduct and doctrine. I have not discussed this seeming contradiction with other Board members, except Ken (**Kenneth Ratcliff**, editor). When the news of the AP scandal first broke, several days before Miller's appointment was known, Ken talked with me about it and indicated that he does not favor even handling any more AP books when the present stock is sold out. AP sent Schertz elders a packet because the church was supporting AP on a monthly basis. Upon learning of the appointment of Dave Miller and its oblique descriptions of what had occurred involving Bert, the Schertz treasurer was instructed to cease any further support immediately. I therefore know that he cannot support AP or urge others to with Miller at its head. In the packet Ken saw your and Joseph's names on the support statement, of course. Ken is aware that I am writing you about these matters. What shall we do about this apparent difference of opinion in our ranks?

On June 11, 2005 Cates responded to McClish in part, saying:

Brother Dub, several of our former students are connected with AP, **Eric Lyons** and **Michael Cortez**, men in whom I have great confidence. Relative to Dave, I cannot defend anything in which he has been involved which is wrong; I cannot do that in myself. I had been told by **Keith Mosher** that he asked Dave at Pulaski this year at the lectures about the re-affirmation of elders, and that Dave told him that was a "mistake." So, I take it that he would not now sanction such. (Perhaps it would be very helpful for him to make that known.). Incidentally, several times, Dave has written or talked to me since he got to Montgomery, asking me what my thoughts were on...or how I would answer regarding...or what my position is on...some issue-which I felt was very positive. But, I had no idea what his position would be at AP. I take it (according to their web site) that he is now serving as interim director. I do think that his time in Montgomery has been a growing experience for him; that is my personal impression.

I, like you, see the great need for AP, and I have great confidence in Lyons and Cortez; **Brad Harrub** has impressed me favorably, as well as have some others connected with AP. I learned that he had been re-hired. I also have confidence in the Palm Beach Lakes elders, who oversee AP, and I have confidence in Frank Chesser, a trusted friend, and Panama Street, whom I have known for five decades. These things impacted my desire to help save AP, and I thought the very fact that Dave called me and asked me to sign was positive....

Dear friend, I pray that this matter will not serve to affect adversely the loving, close relationship of those of us who serve on the Board and on the Editorial Staff of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*.

McClish wrote back to Cates on June 11, saying in part:

Please be assured that these matters have not affected my esteem and appreciation for you, and, as far as I am concerned, I trust that they will not affect my relationship with other Board Members. I hope that I said nothing in my message to you to leave the impression that they had/will. My great concerns were/are two:

1. Dave Miller's directorship of AP.

2. More particularly, the questions some will ask about *TGJ's* President and Vice-President's implied endorsement of Dave Miller, whom *TGJ* has identified as propagating error.

I am glad to hear that Dave has sought your advice and counsel. I hate to appear overly suspicious, but what better way to deflect what was said in the pages of *TGJ* about him than to seek counsel from the President of *TGJ* Board? Keith told me at Bristol that he had visited with Dave at Pulaski, and that Dave had said he "made a mistake" regarding the reaffirmation business. I was glad to hear that admission, but, as you know, that which has been shouted from the housetops cannot be corrected in a corner. If possible, Dave's MDR position relative to Everett Chambers is more damning than his propagation and defense of the elder reevaluation error.... I know not a single reason that I could not wholeheartedly endorse AP, were it not for Dave Miller. He sours the whole operation for me (and for many others) until he comes clean.

I pray for you a safe journey to and a great meeting in Chattanooga.

Your friend and brother in the greatest cause,

On June 17, 2005 Frank Chesser, preacher for the Panama Street Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, wrote a slanderous letter of denunciation to McClish after obtaining a copy of McClish's "Summation." He mailed copies of his letter to apparently hundreds of individuals (including *TGJ* Board & Editors) and congregations all over the country.

On June 30, 2005 David B. Watson wrote a response to Chesser's letter and mailed copies to all *TGJ* Board members and to as many others as he knew had received Chesser's letter.

On July 8, 2005 Cates wrote an e-mail message to *TGJ* Board & Editors stating:

As a result of many statements of concern to me by trustworthy men who are sound in the faith and my own personal concern relative to Apologetics Press and *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*, I request that brother Hatcher add the discussion of the *JOURNAL'S* purpose and reputation to the agenda for the upcoming board meeting.

(The "upcoming board meeting" referred to a two-day meeting of *TGJ* Board and Editors on July 19

Contending for the Faith—October/2005

- 20, 2005, at **TGJ** Business Office in Schertz, Texas. This meeting was planned in **TGJ** Board-Editor meeting in Cates' office during MSOP Lectures, March 29 (2005-Editor). It was intended to be a relaxed, informal, "brain-storming" meeting to discuss various ways of improving the book business and the paper and to discuss future plans in general.)

On July 9, 2005 McClish wrote his response to Chesser's letter and mailed copies to all **TGJ** Board members and to as many others as he knew had received Chesser's letter.

On July 11, 2005 Watson copied the "Statement of Support" for AP signed by Cates and Meador and simply substituted The Gospel Journal for Apologetics Press and then e-mailed it to all of **TGJ** Board members and Editors, asking them to sign it. It read:

We the undersigned, wish to announce that we have complete confidence that *The Gospel Journal* is on a firm footing that will insure its continued work of excellence. We commend *The Gospel Journal* to the brotherhood and recommend that it continue to be the recipient of financial and moral support.

Watson and McClish signed it. None of **TGJ** Board members have to this day signed it.

Instead of signing the "Statement of Support" for **TGJ**, on that same day (July 11, 2005) Cates submitted, in writing, his resignation from the Board of **TGJ**. On July 12, 2005 Meador submitted, in writing, his resignation as Vice-President of Board of **TGJ**. At least two of **TGJ's** three remaining Board members stated that they were going to try to talk both Cates and Meador into rescinding their resignations. They were successful.

On Friday, July 15, 2005, Hatcher, Secretary of **TGJ** Board, called McClish on behalf of the Board, telling him that he and Watson would not be needed for the Schertz meeting on July 19. The Board would meet separately all that day and would then meet with McClish and Watson on July 20.

On Wednesday July 20, 2005 Cates participated in the Board-Editors' meeting as President of **TGJ** Board and Meador participated as Vice-President of **TGJ** Board in the meeting in Schertz, Texas. This meeting began at 9:00 a.m. and by 9:30 a.m. Dub McClish was no longer Editor of **TGJ** and Dave Watson was no longer Associate Editor of **TGJ**.

THE WEEKEND BEFORE JULY 20, 2005

During the weekend of July 16, 17, 2005, Hatcher and Cates were together at The 25th Annual West Kentucky Bible Lectures held at the Sunny Slope Church of Christ, Paducah, Kentucky. On August 26, 2005, Dub McClish questioned Hatcher concerning his time spent with Cates at the Sunny Slope Lectures. McClish wrote:

I know that you and Curtis were together at Sunny Slope the weekend before the meetings at Schertz last month. I still have your e-mail in response to receiving

my apology letters to the Thompsons (reflecting the fact that not only you, but Curtis also had read them [with appreciation no less]). Did Curtis talk to you any that weekend about phone calls, letters, e-mails, etc., he had received concerning my **AP** "Summation" and/or about me, my alleged failed reputation, and the effects these would allegedly have on **TGJ** and on MSOP? If he did so, would you say he did so very little, some, a good bit, a great amount, or "constantly" (i.e., every time you were with him)?

In a phone conversation with McClish on August 28, 2005, Hatcher answered McClish's question from the previous quote, saying that "constantly" was too strong a description of the frequency in which Cates referenced said matters. But, the next degree down from "constantly" (i.e., "a great amount") would be an accurate description of Cates' references to Hatcher about McClish's "**AP** 'Summation'" and/or about me [i.e., McClish], my alleged failed reputation, and the effects these would allegedly have on **TGJ** and MSOP." At this writing, Hatcher is alive and well. If, therefore, anyone has enough concern about the accuracy of these matters to check personally with Hatcher to see if **CFTF** has given McClish's questions and Hatcher's answers correctly, they ought to do so.

If this had been a court case Hatcher's testimony would stand as evidence (unless it could be successfully rebutted) of Cates' efforts **prior** to July 19-20, 2005 to arrange things so as to make them conducive for McClish's and Watson's departure from **TGJ**, that happened during the July 20, 2005 Schertz, Texas **TGJ** Board meeting. If this conclusion is not the proper one in the light of all the preceding evidence, then on the weekend immediately prior to the July 19-20, 2005 **TGJ** Board meeting *why* was Cates spending a "great amount" of time discussing with fellow board member Michael Hatcher McClish's "**AP** 'Summation'" and/or about me [i.e., McClish], my alleged failed reputation, and the effects these would allegedly have on **TGJ** and MSOP"?

TOMMY HICKS' DECLARATIONS

Our readers will remember that on July 26, 2005, **Tommy Hicks** (**TGJ** Board member "at large") wrote to **Kent Bailey** in response to Bailey's e-mail regarding the "dismissal" of McClish and Watson, concerning:

You did not use the word "fired," but you used "dismissal" which, to me, implies the same. Neither Dub nor David was "fired." Furthermore, neither was asked to "resign." By their own volition, both did resign. I cannot speak as to how Dub and David perceived their situation relative to **TGJ** Board, but if *anyone* says, "They saw the handwriting on the wall and resigned," I can assure you that **TGJ Board** had done no "writing on the wall." No vote was ever taken, therefore, no decision was ever made, by **TGJ** Board to "fire" them

or to ask them for their resignations. [It is from this quote that we obtained the title for this article.-Editor]

Christians are obligated to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Thus in the case of McClish/Watson vs. the TGJ board we have the right to expect all involved to be truthful. In Tommy Hicks' previously quoted remarks it is obvious what Hicks and the rest of the TGJ board expect us to believe about the departure of McClish and Watson from TGJ. They would have the brethren believe that:

1. McClish and Watson were as happy as larks on a beautiful Spring morning concerning their work with *TGJ*.
2. Every *TGJ* Board member was pleased and content with McClish's and Watson's work in their respective editorial positions.
3. Then, "out of the clear blue" for no apparent reason McClish and Watson resigned.
4. Notice again that Hicks said:
 - a. "Neither Dub nor David was 'fired.'"
 - b. "...neither was asked to 'resign.'"
 - c. "I can assure you that *TGJ* Board had done no 'writing on the wall.'"
 - d. "No vote was ever taken, therefore, no decision was ever made, by *TGJ* Board to 'fire' them or to ask them for their resignations."

If we accept Hicks's statements as truthful and representative of *TGJ* Board's position on the "resignation" of McClish and Watson, there was neither "rhyme nor reason" for McClish and Watson to "resign" from *TGJ*. Does anyone really believe that *TGJ* Board put **no pressure** at all on McClish and Watson to "resign?" Furthermore, does anyone genuinely believe that everyone involved with *TGJ* was so happy and "pleased as punch" with one another on July 19-20, 2005, but out of the "clear blue" McClish and Watson "resigned?"

DUB MCCLISH'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE KENT BAILEY-TOMMY HICKS EMAIL EXCHANGE

On the same date as the preceding e-mail we recorded in our September 2005 issue that when Bailey questioned McClish via e-mail concerning Hicks's "spin," McClish responded to Bailey saying:

Dave and I have discussed Tommy's responses to you. The parsing and spinning as to whether or not we "resigned voluntarily" is interesting. A good question might be to ask Tommy if he will send you a copy of the "unanimous resolution" of the Board which Michael read at the beginning of our meeting. It carried a not-so-thinly veiled threat that Dub and Dave "may" need

to be replaced...If they invited us to the meeting without our being under threat, it is strange that when we resigned, not a single Board Member suggested we should talk about it some, discuss some possible way to avoid the resignations, or that it was a drastic or unnecessary action on our part. After we said, "We resign," they simply excused us from the meeting for 10-12 minutes for discussion of the resignations. Tommy then came and got us, and Michael read the "unanimous resolution" of the Board to accept our resignations-no attempt to ask us to reconsider, no questions of us or to us in any way that related to any alternative to our departure from our editorial responsibilities. They can pretend all they want to, but our resignations were exactly what they wanted before we walked into the meeting, and objective men, possessing the facts that transpired, can reach no other conclusion. It was just like elders who call a preacher in and ask him if he wants to resign or be fired. Then when he resigns, they whine, "But we didn't fire him; he resigned."

JERRY PARKER'S COMMENTS RELATIVE TO THE MCCLISH-WATSON VERSUS TGJ BOARD CASE

Jerry Parker voluntarily handled *TGJ*'s book business in order to help the journal. He met with the *TGJ* Board on July 20, 2005 immediately after McClish and Watson exited the meeting in which they were forced to "resign." Parker has recently discontinued his work with *TGJ* because of his complete disapproval of *TGJ* Board's decision to accept the "resignation" of McClish and Watson. In an e-mail message from Lynn Parker (no kin in the flesh to Jerry Parker) on July 29, 2005, he included the following summary of the situation by Jerry Parker:

"1.) Dub and David were fired, dismissed, removed, etc. by ALL of the board, 2) the board spent Tuesday working on their position, 3) they were removed because of their stand against what was going on at AP, 4) they (*TGJ* Board) have no idea what great harm they have done."

DID CATES SAY IT, OR DID HE NOT? IF HE DID, WHAT DID HE MEAN BY IT?

Is it not the case that on July 19, 2005 during the *TGJ* Board's deliberations pertaining to the future of McClish and Watson with *TGJ* that several times Curtis Cates reminded the rest of the board that "*We had all better hang together, or we will hang separately?*" Hatcher reported that Cates made the preceding statement to the rest of the *TGJ* Board more than once during the course of their July 19, 2005 meeting.

Here is what we come down to regarding this matter: It is either true or false that Hatcher accurately reported that in *TGJ* Board meeting of July 19, 2005, as the board was discussing McClish and Watson's continued involvement or the cessation of it with *TGJ*,

that Cates said to the rest of the board members the following: *“We had all better hang together, or we will hang separately.”* If Cates never made the statement quoted in the preceding sentence that Hatcher has reported he made, then Hatcher either (1) misunderstood Cates or (2) lied. Whether Hatcher lied or told the truth should be very easy to determine because of the other **TGJ** Board members present in that particular meeting. Surely they can verify that Cates said or did not say, *“We had all better hang together, or we will hang separately.”* We cannot help but wonder what subject was under discussion by **TGJ** Board that would cause Cates to feel compelled to warn the other members of **TGJ** Board that they *“had all better hang together or they would hang separately.”*

If it is the case that Cates made the statement quoted in the preceding paragraph to **TGJ** Board, then what was it that demanded such unity and solidarity of **TGJ** Board? Was Cates not indicating by, *“We had all better hang together, or we will hang separately”* that **TGJ** Board must be totally and fully committed to making sure that when July 20, 2005 was ended that the relationship of McClish and Watson with **TGJ** would also be ended? If the answer to the preceding question is “no,” then what was transpiring among the members of **TGJ** Board that could put each board member in such dire straits so as to cause Cates to declare to his fellow board members, *“We had all better hang together, or we will hang separately?”* After all, such a comment sounds rather ominous to us. As a matter of fact this statement usually is made when people think they are about to do or not do something that is going to put all involved in a precarious position. Now, what was it that **TGJ** Board was in the process of doing on July 19, 2005 that would become a reality on July 20, 2005 that has certainly put **TGJ** Board into a very unsettled state of affairs to say the least—**and the end is not yet?**

BARRY GRIDER’S PART IN THE AP AND TGJ FOUL-UP

On July 29, 2005, Barry Grider wrote an e-mail message to McClish accusing him of making a false statement about him. He wrote:

Dear brother McClish,

In recent days I have received word of my name being circulated among some brethren regarding a supposed statement that I made to brother **Bryan Braswell**. The statement that I supposedly made indicated that Brother Cates had “already made up his mind” to seek your dismissal as editor of Gospel Journal before he left Memphis to attend the board meeting. This statement is not true. I know that brother Cates agonized for days and with tears over what to do concerning the problem that you caused with your “summation of Apologetics Press” email. At the time he left Memphis

he was still not sure of the course of action that should be taken.

I did speak briefly to brother Bryan the week prior to the board meeting. I expressed my concern and brother Cates concern over your “summation of the A.P.” email. I had also received brother Chesser’s letter, and heard from numerous brethren who, like me, were gravely concerned and disappointed in what you had done through the “summation of A.P.” email. However, at no time did I suggest brother Cates had made up his mind concerning your continuing as editor of the paper. Had I suggested such it would have been a falsehood.

I have once more talked to Bryan to make sure he did not misunderstand me and to make sure that I did not leave him with the wrong impression. Bryan stated he knew what I said, and that I did not indicate a decision had been made by brother Cates as to what your future with Gospel Journal should be. Hence, I do not know how this rumor started, but I would ask you to please help make sure it is not perpetuated.

While I strongly condemn your “summation of A.P.” email and believe it did much harm to an already painful situation, I commend you for stepping aside as the editor of the Gospel Journal. I pray that you will take a more constructive course in days to come and encourage others to do likewise.

Sincerely in Christ,

Barry Grider

McClish responded to Grider’s accusation in a letter dated August 3, 2005. We herein quote McClish’s entire letter to Grider. It reads:

August 3, 2005

Mr. Barry Grider
Forest Hill Church of Christ
3950 Forest Hill-Irene Road
Memphis, TN 38125

Dear Barry:

Perpetuate implies continuation of something I have been doing. I could hardly perpetuate the rumor of which you wrote since I have never uttered or written it. You are therefore barking up the wrong tree if you suppose I have been circulating said rumor. I have never made any such statement because I have never been told that any such statement was made to Bryan by you or anyone else. Nor have I even implied to anyone that you conveyed such information. Since I have not spoken with Bryan directly about any of your calls to him, I do not know what you may have said specifically to him. My information came from one of the Roanoke elders who, in a phone conversation the evening of July 17, told me of your call to Bryan a week before the meetings took place. My impression from what he told me was that you at least indicated to Bryan some of the subject-matter of those meetings,

directly involving me. I wonder if it has not occurred to you that such rumors relating to your phone call and the substance of said call would not be flying if you had not made that call to begin with. You would not have needed to make the follow-up call to Bryan to refresh your memory on what you told him had you not made the first call.

When I told Curtis in the Board Meeting about your call to Bryan, he appeared surprised, if not shocked. He apologized that you had done so (not once, but twice) and did so profusely, before the entire Board. He said he did not know how you knew about the meetings (which I find a bit incredible) and said you had no business making any such call, even with the possession of such knowledge. I agree completely with Curtis. I have been accused by some of tale bearing and gossiping. How would you classify your calls to Bryan?

You have obviously inserted yourself into some matters involving *TGJ* and me personally with an aggressive, “hard ball” attitude. You did not need to tell me you “strongly condemned” my “Summation.” I was fully aware of that from various sources, not the least of which was your bulletin article of June 28, “A Time To Be Silent,” in which you all but called my name. This fact was not lost on others, either. Doubtless, some applauded your article, but don’t think everyone appreciated it. If you had been around when the prophets and apostles were writing, I suppose we would have an entirely different Bible, at least had they heeded the dictum you laid down in your next-to-last sentence. We would not know of the sins in Eden, of Cain’s murderous act, of David’s adultery, of Solomon’s idolatry, of Peter’s denials of the Lord and dissimulation at Antioch, of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus, of the lies of Ananias and Sapphira, ad infinitum. The inspired writers had no problem writing the records of the sins (repented of or not), even of the Bible’s greatest heroes, not just for some temporary, perishable medium, but for the Book of the ages. Surely, you did not think through your judgmental statement before you wrote it.

In fact, many (including not a few MSOP alumni and friends of considerable repute) have conveyed to me that they deeply resent your involving yourself in these matters as you have done, believing you to be totally out of place (just as Curtis indicated concerning your phone call to Bryan). Some of them have even repeated to me their nickname for you: “The Mole.” They believe you have been putting your political science degree to effective use, not only in this latest fiasco, but in earlier situations involving MSOP as well. You, Frank Chesser, and others who have been so quick to condemn me for “judging” others have proved yourselves huge hypocrites in your quick judgments of my motives and of me and in your numerous totally unwarranted assumptions relating to my AP “Summation.” You have done your best to shame and defame me, when you are the ones who should be ashamed. A

simple phone call from Frank when he first got the copy of my “Summation” would likely have prevented all of the firestorm of alienation among sound brethren that has resulted from his bombastic, over-the-top, knee-jerk-response letter which he scattered to the four winds. He did so on the basis of his unwarranted assumption that I had done the same with my “Summation,” which is simply untrue. In other words, he judged me by his own motives and behavior in writing and distributing his letter. You surely know by now the extremely limited distribution I fully intended for my “Summation,” but it obviously makes no difference to you. I really believe that you and Frank (and a few others) have proved that you were/are not really interested in the facts anyway. You and others may judge me and my “Summation” any way you choose. Your opinion of it is not law or Gospel. I make no apology whatsoever for writing what I did. Frank obviously believes I sinned in doing so. You seem to agree. For whatever it’s worth, I asked the TGJ Board if they believed I sinned in writing it. Curtis answered for the Board, “No,” and said that they had never entertained the idea that I had done so in their discussions. Once more, in this I completely agree with Curtis and the Board.

I trust you have received and read my letters of apology to Bert and Rhonda Thompson for the extra pain the unauthorized circulation of my “Summation” brought to them. I truly am regretful over that. It should never have happened, and it never would have happened had someone to whom I sent the “Summation” in confidence not decided-with no good reason-to break that confidence. However, anyone who assumes that my letters to them were an apology for writing the “Summation” or sending it to a few interested parties or that I was confessing in those letters that I sinned in writing the “Summation,” has made another unwarranted assumption. They have not read carefully what I wrote, but have engaged in eisegesis rather than exegesis. I guess brethren like you and Frank used up all of your forgiveness, compassion, and mercy on Bert. I surely haven’t heard any from any of you toward me relating to my letters to Bert and Rhonda. I know some are waiting for Frank to distribute my letters to them as widely as he distributed his slanderous hate letter to me, but none of us are holding our breath. It appears that the mercy/forgiveness/compassion “stream” flows only one direction from you sweet brethren. The position you, Frank, and all of the signers of the AP “Statement of Support” (including Curtis) are now in is both contradictory, absurd, and, worst of all, unscriptural. By signing your names you are bidding Godspeed to a false teacher (2 John 9-11). His name is Dave Miller. The idea that one can promote an institution while not promoting or opposing its Director (and a Board member of same) is ludicrous, which is the “official position” the *TGJ* Board took when I questioned them about it directly on June 20 (to his credit, one of the Board members has now admitted that such a dichotomy is logically and Scripturally impossible). Curtis

told me in an email message (June 11) that he did not know Miller would be the new Director when he gave Miller permission to use his name. A “fly on the wall” has told me that both Curtis and Joseph Meador stated in the **TGJ** Board meeting on July 19 that, had they known this fact, they would not have permitted their names to be used. (Of course, there is a simple solution to that matter, at least for men of integrity and principle. They can easily issue a disclaimer if they are sincere.) Perhaps **none** who allowed their names to be used knew that Miller was to be the new Director when they gave their permission. However, some likely have had their heads so firmly in the sand that they were not even aware of his doctrinal errors. Again, some may know of, but may not even be concerned about Dave Miller’s errors. Obviously, this was not true of Curtis and Joseph or they would not have indicated their refusals for AP to use their names had they known. I am confident that you had to know of Dave Miller’s baggage from the time Bert made his stupendous, unbelievable coup in hiring him. Bert replied to the Miller objections he received from contributors (who immediately stopped their contributions) with either a perfunctory form letter or, in at least one case, with an irrational and irate denial of evidence offered, an unqualified defense of Miller, and an attitude of “how dare you question me, the great Bert Thompson” (no, this letter was not addressed to me). I wonder, now, if you, like Curtis, would say that you would not have allowed them to use your name had you known Dave was to be the new Director. If you would **not** have, will you allow them to “perpetuate” using your name as an endorsement?

I think I am safe in saying that the way to save a brother who teaches false doctrine is not the way so many brethren have been dealing with Dave Miller. Why should he repent when he is regularly invited to speak on various lectureships generally considered to be doctrinally sound (e.g., Spiritual Sword, Truth in Love, ETSOP, Polishing the Pulpit)? And what message does it send to a false teacher when other men known for their soundness go right on and speak on the same lectureships with him? The message to Dave is that he has nothing of which to repent. The message to brethren in general is the same—that Dave is completely innocent. This is hardly the way to bring a false teacher to repentance. It appears that if one gets a couple of masters degrees and a PhD, writes some good books, continues to deliver a conservative message, and continues to be used by faithful brethren, it just doesn’t matter what errors he has committed (unless it was involvement in pedophilia, of course). But Dave can advocate grievous doctrinal errors and be given a pass, yea, even be promoted. Is pedophilia the only sin/error that is egregious enough to get the attention of the AP Board and the Palm Beach Lakes elders? (Of course, it doesn’t hurt Dave’s clout to himself be one of three AP Board members, but no one should even suspect any conflict of interest in that regard). A blind man, thinking rationally, can see the gross double standard regarding AP’s treatment of Bert’s er-

ror and Dave’s errors. Frank Chesser well knows of Dave’s doctrinal baggage from several sources; he has likely known of them almost from the time Bert hired Dave. As already mentioned, Bert was informed by several men of Dave’s doctrinal errors at the time he hired him. The Palm Beach Lakes elders have been informed of Dave’s errors, as have the other AP staff members. One is almost tempted to speculate that Dave must have some “goods” on all of these guys. Or maybe he has discovered the secret of creating an impenetrable force field around himself. Will it all come tumbling down on Dave one of these days, as Bert’s “personal sins” of twenty years finally did on him? You say you want AP to survive and flourish, as do I. Are you to the point of accepting a means-justifies-the-end, whatever-it-takes attitude toward its survival? It surely seems so, not only with you, but with others as well.

I note a few ironies: You support a false teacher, but denounce me, not accused by any so far as I know (except radical enemies of the Truth) of teaching error. You have compassion for a confessed pedophile, but only abhorrence for me. You applaud a scurrilous letter written to and about me by an AP partisan who was beside himself when he wrote it, but you have nothing but contempt for a simple “Summation” I wrote concerning the AP scandal. You apparently hold me as a greater sinner than he who has confessed his 20-year addiction to pedophilia. You support AP with a false teacher at its head, but you vilify *The Gospel Journal* in which I have consistently taught and defended the Truth and exposed error in its brief 67-month life. As the expression goes, “go figure.” Some day, perhaps, more calm and objective heads will see and admit that sheer emotion (as opposed to reason), brotherhood networking/politics, and fear of monetary loss have driven this hate campaign against me. It is a classic illustration of a mountain’s being created out of less than a molehill.

Your commendation of my “stepping aside” as *TGJ*’s editor was as undeserved as it was misplaced. Neither Dave Watson nor I merely “stepped aside.” We were, in fact, **pushed** aside. The behavior of the Board on July 20 was graphically reminiscent of elderships that ask a preacher if he wants to resign or be fired, and then when he resigns, they say, “We didn’t fire him, he resigned.” Then, to add insult to injury, they absolve him of any sin or guilt and recommend him to high Heaven to other congregations. Parse or spin it any way you wish, the Board came there unhappy with our work and with us as Editors, and it breathed a collective sigh of relief when we “resigned.” We simply saved their having to “fire” us, which neither Dave nor I have the slightest doubt would have occurred had we not “resigned.”

The following information illustrates in the most graphic way possible the fact that when Dave Watson

and I resigned, the Board got exactly what it wanted, whether or not it “had made up its mind” about us before the meeting: When Curtis and Joseph Meador resigned from TGJ’s Board (7/11 and 7/12, respectively), the remaining Board members immediately got on the phone, imploring them to “unresign” (at least one Board member even offered to go to Memphis to appeal to Curtis in person). When Dave Watson and I resigned, not one Board member suggested we were too hasty in doing so, that this was a drastic measure, that we should talk about it, that perhaps we could work something out, or any other alternative, much less implored us to “unresign.” We were simply asked to leave the Board meeting while the Board went through the formality of “deciding” how they should respond to our resignations. It took every bit of twelve minutes for them to call us back in and read the unanimous resolution of the Board to accept our resignations. Again, no questions were asked or suggestions made of any alternatives. One of the great ironies in all of this is the following: Through the claims of one (perhaps two) Board member(s), the remainder of the Board was persuaded (in the July 19 all-day meeting) that *TGJ* was dead if I remained its Editor.

These same influences also convinced the Board that my “reputation” was “ruined” because of my AP “Summation” that had been circulated. The sad fact is that the Board’s action, taken under political pressure (and monetary threats in the case of at least one Board member) in allowing these sad events to transpire, has likely driven a dagger to the very heart of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL*, from which I fear it will not be able to recover.

Please don’t mistake my words for bitterness. I am not the least bit bitter, but I am sorely disappointed in men who I thought were men of principle rather than of politics. You are mistaken if you think that the numerous brethren who are enraged at this turn of events are acting and speaking in defense of me, personally. They have the true sense that integrity, principle, and truth have been compromised and sacrificed, and they cannot bear to let it pass.

One more matter, and I will conclude. The final statement of your letter is condescending and patronizing at best, and insulting at worst. It hardly befits one who is young enough to be my son and who has not even one-fourth of the years of preaching experience that I have to lecture me on “a more constructive course.” I

do not say it boastfully, but I was fighting the good fight of the faith literally years before you were born. You really ought to think a bit more about “paying your dues” down in the trenches where some of us have been fighting the battles for decades before you start lecturing us older heads about “constructive” behavior.

Yours for the one faith,
 Dub McClish
 908 Imperial Drive
 Denton, TX 76209

PS Feel free to send this letter to whom-ever you choose, as long as you send it in its entirety. I plan to send yours and mine to various other interested brethren.

After reading McClish’s letter, Grider phoned McClish on the same day. He spoke in very complimentary terms, claiming he “loved” and “respected” McClish and that he had admired and appreciated him for several years. He did not complain about McClish’s letter to him in this conversation, but spoke in friendly language.

On Sunday July 31, 2005, Grider sent an e-mail message to Hatcher concerning his July 29, 2005, resignation statement. In that

TRICITIES SCHOOLS

Elizabethton, Tennessee

**No Tuition— Sound Eldership—Qualified Faculty
 3 year program—3rd Year Emphasis on Apologetics**

***In the heart of Beautiful Bristol-Kingsport-Johnson City Area*
 1162 Hwy 91, Elizabethton, TN 37643
 423-474-2622**

Call and ask me for a free catalog

Wesley Simons, Director Clifford Newell, Co-director
 423-474-2248 276-669-6221

Under the oversight of the elders of the
Stoney Creek Church of Christ

e-mail Grider wrote”:

Needless to say I was saddened by the news that you had resigned from the Gospel Journal board. It appears that the pressure from others got to you. I pray you have not chosen friends over principle. The board standing together was needed during this critical hour.

In the same letter he accused Hatcher of making a false statement about him saying:

It has come to my attention that you and others are attributing to me a false statement. The statement indicates that brother Cates had already “made up his mind,” before he left Memphis, that brother McClish should no longer be editor. This statement is not true. While I did speak to brother Braswell the week prior to the board meeting, and while I did express brother Cates’ and my displeasure and concern over the “summation of Apologetics Press” email, sent out by brother McClish, I never said brother Cates had made up his mind. I even called Bryan to make sure that I did not leave him with the wrong impression and he said I never made such a statement. Had I done so it would have been untrue. I, along with brother Elkins and brother Joey Davis, were with brother Cates leading up to his trip to Texas and know firsthand the agony that he suffered over what to do about the situation that Brother McClish has caused. Brother Davis and I both witnessed his tears over this situation. Part of him just wanted to walk away from the whole situation, but you and others would not let him. I just simply ask that you please stop attributing something to me that I did not say and encourage others to do likewise.

In Christian love,
Barry

On August 6, 2005, Hatcher responded to Grider as follows:

Barry,

Thank you for letting me know that brother Cates read you part of my resignation letter. As you will see in the email you sent me, you did accuse me of attributing to you a false statement. You apologized when we talked at the Power lectures and I accept that apology. (If I could change one thing in that statement, I would have made it clearer that I was speaking of Dub’s understanding alone, not what anyone told him which lead (sic) to his conclusion.)

You also stated in the email that it appears that pressure from others got to me. If that is true, it was pressure from board members stating that Dub’s reputation was destroyed and that if he remained as editor of TGJ that the paper would die. After the decision was made, I came to find out that this information was wrong. While it was important for

the board to stand together during this time, it is more important that the board do what is right, and not give in to pressure from others.

As to my resignation from the board, I am including a copy of it in this email to allow you to see that it was not pressure from friends. (In the 2005 September issue of *CFTF* we printed Hatcher’s resignation from the *TGJ* Board.-Editor)

I do not mind this email being made public, as long as it is not changed and done so in its entirety.

Michael Hatcher

On August 8, 2005, Grider responded to Hatcher as follows:

Dear Michael,

Thank you for the email. I appreciated having the opportunity to speak to you last week. I appreciate the kind disposition you demonstrated in the email, despite our disagreement over what has transpired. How different that was from brother McClish, who, after I sent a brief email asking him about the rumor, sent me a 4 page diatribe filled with viciousness and falsehood against me. This only reaffirms my belief that such a man did not deserve nor need to be in the position he was in (*Is this harsh, judgmental, or what? It is Godly for Grider to say what he pleases about McClish, but it is wrong if we deal with Grider in the same way he deals with others-Editor*). I had not done anything to the man, but disagreed with him about his “AP summation” email, and only did that in the same brief email in which I asked about the rumor. But, as one older preacher told me, you really do not have to do anything to Dub, he will do whatever he needs to do to serve his own purpose. That is becoming clearer every day. (*We thank Grider for letting us know that he and some “older preacher” were busy talking about McClish behind his back. They must not have been discussing with each other how much Grider loved and appreciated McClish. Remember what Grider said to McClish in their phone conversation. We wonder who Grider’s fellow gossip was. Moreover, Grider needs to specify and enumerate McClish’s sins. Will he do so? We seriously doubt he will attempt such thing, but he and this “older preacher” can talk about McClish, saying such things as, “you really do not have to do anything to Dub, he will do whatever he needs to do to serve his own purpose.” Such hypocrisy!-Editor*) I believe you are a good man who, because of his closeness to those involved, has not been able to see the damage that brother McClish and a few others are capable of doing. I trust that in time you will. (*Grider needs to show us the damage McClish has done. He needs to specify the damage-item by item. Then he needs to take a long look at himself. He just might see a beam sticking out of his eye.-Editor*).

brotherly,
Barry

CFTF readers should compare and contrast the pleasant tenor of the words Grider chose to employ in discussing McClish's letter with him on August 3 in their phone conversation, as noted earlier, with Grider's severe words of censure for McClish's letter (and of McClish himself) in his comments to Hatcher. Evidently in his August 3, 2005 phone conversation with McClish, Grider withheld his true thoughts concerning McClish from him. However, as is plainly evidenced in his August 8 e-mail to Hatcher, Grider obviously had no problem revealing and stating his true views regarding McClish when he could do it behind his back. So far, behind one's back and as secretive as possible has been the preferred mode of operation for **TGJ** Board and others of their "not open and above board" mind set.

**THE UNITY OF MIND AND EFFORT
EVIDENCED IN THE WORDS OF CHESSER,
MEADOR, CATES, GRIDER AND THEIR
FELLOW TRAVELERS TOWARD MCCLISH**

Michael Hatcher said in his public apology to McClish and Watson: "It now appears to me that there has been a concerted effort to destroy the reputation of a good man-Dub McClish." He correctly observed: "This...began with **Frank Chesser's** hate-filled response to brother McClish's summation of the Apologetics Press Scandal."

Notice in the following list the unity of mind evidenced in the following brethren's remarks regarding McClish and those who think and live as he does.

1. Frank Chesser falsely charged that McClish has a "judgmental, censorious, self-righteous, unforgiving spirit that characterizes a small and diminishing group of brethren in the church." [*We are certainly glad*

that Chesser is not " Judgmental, censorious, self-righteous, with an unforgiving spirit..."-Editor]

2. Joseph Meador, as earlier quoted, joined in this campaign with very similar rhetoric, falsely charging that McClish is one of "a few who are in a small, but no less toxic loyalty circle... a small negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have." [*We are so happy that Meador has no toxicity about him at all.-Editor]*

3. Curtis Cates falsely campaigned that "... McClish's reputation had been ruined and that if he remained as editor the paper would die." [*Assertions by Cates that he never attempted to prove. And, the TGJ Board never demanded that he prove it, though the Bible said we must (I Thessalonians 5:21).-Editor]*

4. Barry Grider inserted himself into these matters with an aggressive hardball attitude of condemnation of McClish, charging him with "viciousness" and "falsehood" and claiming that he "did not deserve nor need to be in the position he was in." [*Along with Chesser, we are glad to see that nothing but honey resides in the mouth and on the pen of Grider.-Editor]*

Can you imagine that any one who wears the name Christian and who must, as is true of all of us, stand before God to give an account of the deeds done in the body, to be so brazen and arrogant as to fabricate the tale that **TGJ** Board has developed in their attempts to justify themselves in the eyes of church? Can you imagine such a group of men as compose **TGJ** Board expecting brethren to swallow that, as Hicks, who continues to be "at large," as a **TGJ** Board member that is, declared to Bailey,

...but if *anyone* says, "They saw the handwriting on the wall and resigned," I can assure you that *TGJ* Board had done no "writing on the wall." No vote was ever taken, therefore, no decision was ever made, by **TGJ** Board to "fire" them or to ask them for their resignations.

If any people believe the political machinations of **TGJ** Board and the "spin" they are putting on the McClish-Watson versus **TGJ** Board case, which "spin" is contrary to the evidence, there is not much that can be done for such persons (Matthew 15:14). It is obvious that before July 19, 20, 2005 **TGJ** Board was preparing for the departure of McClish and Watson from **TGJ**. And, if it has not already dawned on our readers as to *why* **TGJ** Board wanted McClish and Watson out of **TGJ**, if the Lord wills, we will set out those reasons in later editions of *CFTF*.

—25403 Lancewood Dr.
Spring, Texas 77373

**CHECK
YOUR ADDRESS LABEL**

**IF YOURS HAS THE DATE
10/01/05**

IT IS TIME TO RENEW

**SEND RENEWALS TO:
P.O. BOX 2357
SPRING, TX 77383**

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING QUESTIONS FOR MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Church of Christ
phone: (865) 986-5698
PO Box 292 Lenoir City, Tennessee 37771

August 28, 2005

Faculty
Memphis School of Preaching
3950 Forest Hill Irene Road
Memphis, TN 38125-2560

Dear brethren:

This particular church has had very strong ties to *Memphis School of Preaching*. We have financially supported the work in some fashion for some time. As a matter of fact, this congregation has enjoyed association with the late Roy J. Hearn and Garland Elkins even before *Memphis School of Preaching* came into existence. It was about 7 years ago that Curtis Cates preached in a gospel meeting for us and we will always appreciate his great work during that meeting.

We are currently supporting Art Wilson in the School. Art is a tremendous young man and will make a truly outstanding gospel preacher. Without a doubt, you brethren have had a tremendous influence for good upon his life in the instruction that he has received and we are most appreciative for such.

As we all realize, we are facing a very serious issue concerning the situation that has developed with Bert Thompson, *Apologetics Press* and *The Gospel Journal*.

The case being that brother Cates serves on **TGJ** board and also directs *Memphis School of Preaching* we would be most appreciative if all of the faculty would complete and return this survey that we have prepared. We have taken great care to make these *true* and *false* statements as precise as we possibly can. Also, please be assured that we are not assuming any answers that you may give and are willing for you to answer for yourselves.

You may distribute this letter and survey without any alteration to whomever you may desire.

Yours for the Cause,
[Signed]
The Elders of Lenoir City Church of Christ

Survey To Memphis School Of Preaching From Lenoir City Church of Christ

1. T F The Biblical Doctrine of Fellowship is not a crucial component of the New Testament pattern.
2. T F The concept of Biblical Fellowship *does not* deal with the aspect of joint participation.
3. T F One can endorse a particular organization and consistently, at the same time, refuse to endorse the individual who directs such.

4. T F One can claim *not* to endorse the individual who directs a particular organization and consistently, at the same time, endorse said organization.
5. T F God *does not* join individuals in marriage when they deliberately enter into a particular marriage without the intent to remain in such a union.
6. T F Those who teach this “mental reservation” doctrine regarding marriage *do not* teach that which will condemn the souls of accountable men.
7. T F Those who teach this “mental reservation” doctrine regarding marriage *do not* teach a doctrine which will condemn the souls of accountable women.
8. T F The doctrine of the reaffirmation of elders is a doctrine that is in harmony with the New Testament pattern.
9. T F The practice of the reaffirmation of elders is a practice that is in harmony with the New Testament pattern.
10. T F Dave Miller *does not* teach a doctrine relating to Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage that will cause individuals to be lost in sin.
11. T F Dave Miller *does not* teach a doctrine that will cause individuals to be lost when he advocates the reaffirmation of elders.
12. T F Dave Miller has *publicly* repented of *publicly* teaching his doctrine on MDR as noted above.
13. T F Dave Miller has *publicly* repented of *publicly* teaching his doctrine on the reaffirmation of elders as noted above.
14. T F Dave Miller *should not* be removed from his work with **Apologetics Press**.
15. T F Faithful brethren *cannot scripturally* support **Apologetics Press** as long as an impenitent Dave Miller is on its staff in any capacity.
16. T F Faithful brethren *cannot logically* support **Apologetics Press** as long as an impenitent Dave Miller is on its staff in any capacity.
17. T F Faithful brethren *cannot consistently* support **Apologetics Press** as long as an impenitent Dave Miller is on its staff in any capacity.
18. T F Bert Thompson *was not* guilty of a sin that brought public reproach upon the Lord’s church.
19. T F We *do not* have a divine obligation to forgive penitent brethren when they confess their sins.
20. T F When a fallen brother confesses his sin of alcoholism before the church he *is not* under divine obligation to produce fruits of repentance.
21. T F One can know that a brother is no longer involved in alcoholism solely upon the basis of his confession of that sin.
22. T F There are *no* consequences that one must face when one confesses and is forgiven of the sin of alcoholism.
23. T F One can know that a brother is no longer a pedophile solely upon the basis of his confession of sin.
24. T F There are *no* consequences that one must face when God forgives that one of the sin of

pedophilia.

25. T F Dub McClish *sinned* in his writing of the summation of the Bert Thompson scandal.
26. T F Frank Chesser *did not sin* in his written response to Dub McClish.
27. T F Dave Watson *sinned* in his written response to Frank Chesser.
28. T F Those who call upon Bert Thompson to produce fruits of repentance are guilty of sin.
29. T F Those who refuse fellowship to Dave Miller because of his teaching on the reaffirmation of elders are guilty of sin.
30. T F Those who refuse fellowship to Dave Miller because of his teaching on MDR are guilty of sin.
31. T F Michael Hatcher *lied* when, in his written apology to Dub McClish, Dave Watson, and others, he stated that he had been given false information regarding Dub McClish's reputation.
32. T F Michael Hatcher *lied* in his written apology by indicating he had been given false information that if Dub remained as editor such would destroy *The Gospel Journal*.
33. T F Michael Hatcher *lied* in his written apology when he stated that it now appears that there has been a concerted effort to destroy the reputation of Dub McClish.
34. T F The motive of **TGJ** board for writing the statement of 07/20/05, that was read by Michael Hatcher before the **TGJ** board, and to Dub McClish and Dave Watson was a motive authorized by the New Testament.

35. T F Michael Hatcher *told the truth* when he wrote the following to **TGJ** board in his e-mail resigning from said board: *The "spin" that the board has put on this is just that—"spin."*

The fact is everyone knows that it is also. While we are stating publicly that there had not been a vote taken (there had not), we all knew that basically there would need to be a change regarding the editor and associate editor. The differing terms used ("fired," "dismissed," "accepted their resignation") all boil down to the same thing, and brethren know that.

36. T F Michael Hatcher *told the truth* when he wrote the following to **TGJ** board in his e-mail resigning from said board:

Dub (and David) were placed in a position in which they were forced to resign (if you don't believe that, ask either one of them). While our spin is fine and technically true, everyone else realizes the situation also. (This is especially true when Brian Brazwell's [sic] understanding of what Barry Grider said to him and conveyed to Dub was the end result—that Dub is no longer with the paper.)

37. T F Tommy Hicks *told the truth* when in an e-mail he wrote the following to Kent Bailey:

You did not use the word "fired," but you used "dismissed" which, to me, implies the same. Neither Dub nor David was "fired." Furthermore, neither was asked to "resign." By their own volition, both did resign. I cannot speak as to how Dub and David perceived their situation relative to TGJ board, but if anyone says, "They saw the handwriting on the wall and resigned," I can assure you that TGJ board had done no "writing on the wall." No vote was ever taken, therefore, no decision was ever made, by the TGJ board to "fire" them or to ask them for their resignations.

38. T F If the following statement that was written by **TGJ** board about and to Dub McClish and Dave Watson was written about me by the Director of **MSOP** and /or the elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, I would not be caused by the message of said statement to and about me to consider resigning my work with **MSOP**.

The board deeply appreciates each of you and the time, effort, and interest in the paper which you have demonstrated. The recent events that have occurred as a result of the correspondence relating to Burt [sic] Thompson and the two e-mail messages from Dave Watson have created a situation which has given the board the impression that the continued existence of The Gospel Journal is in jeopardy. The board has thoroughly discussed the situation and has

unanimously determined that a change in the editorial staff may be necessary.

Before making a final decision we would like to hear any comments that either of you desires [sic] to make. It is not our intention to turn the meeting into a question and answer session. After the board has heard your comments, we will meet in a closed session and as soon as possible return and let you know our decision. If you would like to take a few minutes to consolidate your thoughts, please let us know at this time before we proceed. I will be the only spokesman for the board during this portion of the meeting.

39. T F Joseph Meador *told the truth*

about Dub McClish and those who believe as he (Dub) does when he wrote the following to Michael Hatcher, which Hatcher quoted in his resignation letter to T&J board:

Brother Meador mentions in his email that we are dealing with “a few who are in a small, but no less toxic, loyalty circle...a small negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have.” Since my elders here at Bellview are individuals who disagreed with our decision and expressed that disagreement to me, I have no alternative to understand [sic] that brother Meador has placed them in that class of “toxic, loyalty circle...negative faction.

The Last Word...

THE LENOIR CITY SURVEY, CURTIS CATES, AND MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

Kent Bailey

As noted in this issue of *Contending For The Faith*, the Elders of the Church of Christ in Lenoir City, Tennessee drafted a cover letter and submitted a series of precisely worded *true* or *false* statements regarding the Bert Thompson/Apologetics Press/*Gospel Journal* controversy to Curtis Cates, the faculty of Memphis School of Preaching, and the Elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ Memphis, Tennessee.

We have no ill will toward these brethren. We have no personal axe to grind regarding this controversy or any other. However, we are disturbed that Cates, the MSOP faculty, and the Elders at Forest Hill have thus refused to answer properly stated questions that have been given to them. (The T&J Board members [of which Cates is President] have also been very reluctant to respond to appropriate questions.)

As we contemplate a discussion of any controversy and/or issue, we should learn to raise appropriate questions and in addition not fear questions raised by others. We are in a very poor position to honestly discuss any issue, debate any cause, and/or defend any action if we refuse to deal honestly with any relevant questions. Cates indicated to me in a telephone conversation that he would be more than willing to sit down and discuss this present controversy and let me read some documents. Upon what basis is he willing to do so when he refuses to answer questions in writing? Upon what basis can we expect an oral answer when he refuses to give us a written answer? Does he fear

that he will contradict himself in the answers that he gives? Is he afraid that if he does, Joseph Meador, Director of the Southwest School of Bible Studies, will include him as part of the “toxic loyalty circle...a small negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have?” Is it the case that Cates really does not want to specifically commit himself to taking a clear cut stand on this issue? Is he attempting to play “both sides of the fence” trying to thereby hold on to his hard core base in addition to attracting support from those more “middle-of-the-road” and less prone to a *Contending For The Faith* mentality? Was brother Cates terrified that *The Gospel Journal* was getting too close to becoming a periodical like *Contending For The Faith*? We cannot help wondering if he also thinks the students at Memphis School of Preaching are getting too close to becoming both contenders and debaters.

Regarding the importance of both argumentation and the answering of questions, the late Guy N. Woods, in his 1974 debate with Ben Franklin observed:

If I know my heart, I have no other purpose in mind in being here than simply to contend for that which I believe to be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in these matters. I shall regard brother Franklin as entirely sincere and as likewise [remove space] anxious for the truth to prevail. But I should like to point out that one's conduct in debate, manner in which one deals with questions and with arguments,

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

Directory of Churches...

-Alabama-

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

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

Tuscaloosa-East Pointe Church of Christ one block from Exit 76, off I-20, I-59, Sun. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed., 7 p.m. Abiding in God's Word—The Old Paths. U of A student, visitor, or resident? Welcome! 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. 770-382-6775, www.cartersvillechurchofchrist.org. Sun. 10, 11a.m., 6:30 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-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-

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

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

-Texas-

Denton area—Northpoint Church of Christ. We are currently meeting at the home of Shawn & LaDawn Hale. 227 Aubrey, Denton, TX 76227. Contacts are Shawn Hale (940)365-5997.

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

Hubbard-105 NE 6th St., Hubbard, TX 76648, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Delbert J. Goines, 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. (817) 282-3239, Toney Smith and Dan Flournoy, evangelists.

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

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

-Wyoming-

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

will go far—very far in enabling us to judge the sincerity and honesty of the disputant. So both of us are on trial before you tonight and shall be throughout this debate. It is, therefore, my sincere hope that we may be honest with each other, that we may deal fully and fairly with the propositions involved and that all of us will remember that one day, very soon for some, and it can't be long for any, we must stand before God and give an accounting not only for our participation in this discussion but also for the manner in which we react to the things presented.

As Woods noted, both honesty and fairness mandate that due consideration must be given to the arguments and questions relative to any controversy. When one fails to notice specific arguments and purposely avoids the specific answer to precisely worded questions, such is a demonstration of the lack of both honor and honesty and a clear indication that one has no intent of resolving a given controversy.

The statements worded in the Lenoir City Survey are both precise and to the point. No truth seeking individual should have any problems in the giving of answers. Would Cates, the Elders of the Forest Hill Church, or any faculty member at MSOP approve of a Baptist debater refusing to deal with precisely worded true and false statements they would give him for consideration in a public discussion?

The time for confidentiality has come to an end. Cates indicated to me, during a recent telephone conversation, that he had evidence that would vindicate the actions of **THE GOSPEL JOURNAL** board. If such is the case then by all means bring on the evidence! It is not the desire of the Elders of the Lenoir City Church of Christ to play politics; we want the truth on this issue as do all others. It does not do the cause of

truth any good whatsoever to allege that one has evidence regarding a controversy and then refuse to make such available for consideration by blotting out the name and address of the author of said material, writing **CONFIDENTIAL** in big bold letters on the document, and then drawing a large circle around such.

Can one imagine our Lord in a controversy with the religious leaders during his earthly ministry possessing evidence to demonstrate the fallacy of their claims writing **CONFIDENTIAL** in big bold letters on the evidence, then drawing a circle around such?

Can one imagine Paul, the apostle of Christ, taking on those “few who are in a small, but no less toxic, loyalty circle..a small negative faction” within the Galatian (men who were binding the law of Moses on brethren and sowing discord), writing the word **CONFIDENTIAL** in big bold print, then drawing a circle around such, on his letter to them?

Our survey is both precise and relevant. Our desire for a scriptural resolution to this controversy is genuine. If brother Cates, the MSOP faculty, the elders at Forest Hill are serious about resolving the present controversy, then let them produce the evidence giving justification for their actions, and let them respond to our survey for all to read. Likewise, if **TGJ** Board members are serious about resolving the present controversy, then let them produce the evidence giving justification for their actions and let them respond to the many questions their recent actions have provoked. Otherwise, their silence will grow even more deafening as time progresses.

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

Contending for the Faith
P.O. Box 2357
Spring, Texas 77383

PRSR STD
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
DALLAS, TX
PERMIT #1863