

Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

WISHES EVERYONE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO RESPECT FOR TRUTH?

Gary W. Summers

Which of the following represents the idea of Proverbs 23:23?

- a. "Buy the truth unless it's too costly."
- b. "Buy the truth unless several good friends advise against it."
- c. "Buy the truth and do not sell it."
- d. "Buy the truth but do resell it."
- e. "Buy the truth, but be flexible."

If you answered it shows that you know your Bible, but you are out of touch with the majority of brethren. Oh, to be sure, there are many of us who stand where we have always stood, but others are "strolling" away from it; and others have "twisted" their positions. Some are "shuffling" along behind others, who may be out to "hustle" them. At any rate, some are "stomping" all over the Scriptures.

The Scriptures teach that we must abide in the Truth and not compromise (Prov. 23:23). They teach that we should speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11). They teach that we should present the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). The preacher must take heed to himself and his doctrine—so that he can save himself and others (1 Tim. 4:12).

Every Biblical doctrine must be upheld; every doctrinal error must be opposed. How do we know this statement is in harmony with the Scriptures? First of all, Jesus told the multitudes: "**Beware of false prophets who come to you in**

sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" (Matt. 7:15). This verse teaches (either directly or by implication) that: 1) Some men preach the Truth; 2) Some men preach error; 3) False teachers have the appearance of being pious; 4) But actually they have ulterior motives.

In some cases these men want their own following (Acts 20:30; 3 John 9); in other cases, they desire money (Rom. 17:17-18; 2 Peter 2:3). The motive of the false teacher, regardless of what it is, is wrong. And those who support him are wrong. Warnings are supplied to us from Matthew 7:15 all the way to the book of Revelation. Although the Ephesians were told to restore their first love (which was now lacking), they were still doing many things right, one of which was testing apostles and exposing them as liars (Rev. 2:2). They also hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which Jesus said He also hated (vs. 6).

What Is a False Teacher?

Faithful gospel preachers used to know the answer to this question but in recent times have suddenly become reluctant to recognize one when they see it. Before considering who is a false teacher, perhaps it would be a good idea to define who is NOT one.

- 1. A false teacher is not one who merely makes a misstatement. Preachers and teachers, despite their best efforts, sometimes speak the opposite of what they intended to con-

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Contending FOR THE Faith™

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

Editorial...

God's Truth

As 2008 rushes to its demise we are caused to reflect upon how much speaking and writing has been done concerning division, factions, fractures, splits, fragmentation, broken fellowship, the lack of brotherly love, the absence of longsuffering, the prevalence of church politics, the evils of extremism, how radical some brethren are, how we need more balance and so on. Speaking in broad sweeping generalities all brethren repudiate division, uphold unity, urge brethren to be in fellowship with one another and grieve over the problems that divide us. *"Oh, why can't we all just get along"* is the lament of many brethren.

However, in noticing the proposed remedies to these problems, the Divine cure is conspicuously absent. Yes, in order to benefit from God's Word one must possess a good and honest heart (Luke 8:15), a strong desire for God's Word (Matt. 5:6), and the willingness to obey God in all things (Ecc. 12:13; John 7:17). But, it is *only* God's absolute, objective, inerrant, complete, final and humanly attainable Truth that is able to solve the church's problems. *Have we been working hard to have unity regardless of what God's Truth says on the issues that divide us?*

From what we have witnessed and from what the Bible records, all too often God's people have sought and are seeking unity outside of the authority of God's Truth. Jesus said that it is spiritual Truth that makes us free from spiritual and moral error (John 8:31, 32, 17:17; Col 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:7). The apostle John wrote, **"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth"** (2 John 4; Also see verses 1, 2 and 3 John 4, 5). The apostle earlier wrote, **"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him"** (1 John 2: 29; See Psa. 119:172; John 12:48). To the Pharisees Jesus said, **"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not"** (John 8:45). Then he said to them, **"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God"** (vs. 47).

All other things being Scripturally equal, whether MDR, R&R of Elders, fellowship, the worship, organization and work of the church, moral conduct, one's attitude toward God and Godly things, corrective church discipline, etc., *division exists in the church because people are not willing to follow God's Truth.*

Too many brethren are seeking unity and fellowship while at the same time attempting to justify themselves and/or others as they live contrary to the Truth. *The proliferation of error in the church and the division therefrom is directly proportionate to the lack of love and respect for and submission to God's Truth.* Hence, like it or not, until the church is willing to return to God's Truth for the solutions to its problems we can expect more division and not less.

—David P. Brown, Editor

2009 SPRING CFTF LECTURES

“Religion & Morality—FROM GOD OR MAN”

FEBRUARY 22—25, 2009

David P. Brown, Director

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

- 9:30 AM Steve Yeatts: *Higher Secular Education—What Should You Expect Your Child to Be Taught?*
10:30 AM Darrell Broking: *Divorce & Remarriage—Did God Say What He Meant And Mean What He Said?*
NOON MEAL PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION
5:00 PM Lester Kamp: *The Social Gospel—Following Christ for the Loaves and Fishes*
6:00 PM Terry Hightower: *Atheism—True or False?*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

- 9:00 AM Jack Stephens: *Marriage—Who Originated It and Governs It?*
10:00 AM Michael Hatcher: *The Resurrection of Christ—Is Jesus Christ Alive Today?*
*10:00 AM Sonya West: *The Feminist Movement—“You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” But Was it Up or Down? (I)*
11:00 AM Wayne Blake: *Humanism and Pluralism—Is Man the Measure of All Things?*
LUNCH BREAK
1:30 PM Skip Francis: *Darwinian Evolution—Is Man Only an Improved Ape?*
2:30 PM Paul Vaughn: *The Bible—Inspired by Man or God?*
3:30 PM Dub Mowery: *Abortion—Murdering a Baby or Removing a Blob of Protoplasm?*

DINNER BREAK

- 6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00 PM Daniel Denham: *The Nature of Truth—What is The Truth About Truth?*
8:00 PM Jesse Whitlock: *Homosexuality—Didn’t He Make them Male and Female?*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

- 9:00 AM Ken Cohn: *Theistic Evolution—Is Evolution the Mechanism God Used to Create the Universe?*
10:00 AM Ken Chumbley: *Agnosticism—Can We Know Anything?*
*10:00 AM Sonya West: *The Feminist Movement—“You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” But Was it Up or Down? (II)*
11:00 AM Gene Litke: *The Age of the Earth—Young or Old?*

LUNCH BREAK

- 1:30 PM Johnny Oxendine: *The Sexual Revolution—Are We Dressing Fornication and Adultery in Formal Wear?*
2:30 PM Gene Hill: *Preacher Training Schools—Are They Living Up To the Reason They Were Begun?*
3:30 PM David P. Brown: *Atheist Ethics—Are Ethics Without God Possible?*

DINNER BREAK

- 6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00 PM Danny Douglas: *The Humanity of Christ—Is He Truly Human?*
8:00 PM Lynn Parker: *Modesty—What is the Bible’s Definition?*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

- 9:00 AM Buddy Roth: *Medical Doctors—Killers or Healers?*
10:00 AM Lee Moses: *The Historical Jesus—Is Christ a Mythological Being?*
11:00 AM Gary Summers: *Post Modernism—Is My God Not Your God and My Truth Not Your Truth?*

LUNCH BREAK

- 1:30 PM Tim Cozad: *The Miracles of Christ—Did Jesus Work Miracles? If He Did, Why Did He?*
2:30 PM Bruce Stulting: *Deity of Christ—Is Jesus of Nazareth God?*
3:30 PM John West: *“Good Ole Noah Built an Ark Like God Told Him To”—Are You Kidding Me?*

DINNER BREAK

- 6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00 PM David B. Watson: *Christians Must Be Militant—Does Jesus Demand that the Church Confront Error?*
8:00 PM Dub McClish: *Higher “Christian” Education—What Should You Expect Your Child to Be Taught?*

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vey. Most people understand that such is the case and are generous in correcting it in their minds.

2. A false teacher is not one who teaches error out of ignorance but, when corrected, publicly acknowledges the Truth, as Apollos did (Acts 18:24-28). To the contrary, a false teacher never admits that he is wrong (except, perhaps, privately to a few) or makes any corrections. In fact, he frequently refuses to even discuss his teaching with brethren.

3. A false teacher is not someone who uses a different strategy or technique than others (unless his methodology violates Scriptural principles). Generally, new ideas have been helpful.

4. Because two brothers have a personality conflict does not mean that one of them is a false teacher. God gave us all different characters and temperaments. Just because two brothers would handle certain situations differently does not prove that one is right and the other one needs to be marked.

5. One should not be labeled a false teacher because he has taken a position on something of no consequence, such as an interpretation on some aspect of the book of Revelation (provided that it does not contradict other clear teachings in the New Testament). Brethren might have a vigorous discussion over the manner of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit or the correct view of “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” but unless a position implies or states a false teaching, we remain united.

These are all things that a false teacher is *not*. So what is one? A false teacher holds to and promotes one or more doctrines that *clearly* violate the teaching of the New Testament, and which, if believed and practiced, would cause members of the body of Christ to be lost. One cannot believe error and practice error and be saved, according to what 1 Timothy 4:16 implies.

Examples of False Doctrines

1. When preachers or elders advocate that someone can divorce a mate for a reason other than adultery and marry another with God’s blessing, they are false teachers. John the Baptizer was imprisoned and murdered because he told Herod that it was not lawful to have his brother Philip’s wife (Mark 6:17-18). Yet some are arguing that, if this action occurred before one became a Christian, it is all right. Others say even the Christian can divorce and marry again for wrong reasons and be forgiven. Those who believe and practice this error are living in adultery and will be lost.

2. When preachers or elders allow instrumental music to be used in worship, they are no longer abiding by the principle of authority, as taught in Colossians 3:17. To allow Christians to use instrumental music in worship is to set forth a rationale that is false, and their worship is vain.

3. Anyone who teaches premillennialism is a false teacher because this doctrine denies plain Scriptures, such as John 6:15 and 18:36. It also elevates the physical above the spiritual. When adherents say that Christ will reign in Jerusalem and that sacrifices will be offered as they were in the Old Testament, they denigrate the Lord’s sacrifice, which was

once for all (Heb. 10:12).

4. Anyone who teaches that the local church has the right to evaluate its elders and that they will remain or resign based the results of the polling is a false teacher. The fact that the elders voluntarily initiate or submit to such a practice is irrelevant. It lacks Scriptural authority in the first place.

5. Anyone who assures someone that he was not **actually** married if he did not **intend** to be married when he took his wedding vows is a false teacher.

6. Any organization that teaches on its website the position that, “because the roles of men and women in the church are determined by creation and the fall, they have been the same in all dispensations: Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian (1 Cor. 14:34; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14)” [the first half of the statement does not prove its conclusion], and asserts that the “Old Testament teaching on women’s role illustrates New Testament teaching” is guilty of error. When they teach that women can intentionally teach men privately (not incidentally) and base it on Acts 18:24-26 and 2 Kings 22:12-20, they are false teachers. When one says that a woman can teach ten men or more in a private setting as long as she has no intention of being in charge, he is a false teacher.

7. The one who teaches that the Holy Spirit *directly* supplies wisdom to Christians and strength to overcome sin is a false teacher. God accomplishes these things through His Word and through providence—not directly.

These are just a few of the false doctrines that brethren are teaching. Others deny that hell is eternal (if it exists at all), that baptism can be valid even if it was *not* for the forgiveness of sins, that the church is just a denomination, et al. But what is currently disturbing is the movement away from observing what the Bible teaches on fellowship.

Fellowship

Some brethren would never teach these false doctrines. If anyone asked them, they would repudiate every one of these—but the most ironic and incongruent thing in the world has occurred—they did not teach these false doctrines, but they are fellowshiping those who teach them. Many of us are trying to understand why. No, it is not a matter of not knowing. Most of the time brethren do know, but they are fellowshiping false teachers anyway. Can anyone explain this phenomenon?

The Bible teaches certain things about fellowship that cannot be ignored. And it was not all that long ago that most brethren agreed. One prominent brother wrote, concerning the elder re-evaluation/reaffirmation doctrine, that he stood “amazed at our brethren seeking to tamper with God’s crystal clear pattern. The eldership is clear in Holy Writ. They are seeking to muddy the clear water of such. I view such with great alarm.” This brother was alarmed in 1990, but he appeared on the same lectureship with Dave Miller (who has never said the re-evaluation process used by the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Hurst, TX, is wrong) as recently as October 19-23, 2008. To many of us, this situation is amazingly amazing. One of the passages most frequently used

by brethren like him over the years has been 2 John 9-11. Has someone somehow removed this text? It states:

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.

Faithful brethren once cited this passage and would refuse to fellowship a false teacher. Now they are appearing on lectureships with them. Some have been appearing with those who teach error on marriage and divorce. Another man who once taught that premillennialism and instrumental music were not issues of fellowship is on that same, aforementioned lectureship. He also was scheduled to appear with Mac Deaver (error #7 above) last year in another Tennessee location. Many are fellowshiping those associated with error #6 described above instead of urging them to repent of the false doctrine they teach.

It cannot be that all of these brethren have forgotten the importance of doctrine. Do they have their own agenda, perhaps—one that does not coincide with the Scriptures? Is it possible that some are operating under the “He Ain’t Guilty; He’s My Friend” philosophy? On March 6, 1994, this writer published an article which brought out this principle. A denominational columnist was defending one of “his best and oldest friends” who was a homosexual Lutheran “clergyman,” who had contracted AIDS. His main justification for enlisting sympathy for the man was that he was his friend. This writer’s response was:

Surely, loyalty is admirable; we need more of it. But in this case it is misplaced. “My friend, right or wrong” is no better philosophy than, “My country, right or wrong.”

Fortunately for David, Jonathan’s philosophy was not, “My Father, right or wrong.” Sadly, even some Christians have defended members of their own families who were committing sin rather than adhere to the Word of God. Jesus says that God comes first (Luke 14:26-27). Moses authorized the killing of “every man his brother” who refused to repent (Ex. 32:25-28). It did not matter whether they were a family or a friend; they had transgressed the will of God.

So why are so many brethren fellowshiping brothers who have taught error instead of holding them accountable? One cannot seem to look at a program or an activity any more without seeing a false teacher or two on the list of speakers. Has friendship taken the place of Scriptural principles? What would Paul have thought if Titus gave the right hand of fellowship to Hymenaeus and Philetus by inviting them to speak throughout the churches of Crete? And if he had protested that they were false teachers, how would he have responded if Titus replied, “Oh, we don’t plan to let them speak on the resurrection”? Can brethren actually be this blind?

Recommendation

The only proper thing to do is to act in harmony with Biblical principles. Any brother who persists in a false doctrine should not be asked to speak, conduct a gospel

meeting, hold a workshop, or speak in any public forum where Christians will be meeting. For his own spiritual well-being, he must not be fellowshiped because that only convinces him he is not guilty at all or that he is not guilty of anything very serious. If faithful brethren do not confront the one teaching error, he will be lost, as will those he teaches. Will God be pleased with such actions on our part, if we do not uphold His standards?

What happens when error is ignored? The same thing will happen in the brotherhood that occurs in a single congregation if sin goes unchecked. An elder’s daughter is going to drinking parties, to dances, and even to a spring break bash, where things get out of hand. But nobody says anything because she is the elder’s daughter. A deacon’s son punches other kids his age just for fun. Someone would like to say something, but nobody would say anything about the elder’s daughter; so how can anyone criticize the deacon’s son?

One member is a salesman, and he drinks with clients (it’s good for business, right?). Others in the congregation are encouraged to follow his example. A few like to play the lottery, which some are not interested in, but the idea of riverboat gambling appeals to them. Examples could be multiplied, but the point is simply this: *A little leaven leavens the whole lump.* When no one deals with a sinful situation, it just encourages others to violate God’s laws (1 Cor. 5:6).

The Bible teaches that we reap what we sow. Already, a number of false doctrines are being allowed because of who teaches them. When one person receives a pass, and the next guy comes along with a false teaching, he will not brook any criticism, either. “Hey, you let Dave Miller get away with his error; why are you picking on me? Mine’s not any worse than his.”

But then worse things will come along and, unfortunately, we have already conditioned people to ignore these little “quibbles” so they will insist that nothing be said on future issues, either. In ten or twenty years, few people will be taking a stand on anything, and they will be branded as radicals. Is inviting error into the church and fellowshiping those who teach it going to be worth the future cost? Is it not still the case that we all reap what we sow?

The Truth has not changed. The Word of God still says what it said four years ago, eighteen years ago, as well as in the first century. Unity will never be achieved by a lack of communication and an unwillingness to follow Biblical doctrine wherever it leads. Friends cannot save us, but they can be a hindrance, if allowed to be. Only Jesus possesses salvation and can save us—not friends. The church has the responsibility to be subject unto Him (Eph. 5:23). Are we going to try to call Him Lord but then not obey Him (Luke 6:46)?

**—5410 Lake Howell Road
Winter Park, FL 32792**

*“You can’t fool all the people all the time,
but it isn’t necessary. A majority will do.”*

ROMAN CATHOLIC INFLUENCE IN TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Dennis Johnson

The Roman Catholic Church has been a major director in Modern Textual Criticism prior to and since Westcott and Hort. Roman Catholic scholars espoused the major points of Modern Textual Criticism long before Westcott and Hort popularized the Lucian Recension theory, the genealogical method and major text types.

Bruce Metzger, the leading Modern Textual Critic for the past 50 years, notes that a Roman Catholic scholar and professor at the University of Freiburg in Breisgau, Johann Leonhard Hug (1765-1846), originated the Lucian Recension theory.¹ Hug based his entire theory on the editions of the Old Testament Scriptures edited in three geographical areas: Palestine, Egypt and Syria. Hug noted that the Old Testament was translated into the Greek language (called the *Septuagint*) about the middle of the third century BC. About 600 years later, there were three revisions (or editions) of the original Septuagint produced in the third century AD in three geographically located areas: 1) Palestine (by Origen), 2) Egypt (by Hesychius), and 3) Syria (by Lucian, a presbyter of Antioch). Hug then attempted to impose the history of the Old Testament *Septuagint* recensions on the copies of the New Testament. He imagined that, since there were three recensions of the Old Testament, there were also three corresponding editions or recensions made of the New Testament. Hug further imagined that in Syria, Lucian's edition of the New Testament manuscripts was a newly constructed text (later called the *Textus Receptus*) that Syria and then the entire world received. Johann Hug's theory was totally rejected² until the late 19th century when Westcott and Hort embraced it.

Hug's Roman Catholic student, Johannes Martin Augustinus Scholz (1794-1852), was the first to emphasize the importance of ascertaining the geographical source represented by several manuscripts. He traveled extensively to find Greek manuscripts and added a staggering 616 to the list.³ Why would the Roman Catholic Church scholars have such a singular zeal to find more and more Greek New Testament manuscripts? Did they intend to produce more faith in every individual word of the scriptures in the members of the Roman Catholic Church, or possibly the Protestant scholars? One wonders if their intent was to build faith in each word of the Greek New Testament or to destroy it!

Contrary to the earlier Protestant textual critics, Westcott and Hort praised the doctrines and work of the Roman Church and accepted Hug's Lucian recension theory.⁴ Westcott and Hort were used to convince the educated Protestant world that Hug's theory was correct.

Considering the Roman Catholic Church's attitude toward the Scriptures and their members reading the Scriptures, they have shown an uncanny interest in the Greek New

Testament for a full 400 years. Prior to the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563) they produced four bilingual (Greek and Latin) New Testaments.⁵ They published a new *Latin Vulgate* near the beginning of the 17th century.⁶ In 1920 Roman Catholic scholarship produced yet another edition of the Greek New Testament which tends toward the Koine.⁷ Roman Catholic Scholars postulated the degeneration of the New Testament copies into what is now called the Western text. A Roman Catholic scholar, Jose Maria Bover, SJ, produced a Greek bilingual edition with an eclectic text, departing frequently from the Alexandrian type of text and approaching the Western or Caesarean type.⁸ Nevertheless, though at least some of their scholars tend toward the *Textus Receptus*, their basic principles have joined with the United Bible Societies to produce an almost purely Alexandrian type text.

The UBS Greek text was distributed by the United Bible Societies in conjunction with the corresponding offices of the Roman Catholic Church. Previously, Bible Societies were under official RCC proscription (condemnation).⁹ The guiding principles for translating the Scriptures into national languages followed the "Guiding Principles" formulated by the Vatican and the United Bible Societies in 1968 and reaffirmed in 1987.¹⁰ The committee was further enlarged in 1966 by the addition of a RCC scholar, Carlo M. Martini who worked with Kurt Aland, Metzger and others on the International Committee in preparation for five Bible Societies to produce a Greek Bible to be used for translators.¹¹ At that time Martini was rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute and later archbishop of Milan and cardinal.¹² The Roman Catholic Church continues to be a primary force behind the UBS text of the Greek New Testament.¹³

Kurt Aland, the leading textual critic after Metzger, shows his partiality toward the Roman Catholic Church in considering all ancient popular editions undeserving of consideration except for those produced by three Roman Catholic scholars, viz. Vogels (1920), Merk, and Bover.¹⁴ Aland rejected all former editions of the Greek NT except for Roman Catholic Church editions as unworthy of consideration.¹⁵ It is noteworthy that the same three Roman Catholic Church editions were all based in von Soden's work (a non-catholic) who favored the Koine (*Textus Receptus*) text,¹⁶ especially when one considers that the text Kurt Aland (UBS and NA) produced is strictly the Alexandrian text type. Is it not strange that the three Roman Catholic editions based in von Soden (whose work Aland judged as careless)¹⁷ would be deemed the best work available? It is thus further worthy of note that Aland had firmly fixed in his mind the fact that the reading of the Greek New Testament is the very foundation for all men in forming their faith.¹⁸

One must wonder why 1) the Roman Catholic Church

would have so much interest in the New Testament Scriptures, considering their mind-set toward the Scriptures, and 2) why the Roman Catholic Church principles would be so basic to the Modern Textual Critics and United Bible Societies Greek New Testament editions. Is the Roman Catholic Church sincerely seeking to build faith in God's Word in the heart of the Protestants, and if so, why? One continues to wonder.

Endnotes

1 About this time two Roman Catholic scholars gave, in different ways, an impetus to the textual criticism of the New Testament. Johann Leonhard Hug (1765-1846), professor at the University of Freiburg in Breisgau, developed the theory that at about the beginning of the third century the several types of New Testament text degenerated rapidly and produced what is commonly called the Western text, which Hug called the cow wools (the common edition). Toward the middle of the third century, according to Hug, this edition was revised in Palestine by Origen, a revision adopted later by Jerome; in Egypt it was revised by Hesychius, and in Syria by Lucian, a presbyter of Antioch, both of which revisions Jerome condemned. Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, (New York, 1992, Third edition, Oxford University Press) p. 123.

2 Ibid., Metzger p. 123.

3 Johannes Martin Augustinus Scholz (1794-1852), a pupil of Hug's and professor at the University of Bonn, travelled extensively throughout Europe and the Near East in order to draw up what was the first comprehensive listing of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, adding 616 new manuscripts to those previously known. He was the first to emphasize the importance of ascertaining the geographical provenance represented by the several manuscripts, a point which B. H. Streeter was to elaborate in 1924 by his theory of 'local texts'. Ibid., Metzger p. 123.

4 1865 Oct. 17th – Hort: "I have been persuaded for many years that Mary-worship and 'Jesus'-worship have very much in common in their causes and their results." (Life, Vol.II, p. 50).

1867 Oct. 17th – Hort: "I wish we were more agreed on the doctrinal part; but you know I am a staunch sacerdotalist (in favor of the priests-dhj), and there is not much profit in arguing about first principles." (Life, Vol.II, p. 86).

1847 Jan., 2nd Sunday after Epiphany – Westcott: "After leaving the monastery we shaped our course to a little oratory... It is very small, with one kneeling-place; and behind a screen was a 'Pieta' the size of life (i.e. a Virgin and dead Christ)...I could not help thinking on the grandeur of the Romish Church, on her zeal even in error, on her earnestness and self-devotion, which we might, with nobler views and a purer end, strive to imitate. Had I been alone I could have knelt there for hours." (Life, Vol.I, p. 81).

5 Modern Roman Catholic scholars, however, recognize that the words do not belong in the Greek Testament; for example, the four bilingual editions of the New Testament that were edited by Boyer, Merk, Nolli, and Vogels include the words as part of the *Vulgate* text approved by the Council of Trent, but reject them from the Greek text that faces the Latin on the opposite page 3 Ibid., Metzger p. 102.

6 Editions: The decision of the Council of Trent (1546) to prepare an authentic edition of the Latin Scriptures was finally taken up by Pope Sixtus V, who authorized its publication in 1590. The Sixtine Vulgate was issued with a papal bull threatening the

major ex-communication for violators of the commands that variant readings should not be printed in subsequent editions, and that the edition must not be modified. (According to Steinmuller, 3 however, this bull "today is commonly recognized as not having been properly and canonically promulgated".) In 1592, after the death of Sixtus, Pope Clement VIII called in all the copies he could find and issued another authentic edition—differing from the former in some 4,900 variants! This latter edition remains the official Latin Bible text of the Roman Catholic Church to the present day. See below, p. 253. Ibid., Metzger, p. 77.

7 The next three editions to be mentioned are the products of Twentieth Century Roman Catholic scholarship. The edition prepared by Heinrich Joseph Vogels (Dusseldorf, 1920; with the Latin Vulgate, 1922; 4th ed., Freiburg i. Br., 1955) is closer to the *Textus Receptus* than the other two.' Ibid., Metzger p. 143.

8 Jose Maria Bover, S.J., devoted his efforts over many years to the collection and evaluation of textual materials. 4 The Greek text of his bilingual edition (Madrid, 1943; 4th ed., 1959), which is printed with the beautiful font of Greek type belonging to the Association Guillaume Bude, is an eclectic one, departing frequently from the Alexandrian type of text and approaching the Western or Caesarean type. Ibid., Metzger pp. 143-144

9 The fact that the Nestle text was produced by the Bible Societies, which were still under official Catholic proscription (condemnation), only aggravated the situation. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1995) p. 26

10 "In any event, the new text is a reality, and as the text distributed by the United Bible Societies and by the corresponding offices of the Roman Catholic Church (an inconceivable situation until quite recently), it has rapidly become the commonly accepted text for research and study in universities and Churches. This holds also for translation projects in modern national languages (cf. the Guiding Principles formulated in 1968 by the Vatican and the United Bible Societies and re-affirmed as Guidelines in 1987, which prescribe its exclusive use)." Ibid., Kurt Aland, p. 36.

11 The members of the Committee are Kurt Aland of Munster, Matthew Black of St. Andrews, Allen Wikgren of Chicago, and the present writer. During the first four years of its work the Committee also included the Estonian scholar Arthur Voobus. For the preparation of the second edition, scheduled to appear in 1968, the Committee was enlarged by the addition of Carlo M. Martini, S. J., of Rome. Ibid., Metzger footnote p. 146.

12 And further, in the committee discussions Aland received as much as he gave, frequently reconsidering his own proposals for revising Nestle-Aland 25 and adopting the suggestions of others. A critical step toward the convergence of the two editions occurred in the deliberations on the second edition of GNT which was published in 1968 (Arthur Vööbus had meanwhile withdrawn from the editorial committee before the publication of the first edition and Carlo Maria Martini, then rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute and later archbishop of Milan and cardinal, was added). Ibid., Kurt Aland p. 33.

13 "What of the present scene where the reader of the Greek New Testament now meets the new text of Nestle-Aland 26 and the text of GNT' which is identical with it? By this we mean the text officially recognized by both the United Bible Societies and the Catholic Church." p. 30.

14 What is the relationship, then, of the editions of Vogels, Merk, and Bover the only editions of the New Testament text

deserving serious consideration to the editions of the Nineteenth Century, and to Nestle and the new text? Heinrich Joseph Vogels' *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* first appeared at Düsseldorf in 1922 (fourth edition, Freiburg: 1955); *Augustin Merk's Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* first appeared at Rome in 1933 (tenth edition, 1984); *José Maria Bover's Novi Testamenti Biblia Graeca et Latina* first appeared at Madrid in 1943 (fifth edition, 1968). As their titles indicate, all three are diglot editions, but the Latin part needs no further comment here because it is simply a reproduction of the *Sixto-Clementine Vulgate* text. This was dictated by the ecclesiastical rules of the period, all three editors being Roman Catholics. It is hardly a coincidence that these editions were all prepared by Roman Catholic scholars, p. 25.

15 "What is the relationship, then, of the editions of Vogels, Merk, and Bover – the only editions of the New Testament text deserving serious consideration – to the editions of the nineteenth century, and to Nestle and the new text?"

16 "... all three editors being Roman Catholics ... It is hardly a coincidence that these editions were all prepared by Roman Catholic scholars – they were intended to meet the overwhelming "competition" of the popular Nestle edition which was circulating widely even in Roman Catholic circles. Ibid., Kurt Aland, pp. 25-26.

17 But these three editions also stood in substantive contrast to Nestle by the strikingly high number of Koine readings in their texts, due to the influence of von Soden. The dependence on von Soden is most obvious in Merk, who employs von Soden's system of manuscript groupings, but it is hardly less obvious in both the other editions. Ibid., Kurt Aland, pp. 26-27.

18 It is almost incredible that by his methods he could have produced the degree of accuracy achieved in his apparatus. In fact, an intensive comparison with the evidence demonstrated (to our utter amazement under the circumstances) that the accuracy of Nestle in instances of disputed readings exceeded 80 percent, while that of von Soden and other modern editors is closer to 20 percent! Ibid., Kurt Aland, pp. 26-27.

With the support of Elise Konig, a wealthy patron who provided him with the necessary funds (and who deserves special recognition – may her tribe increase!), von Soden was able to enlist the efforts of about forty colleagues in all for the task of collating manuscripts in the libraries of Europe and other lands. Under such favorable circumstances the four-volume work appeared in 1902-1913 under the title *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer*

Textgeschichte, 48

But this attempt must be adjudged "a failure, though a splendid one," to borrow the words of the outstanding American textual critic Kirsopp Lake with regard to Westcott-Hort's edition in 1904. There were several reasons for this. Ibid., Kurt Aland, p. 22.

19 "Furthermore, a peculiar kind of responsibility is involved in preparing an edition of the Greek New Testament. It is not just any random text, but the very foundation for New Testament exegesis by theologians of all confessions and denominations throughout the world. Further, this Greek text serves as the base for new translations as well as for revisions of earlier translations in modern languages, i.e., it is in effect the foundation to which the whole contemporary Church looks in formulating expressions of faith. The full awesome weight of this responsibility is better shared by a committee: a single scholar simply could not bear it. p. 36.

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A Response to Heather

Kevin Cauley

Heather is a woman that I have known for many years. In the past, I have had a great amount of respect for Heather for seeking to do the right thing in her life. Recently, however, Heather has changed her beliefs and expressed many of those changes on her blog. Everyone in the world can see what she has written. The WWW is perhaps the most public forum that exists in the media today. Since Heather has chosen to use this medium, I have chosen to use the same medium to respond to her concepts and beliefs. I have no personal animosity toward Heather. In fact, if I know my own heart, I love her and beyond my Christian love for her, I've always had a kind of love for her as a brother does for a sister and so it surprises me to see how she has changed.

Heather and I have shared a common heritage in that both of us were raised at the Southwest church of Christ in Austin, Texas and so I feel like I know her background and understand where she is "coming from"—from a historical point of view. And so it distresses me greatly to see that she has chosen the World Wide Web as a place to express her grievances toward those whom she believes to be in error. I have to question whether Heather has genuine love in her heart, as she professes, for others. I wonder if she (and those like her) still believes the principle in 1 Peter 4:8 "**above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins.**" Should not the principle of love have sought to cover up her words instead of exposing them to the world?

She wants to know why the influence of a person like her would be of such concern for the eldership "if what you have at SW is the Truth." Heather should know that elderships are charged with taking heed to all the flock (Acts 20:28) and convicting gainsayers (Titus 1:9). These elders have a responsibility to God to deal with threats to the local body. What would be the nature of those threats? Would it not be individuals who are seeking to subvert the beliefs of others? Acts 15:24 speaks of individuals who subverted the souls of others due to false doctrine. This was a concern of the apostles! Did the apostles have the truth? They did, yet, they had trouble with others seeking to subvert them. Jesus was divine and WAS the truth, yet had trouble with people seeking to subvert Him! Simply because one has the truth does not mean that one will have no opposition. Heather should know this, and it is a shame that she has believed the lie that if one has truth, that truth can't be denied by anyone and that therefore there can never be a threat that the elders of the church must address.

Heather, as well as many others who have left the churches of Christ (her opinions are hardly unique, and by expressing her beliefs she joins the great swelling chorus of the majority of people in the United States who disparage members of the churches of Christ for their beliefs [Heather, I wonder if you realize that you have given up the truly unique point of view

for the completely ubiquitous point of view?]), expresses her opinion that the actions of the elders are simply about maintaining control. I would say that is correct inasmuch as order requires control. What is the alternative to order? Is it not chaos? Is that what Heather would have people to embrace, chaos? The fact of the matter is that everyone who believes in Principles exercises an amount of order over other people's lives. I suspect that if Heather were ever in the situation where someone was trying to hurt her that she would want someone to control/order that person so that she would not be harmed. Every orderly society that exists has exercised some element of control over its own people. The Bible teaches that we must submit ourselves to God's control/order if we are to be faithful to Him. In fact, in order to TRULY LOVE another person, there must be control/order. The failure of the eldership to control/order those who would create chaos among the society of people known as the church would, in fact, be a failure of the eldership to love the church. I wonder if Heather desires to be loved above all others to the point that she doesn't care what happens to the faith of those around her as long as SHE is not being controlled/ordered? Would that truly be loving? It would not. Heather, do you really know the love of Christ? Jesus taught that in order to love, we must also obey God (see Rom. 13:8-10). Why? It is because God knows exactly what the loving standard of behavior is toward our fellow man and

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He wants us to practice it; yes to control/order us.

Heather evidently believes that she did not have a choice to believe the things that she believed. I'm sad to hear that because that wasn't what I was taught when I grew up in the same congregation that she grew up in. I was taught that I was responsible for searching out my own beliefs and holding onto them myself. I was taught that the people at Berea were nobler than those at Thessalonica because they QUESTIONED the apostle Paul (Acts 17:11)! I remember hearing preacher after preacher saying, "Don't accept my word for it. Do your own study and come to your own conclusions about what is right and wrong" including the "infamous" David Brown. I can't express how many times I heard from the pulpit and in Bible classes to QUESTION those who spoke to ensure that what they were speaking was THE TRUTH, and that if it wasn't the truth, to reject it completely. I have to wonder whether Heather grew up in the same congregation that I did considering her words. I truly don't know what she is talking about when she said that she was not given a choice as to what to believe. I felt like I was constantly told to question the things that I was taught and that if what I had been taught was erroneous, to reject it, regardless the consequences because knowing and believing the truth was more important than anything in the world. Heather, were you listening?

Heather also criticizes the Biblical concept of sex and marriage even to the point where it appears that she is implying that sex before marriage is not sinful. This again makes me wonder exactly what Heather's concept of love truly is. Is it a loving act for two consenting individuals who have not committed to each other for life to have sex before marriage? What if one of those individuals decides to have another "loving" relationship with someone at the same time and transmits a sexual disease? Is that loving? What if the female in the relationship becomes pregnant outside of marriage and the male leaves the relationship because of it? Is that loving?

We've seen the kind of broken homes and lives that result from such a concept of "love" in these United States in the past 40+ years. Yet Heather chooses to ignore the weight of history on this point and imply that sex before marriage is a loving thing. If this is the kind of "love" that you are now embracing, Heather, I want nothing to do with it.

What is the true culprit to broken homes and broken marriages in the church? It is the belief that marriages without commitment make for good and happy homes. This is exactly what the majority of people living in the United States want us to believe and Heather has swallowed it, hook, line, and sinker. Heather has been deluded into believing that she can be happy in her marriage if she will simply not have any standards of right and wrong. Maybe, just maybe, those marriages that she criticizes aren't working out because too many have believed the same lie as Heather. Could it be that Heather's unhappiness is the result of her embracing false beliefs instead of the Truth?

I'll readily confess that I have had rough times in my own marriage. I don't know any faithful gospel preacher that would so candy coat marriage as to say that married Christians will NEVER have ANY problems! Such a person would be a liar and not deserving of our respect and attention. But here's the painful truth that Heather doesn't want you who are reading her blog to know. PEOPLE IN THE WORLD THAT GET MARRIED HAVE PROBLEMS TOO!!!! In fact, they have more problems and worse marriages than faithful Christians. Why is Heather ignoring that obvious truth? Because for her to acknowledge it would mean for her to confess that maybe she is wrong about such things. Heather has, I'm afraid, blinded herself to the reality of broken homes and marriages in the lives of unbelievers that surrounds her.

Then Heather has this little nugget of wisdom to pass along: "SUFFERING'S NOT SUCH A BLESSING!!!!" I've got to wonder what kind of suffering Heather is talking

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about. Is her husband beating her to a bloody pulp? Has she been denied nutrition? Has she been kicked out of her house so that she has no roof over her head? Has Heather had her children taken away from her? Has she been forced to take care of her children on her own with no support from any of her family? Has Heather been forced to sleep on the cold hard ground in freezing temperatures? Has Heather been forced to work hard labor concentration style (oh, and by the way, washing dishes isn't hard labor; I do it occasionally, and it is quite relaxing) against her will? I think I can safely say that Heather has never experienced any of these TRUE hardships. So, what is the source of Heather's suffering? It is her own ingratitude for what she has. Heather, you were raised by parents who loved you, who perhaps loved you too much, and so now, anything that falls short of that standard (the Heather is the center of the universe standard), causes you suffering. Heather, you are UNGRATEFUL and that is the farthest thing from the love of God that you can possibly be.

Finally, Heather says, "I have not turned away from God, or Christ's church, contrary to what you'll be told, but I have turned away from the man made institution 'The Church of Christ.'" Heather, when you turn your back on what it means to love your neighbor, as you have obviously done, then you HAVE turned your back on God and Christ's church. It's sad that you don't see that. It's sad that you believe that you can go to "The church of Conscious Harmony" (which is nothing more than Existentialist Post Modern philosophy shrouded in a hollow shell of Christianity) and be a Christian. You've lost what TRUE Christianity is all about, namely, self denial for the benefit of your fellow man. WHERE IS YOUR SELF DENIAL, HEATHER? I don't see it; all I see is a selfish, self-center, spoiled little brat who doesn't know how good she really has it. Yes, Heather, these are HARD WORDS. I don't speak them because they make me feel good. I speak them because I am HOPING to AWAKEN YOU to the truths that you are denying right now. HYPOCRITE! How can you say that you have the love of Christ when you are so self centered? If TRUE LOVE is shown in the life of Christ through His own self denial and voluntary offering of His life for the sins of others, then WHERE is YOUR love, Heather? I don't see it.

At the end of my letter here, I would like to challenge whoever has been teaching Heather these things (and I know that Heather has been taught these things; she guises her words in freedom, but she has simply submitted to a different master) to a debate. I will affirm that God exists and He has a standard of right and wrong to which we must adhere and that faithfully adhering to that standard is the greatest act of love that we, as humans, can perpetrate while here on the earth. Heather claims that her only desire is to follow Jesus and practice love. I have to say that her actions and words completely betray that claim. I don't believe she is the least bit interested in showing love toward anyone but herself and I urge her to consider these matters and repent before she faces God in judgment.

Post Script

After I wrote this response, Heather put up a note on her blog to say how sorry she was to everyone that she had hurt, but that she just couldn't continue to practice an unauthentic faith and that she understood if we would withdraw fellowship from her. Let's get one thing clear. We didn't withdraw fellowship from Heather, Heather withdrew her fellowship from us (*See Tarbet's article, p. 15-Editor*). By changing her beliefs, her behaviors, her thoughts, and her actions, she took the first step and withdrew her fellowship from good and godly Christian people. Fellowship isn't merely association, no, not at all. Fellowship is the practical aspects of Christian unity. Fellowship is worshiping together, serving together, believing the same things, having a like precious faith, and engaging in our lives with one another while we seek to follow Christ. Heather's abandonment of these things broke the bonds of fellowship long before she was publicly noted. I'm praying for Heather to pursue an authentic faith and to find her way back to Christ, because that is where true faith can only exist; all others are only lies guised as faith; I truly hope she comes to realize that.

Post Post Script

It has come to my attention that Heather is now carrying on with the people on a web site that caters to "ex" members of the church of Christ. For myself, I'm sorry that she is taking up residence there. I feel sorry for you, Heather, that you have to have your life validated by the likes of those individuals and that you need support from them in order to justify your recent behavior. Heather, I really care about you and your spirituality and want you to know that I do love you. I don't see, however, the same words coming from you about me. I find this very disturbing. You should look into your heart and be honest with yourself and ask yourself whether the things that you have written there have been filled with love or hate. I believe the tone of your words and the hate-filled language you used there betray your true feelings for me, a person who considers you like a sister and really wants nothing but the best for you. Nevertheless, you obviously have nothing but contempt for me according to the words that you have written. If you do not understand how you have filled your life with hate then you have been completely deceived by the "majority" of those with whom you want to fit in. I'm praying for you Heather to awaken.

And by the way, I will gladly talk to you personally about these things, just tell me when and where and I will be there. Also, you know where my office is; you know what my day time phone number is; you know how to get a hold of me. As far as my calling upon you, I would just as soon conduct our conversation in public where everyone can see the words that we are writing and judge for themselves as I believe the difference in attitude is quite clear.

—8900 Manchaca Road
Austin, TX 78748

[Cauley's article came from the Blog of *Preachers Files* at the following address: <http://preachersfiles.com/a-response-to-heather/>]

EDITORIAL COMMENTS CONCERNING KEVIN CAULEY'S ARTICLE AND OTHER MATTERS

Cauley's article speaks the truth about Heather Sanders, formerly a member of the Southwest Church of Christ (hereafter SW). If she would give proper attention to it and the other material exposing her errors she would repent of her sins and be restored to her first love. But to date she and others in her sinking boat remain estranged from God.

Originally in the August 2007 issue of *CFTF*, we printed an e-mail Heather Sanders wrote and sent to us. In that e-mail she chided us, making light of and denouncing our exposure and refutation of the then Director of the Southwest School of Bible Studies (hereafter SWSBS), Joseph Meador's errors. We had dealt with Meador's Yoga and Gestalt Therapy activities as well as other of his fallacious conduct in the Feb. 2007 issue of *CFTF*. *As far as we know all of these warnings and rebukes fell on deaf ears at SW*. As we recall, somewhere between seven and ten Southwest members (among them a deacon, two deacons' wives—one of them Heather's own mother and one elder's wife—if there were others we have forgotten their names) wrote us complaining about our exposure of Meador, telling us to cease and desist sending *CFTF* to them. Then, again in our Feb. 2008 issue of *CFTF* we dealt with more of Heathers Sanders' erroneous antics and apostasy.

Not many months ago the Southwest deacon who wrote to protest our examination of Heather and tell us not to send *CFTF* to him, brother Richard Powell (whose father, along with Kevin Cauley's father and three other men, are the SW elders), decided he would "bless" a number of us lowly preachers with his "Bible knowledge," "logic" and "wise insights" on several topics over a period of several weeks through an exchange of e-mails. In that e-mail exchange Powell took it upon himself to "get after" us for a number of things, one of them was our exposure of Heather Sanders' denial of the Faith. He thought we were out of bounds in our refutation of Heather's many errors and matters pertaining thereto.

In view of Cauley's article rebuking Heather we raise the following question: *Did Powell take it upon himself to deal with Kevin Cauley for publicly exposing Heather's antics in his article as he (Powell) readily did in attacking us for doing the same thing Kevin did?* After all, both men are members of the same church with their fathers serving as elders. Both men are home grown and Cauley is one of the teachers in SWSBS.

It was at the peak of Powell's e-mail exchange with a number of preachers that Cauley publicly published his article—*A Response to Heather*. Cauley did so in answer to at least part of Heather's public critical comments about matters at the SW church and her own false beliefs. But Powell never saw fit even to hint at Cauley's article in any of the myriad of e-mails he recently wrote to several of brethren. Of course, he may have known nothing about Cauley's arti-

cle. But when he does learn about it, what will he then do?

MORE FROM DEACON POWELL

In contrast to the other faithful Gospel preachers involved in the previously noted e-mail exchange, I wrote little. However, Powell took the occasion to write some of the most self-contradictory, inconsistent, illogical, unscriptural, absurd, imbecilic and outright false statements that anyone could write. And, guess what? Some of Powell's statements were outright attacks upon your editor.

In an e-mail dated Sun., Aug. 17, 2008, 2:10:53 PM, Powell, in writing about the division in the Buda/Kyle, Texas congregation, wrote: "*I know FIRST HAND what happened to the Buda/Kyle church.*" Powell's statement is false to the core. At best all he has is *hearsay*—unacceptable in a court of law and to any other honest person. But, Powell did not stop with only that falsehood. *He went on to say that your editor was deeply involved in causing the division of Buda/Kyle church.*

On Aug. 21, 2008, 1:23 PM, I answered Powell's false comments with the following e-mail to the group of brethren involved in the email exchange. I wrote:

I have noted some time ago in these e-mail exchanges that Richard in his willful ignorance attributes to me the Buda/Kyle meeting of, I think, January 2006. I have said nothing about his errors on that matter because I wanted to give him time (and he has had plenty of it) to approach me to hear what I had to say about the matter since he has been and continues to be so bold in laying the responsibility of that meeting at my feet. **BUT HE HAS NOT MADE THE FIRST MOVE TO THIS MOMENT TO APPROACH ME ABOUT IT.** He simply continues to make unsubstantiated accusations. He says he has spoken to the men presently at Buda/Kyle about said matters. Has he spoken to the several people that left [the church] about [the] matter?

Regarding said meeting,

1. It was set up as a public meeting as far as the churches of Christ were concerned (as public a meeting as is the SW Lectures) by the then elders of the Buda/Kyle church [Tim Kidwell (also the preacher) and Paul McReynolds].

2. I learned of the meeting upon receiving an invitation to attend it. I was told that at least the SW elders were invited and I know at least some in the Southwest School of Bible Studies knew about it because at least one student from the school was in attendance. There were some from other churches in attendance. Many of the people there I did not know. Some I did recognize because of my seven and one half years in Austin.

3. At the meeting there were several brethren from other congregations. Jack Stephens, at the time a deacon at the Spring congregation and now an elder, was with me.

4. Tim Kidwell did most of the public speaking but Paul McReynolds also spoke

5. At that time the two elders gave every outward appearance of being completely united on what was presented

and the stand they were taking. However, Paul resigned from the eldership shortly after the meeting under consideration. His resignation dissolved the eldership and a majority of the men removed Tim [from preaching] and then apologized to the SW elders for withdrawing fellowship from them.

6. I sat through said meeting and listened as the rest in the audience did. If my memory serves me correctly I spoke up only when Matthew “Matt” Cain (son of Rudy Cain of World Video Bible School) spoke out from the back of the audience wanting to know if I was going to write about said meeting in *CFTF*. My response was that I might or might not, but I either way it would be my decision to make.

There is a recording of the meeting, but I have never listened to it.

7. In 2002 while Stan Crowley was finishing his schooling at SW (Crowley has a PhD in Physics) he injected his false doctrine on MDR into the Buda/Kyle congregation. The controversy became so bad over Crowley and his son pushing this matter that it led to a Sunday afternoon debate between Crowley and Kidwell, which debate was recorded and I have a CD of it. It was during the Spring of 2002 that I first became aware of this false doctrine.

I don’t know what Richard Powell was doing during those days. He must have been letting the SW elders handle it. In fact, the powers that [were] at Southwest School of Bible Studies informed Crowley that if he did not be quite about his doctrine he would not be allowed to graduate from SWSBS in 2002. The elders really handled that in a right way, didn’t they?

8. As far as said meeting at Buda/Kyle was concerned, that is all I had to do with it. I did not consider it enough of a matter to write about it in *CFTF*.

9. Whomever is giving me all the credit for that meeting and what happened at the Buda/Kyle congregation thereafter, is simply “blowing hot air”, which [accusation] they cannot prove if their life depended on it—and their eternal destiny does.

10. Has anyone noticed that the man (Stan Crowley), the false teacher who brought the error into the Buda/Kyle church and, along with his son, pushed it as far as they could till they were warned by SW that Stan would not be graduated if he kept doing what he had been doing for many months, is completely overlooked by Richard and the brethren remaining at Buda/Kyle. And, we have read from Richard words that indicate Crowley is almost a stranger to him.

There would have been no such meeting at Buda/Kyle if Crowley had not taught his error over many months, going back to well before the Spring of 2002. But [when] I attend[ed] by invitation a public meeting that I had nothing to do with setting it up or planning it, the goofy brethren left at Buda/Kyle indicate[d] to Richard Powell that I am basically the ringleader in such. If it is the case that Frank McReynolds is part of or the only source of this gossip, then please know that I with witnesses will meet with him, the men at Buda/Kyle, the SW elders, Richard Powell or anyone else in a proper meeting and we can go over the alleged evidence they have to offer that supposedly makes me the ring leader in putting together said meeting or instigating it or whatever. THAT OFFER BY ME IS CERTAINLY MORE THAN THE PRESENT BUDA/KYLE MEN WHO WERE IN THAT BREAKFAST MEETING WITH RICHARD AND WHO SUPPOSEDLY GAVE HIM HIS INFORMATION ABOUT ME HAVE BEEN AND ARE WILLING TO DO.

Richard’s and their conduct in this matter is not surprising to me. It is typical of Richard’s and their conduct as Richard has proven in this present e-mail exchange. I expect from him or them and others of their ilk no different conduct.

We made no moves regarding the matter of Stan Crowley and what he did at Buda/Kyle in being involved in any form or fashion in the internal affairs of that church except as we were invited to be involved—AND THAT WAS TO OFFER ADVICE AS REQUESTED, ALONG WITH OTHERS WHO WERE ASKED FOR THE SAME, FIRST BY TIM KIDWELL AND LATER BY THE THEN ELDERSHIP OF THE BUDA/KYLE CONGREGATION. Any one who says otherwise is spreading false information, if not out right lying about the matter. Moreover we are prepared to publicly prove it. Is Richard and his fellow gossips, back biters, tale bearers and hell-bound slanderers prepared to do the same? We will not hold our breath till they decide to do so. Richard ought to be ashamed of himself. Of late he along with several other seared conscience brethren have obviously lost the capacity to blush or be embarrassed before God to whom we all must give account for our words and deeds. Hopefully they will find repentance for their mean, base and unscriptural words and deeds that they have slanderously launched against their brethren, before it is everlastingly too late [*The only changes made in this e-mail are typographical, spelling, punctuation and grammatical ones—DPB*].

This is the kind of malicious gossip and tale bearing that has gone on far too long—some of it coming out of the SW Church of Christ from the likes of Richard Powell. And some of these brethren call us vicious and unbalanced.

If Powell wants to challenge what we have written regarding the previously noted e-mail exchange we will be more than happy to release a CD of the e-mails comprising that exchange for all interested parties to read. Without fear of successful contradiction we declare that neither Powell, the SW elders, anyone at the Budda/Kyle church, the Schertz, TX church where Stan Crowley preaches, or anyone else can prove Powell’s accusation regarding us to be true. We welcome their efforts to attempt to do so.

If a church is going to appeal to the brotherhood for students to come to their school, while welcoming financial support from individual Christians and churches of Christ in general, let that church first purge itself of the old leaven of sinful conduct, extending fellowship only to those who are in fellowship with God and withholding it from all who are not in fellowship with Him. If churches are going to have lectureships designed to influence other churches of Christ then let them conduct themselves according to the teaching of the New Testament. Whited sepulchres are as sinful as mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God! The reason we oppose a corrupted worship in the Lord’s church is the same reason we oppose hypocrisy with all of its pretense and sham—the Lord condemns all such sinful conduct.

We are open and above board. We let our Yea be Yea and our Nay be Nay. No one has a problem of knowing where we stand. You are either for us or against us. *THE LORD WILLING, THERE IS MORE TO COME ON THESE MATTERS.—EDITOR*

“I’M A CHRISTIAN”

Alton W. Fonville

Every believer in God wants to be called a “Christian.” Talk with most any denominational person and they will boast, “I’m a Christian.” But, just what does it take to be a Christian?

The Bible declares that the disciples of Christ were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11 :26). As we look at those people to see of what sort they were, it becomes clear—they were preachers and teachers, teaching the word of God called, “the gospel of Christ.” Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch and taught “much people, and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch:” We understand that a “disciple” is a “learner” or “follower” of someone. As they learned about the gospel of Christ and “believed,” they obeyed it and became “**children of God**” (Gal. 3:27). Their faith, “belief,” led them to obey that “teaching” which they had heard. This was exactly what Jesus told his followers while he was still with them: “preach the gospel to everyone—he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16).

The name “Christian” answers to the prophecy of long before this time, telling of a new name that the mouth of God would give unto his people (Isa. 62:2). That name does not belong to everyone who picks it up and wears it without the obedience which it demands. Far too many have “faith” in God and of his son Jesus Christ, but, that faith has never been strong enough to move them to obedience on God’s terms. It is easy for mankind to try and out guess the “author of our salvation—the one who wrote the book.” Jesus was obedient to his Father in all respects, and was declared to be God’s only begotten Son and well pleased in Him. We were given the command to “hear ye Him” (Matt. 17:5). So, what did Christ tell us to do?

He gave specific instructions for his disciples to “go and preach the gospel” to all mankind, warning them that they would be hated because of it. They were joining a “battle for Truth” against all the many errors which were then present and

those which should after appear. He told them that he came not to send peace, but a sword. That sword would separate the righteous from the unrighteous—those who would obey God, from those who chose “their ways” in preference to God’s ways. And, sure enough, our Lord told the Truth. Many of the first century “Christians” were hated and killed because of their teachings. And, we have so many today who profess “the name” without joining in the fray.

By looking carefully at the one chapter book of Obadiah, we are reminded of so many of today’s people. They want the perks, but not the fight which goes along with it. God was speaking of the total destruction of Edom, Esau’s people, because they “**stood on the other side**” and watched their people being destroyed, refusing to lend a hand of support. They paid the ultimate price. People who call themselves Christian today do not want to be among the fighters. They profess to be “peacemakers. They do not like to be called “conservatives” or to be branded as a ‘legalist.’ They say that they want to be just like our lord, demonstrating “love.” Well, just what was our Lord like?

It is rather “narrow-minded” to call a person a hypocrite, a whited grave and to tell them “except they repent, they will be lost;” or, to teach that “except for fornication,” any other divorce was sinful, and without repentance, they would be lost. It is a “legalist” who would say that “**except ye believe that I am he ye shall die in your sins.**” I guess when we follow the Lord and his teachings, we can be entitled to be called a narrow-minded Christian legalist. I am happy to be on the same fighting side in this world of sin. It may mean the death of more faithful saints, but, look at the company we will share. Paul had fought a good fight. He did not simply stand on the side and watch the battle rage. He stepped right up to the sword, took it and used it until his death. Where is your sword, Christian?

—337 Madison 4605
Saint Paul, AR 72760

Along with the foregoing article bro. Fonville submitted the following poem with the comment, “What about the name God gave us—*Christian*?” Please read it with that thought in mind. —*Editor*

YOUR NAME

Edgar A. Guest

You got it from your father,
‘Twas the best he had to give.
And right gladly he bestowed it,
It’s yours, the while you live.

You may lose the watch he gave you
And another you may claim,
But remember, when you’re tempted,
To be careful of his name.

It was fair the day you got it
And a worthy name to wear
When he took it from his father,
There was no dishonor there.

Through the years he proudly wore it,
To his father he was true,
And that name was clean and spotless
When he passed it on to you.

Oh, there’s much that he has given
That he values not at all.
He has watched you break your play things
In the days when you were small.

You have lost the knife he gave you,
And you’ve scattered many a game,
you’ll never hurt your father
If you’re careful with his name.

It is yours to wear forever,
Yours to wear the while you live.
Yours, perhaps some distant mom,
Another boy to give.

And you’ll smile as did your father,
With a smile that all can share,
If a clean name and a good name
You are giving him to wear.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE WITHDRAWERS

Don Tarbet

Strange as it may seem, some actually deny the right of the church to withdraw their fellowship from those who refuse to walk in the light. Others agree that such must be done, but that it cannot be done if some have already “withdrawn from the church.” This is strange language indeed, for we read NOTHING in the Scriptures about the right of people to “withdraw from the church.” However, we DO read about the responsibility of the church to withdraw from certain ones who become wayward. The Scripture says:

Mark them which cause divisions...and avoid them (Rom. 16:17); **When ye are gathered together ...to deliver such an one unto Satan...purge out ...the old leaven...not to company...not to eat** **Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person** (1 Cor. 5: 4-13); **from such withdraw thyself** (1 Tim. 6: 5); **Now we command you... withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly...note that man, and have no company with him** (2 Thess. 3:6,14).

These passages show that the CHURCH has an active responsibility in the matter of discipline, and must take a stand for Truth and fellowship. Our responsibility is not merely passive. Apostates from the faith seldom become such for NO reason at all, but are actively engaged in the ways of the world. **“Demas hath FORSAKEN me, having loved the present world”** (2 Tim. 4:10). Those who forsake the Lord in worship have usually already forsaken Him in living. Does this mean the church can do NOTHING to discipline wayward members if they have already ceased to worship with the saints? Just where do people get the idea that fellowship is limited to the worship service? They must think so, if they think they are to withdraw ONLY from those who attend worship. Actually, we do NOT forbid anyone to attend worship when they are disciplined, but we encourage them to attend so as to be exhorted to Christian living. A withdrawal of fellowship simply means that Christians are to do NOTHING with those withdrawn from that would indicate any approval of their wayward conduct, and this would primarily be out-side of the worship. Any effort to reject God’s will in discipline is an effort to follow the way of least resistance. We need to forget our fears and human reasoning and start to obey God.

—215 W. Sears
Denison, TX 75020

“A magazine writer says we need a new religion. But let’s not do anything rash until we try the old one.”

PREACHERS NEED TO HEAR PREACHING TOO

Brad Green

I have been extremely blessed over the past several years to have the opportunity to prepare and preach sermons from God’s Word.

Perhaps even more edifying has been the opportunity to hear sound gospel preaching as well. Since the time this new congregation began assembling together, I have truly enjoyed listening to the best Wednesday night devotions that I have ever heard. I cherish each opportunity to listen to and apply the Biblical principles to my life as expressed by those who present the devotions. This time of devotion is important to my growth as a Christian and a young preacher. Though I grow daily through my own Bible studies as I prepare to present two sermons each Sunday and a Bible Class on Wednesday, it is from the lessons and sermons presented by others that reach the deepest depths of my heart where perhaps my own personal studies have fallen a bit short. We have all heard statements and reflected, “I’ve never thought of that before.” Thus, it makes sense that the experiences and studies of another can fill in the gaps that exist in our own.

Perhaps, one of the biggest problems among preachers in our brotherhood may be that they preach too much and listen too little. Some men, contented by the fact that they have been preaching for 30-40 years, have become **“at ease in Zion”** (Amos 6:1). They are at ease because they think they know all they need to know. This being the case, they do not consider themselves to be in need of sound, gospel preaching. Many preachers, for many years, have only heard what they, themselves have preached. These men have found the preacher they want to hear and are content to stick with him. These men do not have a preacher to “step on their toes” and if one tries to correct them, they immediately dismiss such as wrong because it is not what they hear (or want to hear) from the pulpit on Sundays. Such preachers have allowed themselves to become their own standard of right and wrong.

Because they have heard nothing from the pulpit opposed to what they preach (since they are the ones preaching), they are convinced that they are faithful and anything contrary to that assessment is disregarded. Let us never be so enthralled with ourselves and the knowledge we possess that we forget Who it is we are to please (Acts 5:29) and by what it is that determines right and wrong (Psalm 119:128; John 8:31-32; 12:48; 17:17). **“The statutes of the LORD are right” (Psalm 19:8); “the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them”** (Hosea 14:9). We must place ourselves in front of the mirror that is God’s Word and do whatever necessary to ensure that our lives are reflective of what God teaches (James 1:22-25). As preachers and teachers, let us acknowledge our dependence upon hearing the Word of God that we may continue to grow in the Faith (Romans 10:17; 2 Peter 3:18). We must put ourselves to the test to make certain that we are living in harmony with God’s Will. **“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves”** (2 Corinthians 13:5).

—129 Lance Road
Lenoir City, TN 37772

Directory of Churches...

-Alabama-

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

-England-

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

-Florida-

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

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

-North Carolina-

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

-South Carolina-

Belvedere (Greater Augusta, Georgia Area)—Church of Christ, 535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841, www.belvederechurchofchrist.org; e-mail belvecoc@gmail.com, (803) 442-6388, 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. 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:00 p.m. Allen Lawson, evangelist, email: lawson@starnetok.net.

-Tennessee-

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

-Texas-

Denton area—Northpoint Church of Christ, 5101 E. University Dr. (Greenbelt Business Park). Mailing address: Northpoint Church of Christ, Greenbelt Business Park, 5101 E. University Dr., Box 12, Denton, TX 76208. E-mail: northpointcoc@hotmail.com. Sun.: 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.; Wed. 7:00 p.m.. Contact: Dub McClish: 940.323.9797; tjoriginal@verizon.net.

Houston area—Spring Church of Christ, 1327 Spring Cypress, P.O. Box 39, Spring, TX 77383, (281) 353-2707. Sun. 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m., Wed. 7:30 p.m., David P. Brown, evangelist. Home of the **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; dggoines@gmail.com.

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

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

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

-Wyoming-

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

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