

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

THOSE “SILLY GOINGS–ON”

DUB MCCLISH

Introduction

Tennessee Bible College (hereafter, TBC), Cookeville, TN, publishes a monthly periodical it calls *Living Oracles*. In the May 2009 issue, Malcolm Hill, its editor (and the President of TBC), commented on some brotherhood problems. One paragraph particularly caught my eye:

Some brethren in general are now where we were 20 years ago. They are teaching what we taught and standing where we stood. We could not get them to do this 20 years ago, but now they see. There have been break-ups of parties among preaching brethren in the past 20 years and this has helped to get some to see the facts. Party politics has not been good for the church but when there is a break it sometimes works a blessing. There has been a sizable break with some preachers and Memphis School of Preaching. There has been a break within the Gospel Journal brethren. The Contending for the Faith brethren have had troubles within their ranks. Some East Tennessee brethren had a spiritual clique going and trouble has entered their group. Apologetics Press has been under fire over stands her director has taken. There are others we could point out but we have given enough to show what we have in mind. Tennessee Bible College has not been a part of these silly goings-on nor have we wanted to be. What a blessing to be out of such things and walking in the pure and undefiled way.

Various statements and/or implications of brother Hill's comments are little short of amazing and deserve some notice.

Boastful, Self-Serving, Condescending

To hear him tell it, he and TBC have not altered their thinking or their course one-half a scintilla of one-half a de-

gree over the past 20 years. Let me get this straight: *He and those with whom he surrounded himself all of these years have alone been the sane and stable voices of truth in a fluid brotherhood, bravely standing when all others were floundering around in compromise and confusion.* Now none can gainsay that many brethren have compromised egregiously and at times, at a ferocious rate. Moreover, this sad situation stretches back double the 20 years he mentions. However, to boast (that's all one can call it) that he and his little TBC conclave have been the sole watchmen on the walls the past score of years cannot be allowed to pass without challenge. It is as pompous as it is pretentious. Alas, it appears that the “I-alone-am-left” virus that momentarily plagued the fiery Elijah incurably infected our Tennessee brother years ago, and it has risen to the surface again.

Is he totally oblivious to how patronizing and condescending his words are (or perhaps he does not care, he thought readers would not notice, or he considers himself so superior that he has the right to be condescending)? He sets himself and TBC up as the rock-steady standard-bearers of Truth to whom all of those brotherhood drifters, like prodigals, are now returning. Some brethren are finally doing what he has been doing and trying to get them to do for 20 years? *I fervently hope not.*

But bro. Hill waxed even more eloquent about his accomplishments in an earlier paragraph of his editorial (it is rumored that he has got an arm in a sling—nursing a dislocated shoulder from patting himself on the back). In the earlier paragraph, he stretched his self-commendation as the great

(Continued on page Four)

IN THIS ISSUE...

THOSE “SILLY GOINGS–ON” – DUB MCCLISH.....1
EDITORIAL – DAVID P. BROWN.....2

JIM WALDRON'S CONVENIENT ALIBI... – D. DENHAM.....3
A REQUEST CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP – GARY W. SUMMERS.....8
2009 SPRING CFTF LECTURESHIP AD.....15

Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

Editorial...

*CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH WISHES FOR
ALL A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON AND
A PROSPEROUS 2010*



As 2009 goes into the record books and we rush toward 2010, we do so with *CFTF*'s long time commitment to comfort those who are afflicted for righteousness sake as we Scripturally oppose, expose, rebuke and defeat all advocates of any error in and out of the church. We engage in the same as we continue to earnestly plead, by the mercies of Jesus Christ, for erring church members to repent of and fully renounce their sins, returning to the "strait and narrow way" of God's Truth in so doing (Mt. 7:13, 14). How much longer we have to continue this work before we are unable to do so or life's little day is over is unknown, but fervently we will do what we can until night comes and our work on earth is done.

To our supporters we are most thankful. We covet your prayers to the end that all of us will love the Lord with all we are and love our neighbor as ourselves. Our goal is never to bind where God has not bound nor loose where God has not loosed. Also, we will turn from any real error in our own lives when it is pointed out to us. We are committed to teaching and defending *all* and *only* what our Lord has authorized in His last Will and Testament (Acts 20:26, 27). In doing so we will leave undone what our Lord and Master has prohibited as well as what He has not authorized while vigorously opposing error (Col. 3:17; Jude 3). More than that God does not obligate us to do. Less than that brings upon us spiritual ruin (Jn. 12:48; Mt. 7:21-23).

The Lord's church is worth its purchase price—the precious blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). Thus, the church belongs to Christ and not us. With that fact in mind we *must* determine our conduct in and toward it. Also we *must* desire, not only our own faithfulness to Christ, but also the faithfulness of all our brothers and sisters in Christ. The purity of the bride of Christ and what it takes to keep her pure cannot be overly emphasized. May those who think otherwise change their sinful thinking or be defeated in it. To that end we continually and consistently labor. May God help us to have a "thus saith the Lord" for all we believe and practice, making any sacrifice necessary to accomplish the same.

—David P. Brown, Editor

JIM WALDRON'S CONVENIENT ALIBI OR HOW TO AVOID INCONVENIENT FACTS

Daniel Denham

Bro. Jim Waldron of Crossville, TN continues to hedge, dodge, and shuffle in an attempt to avoid the obvious. He has no real desire to debate openly the real issues that divide us on MDR. Instead, ignoring the facts that were published in the August 2009 issue of *Contending for the Faith (CFTF)*, he has chosen to post an alibi for his behavior under an attachment titled “MDR Questions” on the Waldron Mission Fund website (http://waldronmissions.org/index_files/Page14385.htm) sponsored by the Crossville church of Christ.

The complete title of his document is “MDR Questions between D. Brown, H.D., [sic] Denham & J. Waldron.” It is not titled “The Question of MDR between...” but “MDR Questions between...” as we have noted. While the document does discuss the matter of MDR, Jim does not give or address any specific questions. When I first saw the title, I thought to myself, “At last, he may be going to answer at least some of the many questions we have put to him concerning MDR,” especially seeing that the document is advertised in by its title as concerning “MDR questions between D. Brown, H.D., [sic] Denham, & J. Waldron.” However, I was disappointed to see that he does not answer even one of our questions. To this day he still remains “as silent as a tomb” on them, including the numerous questions that I raised in my September 2008 *CFTF* article that got him so stirred up with us.

Evidently, someone else is raising questions for Jim to answer, and he seems to be attempting to answer them by his alibi piece. Interestingly though, he leaves a lot of pertinent facts out of his answers, but that is probably because to mention them would have proven quite inconvenient to his alibi. We shall see if he intends at any later point to bring these details to light for his readers and whether he will finally address the questions that David and I have put to him. But for the present, we must content ourselves with examining and responding to what he has said on the subject, as it does definitely involve us.

In his alibi, he posts three emails from me originally posted to the members of a website owned by bro. Keith Sisman. According to Jim, these posts were forwarded to him by some of his compatriots. He does not bother to tell his readers that these “gentlemen” violated the list rules in doing so. But that is really another matter, which addresses the ethics of the parties who did so when it comes to honoring agreements. In fact, I anticipated that there would be those with so little regard for keeping their word that they would forward my

posts to Waldron, because I know some of those with whom he closely associates. Jim also circulated his own responses to these emails to addresses unethically obtained from the site. We can only conclude that his cronies aided him in this action. Apparently, civil laws are binding only in the areas they arbitrarily choose them to be.

What I posted, regardless, was truthful and to the point, which facts have obviously occasioned Waldron's turning into an “Alibi Ike” for his readers and supporters both by email and in his alibi on his website, to which we shall now respond seriatim.

(1) Waldron, after posting the three fraudulently obtained emails, commented: “Brethren I am not hiding in the hillocks and mountains of Tennessee (Item 2 above), although they are greatly to be admired; I am in the northeast part of India in the foothills of the mighty Himalayas teaching Romans to a class of thirteen student preachers.” The fact, however, is that he was “in the hillocks and mountains of Tennessee” when he had the postman mark our letter of June 5, 2009 to him as “Refused”! Thus, my first post, which would be Item #1 in keeping with Jim's enumeration of them, was quite accurate as to the timing of his refusal to even receive the letter. That he went off to the Himalayas shortly after that does not change the fact that he has been ducking an honest and open debate on the issues dividing us, while stirring strife among the churches over his error. While teaching Romans is a noble endeavor, the Himalayas had nothing to do with his refusal to even read our letter relative to the issue. Despite their impressive size, even the “mighty Himalayas” are not big enough to hide the obvious fact that Jim will not address the matter he stirred up and continues to stir up with his foolishness.

(2) Jim then retreats to his threadbare excuse that an article by Terry M. Hightower published in the Sept. 2002 issue of *CFTF* by David Brown is what stirred him up to get involved in this controversy. Conveniently, he fails to tell his readers that in a letter to David and me, he admits knowing at the time of reading the Hightower article of the controversy already existing with the Southwest congregation in Austin over MDR. Conveniently again, he fails to tell his readers that Terry's article was prompted by Southwest's false teaching on the subject. Then, also quite conveniently, he neglects to inform them that he knew that to be the case prior to his attacks on Terry Hightower, David Brown, and *CFTF*. Such

(Continued on page Eleven)

(Continued from page One)

standard-bearer an extra decade—to “the past 25 or 30 years.” He particularly claimed personal credit for the faithfulness of Tennessee congregations in the “area where we have lived, preached, and taught.” I’m trying to figure which congregations would be on his “faithful” list. It would not happen to consist of **only** those that have remained in fellowship with and supportive of the Hill/TBC agenda, do you think? His claim must come as a great surprise to those congregations in the Cookeville area that have not drunk the TBC Kool-Aid for several years, but somehow, difficult as it may be to believe, **have remained faithful nonetheless.**

What about bro. Hill’s boast that he and TBC have not altered their stance any over the past 25–30 years? That 30-year figure is a good one to consider. Thirty years ago (1979), bro. Hill somehow persuaded (I never understood how) a number of then-respected scholarly brethren to relocate to Cookeville and join the faculty of TBC. These included the likes of Roy C. Deaver, Mac Deaver, Thomas B. Warren, Andrew Connally, Bert Thompson, and David Lipe. This impressive collection put TBC on the “brotherhood map,” *but only very briefly.*

Alas, the honeymoon for TBC’s scholarly teacher corps was destined to be short-lived. Various factors, none of them complimentary toward bro. Hill, resulted in the implosion of his super-faculty for the most part by 1981. (About 20 years ago, Hill ran up a trial balloon of criticism of Bert Thompson, one of the first faculty whistle-blowers to depart, which provoked Thompson to publicly warn Hill that further attacks would be met with publication of documentation concerning Hill’s misdeeds during the acclaimed faculty’s brief stint. Suddenly, the Cookeville guns aimed at Thompson fell completely silent.)

Of this imposing slate of instructors, as far as I have been able to ascertain, only the Deavers and Thomas B. Warren left Cookeville on friendly terms with bro. Hill when all the dust settled. The late Andrew Connally told me in a 1986 conversation that he had no closer friends on earth than Roy Deaver and Tom Warren, but there was one subject he could not discuss with them—Malcolm Hill. He said, “They still refuse to see through him.” (Many others of us join bro. Connally in amazement that men of such intelligence as brethren Deaver [both Roy and Mac] and Warren could be so undiscerning.) As far as I know, brethren Roy Deaver and Tom Warren, who have finished their earthly courses, remained friends with bro. Hill until they died. Mac remains closely tied to TBC and its president to this day.

Hill has several times defended Mac Deaver in the pages of *Living Oracles* over the past dozen or more years, has published several of Mac’s articles in its pages, and regularly invites him to speak on TBC’s lectureship. Under a photo of Malcolm Hill and his wife, Mac wrote of this continued friendship: “When some others forsook us because of the controversy over the Holy Spirit, brother Malcolm continued to use us and loyally stood by us” (Mac Deaver, *The Holy*

Spirit [Denton, TX: Biblical Notes, 2007], p. 366). Mac has returned the favor by bringing Kerry Duke (TBC Dean) and Malcolm Hill to Denton, TX, for meetings at the Sherman Drive Church of Christ (formerly Pearl St.), in Denton, where Deaver has preached since August 2005. Hill remains firmly embedded with Deaver. In the May issue of *Living Oracles*, quoted above, Mac has a lengthy article, beginning on page 1. Hill and Duke teamed up with Mac and others of his Holy Spirit persuasions on the Northern New England Lectures in Tilton, NH, October 9–11, 2009.

Mac Deaver Does the Texas One-step

Now let us test Hill’s claim of doctrinal and fellowship consistency (both of which he most certainly expects of others). Did bro. Hill believe or fellowship those who believed that the Holy Spirit operates on the hearts of Christians **directly, in addition to and apart from His Word in 1979?** The late Roy C. Deaver wrote the following in 1989, several years **after** he had left TBC:

For near fifty years...I have preached the **transforming power of the Holy Spirit** in the lives of men, but the **Spirit’s working always in and through, by means of, the written Word of God**, both in the matter of **conversion and in the guiding of the Christian—never separate and apart from the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.** This I will continue to preach (*Biblical Notes*, March–April 1989, emph. DM).

His son, Mac Deaver, likewise opposed the doctrine of a direct, separate-from-the-Word operation of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian as late as 1993, so he did not believe any “direct-operation” doctrine while he taught at TBC. Note the clarity of his statement:

The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit **indwells** the Christian, but it also teaches that He **guides/directs** the Christian through the word (cf. Eph. 2:22; 2 Tim. 3:16–17). **Here we stand;** and in opposition to any and all who deny this view (emph. his).

In a recent meeting of brethren...who are seriously concerned about doing what they can to **prevent rupture in fellowship**—it was stressed forcefully (after many hours of careful, prayerful study) that as long as we agree that **the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs, and edifies only through the Word of God**, whatever other differences there may be on the subject ought not to have the least effect on the question of our fellowship (*Biblical Notes*, Nov.–Dec. 1993, emph. DM).

No one to my knowledge has ever come forth with any statement to the effect that Thomas B. Warren (or any of the others of that august 1979 TBC faculty) believed anything different from the convictions stated above.

Had bro. Hill **not agreed** with the foregoing view of the operation of the Holy Spirit, he most certainly would **not have invited** these men to join his faculty. However, Mac Deaver reversed his (and his father’s) staunch Scriptural 1993 position, first hinting at it in his 1994 debate with

Marion Fox. He was so settled, clear, and vocal in his position by 1996 that we ceased inviting him to speak on the Annual Denton Lectures thereafter. In 2000, he affirmed the following proposition in oral debate with Jerry Moffitt as part of the Annual Denton Lectures: “The Bible teaches that, **in addition to His sanctifying influence through His Word, the Holy spirit operates directly** to sanctify the heart of the faithful Christian”(emph. DM).

In spite of the fact that Mac Deaver reversed his position and began espousing a fatal error relative to the work of the Holy Spirit—an error which Malcolm Hill would not have thought of espousing in earlier years (before 1994, in fact)—Hill continued and continues to defend, support, and fellowship Mac Deaver, **as if he had never changed his convictions**. I suppose his flip-flopping with Mac on this crucial subject is an example of Hill’s self-proclaimed consistency of “teaching what we taught and standing where we stood” for decades. I would be very pleased to see one example of Hill’s advocacy of or sympathy for a doctrine of direct work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of a Christian **before Mac Deaver began advocating it**. It borders on being downright amusing to hear him defend Mac Deaver’s direct-operation foolishness as nothing more than a facet of the doctrines of the indwelling, prayer, and/or providence.

Hill is not really Deaver’s friend, because “friends don’t let friends drive drunk.” A true friend would try to help Deaver see his error (not that he would pay any attention, for many of us who were once his friends have thus attempted). Rather than fellowshiping and defending him, Hill would **“have no fellowship with [Deaver’s] unfruitful works of darkness”** (Eph. 5:11). Instead, the TBC executive berates all of those who cannot/will not fellowship Deaver in his error as trouble-makers who get all excited about nothing. John’s inspired declaration of culpability for the error of the false teacher when one bids him Godspeed (2 John 9–11) means nothing to the Cookeville guru. He just lurches on like a bull in a china shop.

Hill has periodically scolded all who have ceased to fellowship Mac over what he (Hill) considers to be innocent opinions. To so argue is to exhibit the inability to perceive the difference between black and white, or else to demonstrate such blind allegiance to a mere man that he is willing to follow his blind leader into his error pit (Mat. 15:14). **Note it well**: Deaver (in his 1993 statement above) **clearly distinguished** between the direct/immediate impact of the Spirit on the Christian’s heart and His work through the agency of His Word. He likewise made it **abundantly clear** that the Spirit guides, convicts, leads, directs, and edifies us **only** (Mac’s word) through His Word. He also **distinguished between** the issues of the **guidance** of the Spirit and the **indwelling** of the Spirit, rightly indicating that the former was one with fellowship implications, but the latter was not. One would think the president of a college (that awards Ph.D. degrees, no less) could also make these distinctions, especially since

his bosom buddy had already laid them out for him. His attempted defenses are nothing short of “pitiful” (to use one of the favorite expressions of his Denton, Texas, hero).

The Deaver Texas Two-step

In the April 1974 issue of *Spiritual Sword*, the late Roy C. Deaver penned an article titled, “Water Baptism—Not Holy Spirit—Is the One Baptism.” He began his article as follows: “In this brief article we confidently affirm that the ‘One baptism’ spoken of by Paul is water baptism—not Holy Spirit baptism.” He went on to discuss Ephesians 4:4–6, in which Paul declared, **“There is...one baptism,”** and other relevant passages. He closed his article by writing, “...there is now no such thing as Holy Spirit baptism.”

Obviously, Tom Warren, editor of *Spiritual Sword* at the time, agreed with the Deaver assessment or he would not have published it. Warren doubtless assigned this topic to his dear friend, knowing he would write correctly concerning it. I know of nothing from the mouth or pen of either Roy Deaver or Tom Warren from 1974 until they departed this life (Warren in 2000, Deaver in 2007) to indicate any variance from Deaver’s 1974 article. Such was unquestionably the united conviction of these men **and of Mac Deaver** when bro. Hill enticed them to join the TBC faculty five years later. **This was therefore the conviction of Malcolm Hill, as well**. Dare anyone argue that Mac Deaver entertained or preached anything contrary to his father’s Scriptural conclusion on Holy Spirit baptism until recently, in the face of Mac’s own declaration of this fact (as I will subsequently document)? *Had bro. Hill thought that any of these men held any other view of Holy Spirit baptism, he would not have given a thought to hiring them. If this is not the case, let Hill deny it.*

As so often occurs with error, an initial misstep, doggedly pursued and defended, paves the way for additional missteps. It has been sadly so with our bro. Mac Deaver. His sashay into error concerning the Holy Spirit did not stop with his direct-operation doctrine. As early as 2001, some of his closest associates (e.g., Glenn Jobe, the late Bob Berard, Todd Deaver) began trumpeting universal Holy Spirit baptism (as universal as water baptism). Before that time, only rank liberals or those tainted with Pentecostalism ventured to advocate any such thing among brethren.

To his credit, for a few years, Mac apparently resisted before he succumbed to the second step of his Holy Spirit heresy, although one of his sons and some of his closest associates had embraced it. He finally went public with his “conversion” in 2006, at which time he tells us that in a debate with a denominationalist, he “for the first time took the position in oral controversy that in becoming a Christian, one is baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit” (op. cit., p. 365). Thus his public espousal of this doctrine did not occur until **more than a quarter century after Malcolm Hill hired him** at TBC. Anyone who believes that the president of TBC would have given this heresy a pass in anyone **besides Mac**

Deaver and/or before he started spouting it, raise your hand and I will alert the white-coat patrol to gently cart you off to join the other folks in La-La Land. Yet astoundingly, bro. Hill claims that he and TBC have remained rock-solid, unchanged, constant, and consistent in their doctrine for 30 years. This time a Tennessean has outdone us Texans in manufacturing a whopper.

In his 2007 book, previously cited, Deaver devoted a chapter to his new-found Holy Spirit-baptism dogma. He has since become sufficiently confident in his stance to publicly defend it. Earlier this year, he signed an agreement to affirm the following in a public oral debate: “The Scriptures teach that in order for a sinner to become a Christian, he must be baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit.” (I suggest that he begin looking for a Pentecostal opponent for his next debate after the one just mentioned, and offer to affirm the same proposition. I can just hear the Pentecostal preacher now: “You want to affirm what, and me to deny what? Are you kidding? Obviously, you and I agree on this issue; there is nothing to debate.”)

Deaver is now teaching his doctrine to the general public. In a July 29, 2009 *Denton Record-Chronicle* article, titled (ironically), “According to the Bible...,” he commented as follows on John 3:3, 5 concerning the salvation of the sinner:

He must be regenerated or made spiritually alive again. This happens when he is baptized into Christ (Tit. 3:5; 2 Pet. 1:40 [perhaps he meant 1 Pet. 1:22–23. DM]). As his body is immersed in water (Acts 8:38), **his human spirit is immersed in the Holy Spirit** (1 Cor. 12:13) (emph. DM).

Remember, Hill has boasted of his doctrinal consistency over a 30-year span. Pardon me for being a bit confused. Was he a closet universal-Holy-Spirit-baptism guy in 1979 and just hid it so as not to scare away the likes of the Deavers and Warren? Has he just been waiting all of these years for his friend Mac to fall for this Pentecostal error so he could come out of the closet on it? Or, perhaps Hill opposes this doctrine now, but is hiding his opposition in order to maintain friendship and fellowship with a false teacher. I have already noted the way bro. Hill rationalizes his support for the Deaver direct-operation error by misidentifying it as nothing more than the Spirit’s indwelling, answered prayer, and Divine providence. I am now very interested in seeing how he will attempt to mask Deaver’s Holy Spirit-baptism error so he can fellowship it. Will he rack it up to a further variation of the indwelling and providence doctrines? We need bro. Hill’s self-vaunted wisdom, faithfulness, and consistency to help us decipher all of this.

If he has been doctrinally consistent the past 30 years, he either believed in Holy Spirit baptism then and still does, or he did not believe in it then and does not now. In either case, he has belied his boast of being unwavering in his doctrine and in his fellowship practices. Having said that, I must grant him consistency in the following: Clearly, bro. Hill, even in the

face of Deaver’s latest doctrinal adventure, has not “batted an eye” relative to maintaining his fellowship with and support of this errant brother. He has invariably extended fellowship to Mac Deaver over the past three decades, regardless of how damnable his doctrinal shifts have been. That is something about which to brag if I ever heard it.

Now, About Those “Silly Goings-on”

In the mid-section of his editorial, bro. Hill refers to some developments among certain brethren and then states: “Tennessee Bible College has not been a part of these silly goings-on nor have we wanted to be.” (One can almost see him drawing himself up piously on his tip-toes, thumbs under arm pits.) Just what might be these things he calls “silly goings-on”? He describes them as involving a “sizable break” among supporters of Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP), *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL (TGJ)*, or *THE NEW GOSPEL JOURNAL [TNGJ]* as it has become), *Contending for the Faith*, East Tennessee School of Preaching, and Apologetics Press. His observation is correct; fellowship “breaks” have been, not only “sizable,” but grievous, and have occurred among those who were once united in support of most of the works he has named. While he failed to give a time frame for the beginning of these “breaks” or the cause(s) of them, I will do so. Now if these “breaks” are so much silliness, then the basis/bases for these “breaks” must be utterly inexcusable. Let us review what the “silliness” is all about, remembering all the while that the lily-white sage of Cookeville and his TBC have remained aloof from it all.

The time frame for these “silly goings-on” began in late May 2005 when the brotherhood was stunned by the removal (even more so by its necessary reason) of Bert Thompson as executive director of Apologetics Press (AP). In the wake of the scandal, the remaining AP staff hit the phones, soliciting endorsements for AP’s survival, resulting in signatures of sixty brethren, many of them “**reputed to be somewhat**” (Gal. 2:6), affixed to a “Statement of Support” for the beleaguered institution. Thompson had hired Dr. Dave Miller to join the AP staff three years earlier. His hiring cost AP considerable monthly income from knowledgeable brethren, aware that he was an impenitent teacher of crucial errors involving the eldership and MDR (also, as it turned out, serious fellowship compromises as well). These were errors of which at least some of the signers of the AP document **were aware and which they had opposed**—before the AP scandal broke. Miller himself helped solicit the names for the “Statement of Support.”

In early June, AP officially announced the Thompson departure in a packet that included the list of sixty signers **and** a letter announcing that Dave Miller was AP’s new executive director. His appointment doubtless caught some of the signers by surprise, especially those who were on record as opposing Miller’s errors (including Curtis A. Cates). Now several among the sixty found themselves in a dilemma. If they continued to support AP by leaving their names on the

list, they would be supporting a false teacher (Dave Miller), inseparable from his errors. However, if they remained consistent (and Biblically right) in their opposition to Miller and his errors, they could no longer support AP. **In the four intervening years, not one of those sixty men has recanted his support, which support has influenced many other brethren to ignore the Miller errors and to fellowship a false teacher.**

Curtis A. Cates (then director of MSOP) and Joseph Meador (then director of Southwest School of Bible Studies) both signed the AP statement. Cates and Meador were president and vice president, respectively, of the board of The Gospel Journal, Inc., owner of *TGJ*, of which I was editor at the time. While they had opposed Miller's errors before the AP upheavals, their names among the sixty implied their defense/support/endorsement of said errors and their advocate. Their signatures also placed them in direct conflict with their editor (me) because of my years of opposition to Miller's errors and because we had exposed Miller's elder reaffirmation doctrine in *TGJ*. Rather than consistently (and Biblically) continuing to oppose Miller and his error, even if it meant opposing AP, Cates and Meador folded. (Actually, Meador was so doctrinally and morally corrupt by this time—though his immorality was not yet unmasked—that his even being on *TGJ*'s board was a travesty.)

The first major after-effect of the AP scandal that eventuated in grievous fellowship implications was my "encouraged resignation"—led by Curtis A. Cates—as editor of *TGJ* (and that of my esteemed associate editor, Dave Watson) on July 20, 2005. (To his great credit, eight days following his part in our "resignations," bro. Michael Hatcher resigned from *TGJ*'s board, rebuked the other board members for their behavior, and issued a public apology to bro. Watson and me for his part in the debacle.)

The major changes involving *TGJ* signaled a new fellowship direction for its board and for MSOP, since Curtis Cates was president of one and director of the other. Implications of these fellowship compromises with Miller and AP, typified by that of Cates, led to loud outcries from faithful brethren far and wide. These outcries have included many MSOP alumni and other former close associates of Cates, MSOP, and the Forest Hill congregation, MSOP's sponsor. The fellowship compromises to which that initial concession of signing the AP statement led have been many and, in some cases, stunning. Bro. Miller continues in wide circulation among brethren on lectureships and in other speaking engagements, greatly encouraged and given credence by those who "put their names on the dotted line" implicitly endorsing him. Many who before June 2005 were opposing him and his errors have now been overcome by a mysterious form of amnesia that has led to an acute case of lockjaw—serious spiritual maladies, indeed. The fellowship ripples have not ceased to the present. We could cite repeated instances of various congregations inviting an increasingly doctrinally diverse menu of speakers to

appear on their lectureships, which phenomenon was both unheard—and unthought—of by them or others before June 2005. Once these brethren redrew their fellowship "circle" large enough to include Miller and his errors (to be as large as Barry Grider's), it was large enough to encompass many others they had formerly (and rightly) shunned. (Note to bro. Hill: Don't be surprised if you receive an invitation to speak on MSOP Lectures in the near future.) Many of us then had to redraw **our** fellowship "circles" relative to them in order to comply with such inspired edicts as Ephesians 5:7, 11 and 2 John 9–11.

As much as Hill has ranted and raved about **perceived** (by him) fellowship compromises in others over the past quarter century, one would think that he would be just a bit concerned about such bold and in-your-face violations of Scriptural fellowship that have racked the brotherhood the past four years. Instead, he sees it all as "silly goings-on." Perhaps the following explains why: "Fellowship compromises" actually occur and are worthy of lambasting **only if Hill so perceives and defines them**. Otherwise, even blatant compromises in fellowship that separate brethren who have worked in great harmony for decades are merely "silly goings-on." After disdainful such "silly goings-on," he sanctimoniously exclaims what a blessing it is to be "out of such things and walking in the pure and undefiled way." This—from a man who has compromised Scriptural fellowship to the ultimate in continuing to defend and support one of the boldest false teachers of the past fifteen years. Did a strutting peacock ever exhibit more self-righteous plumage than Malcolm Hill in his statement? I wot not.

I remind bro. Hill of some of the bases for these "silly goings-on" that have produced these "sizable breaks." Brethren involved with MSOP, *TNGJ*, Gospel Broadcasting Network, Florida School of Preaching, Southwest School of Bible Studies, and numerous congregations that host annual lectureships have engaged in:

- Endorsement and defense of a false teacher (Miller) in order to support an institution (AP)
- Endorsement and defense of doctrinal and practical errors that they formerly (and Scripturally) opposed
- Realignment of their fellowship to **include** those who support Miller and his errors
- Realignment of their fellowship to **exclude** those who continue to oppose them
- Broadening their fellowship lines well beyond Miller and his errors to those whom they formerly (and rightly) excluded from their fellowship
- Meeting with stony silence sincere, earnest questions about their new fellowship practices
- Refusing to meet with their questioners to discuss these fellowship issues in various open forums

Every item in the foregoing list (which is not exhaustive)

represents one or more violations of Scriptural mandates regarding fellowship and/or accountability for one's actions. This behavior has resulted in egregious breaches of fellowship, qualifying as Hill's "sizable breaks" among brethren. To identify them, however, as "silly goings-on," one must either not know or not care what the Bible teaches concerning Christian fellowship. Perhaps some of both can be seen in bro. Hill's record.

Conclusion

Were it not so patently anti-Scriptural, I would be tempted to refer to bro. Hill's fellowship record over the past several years as a bountiful portion of "silly goings-on," but it reaches far beyond "silly." As previously noted, Hill was quick to defend Mac Deaver when he began openly trumpeting his "direct-operation-of-the-Holy Spirit" doctrine in about 1996. Also previously noted, more recently he has been quick to follow Deaver's lead on Holy Spirit baptism. Hill **has to know** that these doctrines are not just error, but damnable error. As classmates at Freed-Hardeman College in the mid-1950s we both sat at the feet of the same able and sound

Bible teachers who taught us to recognize and refute such heresies. Furthermore, as also noted above, he undeniably opposed these doctrines earlier (as did Deaver), belying his claim that he has remained constant in doctrinal conviction and fellowship practice.

For bro. Hill to pontificate on what are and what are not "silly goings-on" with his record of doctrinal digression and fellowship compromises is downright comical. It is lamentable that Hill does not seem to realize (or refuses to admit) that, for just such behavior, he and TBC have for years been little more than a brotherhood joke, generally speaking. Those knowing little or none of the history of TBC and its president may be swayed by his statements of self-aggrandizement, but brethren whose memories go back several years will "consider the source" when they hear the crowing of the cock from Cookeville.

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A REQUEST CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP

Gary W. Summers

The Bellview Church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida published an article by Johnny Oxendine (8-24-09) that raises again some important points concerning fellowship. The intriguing title is: "The Hybrid Church And Why It Has a Real Chance to Succeed With Some." He leads off with the following two paragraphs:

The title has probably caused some of you to have a puzzled look or a frown on the brow. What could possibly be meant by this phrase, *the hybrid church*? Today, we want to introduce you to this phenomenon with the understanding that this is a real amalgamation in the church. The *hybrid* church is a newcomer in the brotherhood. It is composed of brethren of all stripes who share a common denominator to **not** pass judgment on the activities, errors, false teaching, or associations (fellowship) of others.

Hybrid means "a thing made by combining two different elements, a mixture"; these newly-combined elements are quickly transforming into a sector that will shortly (if they continue on this path) not resemble the Lord's church at all. There will probably be some identifiable remnants remaining, but what we see in the New Testament will be radically changed as a result of this new hybrid (or Greek mythology Hydra) church.

He then brings into view "the most recent flyer advertising the Tahoe Family Encampment" (July 2009), and he comments on the names that are listed on it, wondering how it could be that, if they are on the same program, they are not in fellowship with each other. This is a good question, which

some Scriptures later in this article touch upon. Are brethren giving thought concerning whom they fellowship? How far does fellowship extend? If one fellowships a man affiliated with a certain work, is he not also fellowshipping it?

The issue of *fellowship* ought to be of concern to all of us, since it is a Biblical topic. It has not been all that long since both preachers and churches agreed concerning what the Bible taught. Now someone looking at us would probably wonder, "What do these people believe?" To demonstrate how things have changed, when I attended the Joplin Unity Summit 25 years ago, someone asked me (before I had figured out what the true purpose for the occasion was) if I thought that Carl Ketcherside would be there. My immediate response was, "Not if they want anyone to take this unity effort seriously." Ketcherside, like Leroy Garrett, had a name associated with compromise. Both men emphasized unity at the expense of truth; one wonders if the same thing is not now recurring.

Rubel Shelly decided in the early 80s that there were Big **F** and little **f** forms of fellowship, which basically resulted in fellowshipping false teachers. Even though Alan Highers wrote a book specifically against that concept and William Woodson wrote against "change agents" in the church, it seems that the idea of a broader fellowship has currently gained ground—even among those who once opposed it. So here is a crucial question:

At what point does association with false teachers and false

doctrine constitute sin in the sight of the Lord?

Brethren in most areas of the country need answers to that question. In Orlando, for example, every two years there is a Spiritual Growth Workshop. Are all the speakers flat-out liberals? No, but many are. For each event they invite men like Randall Harris and John Clayton—both of whom have been well-documented to be unsound with respect to many of their doctrines. Liberals attend this gathering of wolves, but brethren from non-liberal congregations also go! Why is this not *fellowship* on their part with error and false teaching?

The Jerusalem Spiritual Growth Workshop

Had there been a “workshop” in Jerusalem and a famous Sadducean orator was teaching that there were no angels and no resurrection, would Jesus have attended to “learn” from such a person? No. Had He been there at all, it would have been to oppose the doctrine. However, Jesus did not go to their conferences; they came to Him (Matt. 22:23-33).

But consider this foolishness a bit further. Suppose all the groups in Jerusalem “agreed to disagree” and have an ecumenical forum. A prominent Pharisee could speak on topics such as “The Value of Manmade Traditions,” “How to Make Long Prayers and Subtly Disfigure Your Face While Fasting,” and “Keeping Oneself Outwardly Pure.” The Sadducees could have someone speak on “Is the Rich Man in Torment?” The zealots could have classes on “Organizing Your Own Private Militia,” and the Herodians could do “Accepting Without Question Every Government Program.”

The Galilee Family Encampment

If such an absurd event ever occurred, would Jesus or His apostles have advised anyone to attend? If not, why not? Perhaps after the destruction of Jerusalem, some brethren hosted a Galilee Family Encampment. Of course, Paul, Peter, and most of the other apostles were already martyred, but what would Paul have thought if he had seen the apostle John on a program with Hymenaeus and Alexander, who had made shipwreck of the faith and had been withdrawn from (1 Tim. 1:18-20), lecturing on the grace of God? Paul would be no more kindly disposed toward Hymenaeus and Philetus attempting to prove that the resurrection was already past (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

While scheduling this great annual event, no one would want to omit those two-legged dogs of the mutilation (Phil. 3:1-2, 18-19). And wouldn't Peter be surprised to see certain liberty promisers on the program, if he were alive (2 Peter 2:17-22)? No encampment would be complete without scoffers who insisted that all things had continued the same since the fathers fell asleep (2 Peter 3:1-9). Suggested topics for the Galilee Family Encampment are: “The Pleasures of Carnal Living,” “The Earth is Eternal,” and “Did You Miss the Resurrection?” What a great time everyone would have! To make it complete, we just need to add: “What Did Paul *Really* Mean When He Said to Mark False Teachers?” Perhaps one of these illustrious figures could write a book: *Big F and Little f (f)alse Teachers*.

Of course, if such an event had actually been scheduled in the first century, everyone would want to know, “Why is

the apostle John associated with this endeavor?” Obviously, he would not, since he wrote: “**Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world**” (1 John 4:1). Concerning this same group of men, the disciple whom Jesus loved wrote:

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, nor greet him, for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

Defenders of such encampments and workshops often say, “They will not be allowed to teach error here.” Oh! Apparently many of us have not seen that exceptive clause in 2 John 9-11. Which part of the passage is it that warns against encouraging or using false teachers but then supplies the caveat: “But you can greet them and let them speak if they don't present any error”? Under this logic Hymenaeus and Philetus could be asked to speak on the virgin birth, the Deity of Christ, a few dozen other topics. Of course, if they were used, faithful brethren would assume (erroneously) they were sound men in fellowship with the church.

What Makes Someone a False Teacher?

At this point it might be helpful for several brethren to offer a definition—if it is different from the one following. My philosophy is that a false teacher is one who teaches any specific doctrine that—if believed and followed—would cause someone to lose his salvation.

Teaching that the resurrection was already past was over-

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throwing the faith of some, therefore, Paul considered it harmful to the well-being of the church. Peter showed the dangers of any doctrine that leads brethren into being carnal rather than spiritual. He also said that convincing brethren that the Lord would not be returning was deadly. For one thing, it would make everyone relax their moral guidelines rather than watch and pray (Matt. 24:42-51). Paul adamantly opposed those who tried to bind circumcision and other parts of the Law of Moses upon Christians. He said those who believed such a thing had fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4)! Jesus taught that religion that focused on externals was useless—that faith must be genuine. Any efforts to set aside God’s holy Word He condemned.

In light of these Scriptures, what was bro. Oxendine’s complaint? He, like many of us, marveled at the conglomeration of teachings held by those who spoke and fellowshiped at that event. He mentioned Brad Harrub of Focus Press. To my knowledge, no one has ever ascribed a teaching error to this brother. No false doctrine has ever been promulgated in the magazine he edits, *Think*. But he has been associating himself with the other speakers on that program who do.

One of the men who speaks annually is Truitt Adair of the Sunset Bible Institute. Some of Sunset’s instructors have taught error on divorce and remarriage for decades. Is that something over which a person could lose his soul? Yes! If two people are committing adultery, having been unscripturally divorced and married again (as with Herod and Herodias), then they are in an unlawful situation that will cause them to be lost—unless they repent of it by leaving the situation. What Adair himself believes may be the truth, but the institution he heads has had false teachers in it who have never repented. Would Paul fellowship such a one?

Besides, Adair will not condemn error. The following information may be verified by doing an Internet search of Sunset International Bible Studies. Select the “External Studies Overview” from the list of options. It will be first or near the top. In the bar across the top, select “Resources” and under it “Christian Chronicle Interview.” One year Sunset did not participate in the Tulsa Soul-Winning Workshop (a promoter of just about everything liberal), and the *Christian Chronicle* interviewed Truitt Adair about it. That year they had scheduled to speak on Friday evening Max Lucado and from the Christian Church, Bob Russell. Adair commented thus:

We were told by workshop planners that each evening there would be a speaker to represent the “Church of Christ” and one to represent the “Independent Christian Church.” As with any program of this kind, planners endeavor to select speakers and topics that advance the message they are trying to communicate. Though we would have chosen differently, the program and speakers selected by workshop planners seem to be consistent with the purpose and agenda of this year’s workshop as we have understood them in our conversations.

First, one wonders which of these men was supposed to represent the Lord’s church. If the answer is Max Lucado, such is preposterous! Second, Adair could find no fault with the program (which is bizarre in itself)—except he would have chosen different speakers. Third, he says the speakers

were consistent with their agenda. In this he is correct; Tulsa’s “agenda” for years has been *compromise*. Why is Adair not troubled by that? Can sound brethren fellowship him?

The Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ in Florence, Alabama, that Kerry Williams is part of, lists on their Website links to all “Christian” colleges associated (no matter how loosely) with churches of Christ. Why? Most of us would not recommend Abilene, Pepperdine, or Rochester under any circumstances. Perhaps they could explain why they have links to those institutions who have been leaders of apostasy.

Then there is the Edmond Church in Oklahoma. This congregation is associated with Oklahoma Christian University, the *Christian Chronicle*, and the television program, *In Search of the Lord’s Way*. Information regarding the university has been plentiful, and all anyone needs to do is to read the newspaper to know that it should be called the *Liberal Christian Chronicle*. Phil Sanders has written for conservative publications, such as *Think* and *Spiritual Sword*, but now that he is working with *In Search of the Lord’s Way*, how is his name *not* to be associated with the liberal Edmond Church and the *Christian Chronicle*? If someone is not a false teacher, can he fellowship those who are?

World Bible School

Glenn Colley was another speaker at Tahoe. If one goes to the website of the West Huntington (Alabama) Church, they have an entire page that spotlights World Bible School as one of their works. If one then goes to worldbibleschool.net, one finds across the top of the page the fifth heading, “church enrichment.” On the left-hand side, there are three menus: the second heading is “Info Menu.” Click on “Who Are we?” and be prepared to be amazed. The answer is “the Center for Church Resources,” which “operates in association with Abilene Christian University” and is directed by Dr. Ian Fair. Under Web Links are ACU, *Christian Chronicle*, and *Heartlight*. Does anybody think Glenn Colley is supportive of ACU? No, but why have fellowship with World Bible School, who thinks they are great?

Apologetics Press

Glenn Colley, Memphis School of Preaching, and many other brethren endorse Apologetics Press. No one has ever expressed any complaints against the work that Apologetics Press does. They have some talented people who work for them, and the materials they produce are of good quality. But the current head of AP is Dave Miller, whose name has become synonymous with two false doctrines—the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders, which he defended and never has admitted to be false, and the “marital intent” doctrine that he used to defend a colleague who “married” a cousin to get into the United States, after which they separated, Millering declaring they were never in a Matt. 19:6 marriage. Many brethren protested Bert Thompson’s hiring of bro. Miller, but the protests were waved off.

It is true that he issued a “statement” concerning these things in 2005, *but the statement does not include any admission of wrongdoing*. One of the elders who oversees Gospel

Broadcasting Network asked me: “Even if it were true that Dave taught these doctrines, would it be worth splitting the church over?” Of course, I was shocked by such a question. One of the first departures from God’s Word in the second century involved false teaching regarding the eldership. How can one fellowship a brother who teaches that elders can remain or retire according to the results of an approval rating by the congregation? (Another GBN worker wondered in their last bulletin why they do not have their 7,000 monthly contributors yet.)

So now we return to the original question, written in bold on page one. It is a serious question. If anyone holds a different position regarding fellowship than what has been set forth

here or can explain the liberal connections that some have, it would be wonderful to hear it. If ours is wrong, then it needs to be corrected. Anyone who wants to write anonymously is free to do so. Many of us would like to concentrate more on love and unity, but we did not originate these false doctrines—and we are not going to fellowship them. Any legitimate rationale would be helpful. Until something changes, we will maintain our current position, *marking* (rather than *fellowshipping*) false teachers (Rom. 16:17-18).

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(Continued from page Three)

conveniences there must be afforded by the heady atmosphere of the Himalayas!

But Jim is not done with his convenient memory lapses. He asserts concerning Terry Hightower: “In presenting his views he stated that some viewed his teaching as being ‘mental divorce,’ then proceeded to accept that conclusion.” We answered this charge in our exchange with Jim. Conveniently again, Jim fails to provide our answer to this false charge. He is acting on pure supposition in the matter. Terry’s use of the phrase was the equivalent to our frequent responses to the liberals who accuse us of teaching “legalism.” The response is, “If you call that legalism, then so be it!” It is not a tacit admission to being legalists in the common sense of that term any more than Terry’s statement, which we provided *in situ*, was an implicit admission that the view of MDR he affirmed was actually “mental divorce” as depicted by the Southwest church at the time. Jim is being deceitful and disingenuous in holding forth this canard as his best line of defense.

Furthermore, Jim conveniently omits the fact that he participated in the White Oak Church of Christ, Chatanooga, TN, discussion in which brethren from the Crossville church claimed they would cease using the pejorative phrase “mental divorce” to the opposing view. Jim was even present when the statement by Mike Glenn vowed not to make further use of that phrase. Yet Jim offered no word of protest against Mike’s statement, but rather left every impression that he concurred with it. Why then does he continue to use it? He will have to answer that, brethren. I know that he knows better, and he knows it too!

His entire house of cards rests on his false charge and the quibbling his use of it engenders. He prattles on in his alibi about Brown “signing off” on Terry’s alleged “mental divorce” confession. Again, the charge is false, and Jim’s position is morally bankrupt in depicting it in such prejudicial and unjust terms.

It is interesting that Jim points people to his MDR packet, including his copy of the Hightower article and exchange

with him, without noting our responses in *CFTF* to his charges. *Why does he not want people to see the other side of this dispute?* Why does he not want folks to consider his “information” packet without considering the responses to it from us in *CFTF* with which Terry is in full agreement? Why does he not make that material answering his false charges part of his “information” packet? Might it be due to a desire to present only the material that is “convenient” for the occasion? Again, he must answer that!

For certain, however, he does know that he has been answered and answered quite well. In fact, he has been answered so well in our exchanges that he desires not to even attempt to allow his members to be exposed to our answers in person! *A debate on the real issues would address these matters fully and fairly, but Jim will have none of that, especially at Crossville.* Were he to defend his convictions on the subject in debate before the brethren, his errors would be exposed – and he knows it. Ah, yes, the convictions of convenience!

(3) Waldron also appeals to his Sep. 2008 *Bulletin Briefs* article on 1 Corinthians 7:11, which was not only poorly written but terribly flawed. He seems to have tried to impress a querist with his command of the Greek syntax of the text, but only succeeded in showing how little he really knows about it and the Greek terms employed in it. He stated that “Brown published an article in *CFTF* consisting of eight columns by Howard Daniel Denham in which he wrote many words in opposition to what” he “had written.” Yes, indeed, I did write many things refuting his “exposition” of the text among other things. *He has yet to deal with any of it, and we note that he does not post that material on his site so that his readers can see it for themselves, while we have taken the time to post his material in total along with our responses (CFTF, Aug. 2009).* This, by the way, is what honest debate is all about – a laying bare of all the pertinent data, rather than the special pleading that Jim seems to specialize in on MDR these days.

(4) Waldron then presented to his readers the two propositions that he submitted that, as we noted in our earlier ex-

change with him (which he conveniently does not post), do not touch top, side, bottom, or edge of the issues involved. He submitted a proposition that called upon us to deny a statement that is true and with which we agree “as far as it goes,” as we noted to him. The other proposition he submitted for us to affirm would have obligated us to defend his false and foolish depiction of our position. For the sake of comparison, we asked him if he would be willing to affirm in debate with a Baptist debater that the Scriptures teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. He does not tell his readers that he rejected propositions we submitted which clearly deal with the real points of dispute. Again, why? Well, Jim, here is another one, why? Good brethren need to ask themselves, “What is he trying to hide from his readers?”

(5) Instead, he again referenced his ridiculous depiction of the Hightower article by asserting that David, in rejecting Jim’s propositions, repudiated Terry’s position. No, folks, it is rather the case that David rejected Jim’s ridiculous depiction of Terry’s position, a simple truth that Jim Waldron simply cannot handle. Again, the full facts speak for themselves, as inconvenient as they may be for Jim’s revisionism. Terry Hightower is in full agreement with the position we were ready to affirm in debate with Jim Waldron. This fact troubles Jim to no end because it exposes the falsehood he has perpetrated in order to justify in part his crusade against faithful brethren on this subject. In fact, remove the Hightower article completely, and what is Jim left with as a foundation for his case? Absolutely nothing! Jim has to demonize his opponents by foisting upon Terry’s material a meaning that Terry neither affirmed nor intended to affirm. *Jim has read into it what he wanted for whatever purpose at the time.* He is trying to rewrite the history of the matter as he wishes it had happened and not as it did happen. This is reminiscent of the practice of postmodernists who are devoid of substance in both evidence and argument. But, as we have noted elsewhere, to change now would require him to make a number of corrections that would be most embarrassing not only to him, but also to the good brethren at Crossville who supported him in his reprehensible crusade.

By the way, Jim conveniently ignored in his alibi piece the fact that it has been pointed out to him that, given his own definition of the phrase, he himself has affirmed the Scriptural authority of “mental divorce.” *Waldron affirmed in a letter to Terry Hightower that a woman who is being put away under the civil law by an adulterous husband could claim the divorce as her own putting away of the adulterer simply by telling him that such is the case when she signs the divorce papers.*

By the way, I have yet to find any law that requires such signing of the divorce papers envisioned by Jim for any state in the union or, for that matter, any country on earth. This is a total fabrication of Jim’s mind to try to deal with a situation that he knows he cannot otherwise justify under his current dogma. But rather than admitting the falsification of his error, he has concocted a theory that he thinks gets around its self-created dilemmas.

But let us grant his fabrication for argument’s sake! Where then, folks, is the specific “divorce for fornication” in the foregoing situation? It is certainly not in the case as filed by the adulterous husband – he is the fornicator who is putting away, as per civil law, the innocent party. Neither is it in the proceedings of the court based on that suit, nor is it in the decree as gaveled by the judge. It is also not in the written document that registers the divorce in the state records on behalf of the civil authorities. In fact, it does not exist in any tangible or material form as so ruled, recognized, and granted by the civil state! *Given Jim’s own view, it would exist only in the mind of the woman.* According to Jim’s own definitions and descriptions of things, that would have to be the case. It would not even necessarily exist in the mind of the guilty adulterer, if the man rejected her contention, according to Jim. *By Jim Waldron’s own criteria, the innocent wife divorced by her fornicating husband would have the right to “claim” a “mental divorce.”* The only requirement, according to him, is to sign the (non-existent) paperwork, which would (non-existent) reflect the fact that the husband actually is the one who obtained the divorce instead of her. Let him deal with it. I suspect that the mountains of the Himalayas will erode away to beach sand before he really addresses this glaring self-contradiction and brazen hypocrisy on his part!

Furthermore, that our brother does not address the numerous contradictions existing between his view and those of Eddie Whitten and Mike Glenn in the material that comprises his self-prized “information” packet offered as support for his crusade and as a “fig leaf” for his alibi should also be noted. Evidently, Jim will not allow contradiction, absurdity, and logical fallacies to get in the way of the story he wishes to tell. Such inconveniences must simply be ignored by him and his cronies, it seems.

(6) Jim also asserted relative to the propositions that he submitted to Brown and me:

“The two propositions above represent the very essence of the differences between those who hold to the very words of Christ (e.g. Matt. 5:32; 19:6-12; Mark 10:5-12; Luke 16:18; cf. I Cor. 7:11; Rom. 7:1-3) and those who believe that one may mentally claim divorce because of adultery which takes place ex-post-facto to the actual divorce.”

Let brother Waldron, however, now apply this statement to the aforementioned scenario that he claims is Scriptural! Let him apply his reasoning [?] to the case of a woman who is put away by her husband on grounds other than fornication while he himself has been guilty of adultery. Let us watch the mental gymnastics and observe the verbal legerdemain to which he will resort in order to fit that scenario into the texts as he has interpreted them. Let him demonstrate that a woman has the Scriptural right to put away her adulterous husband by the same act in which he put her away in the sight of the civil authorities and by the very decree of the judge of the case! Let him even show that the passages involved imply the right of an innocent woman to put away her guilty husband at all. When he begins to engage in his exercise he will meet

himself coming back, which is why he will not do it in public debate with propositions that truly reflect what we believe and teach, rather than his pathetic and puerile performance thus far. What he allows for himself he disallows for others in the matter. Yet his view, we are told, does not violate “the very words of Christ.” Again, let him find “in the very words of Christ” sanction for his position relative to the *put away* woman of the preceding scenario!

(7) Waldron also claimed in his alibi piece:

Proposition one I have been affirming both publicly and privately in many countries and cultures across the world in debate, preaching and writing since 1977, yea many years before that date. Here I stand. As I noted Brown paid lip service {sic} Proposition one, but when I admonished him to sign it and let us shake hands of {sic} the point he did not.

Fascinatingly, Waldron again omits certain facts of the case. What David and I both affirmed is that we agreed with the proposition “as far as it goes.” *The problem is that it did not go far enough.* As we noted, we were in “basic agreement,” but that does not mean that we did not consider the proposition flawed and fallacious, especially since the purpose of the debate was to address the *points of difference* in our views instead of points of agreement. *The proposition, as written, flatly contradicts the scenario above that Waldron himself put forth in his exchange with Terry Hightower.* That Jim has repeatedly failed even to see this is amazing! We do not make a habit of shaking hands on propositions that are flawed due to some imprecise wording or incomplete structure, which attends this proposition as it relates to the issues between us.

The central issue is whether civil law trumps God’s law in MDR. Waldron implicitly affirms – but evidently will not do so in public debate – that it does. *We deny that it does and are willing to defend that conclusion.* A second crucial issue (which, in fact, is ancillary to the former and which attends the texts of Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 in particular and, consequently, the subject of MDR in general) is the application of the dependent or subordinate adverbial clause to the second independent clause of the texts in Matthew. Waldron wants to ignore the force of that construction. Again, it is yet another inconvenience for his view.

We answered Jim’s sophomoric ploy in part as follows in our letter of April 9, 2009, which explanation is conveniently lacking from Waldron’s alibi piece:

“Your proposition makes no provision for the exceptive clause, much less as it pertains to civil law, other than in your mind. Further, you have not even specified what you mean in your proposition by such terms as unscriptural, divorce, any succeeding marriage, invalid, and especially the term adulterous. The SW brethren, for example, have frequently used the term adultery, as well as its cognates, to refer to something other than a sexual sin. Also, if a couple divorced for an unscriptural reason, could they remarry one another? That would be, given what you have said elsewhere, a “succeeding marriage.” Brother Waldron, we do not intend to enter a debate wherein the opposing party reserves the right to define his proposition

only as it strikes him for the transient occasion. Surely, like us, you are not desirous of a battle over semantics, which is why propositions must be precisely stated and defined up front. The only statement we would sign then relative to your proposition is that statement which we have already made, and that is assuming *only* a strict definition of terms – “the specific parameters” to which we referred and which you have ignored. We suspect that such really does not suit what you wanted out of your ploy. Would you agree to sign approvingly the proposition we submitted for ourselves to affirm? If not, why not? If you agree with it, then why not sign it? If you do not agree with it, then why not deny it? “What’s sauce for the goose is, at the very least, salad dressing for the gander.” There is one large difference, however. Our propositions actually *do address* the essential differences between us. We suspect that the real reason why you will not sign them is because they are so precisely stated that those who hear the debate will be thereby clearly able to discern the truth of our position. If you are unwilling to affirm our wording of your position, then submit a proposition that genuinely reflects your view (as laid out in your own materials and those which you sent to Daniel) on the role of civil law relative to MDR. You know quite well that Daniel’s article, which offered the challenge to debate, dealt with *that* specific point on MDR.”

We invited Jim to shake hands with us on our propositions, but, alas, that too proved to be an inconvenience he must ignore – both in the doing and the reporting! Below are the propositions that we submitted to him. He can either shake hands or sign them. Or, will he say but do not and thus add one more act of hypocrisy to his growing list?

1. Resolved: *The Scriptures teach that a Matthew 19:6 God-joined marriage remains intact in the sight of God when a civil divorce has been granted on grounds other than fornication.*

Affirm: David P. Brown

Deny: _____

2. Resolved: *The Scriptures teach that every divorce granted by civil courts is also granted and honored in the sight of God.*

Affirm: _____

Deny: David P. Brown

Now, if bro. Jim agrees with proposition one, then let him shake hands with us on it. If not, then he knows what to do. If he rejects the second, then let him say so, and we will shake hands on his agreement with us that it is a false doctrine.

(8) Waldron then adds a lie to his tale of woe. He wrote once more regarding the earlier propositions he submitted: “Both Denham and Brown countered these propositions claiming that they both believed number one...” As I have noted, we replied to Jim that we were in “basic agreement” with number one. We also pointed out in the very letter that Jim *refused to read* that the term “basic” is central to our refusal to sign it or shake hands on it. Since he refused to read the letter, it is not our fault that he has decided to act

dishonestly. *We never claimed to be in full agreement with whatever assertions, ideas, or notions that he wished to attach to his affirmative proposition. Neither did we claim that the proposition properly reflected the full force of the exceptive clause in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 upon which the dispute actually centers.*

It is not an either/or situation as is supposed by Waldron in the case. His proposition is not precisely stated relative to the central issue of the exceptive clause. His affirmative proposition, in not taking the proper force of the exceptive clause into consideration, is therefore incomplete and flawed. Jim's assertion thus commits the either/or fallacy, which is why we said that we are in "basic agreement" with the proposition. *It simply does not go far enough!*

But Jim apparently prefers to ignore such qualifying terms as adjectives and adverbs, when they get in the way of melodramatics. They are inconvenient here, but are nonetheless crucial to the issues. Whether it be our use of the adjective *basic* or the Lord's use of the adverbial clause *except it be for fornication*, these forms create problems for both Jim's false doctrine and his alibi. But let us not let facts get in the way of our brother's story!

(9) So then Jim, like "Johnny One-note," trumpets that the second proposition he submitted "sums up the very doctrine that Hightower affirmed and Brown approved and published in September 2002, and that for the whole brotherhood to read and accept." Yet one more knot in his convoluted tale! It is clear that Jim does not care about the facts of the case. It is equally clear that he does not mind misrepresenting his opponents in this matter. As we have noted, he must misrepresent or else be found out, and he refuses to allow the latter. *Again, let him apply his definitions and depictions to his own aforementioned scenario concerning the put away woman with the adulterous husband.* His hypocrisy in this is simply stunning, brethren.

(10) Finally, Waldron classified his two propositions as "very fundamental" to the issues that divide us. This is not only laughable, it evidences how really out of touch he is with the subject, and how disingenuous he has become in pushing his wicked crusade in dividing churches, in particular throughout eastern Tennessee and northern Georgia.

He also asserted that our propositions "would amount to a striving about words to no profit." The brethren (including Waldron) who attended the White Oak discussion dealt with these same basic propositions in part or in whole. Were they "striving about words to no profit"? Is that how Jim really views the issue of the role of civil government in MDR? Is that what he thinks about the brethren who expressed concern over these very matters in the face of the absurdities of his own position taken at White Oak?

Does Jim really believe that it makes no difference at all as to what the whole truth is about the proper application of the exceptive clause in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9? Is he so jaded in his thinking as to believe that God is obligated

to recognize and thus honor everything that civil law calls a marriage or a divorce? Is debating such matters but a "striving about words to no profit"? I am persuaded that Jim Waldron has told us far more than he intended as to just how bankrupt his view really is relative to MDR! His alibi has instead become a *mea culpa*.

His article ends, after noting his absurd recommendation for one four-night debate with half in Texas and the other half in Tennessee, his letter of Feb. 23, 2009 (to which our letter of April 9, 2009 was the response), and his letter of May 25 (which occasioned the June 5 letter that he refused). That he chose not to see the evidence in particular in the latter only confirms the fact that Jim has made up his mind that he will split the church over his error rather than even consider the possibility that he is in error, much less defend his views in open and fair debate. But why did he not publish our letters alongside of his alibi? If he is genuinely concerned about getting all of the evidence before his readers, then one would think that he would have done so. Even if he himself has chosen to refuse to consider the evidence offered by his opposition, why would he refrain from providing access to it to his readers if he it were his earnest desire to address the questions between us before his readers? But, wait, how can he do that when he has refused to consider all of the evidence himself?

The inconvenient and incontrovertible fact then must be that his refusal to read our June letter *shows* that his website document is *not really about dealing openly and honestly with the questions between us, but is really about providing cover for his blunders.* It certainly is not to get the whole truth of the matter out before his readers.

It ought to strike the mind of any honest observer that while we have been completely aboveboard in laying out our case concerning Jim's false doctrine before our readers in *CFTF*, our brother has chosen both to ignore critical evidence and even suppress it from his own readers. This is indeed the sad part of his sad tale – that he finds it necessary to practice the ancient art of coverup. But, like the fig leaf aprons of Adam and Eve, his alibi does not and cannot cover nearly enough. Perhaps, he will wish to add more to his tale when brethren ask him about our response to his alibi, but he has already said enough to show that he is certainly straining greatly to justify his actions, absurdities, and self-contradictions. It would be much easier (not to mention, proper) if he would just repent!

—607 72nd St.
Newport News, VA 23605

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*The first law that ever God gave to man, was a law of obedience; it was a commandment pure and simple...From obedience and submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion and self-will. —Montaigne*

# 2010 SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST *CFTF* LECTURES

## “Profiles In Apostasy #1”

FEBRUARY 28—March 3, 2010

David P. Brown, Director

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

9:30 AM **David P. Brown:** *The Worldly Church* by Alan, Hughes & Weed

10:30 AM **Terry Hightower:** *Facing Our Failure: The Fellowship Dilemma in Conservative Churches of Christ* by Todd Deaver

**NOON MEAL PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION**

5:00 PM **Lester Kamp:** *Down, But Not Out* by Al Maxey

6:00 PM **Lynn Parker:** *Free In Christ* by Cecil Hook

### MONDAY, MARCH 1

9:00 AM **Skip Francis:** *The Core Gospel* by Bill Love

10:00 AM **Daniel Coe:** *Don't Shoot We May Be On The Same Side!* by Marvin Phillips

11:00 AM **Bruce Stulting:** *Shall We Splinter?* by James D. Bales

\*10:00 AM **Sonya West:** *Women in the Church: Reclaiming the Ideal* by Carroll D. Osburn #1

**LUNCH BREAK**

1:30 PM **Daniel Denham:** *Errors on MDR* by Several Authors

2:30 PM **Extended OPEN FORUM—BARRY GRIDER'S ARTICLE IN THE 12/1/09 THE FOREST HILL NEWS**

**DINNER BREAK**

6:30 PM **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**

7:00 PM **Ken Chumbley:** *Our Heritage of Unity and Fellowship* by W. Carl Ketcherside & Leroy Garrett

8:00 PM **Paul Vaughn:** *The Stone-Campbell Movement: The Story of the American Restoration Movement* by Leroy Garrett

### TUESDAY, MARCH 2

9:00 AM **John West:** *Rebaptism* by Jimmy Allen

10:00 AM **Danny Douglas:** *In Search of Peace, Unity and Truth* by Olan Hicks

\*10:00 AM **Sonya West:** *Women in the Church: Reclaiming the Ideal* by Carroll D. Osburn #2

11:00 AM **Gene Hill:** *They Smell Like Sheep: Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century* by Lynn Anderson

**LUNCH BREAK**

1:30 PM **Doug Post:** *The Cruciform Church* by C. Leonard Allen

2:30 PM **Wayne Blake:** *Leadership in the Kingdom: Sensitive Strategies for the Church in a Changing World* by Ian Fair

3:30 PM **OPEN FORUM**

**DINNER BREAK**

6:30 PM **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**

7:00 PM **Michael Hatcher:** *Sermon on R & R of Elders Delivered at the Brown Trail Church of Christ* by Dave Miller

8:00 PM **Johnny Oxendine:** *Come to the Table: Revisioning the Lord's Supper* by John Mark Hicks

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

9:00 AM **John Rose:** *What Would Jesus Do Today* by Mike Cope & Rubel Shelly

10:00 AM **Jimmy Gribble:** *Daring to Dance With God: Stepping into God's Embrace* by Jeff Walling

11:00 AM **Lee Moses:** *Righteousness Inside Out* by Mike Cope

**LUNCH BREAK**

1:30 PM **Gary Summers:** *The Fire That Consumes* by Edward Fudge

2:30 PM **Jess Whitlock:** *The Peaceable Kingdom* by Carroll D. Osburn

3:30 PM **OPEN FORUM**

**DINNER BREAK**

6:30 PM **CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**

7:00 PM **Dub McClish:** *The Way of Salvation and The Gist of Romans* – KC Moser

8:00 PM **Gary Summers:** *Who Is My Brother?* by F. LaGard Smith

**Lunch Provided by the Spring Congregation • Hardback Book of Lectures Available**

**R. V. Hook-Ups • Video and Audio Recordings • Approved Displays**

**Elders: Kenneth D. Cohn, Buddy Roth and Jack Stephens**

**Spring Church Secretary: Sonya West**

**SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST, PO BOX 39-1327 SPRING CYPRESS ROAD, SPRING, TX 77383**

Church Office Phone: (281) 353-2707

\*LADIES ONLY

E-mail:sonyacwest@gmail.com

## 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**—Ramsey Church of Christ, meeting at the Rainbow Centre, Ramsey, Huntingdon. Sun. 10, 11 a.m.; Wed. (Phone for venue and time); www.Ramsey-church-of-christ.org. Contact Keith Sisman, 001.44.1487.710552; fax:1487.813264 or Keith Sisman.net. Research Website of 1,000 years of the British Church of Christ; www.Traces-of-the-kingdom.org and www.Myth-and-Mystery.org.

### -Florida-

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

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

### -North Carolina-

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

### -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.

**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. Goines; DJGoines@Valornet.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**—255 Saengerhalle Rd. Sun: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Lynn Parker, evangelist. (830) 625-9367. www.nbchurchofchrist.com.

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

### -Wyoming-

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