

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

The Holy Spirit Issue – “Kerry at the Bat”*

Daniel Denham

We have previously noted in this journal two hapless attempts by Malcolm Hill, former president of Tennessee Bible College (TBC), to establish the doctrine of “direct help” postulated by their off-campus guru, Mac Deaver, late of the apostate Sherman Drive church in Denton, TX, and now of the equally apostate Sheffield church in the same state. Malcolm in classic self-contradiction affirmed in his second article that 1) he knew that the Spirit worked in providence, although 2) he admitted that he did not know anything as to how, even though 3) he was certain it was direct.

Despite this obvious self-defeating position, Malcolm went on palavering about this imagined work without setting forth any real evidence as to its truth. Somehow, he does not seem to get the simple fact that unless the action involves direct and immediate (i.e., without means) contact of the Holy Spirit upon the human spirit of the saint, then he cannot establish his case, and pleading, as Mac so frequently does, from the vantage of *argumentum ad ignorantiam* does not avail his case. If any means is employed separating the Holy Spirit from the human spirit in proximity, then BY DEFINITION the action is indirect and not direct. It is mediate and not immediate. It is natural, as we have previously defined that term, and not supernatural, as we have also previously defined that term.

KERRY DUKE’S TURN AT BAT

In an article posted on the web site of the West End church of Christ in Livingston, TN, Kerry Duke, teacher and dean at TBC under Malcolm Hill, weighs in with his attempt

to further the “direct help” heresy. The article is titled “How Important Is The Holy Spirit Controversy?” and smacks of the same self-serving pleading of Malcolm’s failed posts in *Living Oracles*. Like the poetic Mighty Casey, Kerry takes his turn at bat to save the day for the Cookeville Nine, but does he really fare any better than his former boss, Malcolm Hill?

KERRY’S BASIC APPROACH

Kerry begins by tossing some dust in the air with inane rambling first over Abraham’s mental processes in the offering of Isaac in Genesis 22 and then by speculating about the methodology of Satan in influencing human beings to sin. He asks a series of questions, which he himself does not deign to answer, but which he obviously believes serves his purpose. After almost two full pages of single-spaced gibberish, he finally asserts: “Dividing over how the unseen hand of Satan works is no more ludicrous than dividing over how the unseen hand of God works” (p. 2).

Does it matter what one thinks and teaches as to how the Devil works in enticing people to sin? Kerry says that it does not. What if the party believes and affirms explicitly or even implicitly that Satan works in such a way so as to override human free will or impede its operation so that men are not really morally responsible for their sin. In fact, suppose one’s position implies that sin is not even a thing the individual is truly responsible for doing, so that it is all Satan’s fault, according to his teaching. Surely, brother Duke would

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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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...

ELDERS AND SCRIPTURAL FELLOWSHIP

In exercising the authority delegated to them by Christ, God's elders (presbyters, pastors, bishops) are to superintend the church—to see that what God has obligated the church to do is done in the quickest and best way possible—*expedited* (Acts 20:28). Thus, the eldership leads the church to do *only* what the New Testament authorizes it to do, leaving undone what is unauthorized or forbidden (Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:13; 5:17; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Also, they are to teach the Word (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 3:13-17; 4:2; Titus 1:9;), protect the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17, 28-31), visit and pray for the sick (James 5:14; Acts 20:35), judge doctrinal issues (Acts 15:16), and live exemplary lives before all.

Herein we will concentrate on the elders responsibility to protect the church. Whatever the church does the elders should be knowledgeable of it. In the use of the building elders must know *who* is using it and for *what* it is being used. Another congregation of God's people may be using it—such as an Spanish speaking congregation. Would a faithful eldership remain silent while the church they oversee fellowshipped brethren engaged in sinful acts of worship whether in the same building or not? If the Spanish speaking church used mechanical instruments of music in their worship should the Anglo church extend fellowship to the erring Hispanic church or vice versa? Of course, the faithful brethren would be obligated to God and the church they superintend to do all they could to correct the brethren in error. However, if the erring congregation refused to repent of their error, the faithful church would have no choice but to withdraw fellowship from their unrepentant and erring brethren. If not, then why not?

Furthermore, whether a congregation uses the same building with another congregation or not, faithful brethren are obligated before God to know what their brethren believe and practice. Indeed, only a casual reading of the New Testament epistles reveal the deep concern of the inspired writers regarding the spiritual status of brethren no matter the congregation or the geographic distance between them.

It is also our prayer that the Truth of the New Testament concerning the sober responsibility of elderships everywhere to be vigilant in not only knowing what the churches they oversee believe and practice (that is their first responsibility), but also what their sister congregations believe and practice too. This is the case because God has not given any church the right to be wrong—the Seven Churches of Asia (Rev. 2 and 3), and erring churches infect faithful churches.

—David P. Brown, Editor

The View From Planet Deaver #2

Terry M. Hightower

Does the Spirit Directly Operate To Change One's Natural Ability?

Amazingly, as the leading devotee of what can be rightly called "Post-Baptismal Divine Illumination", Roy Deaver pointed out in 1995 that:

The point is simply this: the inspired word of God is all-sufficient! But, sufficient for what? **It is all-sufficient to accomplish that for which God gave it** [emphasis in orig.].! But, the word will not forgive my sins. The word **will not sing for me**. The word **will not pray for me**. The word **will not observe the Lord's Supper for me**. The word will not **"...visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" for me**. The word **will not on its own go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature**. The word **cannot believe for me, cannot repent for me, cannot confess for me, cannot be baptized for me**. But it is all-sufficient to give me the divine instruction which I need and must have in order to become a Christian, **to worship as God requires, to live as God wants me to live, and to explain the blessings which I have in Christ**, in the church of Christ, upon the terms of the gospel of the Christ...[emph. TMH, except as where noted].¹

I remember thinking when I first read this: "Who on Earth ever thought such as this about the inspired Word of God in the first place?" And, "What does this have to do with the Biblical objection that humans must exert just their own moral volition or will to accomplish the various deeds ascribed to THEM?"

Is It OK If Only "Partial"?

Our beloved brother needed to ask himself if the Holy Spirit can **directly operate** upon his mind in order to even **partially**: sing, pray his private prayers, observe the Lord's Supper, visit orphans and widows, go and preach the Gospel, believe, repent, confess, or be baptized for him. Remember that the view from Planet Deaver is that the Holy Spirit can **DIRECTLY** have part of my strength for me (per a misuse of Eph. 3:16) and from the same reasoning process have part of my love for me (per a misuse of Rom. 5:5). Those who have designed and broadcast "maps" of this morality scheme will usually ask: "Who's to say He cannot go all the way with His direct enablement going beyond our own moral volition in "helping" us to accomplish such required tasks?" In fact, the Deaver view is that He does so, but the ethical flaw is in thinking that the HUMAN will then get the credit for consummating said execution. I expect to hear any day now that while those on Planet Deaver hopefully still oppose the use of steroids by all non-Christians, they would uphold their use by a "baptized-into-Christ" Mark McGwire in hitting baseballs. After all, if the saint can get a "little direct help" in his spiritual accomplishments from his friend

the Spirit, then why not in the physical realm if God wants to do so? Never mind that it is obviously in effect "cheating" against the other human players devoid of such moral enablement! But why would we regard this as such a terribly unfair viewpoint when the Deavers defend the principle as applying generically in the moral realm? I do know that Mac first announced his heresy to the world in the **1994 Fox-Deaver Debate**. It may just be coincidence, but 1994 is the same year Danny Glover did a remake of *Angels In the Outfield* where a young boy prays for a chance to have a family if the Angels win the pennant, whereupon angels are assigned by God to make that possible. A cute movie, but with terrible ethics!

Two False Teachings

What one must realize is that in the view from planet Deaver, one is desperate to somehow prove and maintain two strange teachings as if they were the truth of God's Word. First, one must hold that God categorically refuses by direct means of the Holy Spirit to affect the mind of any **non-Christian**, including those who are sincerely seeking salvation (e.g., Cornelius) and even those who have just reached the age of accountability! As I said in my first article, the non-saint must "paddle his own canoe"! Absolutely NO non-Christian has any firsthand (i.e., direct) influence of the Spirit exerted within his heart enabling him to: (1) understand any Bible passages nor (2) provide immediate strength and/or courage concerning sins in either a negative or a positive sense. Second, one must simultaneously hold that one ought to accept the notion regarding a **Christian** that a direct, "personal influence of the Spirit is meant by God to be exerted within the heart of every faithful saint"² in order for him or her to properly understand at least some Biblical texts and to adequately possess the internal strength to refrain from some sins and to accomplish certain positive actions. I call this "Calvinism Lite." Faithful brethren, despite a few wayward souls who admittedly somehow strayed from the plain teaching of Acts 10:34, have historically and rightfully held regarding any and all accountable humans (i.e., Christians and non-Christians) that the Word of God was sufficient to accomplish one's needed salvation simply when coupled with one's own personal, **non-directly** affected will.

Despite the false charges which the Deavers have attempted to foist upon myself and other opponents, we have held and openly taught that providential actions of God may be occurring in the world today—even some which may involve Deity's personal, direct action behind the scenes such

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not accept someone's claim, "The Devil made me do it," as the old Flip Wilson line had it, in defense of an act of murder or adultery, would he? If brother Duke committed adultery against his wife, would he expect her to ignore his part in the act because he believed that Satan overpowered his will, according to his own perception of things, if he held such a view? Would he expect her to go back and reread his article and conclude that therefore she would have no right to put him away because of his perception of the matter? I suspect that he would not. I suspect also that she would not fall for the ploy either, if he tried it. Kerry understands that ideas have consequences. He also knows that the possible consequences often determine whether an idea is truly dangerous or not. Does not the apostle Paul, in fact, say of himself and certain others that "**we are not ignorant**" of Satan's "devices" (2 Cor. 2:11), thus indicating that we need to be aware of how Satan does entice people to sin?

Clearly, any view that would encourage an individual, whether explicitly or implicitly, to sin either by doing that which he must not do or by failing to do what he is obligated to do is an inherently dangerous doctrine. Kerry Duke does not seem to grasp that fact, regardless of whether it relates to one's beliefs and teachings on the work of Satan or on the work of God. When it comes to the unseen hand of God in the conviction and conversion of the alien sinner, Kerry believes that he knows that these things are carried out only through the Word, unless I am seriously mistaken as to how far the TBC crew is now willing to go with their current Spirit mania.

Does it not make a difference, brethren, as to what one believes and teaches relative to the work of the unseen hand of God in these matters? Kerry Duke needs to give an answer here to this very basic point! His answer will either sweep away all the debris of his article designed to obfuscate or it will confirm suspicions by some who think that maybe TBC and other Deaverites are ready to accept direct operations on alien sinners as well, especially in view of Mac's present day Spirit baptism doctrine.

TOUCHED (IN THE HEAD) BY AN ANGEL

Next Kerry spends time about the work of angels in a similar vein as his ramblings on Abraham's thinking concerning the offering of Isaac and Satan's modus operandi in enticing men to sin (pp. 2-3). He states that we all agree that angels "do not work miraculously," but at one time they did work miraculously, or was the striking of the men of Sodom blind by the angels at Lot's house some sort of non-miraculous parlor trick? Did they just throw dirt in their eyes?

If Kerry Duke is going to argue that angels may do things in the realm of providence in a direct and immediate way simply because we do not see their "unseen hands" at work, then how could he know that they are not doing it miraculously? Yes, the age of miracles has ceased, but that would then imply so has direct contact with angelic beings

in the world today. Surely, Kerry believes that we can pray for brethren who have certain maladies of the eye (e.g., macula degeneration, retinal tear, glaucoma, or other problems caused by diabetes or injury). Requests for such are made all the time. How would an angel go about actually carrying out God's answer to such prayer? Remember, Kerry is affirming direct spirit on spirit contact – that is the very heart of the Deaver "direct help" doctrine, which Kerry endorses. As he is quibbling about the involvement of angelic agency in such an operation in response to the prayers of saints, what would be the essential difference between an angel striking a man directly blind as in Genesis 19 or an angel directly touching with his finger, as it were, a saint's optic nerve, the macula, or whatever portion of the eye adversely affected by injury or disease today so as to help restore or speed repair of his eyesight in response to prayer? Why is the former miraculous and the latter non-miraculous, if we are to accept what seems to be Kerry's implication that such kind of direct contact occurs in response to a saint's prayers today without it being miraculous? What kind of contact is required for the result to be a miracle rather than a case of natural, providential healing?

To quibble about the degree of power will not get the job done, as that simply raises yet further problems for Kerry's doctrine. For example, at what point on a power scale would it pass from being merely providential to miraculous? Can Kerry give us this mysterious point of departure or distinction between the two levels, especially seeing that in both cases the contact or action producing the effect takes place in the same way in the head of the object of the activity in both cases? What is the essential difference between Jesus literally, physically touching a man with a withered hand and the Holy Spirit literally contacting (touching) the physical heart of a saint to help him recover from a severe heart attack? Will Kerry contend that it is only in the degree of power exercised by God in the matter? If so, then let him tell us at what point does one pass from an action being purely providential to that which is miraculous.

He may quibble that the difference is simply one of visible discernment or verification – viz., the first action is more directly observable as to its effect than the latter and so is miraculous, while the latter is not. Thus, it would be, according to this quibble, simply a matter of observation rather than amount of power (or, at least, a combination of the two) that makes a specific action miraculous as opposed to non-miraculous. But this quibble suffers from an implicit limiting of the miraculous only to that which is observable. While the word *semeion* ("sign," "mark," or "token"), as also the word *teras* ("wonders"), involves this idea of visible or tangible observability, there are other terms (e.g., *dynamis*, *charisma*) for miraculous acts that are not necessarily visibly observable. The word *dunamis* refers mostly to miraculous power or working in a general sense, whether externally observable or not. It could be used (and was) of any

extraordinary power (i.e., any power that was beyond the ordinary power available in the natural realm, including the innate abilities and power of man) expended to accomplish a particular act. The word charisma or charism is used of the spiritual gifts imparted by the Spirit, many of which clearly involved an interior working of the Spirit upon or within the human spirit. Some of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12 fall within this latter category of miraculous activity. Prophecy, for instance, was a miraculous gift (charisma) available through the Spirit, but the action involved in it took place within the spirit of the human agent under the direct control and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The inspired Record says, “...**holy men of God spake as they were moved** (lit. borne along) **by the Holy Spirit**” (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21). Certainly, when the prophecy involved the foretelling of future events that were to occur within an observable time frame for the parties involved there was then some measure of observability as to the effect in the long term; however, the miraculous action itself was otherwise unobservable. Much of prophecy also involved forth-telling, inspired preaching. This was, without doubt, its most common use. How then would visible observation verify the miraculous activity involved in the process? The use of the *teras* and *semeia* kinds of miraculous workings was, in such cases, then the principal means of verifying these other kinds of workings going on internally (cf. Heb. 2:2-4; Mark 16:20). Miraculous wisdom was also available to certain in the first century A.D. (1 Cor. 12:8). Certainly, one could in time see the benefits of the activity but the miraculous action itself may have actually occurred days, months, weeks, or even years prior to any practical fruition of the exercise of the gift in a specific instance.

I know for certain that Mac Deaver’s book teaches that God directly – without means – touches both the mind and the body of the saint so as to effect healing today (*The Holy Spirit*, pp. 215-226). I would assume that Kerry agrees with Mac on this matter. He implies that he does on page 3 of his article. Kerry admits that the angels “do not reveal themselves today as they did in Bible times; they do not deliver verbal revelation today,” but seems to hedge on the matter of their “ministering” to the saints. Do they make direct contact with the mind and body of the saint? Kerry needs to tell us plainly whether he believes such is the case, or else his meanderings here, like that on Abraham and Satan, is just so much folderol, misdirection, and smokescreen.

Are we seriously to believe that there are “angels in the outfield” pulling back foul poles, as it were, or causing pitchers to throw “dipsy doodles” that otherwise would not occur? Kerry’s speculations tend to such conclusions.

SPECIAL PROVIDENCE AND MORE MEANDERINGS

Kerry in the midst of the same lengthy paragraph on angels suddenly switches to a discussion of “special provi-

dence.” Like the batter who is constantly moving his feet and hopping in and out of the batter’s box in a baseball game to confuse the pitcher or throw off his timing, our brother seems more to be intellectually fidgety and unable to focus on matters at hand. He just strings together these roaming and disconnected thoughts that somehow are supposed to lead to the conclusion he asserted earlier concerning how “the unseen hand of God works.”

The argument he ultimately is trying to fashion is actually a species of *argumentum ad ignorantiam*. It is implied by Kerry that if one does not know everything as to how God does a particular act or causes a particular effect to obtain then he cannot ever say that he knows it is not direct or immediate in relation to the mind, body, and spirit of the saint. Yet, Kerry has admitted that he himself knows that whatever happens it is non-miraculous, thus implying that one can know certain things about the matter without having to know everything about it.

Notice the following statement and questions from him in this regard:

Consider the broader subject of God’s special providence. Do we comprehend how it works? Do we even begin to understand how God answers prayer and intervenes in the world without removing man’s free will? (p. 3).

One will observe his use of the word *comprehend*, which refers to a complete (hence comprehensive) knowledge of all matters pertaining to the subject in question. Its use implies that one must have such a degree of knowledge on the subject of special providence before he can reject the direct help doctrine to which Duke and company are so wedded. Again, the implied argument is a species of *argumentum ad ignorantiam*. Because one may not know everything about a matter, it does not follow that he cannot know anything about it. There is a much better word for use here – *apprehend*. One can apprehend certain things on a given subject without having to comprehend the subject. I can apprehend certain facts about God’s operation in providence without having to comprehend every aspect of the subject. I can know, for example, that God exists, and yet not know everything about the nature of God. I can thus apprehend the fact of God. I can apprehend that God works in providence. I can even apprehend certain logical limitations (in addition to Scriptural ones) that necessarily inhere in how God operates in special providence. Yet, I do not have to claim (and am not obligated) to know everything about special providence in order to apprehend these logical (and necessary) facts. Perhaps, Kerry Duke should go back and re-read Mac Deaver’s booklet, *Can We Know Truth?*. This epistemologically agnostic approach he has taken in his article makes a mighty poor defense for their Holy Spirit theories.

Yet here goes Kerry Duke again: “Do we know how God protects us when we pray, ‘Lord, please keep us safe as we travel’?” There are some things we can know that bear

on this point, despite Kerry's obvious attempt to bury the subject in agnosticism. We can know, for example, that God is not going to suspend the four basic laws of motion. We also know that He is not going to set aside the law of gravity or the two laws of thermodynamics. We know further that, on the basis of what has been termed the Divine principle of the utility of power, God is not going to buckle up the seatbelts for us, if we should forget. Maybe Kerry would have us to believe that guardian angels do such mundane things for the saints in response to prayers.

But Kerry is not done with this agnostic defense. He asks, "Do we understand how God answers a brother's prayer like 'Lord, please help the speaker to remember what he was prepared to say'?" This is a prayer that Deaverites appeal to as proof that a direct operation of the Spirit on the saint must occur, simply because some brethren may periodically pray it. Obviously, truth is not, however, established by how an uninspired person may pray. If a child of God mistakenly were to pray directly to Mary would that make her a Goddess in the real and meaningful sense? Is she a Co-Mediatrix as Roman Catholicism teaches, simply because some may pray a prayer to that effect? Prayer must be according to God's will, which certainly includes what God has authorized concerning prayer, for it to be acceptable (1 John 5:14-15). We know that whatever the brother is praying for it cannot be that which involves God placing in the mind of the individual the words to use in the lesson, for such, by definition, would be inspiration (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). In fact, was not the function of the Holy Spirit in the apostles to "**bring all things to**" their "**remembrance whatsoever**" Christ had "**said unto**" them (John 14:26)? Does brother Duke take this prayer to include that kind of reminding? If Kerry is implying that God actually "prods" the memory (mind) by giving it words (i.e., information), which formerly it knew but forgot, in a direct and immediate Spirit upon spirit fashion, then what is the difference between this and the inspiration promised to the apostles in John 14:26? Does Kerry believe that Christians today have exactly what the apostles had in John 14:26? And if God directly, immediately by His Spirit operating upon the human spirit gives even one word to the saint's memory (mind), then why not two? If He may under the current system of special providence give two, then why not three? And so on, until everything He has ever said is brought to remembrance in response to the prayer? If he answers in the affirmative, would not Kerry then be saying that this is the way in which God answers that prayer – by giving information directly to the mind? Furthermore, when one asks for help in understanding God's Word does that mean that God answers the prayer by giving additional information on the subject essential to its understanding in fulfillment of the prayer? If so, then why would that not be a case of Divine revelation, which again implies inspiration? Let Kerry wrestle with these matters for a while before so

arbitrarily pronouncing any knowledge on this subject to be out of bounds.

Yet, here he goes again, stating: "Anyone who thinks he has the answers to these questions is unaware of his own ignorance" (p. 3). Amazingly amazing! Does Kerry profess to know that God gives direct information to the mind of the person for whom the brother prays? (Mac certainly makes such grandiose claims in his book.) Or, is the TBC Dean confessing that he is "unaware of his own ignorance" in the matter?

Although he pleads ignorance here, does he not elsewhere actually seek to convince us that he has certain knowledge, which knowledge he contends completely eludes the rest of us? If so, it is then a feigned humility that Duke promotes here. It is stunning how these brethren present themselves as the voices of reason and humility, while at the same time being so obviously unreasoning and tooting their horns announcing their act of spiritual alms giving in being willing to fellowship us ignorant folks. We are reminded of Malcolm Hill's own arrogantly-stated and self-contradictory postulates that 1) we cannot know anything as to how the Holy Spirit operates with regard to helping the saint but 2) he knows that it must be direct and immediate Spirit upon spirit contact, and if one does not believe that then he does not really believe that the Spirit is doing anything. Mac Deaver spends a couple of chapters in his book on this latter theme alone (chapters IV, V, pp. 59-95).

But watch carefully now that very attempt – much sooner than one would have expected, and with such arrogance so as to deny utterly the ability of others to know the truth to these questions, while arrogating to themselves such knowledge. He writes:

And a pat answer like "well, God does these things through natural law" is a hollow response. If God actually works through the physical environment to accomplish His providential purposes, then He must act upon that environment, that is, He must do something to it. Brethren are often imprecise and incorrect in their choice of words on this topic. They sometimes make statements about providence without realizing, much less believing, the implications of what they have said; and yes, it is good to clarify the nature of providence because of this misunderstanding (p. 3).

Yea, verily! Our brother is a classic example of his own criticism! The principal issue over the direct help doctrine is the matter of direct Spirit upon spirit contact to effect an outcome that otherwise could not obtain. The question is not whether God can operate within the scope of nature, for most certainly He can. But at the point that He employs means beyond Himself and thus His own raw, innate power to do a thing, then the activity ceases to be direct in any meaningful sense and therefore by definition becomes indirect. What Kerry Duke, like Malcolm Hill, clearly fails to grasp is the fact that the direct help doctrine depends on di-

rect Spirit upon spirit action. Postulating an action involving a chain of causality that terminates in the use of means will not establish the “direct help” doctrine. The action at the point of contact is then by definition indirect. In fact, at the point means is used a chain of causality ceases to be direct.

In quibbling about providence, Kerry, like both Malcolm Hill and Mac Deaver, is in reality then making a red-herring argument to divert the issue from that of the nature of moral influence, which pertains to right and wrong choices and the functioning of man’s moral faculties, to the realm of special providence, which though somewhat interrelated is nonetheless a distinctly different subject relative to Divine activity. Also, they are guilty of fallaciously arguing from *ignoratio elenchi*, the fallacy of proving or trying to prove the wrong conclusion. Let us suppose, for example, that one could prove that God directly and immediately heals a person without the use of any means (e.g., medicines, doctors, rest, exercise, diet, therapy, et al.) intervening between Himself and the saint in the realm of special providence. How does proving that demand the conclusion that Deity directly through the personal contact of the Holy Spirit upon the human spirit of the saint strengthens him spiritually so that he is empowered to choose to do a specific act X or avoid a specific temptation Y or overcome a specific trial Z? There is no necessary relationship between the two premises so that the former demands the truth of the latter. So we pass on from the rest of Duke’s ramblings here to the real crux of the matter – the work of the Holy Spirit.

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

Kerry asserts: “If dividing over how the devil tempts us is unjustified, then so is dividing over how God the Holy Spirit helps us” (p. 3). Oh, really? Well, we have dispensed with the Devil tempting us quibble earlier by answering his assertions on how the Devil influences people to commit sin. Unless Kerry is ready to take the position that Satan gives the exact words and formulates the precise thoughts from his mind to the mind of the human agent directly and immediately by contact of his evil spirit upon the human agent’s spirit, then Kerry has no real parallel in his argument.

I must say that reading his article has influenced a desire in me to want to watch some Flip Wilson reruns. Kerry may be giving credence to Geraldine’s axiom of behavior after all (NOTE: written with tongue firmly in cheek!).

POINTS OF AGREEMENT? -- THE HIDDEN BALL TRICK

There is an old play in baseball called the hidden ball trick. A fielder hides the ball and holds it waiting for an opponent, who is a base-runner, to step off base far enough so that the fielder can tag him with the ball for an out. It is a rouse. It is designed to deceive – to lull an opponent to relax enough to get caught off base.

Now brother Duke pulls his own version of the hidden

ball trick by going through several points of supposed agreement. These are designed to emphasize the union that ought to exist despite differences over this subject by reminding his opponents of their many points of possible agreement. This approach too is fallacious in that it fails to address their real essential difference, which places the two views poles apart. It is like a proponent for the use of the mechanical instrumental in worship arguing for acceptance and tolerance of the piano on the basis that his opponents hold numerous views similar to or the same as his concerning worship – e.g., both (supposedly) believe that Bible authority is essential, both believe that we must please the Lord in our worship, both believe that worship must come from the heart, and both believe that we must therefore be sincere, so that sincerity is essential in our worship, et al. However, just like with the MI crowd, the reasoning simply does not get Kerry where he wants to go. There are more than sufficient reasons why that doctrine must be rejected by all right thinking people – one of which is the Bible doctrine of personal accountability, but that is reserved for other articles to address more fully. Back to brother Duke’s attempt for now!

Duke thus writes in his article:

We agree that He {God the Holy Spirit} does not work miracles or impart revelation today. We agree that the strengthening of Ephesians 3:16 is non-miraculous. We agree that it does not violate man’s free will. We agree on the nature and limits of this strengthening, and yet brethren quarrel endlessly and refuse to fellowship each other over the question of the unseen hand of God in this matter! (p. 3).

One of the self-apparent problems with Kerry’s statement is that his position implies just the opposite about what he claims to be in agreement with us. His position implies that the direct actions of the Holy Spirit are miraculous, despite what Kerry claims to the contrary. His position also implies that the strengthening of Ephesians 3:16 is miraculous. And, further, his position implies that man’s free will is violated by the Spirit in this direct operation. Finally, we also definitely do not agree “on the nature and limits of this strengthening.” In fact, these specific points are at the very heart of the dispute over the doctrine. Kerry contends that the action involved in the strengthening is direct and immediate, and that it thus involves direct contact of the Holy Spirit upon the human spirit of the saint. While he may verbally limit it to a “non-miraculous” effect, he does not define just what the term miraculous really even means here. We are left to take his word and conclude that he means basically the same thing that we mean. Well, Todd Deaver held to this same view and stated the same limitation but is now out in spiritual Lalaland involved with an apostate bunch promoting present day spiritual gifts, including the gift of “apostolic authority.” I feel certain that Todd would most likely differentiate between these supposed spiritual gifts and miraculous powers like raising the dead or causing the congenitally blind to see in regard to the degree of power

expended through the actions, but time will eventually erode even that distinction. It should be noted that Todd is one of the people credited by Mac as having convinced him of present day Spirit baptism. How far behind his advance into apostasy in these matters are Mac, Malcolm, and Kerry?

Kerry needs to read Mac's book a little more carefully as well. Mac has made it quite clear that he holds his doctrine to be absolutely the truth and that failure to accept it will doom the church to failure. Hear him: "If we have a future at all, we will have to come back to the truth on effectual prayer and the work of the indwelling Spirit" (p. 334; cf. p. 338). He made this statement just after a lengthy dissertation contrasting his view with that of those who oppose him. Kerry Duke then cannot have it both ways. He cannot contend that this is a dispute over matters of indifference, matters of judgment, while they make statements that imply that unless one accepts their view then the church has no future. One cannot claim, as Mac has done against his opponents, that they are "killing churches," and expect us to take seriously Kerry's words here. Mac never has repented of that diatribe, and even defends it in his book.

Kerry Duke, like Malcolm, resorts to a phony appeal for tolerance, despite the fact that Mac has repeatedly shown to be one of the most intolerant in the dispute. Talk to preachers who have lived in areas where the Deaver doctrine is strongly held and see how they have been treated when they voiced concerns about it! Go to Denton, TX, and see the results of Mac's tolerance and that of his cohorts at Sherman Drive! Talk with brethren who have been the targets of attack from the prophet of Schaumburg, IL, one of Mac's biggest supporters, and his allies in that area! No, brethren, the tears for tolerance are crocodile tears. Liberals cry for peace and tolerance when they have little power in areas, but intolerantly flaunt power when and where they have it.

IS IT REALLY "MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING"?

Kerry takes a final big swing at finding common ground with Mac's opponents. But the ground is really doctrinal quicksand for the Lord's people.

If one were to believe Kerry Duke, the entire controversy over the Holy Spirit centered on the teaching and work of Mac Deaver is overblown hype. But is that really the case? Listen to Kerry once more try to convince folks that they need just to chill out and let Mac run about teaching his doctrines without calling him and his supporters to task for it. Kerry writes:

One brother says the Spirit acts providentially on the physical realm to affect the Christian's spirit. Another brother says the Spirit affects the Christian's spirit in a spiritual way without the link of the physical medium. But the effect is the same. The result is non-miraculous and non-revelatory. In either case, God is acting. The theories differ, but the basic beliefs and the end result are the same. Why on earth are brethren acting as if this difference in theory is a weightier matter of

the law and the greatest doctrinal challenge to the church of the Lord in this century? (p. 3).

Of course, Mac Deaver and his compatriots are the ones affirming that "the Spirit affects the Christian's spirit in a spiritual way without the link of the physical medium."

It will be observed that Kerry adopts seemingly innocuous language to describe it. He scrupulously avoids the idea of direct and immediate Spirit upon spirit contact as being necessarily involved in the theory. He also ignores the fact that this direct operation of the Holy Spirit is designed to affect the Christian's moral choices and actions.

If the Spirit is directly in this fashion supplying even a modicum of power, above and beyond the natural, native, and latent powers of man to respond to God's Word, in order to enable a Christian to decide to do or actually do a moral action that he otherwise has insufficient power to choose to do or insufficient power to execute, then in some measure, according to this theory, his free will is being affected, despite Kerry's claims to the contrary. At the very least it is being subverted in some measure by the Spirit's operation, for the party is being caused to choose to do something that he otherwise could not choose or empowered to do something that he otherwise could not do. If the Spirit does this, then in reality it is not the individual saint choosing to do it, but rather being made or compelled in some measure to do it. If such be so, then what kind of obedience is that? As this then affects the doctrine of salvation as it concerns the moral choices and actions of the saint in remaining saved, then is it not really a big deal after all? How can it not be? If a doctrine implies a fatal doctrine, then does not that doctrine concern a "weighty" matter? Furthermore, if God makes this power available to the saint to keep him saved, then why not also to the alien sinner to save him in the first place? Indeed there are challenges to living the Christian life wherein strengthening is needed, but even so there are challenges also to one's choosing to become a child of God, especially in the face of brutal persecution. If the alien sinner has the natural, native, and latent power in himself to choose to do what is right in becoming a child of God, then certainly the saint has the natural, native, and latent power in choosing to live as a child of God ought to live. Or, are we to believe that becoming a Christian robs the latter of his natural, native, and latent powers?

No, the two "theories" that Kerry describes are not ultimately the same. They are poles apart in their final conclusions. The first maintains the integrity of the doctrine of human freedom of will, while the second implicitly impeaches it.

Again, Kerry also needs to re-read Mac's book wherein he rails against the former view repeatedly as deistic, self-contradictory, robbing the church of any real future, et al. To Kerry, as to Malcolm, I say, "Physician, heal thyself!" Brother Duke needs to tend first to the crowd with whom he

hangs in this matter, if he is so genuinely concerned about what each group is saying about the other.

Furthermore, he needs to address Mac's teaching that the Holy Spirit directly, immediately enhances "the capacity" of the saint (thus above and beyond his natural, native, and latent powers) "to comprehend" the Word of God by this Spirit upon spirit contact (Deaver, pp. 108-110, 224-225). Mac also implicitly affirms in his book that information that is necessary for the saint to understand God's Word is also given by this Spirit upon spirit contact, though it is not new "source" information. He claims that the Spirit was directly, immediately reminding him as to "what to say and how to say it" in his debate with Bill Lockwood (p. 224). Well, "what is said" is words, and "how to say it" also implies the use of words, which are the medium of human speech. So, Kerry's claim that Mac Deaver's view is "non-miraculous and non-revelatory" is purely bogus. Opposition to it is required, regardless of whether or not Kerry thinks this is "the greatest doctrinal challenge to the church of the Lord in this century" or a doctrinal challenge to the church at all.

The Dean of TBC needs also to re-read Mac's book relative to the issue of present day Holy Spirit baptism and tell us plainly whether or not he agrees with Mac's doctrine in this regard. And he needs to stop obfuscating that this is a dispute over just how the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian. It is not. There are many opponents to the Deaver doctrine who believe firmly and sincerely in the personal indwelling of the Spirit. Yet they are not in agreement with him on his direct help theory, as well as his present day Spirit baptism heresy. The indwelling is yet another red herring argument. A dean in a school designed to train preachers ought to know better.

CONCLUSION

Once more we have been treated to an attempted defense of the indefensible doctrines of Mac Deaver by an associate of his at TBC. Obviously, the school is intent on carrying his water in this matter, and its administration seems determined to alibi for Mac's error with some of the most silly claims, self-contradictory assertions, and self-serving special pleadings that we have been exposed to in many years on the subject of the Holy Spirit.

I came out of hard core Calvinism, and to be certain Mac Deaver's doctrine is not Calvinism. Rather it is Wes-

leyan Arminianism, also simply called Wesleyanism after John Wesley. One would think that a Bible college would have at least one competent student of church history who would be able to see the self-evident marks of this teaching in their own midst.

No, friends, "there is no joy in" Cookeville – mighty" Kerry "has struck out."*

*My apologies to Ernest Lawrence Thayer, author of the charming poem *Casey at the Bat* (<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prm-MID/15500>).

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(Continued From Page 3)

as the creation of the soul (Zec. 12:1; Ecc. 12:7; Isa. 57:16) or unseen actions by angels (as in Luke 16:22) but NOT those of the movie *Angels In the Outfield* unfairly affecting physical outcomes nor any directly affecting human moral actions.³ To my knowledge no faithful, thinking Christian has ever maintained that there are no indirect actions to the human mind which may occur in the world that could aid man's accomplishing salvation in addition to (or likely stemming from) the teaching of the Scriptures. What we do adamantly deny is that the Spirit today works directly upon the mind of the saint OR non-saint to enable them to personally understand or obey God's written Word. This is certainly more consistent than those on Planet Deaver who are in actuality only One-half (i.e., Saints Only) Anti-Calvinists! Faithful Christians have always rightly opposed the denominationalist in his claim of a need for a Direct Operation of the Spirit as a sort-of "STP additive" above and beyond God's divine Word in order to bring about the sinner's salvation. This has commonly been called "The All-sufficiency of the Bible"!

Division On Planet Deaver

Our beloved brother Roy is now deceased, but his son Mac Deaver assumed the role of "brotherhood revisionist" regarding the Holy Spirit and has gone much further than Roy, even to the point of believing that God directly affects his mind during his sermons and Bible classes, and more recently to arguing that all Christians are baptized in both water and the Spirit today.⁴ Just to read the introduction to his 2007 volume is to be amazed at how Mac's ego has somehow compelled him to make incredible condescending and outlandish statements, some of which could have easily come from the mouth of those whom even Mac regards as liberal concerning the Holy Spirit. Taking a page from the typical leftist and forgetting that none of his degrees are in psychology, Mac "couches the contender" by way of psychoanalysis in saying:

...the Holy Spirit has been the much neglected member of the Godhead during my lifetime...the enormous importance of 'getting it right' has evaded the brotherhood during my day, generally speaking. While we 'got it right' on other fundamental issues and even contested these in public debate, whenever there was a public test of the accuracy of our views on the Spirit, it was usually with a member of a denomination, whose views on other matters so prejudiced us against him that any truth with regard to the Spirit that he held was likely to be overlooked....I have lived to see that 'gospel preachers' at times simply do not know what they are doing with regard to the Spirit at all. If such men would simply be silent, that would be a help.⁵

This can only mean that based upon their beliefs and actions brethren like Thomas B. Warren and Roy C. Deaver (in earlier years) not only neglected studying the Holy Spirit, allowed prejudice to cloud their thinking in opposing any and all claims by denominationalists to possess Holy Spirit bap-

tism, but they at times simply didn't know what they were doing with regard to the Spirit at all!

So according to "Passive Sanctification Mac," it would have especially helped if Tom Warren had been silent instead of moderating for and helping David Lipe be so vocally powerful in teaching that to claim Holy Spirit baptism equaled claiming the miraculous. See this in his well-known 1976 debate (still in print!) with the United Pentecostal (Jesus Only-in-the-Godhead) Billy Lewis. Though having it right on other fundamental issues, Mac must maintain that neither Warren nor Lipe ever learned that they were so prejudiced against Lewis that they missed his "truth" about every Christian getting Holy Spirit baptism (cf. "all flesh" on Charts M-5, M-5A, and M-5B)! One should buy this great debate and in particular notice Charts M-10, M-18A, M-20, M-22, M-23, M-24, M-26, M-130, and H-10, because we are now expected to believe that Mac has "got it right" in affirming with Lewis (cf. Chart M-130) against Lipe and Warren (and Roy!) that we can get TWO (water and Holy Spirit) baptism out of the "ONE baptism" of Ephesians 4:5. The Warren-Lipe Chart M-130 (on Eph. 4:5) was headed "LEWIS REJECTS THE BIBLE" for Lewis' getting ONE out of THREE on the Godhead and for getting TWO out of ONE on baptism! So Thomas B. Warren held the position (as most of us still maintain) that "MAC DEAVER REJECTS THE BIBLE" too! It is just too bad that Warren and Roy Deaver are not around today to help Lipe debate this with Mac. Though I'm quite sure that Billy Lewis did not get his "two-out-of-one" doctrine from the "Schaumburg (Illinois) Seer," I do know that Mac's source for such was his fellow Divine Illuminationist in that city—Glenn Jobe). I hope that the reader will realize that both Jobe and the Pentecostal preacher Lewis got such a notion from the same source (cf. John 8:44), whereas Tom's, David's, and Roy's came from the Bible.

When Being Silent Would Have Helped

Would to God that such men as Roy, Mac, Weylan, Todd, and Glenn Jobe had simply been silent, instead of "enlightening us" during their ever-changing odyssey of discovery from (alleged) darkness into (alleged) daylight about the Holy Spirit! Where we once were united without such (purported) superior knowledge and information from Planet Deaver, we are now tragically divided. For some curious reason even those of us maintaining a literal indwelling of the Spirit have not gotten the SAME (alleged) divine illuminations as these mighty thinkers! In fact, even Todd Deaver has now defected to new, liberal positions on Christian fellowship in opposition to Mac, Weylan, and Glenn.⁶ Who then can blame myself and others for being confused as to the Spirit's (alleged) direct operation upon these men and where it has or may take them in the future? BUT PLEASE NOTICE: The rest of us who deny any such (alleged) direct action by the Spirit upon our human spirit are just holding

what these men themselves uphold in regard to **non-saints** (in addition to the fact that these same men themselves at one time even agreed with us about the saint)! Thus, most of the objections applied to our position in reference to the saint in this matter will also apply to their own position in reference to the non-saint, but strangely they have been logically “dense” as to recognizing this truth and making this application.⁷ They, in fact, have started sounding like errorists who deny amenability to the gospel by non-Christians!

Yes, I have seen Mac’s hollow and almost hilarious attempts to explain why the non-Christian does not get similar help.⁸ He answers “not a peep” about a still innocent child who has just reached the age of accountability who is encountering temptation and is also studying the Bible for help and answers from God. Mac does quote from A.B. Jones who argues that “The reason then, that the Holy Spirit does not come directly to the heart of the [alien] sinner in conversion is grounded, not in an arbitrary law of God, but in a necessity growing out of the moral condition of the [alien] sinner, **his unfitness for this fellowship.**”⁹ Despite both of them receiving the Spirit’s Direct Operation, it has apparently never dawned on either of these two men that: (1) a pure, innocent youth just after becoming accountable is NOT morally unfit since he has not yet sinned, but morally NEEDS a correct understanding of the Bible and moral strength not to sin!; and (2) an apostate Christian thereby becomes morally unfit for this fellowship, too, due to HIS “moral condition.” Though the Spirit will NOT operate directly upon this youth’s heart for knowledge or strength, He (allegedly) will still do so on the apostate’s heart so long as he is “cooperative”!

Acts 10:34: Must Anything Be the Same?

In attempting to further explain why the alien sinner does not get so much as an ounce of direct Holy Spirit help in either understanding Scripture which he MUST understand in order to be saved, nor an ounce of direct help enabling him to have the courage and strength needed to obey it, Mac has actually had the nerve to stand up and declare: “It’s easier to become a Christian than to remain one.” When I first heard this I immediately thought of Roy Deaver’s material against Bales wherein he described the African gentleman who wrote concerning his marital condition—which included seven wives with which he had produced progeny. For a man growing up in such a pagan culture, never having owned a Bible, with no “church” help and support, would this situation requiring him to give up the last six wives really be easier than for an apostate Christian who was for many years similarly involved in polygamy? An old joke says that when the American missionary tells a chief in just such a situation: “Go and tell your last six wives you must divorce them,” that the chief replies: “YOU go tell them!” No, this bifurcation between saint and non-saint is surely an error concocted by people on Planet Deaver in order to “stay with” what can, contrary to A.B. Jones and Mac, ac-

curately be described as grounded “in an arbitrary law of God” wherein the alien sinner and others (i.e., innocent children) are regarded by the Deity inequitably regarding basic moral accountability in reference to His help in meeting His demands. The same inequity exists with this view as when false teachers on MDR try to separate saint from sinner. Let us all continue to uphold the principle of Acts 10:34 and that Biblical ethics center on whether one is an accountable HUMAN individual or not, and not on the basis of categorizing them as Christian or non-Christian.

ENDNOTES

1. In a letter from Roy C. Deaver to Jerry Moffitt (Sept. 11, 1995), pp. 2-3. as quoted in my chapter “Paul’s Prayer To And Praise To God,” in *Studies in Ephesians*, ed. Dub McClish, (Denton, TX: Valid Publications, 1997), p. 186. **CORRECTION:** *In my previous article last month the word “active” should be changed to “passive” in footnote # 4. I apologize for failing to catch this error before it went to press.*
2. Mac Deaver, *The Holy Spirit (Center of Controversy—Basis of Unity)*, (Denton, TX: Biblical Notes Publications, 2007), p. II of the Introduction.
3. Terry M. Hightower, “Does God Really Hear and Answer Prayer?” in *Studies in 1,2 Peter and Jude*, ed. Dub McClish, (Denton, TX: Valid Publications, Inc., 1998, pp. 659-660. See also footnote 17.
4. Mac Deaver, *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 291-304.
5. *Ibid*, p. I of the Introduction.
6. Terry M. Hightower, “An Expose’ of Todd Deaver’s Facing Our Failure,” in *Profiles In Apostasy #1*, ed. David P. Brown, (Spring, TX: *Contending For The Faith*, 2010), pp. 3-50.
7. This would include Mac’s foolish accusations that I am parallel to “antis” who disallow church cooperation on the basis that churches doing so with one another forfeit their autonomy, especially when HE is the one upholding his across-the-board Saints Only position as to Divine Illumination. Why a “just-now-accountable” young person or a sincere, seeking alien sinner couldn’t have the same “cooperative effort” with God that is offered the saint (even a rank apostate one) wherein they also “do what they can, but He directly helps us do better” is unknown. But more on this will have to wait for another article.
8. In such material as “The Work of the Indwelling Spirit: Out of Touch With Our Own Past,” in *Studies in Philippians and Colossians*, ed. Dub McClish (Denton, TX: Valid Publications, Inc., 2000), pp. 493-503.
9. *Ibid*, p. 494. Emphasis Jones.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO *THE* “new” *GOSPEL JOURNAL*, ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CURTIS A. CATES

The purpose of this writing is to clear the name and reputation of the church of Christ located in Evant, Texas. For many years the congregation in Evant, Texas has been known as a church that stands forthright for the cause of Truth, that does not compromise with error, and that will not endorse either false teachers or false doctrines. It is our desire that the brotherhood understands that such continues to be the case this first day of June, in the year of our Lord, 2010.

The “new” Gospel Journal, hereinafter designated as *TNGJ*, included the Evant church of Christ in the church listing section of that publication for the years 2006 and 2007. The bill had been inadvertently paid. Mike Mallett, one of the elders wrote under date of December 17, 2007 to request that money be returned. Why? Because the elders had dropped the congregational subscription to *TNGJ*, following the dismissal of brethren Dub McClish and Dave Watson, as editor and co-editor. According to the policy of *TNGJ*, only those churches with congregational subscriptions would be listed in the “church directory” section without charge. The elders had never requested that the Evant congregation be included in the church list. Under the capable leadership and editorship of brother Dub McClish, it had been a pleasure to be listed with sound congregations. However, after the bushwhacking of Dub McClish and Dave Watson, it did not take *TNGJ* long to depart from God’s Truth. It would be sometime before the congregation in Evant would ever see any money from the new paper.

In that letter, brother Mallett stated in clarion terms: “Under the present leadership of *The Gospel Journal* we do not wish to have any association with this publication or its board of directors. Please remove our church name from this directory.” What is so difficult to understand about that request? (1) The Evant church of Christ does not desire to be associated with *TNGJ*..., (2) Please remove our church name from this directory, and (3) Quote: “As we did not authorize your publication to list us in your directory for the past two years we are requesting that *The Gospel Journal* refund the payment of \$240.00...”

As far as anyone here knew, that was to be the end of the matter. However, under date of February 11, 2010 the church in Evant received a note of “thanks” from Paul Sain, Business Manager, for *TNGJ*. Brother Sain also included a bill in the amount of \$128.00. Remember, the paper still owed the congregation in Evant, Texas \$240.00. The bill was for the “church listing” in 2009. We assume that 2008 issues of *TNGJ* included such listings.

Under date of March 6, 2010, the elders requested that

I respond to brother Sain’s correspondence. I reminded him that since the sad events of 2005 the Lord’s church in Evant, Texas has had no association with *TNGJ*. The letter pointed out that neither he nor the editor had any business putting the Evant church in their directory. We requested (again) that the name of the Evant church of Christ be removed from the pages of *TNGJ*. We asked for an immediate correction of that blatant oversight.

After twenty days had passed, with no acknowledgement whatsoever, another letter was sent to brother Sain under date of March 26, 2010. We asked for a cessation of all such ads and a statement that the Evant congregation does not lend support to *TNGJ*. We let him know that copies of all this correspondence were being sent to brother Curtis A. Cates, and to the elders of the Forest Hills church of Christ. We requested a deadline for both of these matters to be resolved no later than the last day of April, 2010. We desired that the name of the Lord’s church in Evant, Texas be cleared as quickly as possible.

March 26, 2010 we asked Curtis A. Cates as the editor of *TNGJ*, if he would assist us in clearing up this matter. March 26, 2010 we also asked the elders of the Forest Hills congregation (Memphis, TN), for their assistance in resolving this injustice. We have never received one word from brother Paul Sain, nor any of the elders of the Forest Hill congregation.

Curtis A. Cates did respond to the elders of the Evant congregation with an apology and a statement that the church here was released from all supposed debts for which the church had been erroneously billed. He had in his possessions copies of the correspondence, showing that *TNGJ* still owed the Lord’s church in Evant, Texas \$240.00.

Under date of April 5, 2010 a letter of thanks was sent to brother Cates for both his apology and release from the “obligation” to pay the \$128.00. Also, we reminded him that a statement needed to be placed in the pages of *TNGJ*, to allow brethren to realize that although our church name was in the “directory” for three or four years, that the church in Evant, Texas did not go along with the new liberal stance of the paper, and its obvious support of false teachers and false doctrines. The congregation here does not fellowship those things that are freely fellowshipped by *TNGJ*, and its current board of directors.

The elders of the Evant church of Christ received a note from brother Cates under date of April 16, 2010. The note included a check in the amount of \$240.00 from the personal checking account of Curtis A. Cates. He stated that he was

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sending his personal check to the church in Evant, Texas “to clear this matter up...” Therefore, we sent another letter of thanks to brother Cates under date of April 24, 2010. Once more, we reminded him that several attempts had been made with him and brother Sain to have some sort of retraction printed within the pages of *TNGJ*, to let those who still received that publication, (which that month still contained the Evant congregation information in its directory), that the church in Evant, Texas does not support nor endorse the new direction of *TNGJ*. The letter explained that “the elders here do not wish to leave the mistaken impression that the Lord’s church endorses or supports the extremely liberal views of fellowship as upheld by the board of directors, the current editor, nor any of the writers...”

The final correspondence was sent to brother Paul Sain under date of April 26, 2010. The elders wanted the business manager, brother Sain, to know that the original false bill, in the amount of \$240.00 had been reimbursed by brother Cates from his personal funds. We would not want to falsely take \$240.00 from *TNGJ*. Once more, we included a reminder that some sort of statement needed to be made in the pages of *TNGJ*, informing the brotherhood that the congregation in Evant, Texas could no longer support nor endorse the digressive directions of the *TNGJ*.

Please understand that the board of directors, the elders of Forest Hill, brethren Curtis Cates, and Paul Sain all knew of our intent to have a public retraction made within the pages of *TNGJ*. The elders of the Evant congregation also informed brother Sain that the \$240.00 has been placed in our mission

fund, which helps with the support of brother Dub McClish.

The month of May is now gone. *TNGJ* has finally removed the name of the Evant congregation from the church directory within its pages. We are thankful for this. As of today’s date there has been no statement and no word (could we say silence?) from the editor, the business manager, or any of the board of directors about such a statement. This deafening silence suggests to us that there will be no such statement placed within the pages of *TNGJ*.

Therefore let it be known to faithful brethren and churches of Christ throughout the world, that the church of Christ located in Evant, TX does not support or endorse the *TNGJ*, the current editor, board of directors, or elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ in their numerous departures from the powerful Word of God. We wish to stand in fellowship only with those who are in fellowship with God. Those who have let it be known that they are no longer in fellowship with God and His holy teaching, are not in fellowship with us. Since our many requests for such a message to be included in the pages of *TNGJ* have fallen upon deaf ears, please help us to spread this message throughout the borders of His kingdom. Let us pray that the time will come when *TNGJ* will return to the old paths and be counted as standing on the Lord’s side, in the way that once it did!

Because of a cross,

/s/Jess Whitlock

Evangelist, Evant Church of Christ

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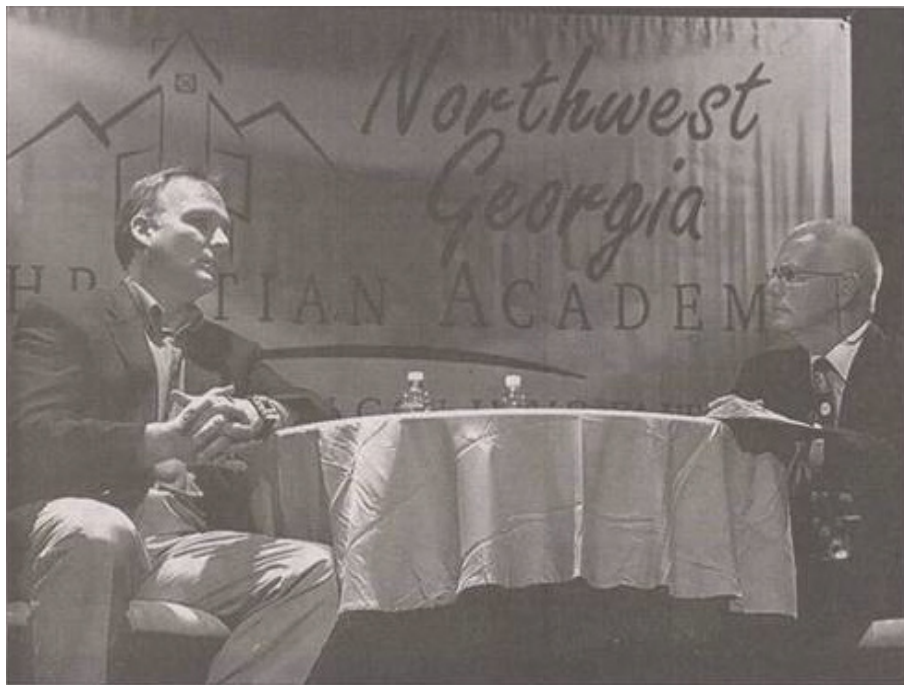
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Calhoun “Church of Christ” Fund Raiser

The following is reported by Ron Hall, an elder of the Northside Church in Calhoun, Georgia. The “Calhoun Church of Christ” had a fund raiser for their school and sold raffle tickets to raise money. — Editor

In two articles appearing in the *Calhoun Times* on March 10, 2010, was revealed the first bits of public information I have seen about the Northwest Georgia Christian Academy fund raiser event. The first article reported that this event “drew more than 500 people to the Calhoun Church of Christ.” As you can see from the previous quote our community believes this was an event of the Church of Christ.

Also, if the amount raised, as reported in the article, was only \$10,000 then I must admit that I was surprised that it was that low. I would have thought it would have been much more than that. If this was all they were able to raise after resorting to gambling and bringing in a sectarian speaker to talk about his faith experience, I have to wonder was it worth it? Was it worth it to present the Lord’s church to our community as one who endorses such ungodly activities as they promoted and endorsed during this little fundraiser. The distinctive nature of the Lord’s church has been damaged because of their ungodly actions – and for what – \$10,000!



The second article was written by Coach Jerry Smith, a local sports writer for the *Calhoun Times*. According to Smith’s article the Calhoun elders brought in Frank Mills to introduce the event and explain the function and purpose of the Northwest Georgia Christian Academy. Smith went on to comment about the highlight of the event was the Dave Stokes (long time local sportscaster for WEBS radio station) interview with coach Richt. Smith (an unfaithful member of the church) continued, “It was a conservation of warmth, inspiration and challenges. That conversation provided a look up-close and personal to the person (Mark Richt) with a deep faith.” With this acceptance of men who teach damnable doctrines, is there any wonder why the Calhoun Church of Christ is thought of as being just another denomination! This ungodly event cast a dark shadow over the Lord’s church in our area.

Fundraiser brings in more than \$10,000

University of Georgia Football Coach Marck Richt (left) talks with Dave Stokes about faith and family during the first Northwest Georgia Christian Academy fundraiser. The event, “An Evening With Coach Richt” drew more than 500 people to Calhoun Church of Christ. Richt spoke on his faith and family; he believes in Christian education, and all five of his children attend Christian

Schools. A silent auction took place to start the evening off, and the NW-GCA students presented Richt with a scrapbook of hand written thank you letters. To close the event, Richt drew the winning ticket for a 2010 Ford Mustang, donated by Prater Ford. The winner was Melany Webb. More than \$10,000 was raised to benefit the academy during “An Evening With Coach Richt.”



Northwest Georgia Christian Academy presents “A Night with Coach Richt” Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. at the Calhoun Civic Auditorium. Door open at 5:30 p.m. University of Georgia Football Coach Mark Richt will be drawing for a 2010 Mustang from Prater Ford. General admission tickets: \$25. Mustang drawing tickets: \$50. Proceeds benefit Northwest Georgia Christian Academy. For ticket information, visit NWGCA.com or call 706-625-8677.



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NOT THE BIBLE BELT: WORLD CONVENTION OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST

The following article by Ken Chumbley addresses the fallacious idea that churches of Christ in the “Bible Belt” states today are more knowledgeable of the Bible and better grounded in a correct understanding of New Testament Christianity. Obviously it is not the case with Lipscomb University and many churches of Christ in the South.—DPB

You may not have ever heard of the organization known as the *World Convention of Churches of Christ*. However such an organization has existed since 1930. It is composed of members and leaders of Disciples of Christ (Christian Church), Independent Churches of Christ (Christian Church) and churches of Christ. Every four years people from these churches convene somewhere in the world. This information alone should be sufficient to enable faithful members of the church to realize that such is no place for them.

You might wonder why I am discussing this matter at this time. The reason is that earlier this year Gary Holloway, Ijams Professor of Spirituality at Lipscomb University (the school dropped “David” from its name and lists Holloway as Professor of Bible) and the preacher of the Natchez Trace Church of Christ in Nashville, TN was appointed Ex. Dir. of the Convention. That Holloway is professor at Lipscomb University is another clear indication of the school’s deliberate departure from the founding principles on which David Lipscomb and James A. Harding founded the school around 120 years ago, known then as the Nashville Bible School. Brother Lipscomb, as editor of the *Gospel Advocate* was a leader in the opposition to the apostasy that became the Disciples of Christ/Independent Christian Church. The division came over matters such as the missionary society, mechanical instrumental music in worship, women serving as preachers, elders and deacons, fellowshipping the denominations and in general embracing theological liberalism. Why would a professor at Lipscomb want to serve as the Ex. Dir. of this organization? Also, why would the administration and board of trustees of Lipscomb allow Holloway to serve in this capacity? Why would the elders of the Natchez Trace church allow their preacher to take this position with a denominational group? Why would the organization want to hire Holloway? Could it be that they share the same views? One thing is certain, the Disciples of Christ/Christian Church has not renounced the direction they took well over 100 years ago and returned to the Truth of God’s Word. In fact, they have moved further and further away from New Testament Truth as the years have gone by.

Sadly, Lipscomb University is not alone in its abandonment of the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Furthermore, the Natchez Trace Church of Christ is not alone among congregations that have and are abandoning that faith. Faithful brethren need to stand fast for the Truth concerning the church our Lord established and purchased with His blood that was shed on Calvary’s cross (Matthew

16:18; Acts 20:28).

—1131 Terrace Cir.
North Augusta, SC 29841-4350

[The following information about the World Convention of Churches of Christ is taken from the Convention’s web site under the heading of “Our Ministry” (http://www.worldconvention.org/wp/?page_id=2).

Global Fellowship: Christian – Churches of Christ – Disciples of Christ congregations are found in over 168 countries. In a number of countries they have joined uniting churches. ‘World Convention’ aims to build up a sense of fellowship (‘continuing convention’) amongst these churches.

Family Understanding: The Christian Churches, though they began as a movement for unity, have become a diverse group. Their origins lie in both Britain and the USA. Those (mainly Commonwealth) with British links are usually called Churches of Christ. Within the USA two major divisions have occurred creating the churches of Christ (A Cappella), the Christian Churches (‘Independent’) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These streams are now represented in many countries beyond the USA. World Convention builds up fellowship and understanding amongst these groups, including those within united churches.

The Wider Church: The church universal is like a global jigsaw with its denominations, divisions and regional groupings, and the many parachurch organizations. World Convention helps relate the tradition of the ‘Christian’ family to the wider church, and the activities of the wider church to our family.

Future Directions: Each part of the church has its own responsibility for its own future, but World Convention seeks to provide support for discovering our ‘together’ destiny.

*This man-made outfit calling itself the **World Convention of Churches of Christ** is foreign to the Word of God. And, it all began with the first step away from the divine pattern that is the New Testament. That first step may seem insignificant to man, but this silly Convention dedicated to rebellion to God and His Word is the end result for all those who walk in the way of Cain. If anyone desires to see where brethren who repudiate New Testament authority will lead those who run after them, this “unity in diversity” convention of spiritual rebels is a prime example. May God help us to always oppose such towers of Babel and ever call men back to the clear simplicity of the New Testament’s teaching regarding salvation and the Lord’s church. — Editor]*

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.

-Colorado-

Denver—Piedmont Church of Christ, 1602 S. Parker Rd. Ste. 109, Denver, CO 80231, Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., Wed. 7 p.m. www.piedmontcoc.net, Lester Kamp, evangelist. (720) 535-5807.

-England-

Cambridgeshire—Cambridgeshire—Cambridge City Church of Christ, meeting at The Manor Community College, Arbury Rd., Cambridge, CB4 2JF. Sun., Bible Study--10:30 a.m., Worship-- 11:30 a.m.; Tue. Bible Study--7:30 p.m. www.CambridgeCityCoC.org.uk. Keith Sisman, Gospel Preacher. Contacts: Keith Sisman [From USA, Toll Free: (281) 475-8247]; By phone inside the U.K.: Cambridge (England): 01223-911243]; Alternative Cambridge contacts: Joan Moulton - 01223-210101; Matt. Shouey (Lakenheath) - 01638-531268. Postal/ mailing Address - PO BOX 1, Ramsey Huntingdon, PE26 2YZ United Kingdom

-Florida-

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

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.

Pensacola—Eastgate Church of Christ, 2809 E. Creighton Rd., {emsacp;a. F; 32504, Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Tim Cozad, evangelist, (850) 477-4910

-North Carolina-

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

-South Carolina-

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

-Oklahoma-

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

- Tennessee-

Murfreesboro—Church of Christ, 1154 Park Avenue, Murfreesboro, TN 37129, 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.murfreesboro-churchofchrist.org. evangelist, Steve Yeatts.

-Texas-

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

Evant—Evant Church of Christ, 310 West Brooks Drive, Evant, TX 76525. Office: (254) 471-5705; Jess Whitlock, evangelist (254) 471-5717.

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. Goins; DJGoins@gmail.com.

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

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

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