

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

2009



January

April

July

October

February

May

August

November

March

June

September

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

January 2009

Number 01

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



How Many False Teachers Can You Fellowship Before You Sin?

Tim Cozad

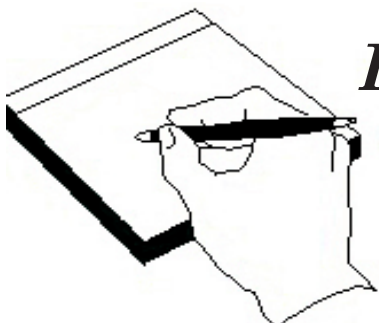
Whoever heard of such a question and why would someone even consider asking it? Even those who have a limited knowledge of the Bible can answer this question without giving much thought to it. And yet, some among us will give the right answer, but will not practice it themselves. Forty years ago practically every member of the Lord's church would have been able to quickly give the correct answer, supplying book, chapter, and verse for their reasoning. Forty years ago, the Lord's church was stronger than it is today. Forty years ago elderships were stronger than they are today. Forty years ago Gospel preachers were stronger than they are today. My how the "winds of change" have swept through the church over this period of time and continue to sweep through her. Never has this writer known so many who once stood for the truth now finding it not expedient to do so. Long time friends, co-workers in the Lord, families, and congregations have been torn asunder over this very question in the last few years. The fellowship issue among us is not in the process of dividing the church; it has

already divided it! Solomon warned: "he that soweth discord among brethren" (Pro. 6:19) was something that God hates. What started with false teaching and practice by the Brown Trail Church of Christ has divided the precious bride of Christ and continues to divide her. If one has not heard of Dave Miller preaching false doctrine on "Reevaluation and Reaffirmation of Elders" and the Elders at Brown Trail agreeing to put it into practice, the question should be asked, why not? The evidence is not contrived or made up but undeniable. And yet, many refuse to believe what happened at Brown Trail really happened or they make excuses why they had to do it. Sounds like Saul telling Samuel that he had to force himself to offer sacrifices to God (1 Sam. 13:12). It does not matter why someone preached false doctrine and why false doctrine was practiced. The only thing that matters is that they repent and if they do not, fellowship must be withdrawn until they do (Rom. 16:17; 2 John 10-11). Many who have believed and practiced this in the past (Memphis School of Preaching, those associated

with Gospel Broadcasting Network, Apologetics Press to name just a few) have decided to continue to fellowship Dave Miller in spite of the facts and in spite of what the Scriptures teach. Consequently, the title of this article seems correct after all.

Back to the question before us: how many false teachers can we continue to fellowship before it becomes sin? One brother jokingly stated not more than four or five, what with the way some brethren define fellowship. But, what does the Bible teach? The Bible teaches that if we extend fellowship to even one false teacher we sin. "And have **no** fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*" (Eph. 5:11). For years the faithful churches of Christ have had no fellowship with the denominations or other false religions of the world (unfruitful works of darkness) because of their false teaching and false practices. However, the scriptural rules seem not to apply when it comes to brethren, especially when the brother is a fellow Gospel preacher who has taught false doctrine. Paul did not write "have no

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Instructions

During the holiday season, many give and receive gifts. It is always a special joy for children to receive gifts. Many times these gifts are toys, but someone must assemble those toys before the child can play with it. This holiday season, I sat and watched two grown men assemble a toy given to a small child (I probably would have been involved in trying to assemble it but was recovering from my surgery). As these men finished (or thought they were finished) one said there were some extra screws and wondered where they went as he held them out for everyone to see. Then began a look for where the screws were to go. Then they realized there was also an extra part laying over to the side which they did not see. Thus, they began looking at the picture on the box to try and determine where the missing part was to go. About this time I mentioned the old statement: "When all else fails, read the instructions." Finally, they got the instructions and after undoing some of their work, they were able to put the toy together properly. How many times has this same thing taken place both through the years and in homes across America? We get the instructions and set them aside till something goes wrong; then we get the instructions and begin to follow them. No one knows how much time and heartache we might save if we simply followed the instructions to begin with.

In life we have been given an instruction book. That Book is God's Word—the Bible. Some have set aside that Book totally ignoring it. They have rejected God and the Bible as His Word. As to how one should live, they never offer anything of substance. Their lifestyle is a life of living for self and whatever brings them pleasure. However, as they live seeking what is pleasurable to them, they are living to their own destruction. Paul's words aptly

describe them: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phi. 3:18-19). They seek for peace, joy, purpose in life, yet they reject the only thing that can truly bring those things.

There are also those who make a claim of believing the Bible, but then teach in such a way as to oppose it. They deny it is a pattern for us to follow (like Al Maxey affirmed in his debate with brother Darrell Broking). For example, the Bible teaches one must be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). Yet, these will find some way in which God will save at least some who have not been baptized for the remission of their sins. If we can discard the Bible's instructions in one area, then we can in other areas also. They dismiss God's Word when it pleases them so they can live and do what they want. They fail to follow the instructions.

Then there are those who again make a claim of following the Bible and will teach and preach we are to do what is authorized in the Bible, but when certain areas are discussed, they really do not follow the instructions. We have seen demonstrations of this recently regarding fellowship. The Bible teaches, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*" (Eph. 5:19) and, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.

Policy Statement

All correspondence written to *Defender*, myself (Michael Hatcher), or to the elders at Bellview concerning anything in *Defender* is viewed as intended for publication unless otherwise stated. While it is not the practice of *Defender* to publish our correspondence, we reserve the right to publish such **without further permission being necessary** should the need or desire arise.

Occasionally we receive requests to reprint articles from *Defender*. It is our desire to get sound material into the hands of brethren. Thus, it is our policy to allow reproduction of any articles that should appear in this publication. However, honesty should demand that you give proper credit when reprinting an article. You should give the author credit for his work and we would appreciate your including that you got the article from this paper.

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). They read and preach these verses concerning fellowship, but then they will go right ahead and fellowship a false teacher like Dave Miller (and those who fellowship him). They show lip service to God’s Word, but then will discard it when they feel it necessary. Only as we follow the instructions in every aspect of our lives will God be pleased with us and bless us.

We must follow the instructions regarding God’s plan of salvation. We might expect the religious world to try and substitute their own plan for God’s, but we must stick with the instructions. Following after denominational grace only or faith only salvation will only bring damnation. Based upon God’s wondrous grace, man must believe (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; Mark 16:15-16) which comes from hearing the Word (Rom. 10:17), repent of his sins (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 17:30-31), confess his faith in Jesus as God’s Son (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37), and be baptized in water for salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21). Upon our obedience to the instructions, God will forgive our sins and add us to the Lord’s church.

When it comes to man’s worship, we are to follow the instructions of Christ. Our Savior instructed us to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. He set forth five avenues through which we are to worship Him. We are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). The Lord never authorized any other type of music. We have the need to pray to our heavenly Father through the mediatorship of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 14:15; 1 The. 5:17). We return a portion of our money, placing it in the common treasury of the church for the work of the church (1 Cor. 16:1-2). We partake of the communion of our Lord, partaking of unleaven bread and fruit of the vine, on the Lord’s day or the first day of each week (1 Cor. 11:23-34; Acts 20:7). Then there is the study of God’s Word through preaching (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 2 Tim. 4:2).

We are to live our lives in accordance with the instructions of the New Testament. The grace of God instructs “us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,

and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Tit. 2:12-14). The Bible instructs us to put off the works of the flesh and add the fruit of the Spirit to our lives (Gal. 5:19-26).

Likewise, we need to follow the instructions if we desire our homes to be a haven on earth. God’s instructions must be heeded regarding marriage. God designed it to be one man for one woman for life. Only death and fornication can break this bond that God joins together (Mat. 19:6-9). Within the home the man is to take the headship of the home; the wife is to be in submission to her own husband; the children are to obey and respect their parents (Eph. 5:22-6:4).

Brethren, if we would simply follow the instructions God has given us, we would live far better lives and would find the peace, joy, contentment, purpose in life that men are seeking.

MH

Continued from Page 1

fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, unless, they are your bosom buddies or they are involved in a work you believe to be good.” Paul said “**no fellowship.**” If Christians pick and choose what they would like to obey and what they do not want to obey they are no better than the denominations for that is exactly what they do. Paul’s inspired ruling on this subject applies to all.

One might as well ask how much darkness can one continue to live in and still have fellowship with God? John writes, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). John continues writing, “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1:5). As Christians, for our fellowship with the Father and the Son to continue we must continue to walk or live faithful to His Word (1:7). Remembering, that in God is no darkness at all, how much darkness can be in us and we remain in fellowship with God? None! This does not mean one lives a sinless life, but one has the ability to ask God for forgiveness when one sins “and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth [keeps on cleansing] us from all sin” (1:7). John explains, “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (1:6). Therefore, if one will fellowship even one person who is a false teacher—whether it is Billy Graham, Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, or Dave Mill-

er—he sins. The truth is not in them and consequently that individual forfeits fellowship with God. As one brother stated, “This is not rocket science.” This is not hard to understand, just hard for some to obey.

How many false teachers can we fellowship and still be in fellowship with God? The Bible teaches not one. However, some brethren still do not get it. Some continue to fellowship Dave Miller because of his work at Apologetics Press. Although, it has been documented that Apologetics Press will go anywhere to hold its program, even if a congregation is known to be rank liberal (“unfruitful works of darkness”). Some will continue to fellowship Dave Miller because he has written books and articles that taught the truth. Rubel Shelly used to teach the truth on liberalism at one time, does that mean faithful brethren should extend fellowship to him? When this writer attended the Memphis School of Preaching, the instructors brought Rubel’s name up time and again explaining how far he had drifted from the truth and why fellowship had to be withdrawn from him and rightly so. Yet, the same instructors now extend fellowship to Dave Miller, a known false

teacher, and this writer cannot see a difference between Rubel Shelly and Dave Miller. Does Memphis School of Preaching see a difference between these two men that many do not or does Memphis School of Preaching just see things differently than they used to? The Scriptures are still plain:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Rom. 16:17-18).

How many programs can we continue to fellowship that fellowship false teachers and still be in fellowship with God? When a program like Apologetics Press or the Gospel Broadcasting Network uses a false teacher (Dave Miller) is it right to continue to support them? Many who give an affirmative to this question at one time said no. Now, they evidently believe it is wrong to cancel out a good work for this reason. The problem with that reasoning is that when a program uses a false teacher it is no longer the good work it used to be. When has it ever been right to do wrong or when is doing wrong

considered to be right? Why do some brethren who refuse to see this refuse to accept what John taught recorded in 2 John 9-11? For those who have forgotten, John wrote:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Programs, works, even congregations who use false teachers are guilty of their false deeds. Whoever the individual is, whether he has taught the truth in the past, a fellow Gospel preacher or a bosom buddy must not have fellowship extended to him. Therefore, when a program or work partakes in the false teachers evil deeds they can no longer be supported by faithful brethren.

Many are praying that those who have created this division among us repent before it is everlastingly too late. However, if they will not, the faithful must continue to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3).

521 Bobwhite Dr; Pensacola, FL 32514

The Power of God Unto Salvation: Can Another Gospel Save?

Darrell Broking

Introduction

That there is nothing new under the sun is as true today as it was in Solomon’s day (Ecc. 1:9). The fact that there are people who seek to change God’s plan to save fallen man to a plan compatible with their will is as old as sin itself. Amos dealt with people who completely violated the

will of God and asserted their own will in their worship: “And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim *and* publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD” (Amos 4:5). Those people offered sacrifice with leaven, which was contrary to the law (Lev. 2:11; 6:17). Amos identi-

fied their problem when he said, “for this liketh you,” which means “this is what you like.” The people violated the will of God because they liked their will more than God’s Will. There are many who believe that their will is actually the will of God; however, God expects men to submit to His Will not to redefine it!

The Goal of the Mosaic Law

The Old Covenant was designed to do many things, which were all focused on the coming of Christ with eternal salvation. Paul noted, "Christ is the end

of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4). Paul wrote with regard to the Mosaic Law, not law in general as advocated by liberals. The Greek word translated "end" in this verse is the

word *telos*, meaning "end, term, termination, completion," and is used in this context to denote "either termination or goal" (Zodhiates). Examining the overall context of Paul's writings about the Mosaic Law makes it clear that he used *telos* to refer to the goal of the law. The goal of the Law of Moses was to bring the Christ into the world!

Paul had to fight the troubling Judaizers who insisted on making the Mosaic Law part of God's power unto salvation. Judaizing teachers were busy trying to change the Gospel of Christ into another gospel, a powerless gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). While writing to combat the error of the Ju-

daizers, Paul explained that the Mosaic Law was not against the promises of God: "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been

introduces a contrary to fact condition. The fact being that the Mosaic Law was powerless to give life and nothing could change that fact. *Dunamenos* (ability, power) is of critical importance to one's study of

the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. This word is a present passive participle in the third attributive position, noun-article-adjective, modifying *nomos* (law), which is followed by the complementary infinitive *zoopoiesai* (make alive). The point is that the Mosaic Law, says Paul, was powerless to make one live. It

just did not have the ability to offer humanity the freedom from sin.

The Gospel is The Power of God Unto Salvation

Why is all of this so important to a study of the New Covenant of Jesus Christ? Because, what Paul said was that the Law of Moses was not God's power unto salvation. In another place Paul plainly explained what that power is: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). What is God's power unto salvation? The Gospel! "Power" in Romans 1:16 is the Greek word *dunamis*. Some say

Defender Via E-Mail

Defender (along with our weekly bulletin *Beacon*) is available to those who would like to receive it by e-mail. With the continued increase of expenses (paper, printing material, mailing expense, etc.) sending out the publication via e-mail will save us some expenses. It will also enable you to receive the paper the most expeditious way (you will receive it before others who have it being sent by regular mail). We will e-mail you an Adobe Acrobat PDF (a free reader is available from www.adobe.com). We will send you the file with the ability to print it on your printer if you desire. If you would like to receive either or both of these publications sent directly to your e-mail please send us your e-mail address at bellviewcoc@gmail.com. Your e-mail address will not be used for any other purpose than to send you these publications or information relating to them.

by the law" (Gal. 3:21). The Mosaic Law worked to bring in life through Christ and when that happened, the law fulfilled its purpose and was taken out of the way (Col. 2:14).

The Mosaic Law Was Not God's Power to Save

Of particular interest in Galatians 3:21 is the Greek phrase, "*ei* (if) *gar* (for) *edothē* (given) *nomos* (law) *hō* (the) *dunamenos* (ability, power) *zoopoiesai* (make alive)," which in the English means, "For if a law was given which was able to make alive." There are some things in the Greek text here which may help the Bible student grow in his knowledge of God's plan. For example, *ei* (if) in-

34th Annual Bellview Lectureship

June 13-17, 2009

Preaching from the Minor Prophets

that because this is the word from which the English word dynamite comes, that the Gospel is God's dynamite to blast sin out of one's life. However, when Paul wrote the verse he did not have the word dynamite in his mind. He was thinking about ability and power. You see, *dunamis* is the noun form of the participle *dunamenos* used in Galatians 3:21.

Notice further that Galatians 3:21 reads, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." The Greek text actually reads *ek* "out of" the law instead of "by" the law. This too is significant. After declaring the Gospel to be God's power to save Paul wrote: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Thus, the Gospel reveals the righteousness of God. What does "from faith unto faith" mean? Some say that this phrase means from the Old and New Testaments. However, the Greek reads, *ek pisteos eis pistin*, which literally means, "out of faith into or unto faith." The genitive *pisteos* is the source, which is the Gospel of verse 16 (cf. 3:27; Heb. 11:1). The accusative or the direct object, *pistin*, is the verbal action of faith (cf. Heb. 11:6). Therefore, the righteousness by which all men today are to live comes from the Gospel of Christ, which is God's power to save.

But They Say That Jesus Saves

While it is true that Jesus saves through His blood, it is equally true that man's response to Jesus' saving blood must come through hearing and obeying the Gospel of Christ. This is the part that the liberal does not like. Liberals want to do away with the New Testament as the pattern to which men must conform to be saved. Liberals want to hustle

God's grace at basement bargain prices, which is nothing more than mocking all that Jesus did to secure man's salvation. They offer cheap grace that does not save. As they endeavor to teach men to seek salvation through Christ and not through His Word, modern liberals are no better than the troubling Judaizers who went about preaching another gospel.

Paul plainly said that the Gospel is God's power to save, and that in the Gospel God's righteousness is revealed from its source to action in the believer. The Lord sent Paul to preach the Gospel (1 Cor. 1:17), and Christians are begotten through that same Gospel message (1 Cor. 4:15). Christians are people who have made the decision to subject themselves to the Gospel of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 9:13), because they have obeyed it (cf. 2 The. 1:8). One cannot escape the fact that the Gospel is God's power to save. The Gospel was sealed by the blood of Christ, which is despised by those who fail to honor Jesus' Gospel: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:29).

Why Do Some Proclaim Salvation Apart From The Gospel?

It is hard to imagine that some who claim to be ministers of the Gospel actually preach and teach a salvation that is separate from the Gospel, but some do. For example Al Maxey wrote:

The light available to this caveman, or some primitive living beyond the parameters of civilization, may well only be that of *Nature*. That then becomes *his* available light "coming down from

the Father of lights" (James 1:17). This man is therefore responsible for seeking to understand that revelation to the best of his ability, and also for ordering his life according to the truths perceived therein. Those who perceive GOD in this revelation, and who seek to live as He would have them to live, have *responded* to that revelation of the Creator, and God will judge their hearts and actions accordingly. Those who *REJECT* this light from above, and choose to continue living for *self*, will be rejected by the One who provided them that guidance in that revelation. Thus, regardless of the brightness or dimness of the light made available, *all* men have a choice; they will either seek and accept, or ignore and reject and God will judge accordingly, dispensing either life or death based on their choice.

Please do not misunderstand the context of Maxey's statement. If you read the article in question it is clear that Maxey wrote about people coming to Christ without the Gospel. It is no secret that Maxey and others like him have relegated their standard to that of subjectivity, based upon whatever light one might have, instead of the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ. People like the erring preacher and elder Al Maxey are certainly in the scope of Paul's statement: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4). The reason that men like this proclaim the false idea that salvation is obtainable without Gospel obedience is because they really do not believe. Remember that the Gospel is God's power to save "to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). They are like the unfaithful Hebrews of old: "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto

them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 4:2). They do not feel a need for the Gospel because it is hid to them. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (2 Cor. 4:3).

Conclusion

The Gospel of the kingdom is the Word of truth (Eph. 1:13). Of that specific Word of truth, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, James wrote: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of

firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). The point is that the Gospel is God's power to save. How to bring men into His grace was God's decision to make, and He decided to limit the light of salvation to His Gospel. No wonder "faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). What a sad declaration it is when liberals proclaim another gospel! They are serving up cheap grace that will only immerse its adherents with flammables made for the eternal burning. Their will is

obviously not "His own will." Their will cannot bring about life any more than the Mosaic Law could. The Gospel is God's power to save!

4852 Sauflley Field Rd. Pensacola, FL 32526

Works Cited

Maxey, Al. *Grace and the Caveman: Pondering the Parameters of Divine Acceptance of Human Response to Available Light*. 15 November 2004. 30 July 2008
<<http://www.zianet.com/maxey/reflx158.htm>>.

Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Electronic Ed. Chattanooga: AMG, 2000.

Unity—Can it Be Had in the Modern Religious World?

William S. Cline

Yes—if we respect the wishes of Christ. He prayed for unity (John 17:20-21).

Yes—if we believe there is one God. The Ephesians were told to keep unity on the basis of this truth (Eph. 4:3-6).

Yes—if we realize the dangers of division. Paul taught against religious division (1 Cor. 1:10-13).

Yes—if we are willing to yield human opinions to the authority of God's Word. Jeremiah urged that man's wisdom is not a safe guide (Jer. 10:23).

But—unity does not now exist! The modern religious world is divided into several hundred denominations who war over names, creeds, practices, organizations, worship, and

ritual.

Unity can be had when creeds are discarded in favor of the Bible. The world can have the blessings of unity when all people accept the Holy Scriptures as the sole authority in religion. The Bible only makes Christians only! If all are just Christians, nothing more and nothing less, all will be united!

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2008 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2007, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2007, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$80 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$81.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. If you would like only the 2008 book, it can be purchased for \$6.75 which includes postage. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

Defender is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States*. All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

February 2009

Number 02

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Does God's Providence Necessitate A Direct Operation?

Darrell Broking

Providence in Acts 24:2 is from the Greek word *pronoia*, which literally means "to think before," or "to take thought for." In the Acts passage, Felix's provision for a nation is being considered. Through Isaiah the prophet God said:

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and *there is* none else; I am God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all

my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken *it*, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed *it*, I will also do it (46:9-11).

The Isaiah passage discusses God's *forethought* or *providence* for all of His creation, which was about to be

revealed by the coming of Cyrus, the ravenous bird from the east who was to execute God's will. The providence of God is a fundamental biblical truth that affords the Christian with hope and comfort not afforded

the "sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mat. 5:45). The import of John 7:17 further indicates that **general providence** is used to help those who seek the Lord and

"feel after him" (Acts 17:27) to find Him. As noted by Paul, Christians are blessed in a special way by God: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose" (Rom. 8:28). **Special**

providence is a blessing that helps the Christian as he journeys through life. Paramount in the working of God's **special providence** is the Christian's willingness to submit to king Jesus. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these

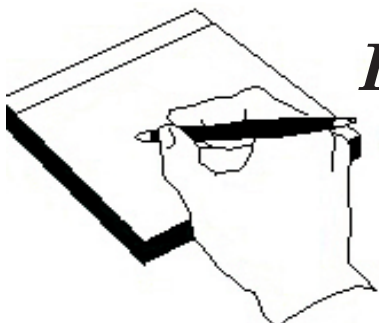
Defender Via E-Mail

Defender (along with our weekly bulletin *Beacon*) is available to those who would like to receive it by e-mail. With the continued increase of expenses (paper, printing material, mailing expense, etc.) sending out the publication via e-mail will save us some expenses. It will also enable you to receive the paper the most expeditious way (you will receive it before others who have it being sent by regular mail). We will e-mail you an Adobe Acrobat PDF (a free reader is available from www.adobe.com). We will send you the file with the ability to print it on your printer if you desire. If you would like to receive either or both of these publications sent directly to your e-mail please send us your e-mail address at bellviewcoc@gmail.com. Your e-mail address will not be used for any other purpose than to send you these publications or information relating to them.

to the world.

As one studies the subject of God's providence he should be impressed with the fact that God's **general providence** blesses all men. The Hebrews writer noted that Christ upholds "all things by the word of his power" (1:3). Therefore, God allows

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Sin Against the Child

During the famine in which Jacob sent his sons to Egypt and Joseph has them in prison, Reuben reminds his brothers what he told them about Joseph years earlier when he says: "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required" (Gen. 42:22). There are numerous ways to "sin against the child" or children.

Abortion

Abortion is certainly a "sin against the child." The wise man Solomon wrote, "These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Pro 6:16-19). Of particular interest is the "hands that shed innocent blood." How much more innocent can one be than when he is in the womb. The question that is often raised concerns whether or not that which is in the womb is human or just a blob of tissue. (Those who claim it is nothing but a blob of tissue want to call it a fetus instead of a person.)

The Scriptures clearly show us how God views the person in the womb. God said he knew Jeremiah before he was formed in the womb. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5). David said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made: marvelous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well" (Psa 139:14). Then God uses the same Greek word for one inside the womb and one outside the womb. When John the Baptist was in the womb, he is described as a *babe*

from the Greek βρέφος (*brepfos*): "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke 1:41). Yet, when speaking of Jesus after He had been born, we have the same word being used. "And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (2:12).

The world has dubbed the senseless murder of 6 million Jews a holocaust. If that is a holocaust, then what is it when the United States aborts about 1.3 million babies every year? There have been almost 50 million abortions in the United States since the Roe V. Wade decision in 1973. Abortion is a terrible "sin against the child."

Love and Discipline

Parents are to love their children. Paul told Titus to have the older women teach the younger women to love them: "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children" (Tit. 2:4). *Love their children* is one word in the Greek φιλότεκνος (*philoteknos*). This pertains to having a proper affection for one's children. While we would think that all mothers would have the proper affection for their children, we have found through the years that such is not the case. Additionally, that affection must be properly directed. Wiersbe writes, "I once heard a 'modern mother' say, 'I love my child too much to spank her.' In reality, she had a selfish love for herself and did not really love the child." The proper love is going to care for the child in all its needs so they will "increase in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). This type of love will show affection in holding and telling of the love you have for the children. Often we become so *busy* correcting our children, we forget to embrace them and tell them how much we love them.

Proper discipline is also necessary to really love to our children. *Discipline* involves training or instructing the child so he will follow the proper code of conduct that is regulated by God's Word. This will include instructing them by what we say. Moses told the children of Israel: "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Deu. 4:9). He then added:

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou

liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates (6:6-9).

Paul knew Timothy had been taught the Holy Scriptures from his childhood by his mother and grandmother (Eunice and Lois).

Discipline will also involve the proper example. Timothy had an unfeigned faith, but that unfeigned faith first dwelt in his mother and grandmother. It was their teaching and example that lead to Timothy's faith. Paul said we are "known and read of all men," yet how much more by our own children? They desire to emulate us in all we do. We sing and speak of our love for God, learning more about Jesus, putting God first, etc., yet do we live those things we sing? Children can spot hypocrisy in their parents in a heartbeat. Do we attend **all** services? Are we actively involved in the work of the local congregation? Are we out teaching the lost about the saving grace of Jesus and edifying those who are saved? Do we "pray without ceasing"? Do we add the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:3-11) to our lives and live according to the spirit producing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (Gal. 5)? We must live the life directed by God's Word and truly put God first in our lives if we ever expect our children to become and remain Christians.

Discipline includes correction as much as instruction and example. Children often do not know how to differentiate between good and evil. (Often we expect them to know right from wrong when they do not yet have that understanding.) Thus, parents must learn to say "no" and mean it when they say it. There is the adage (many think it is in the Bible and while not the words the thoughts are): "Spare the rod and spoil the child." God's Word puts it:

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes [early or immediately].... Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.... Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.... The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame (Pro. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15).

Spanking (not child abuse) done with love in one's heart for the child is necessary to the proper upbringing of the child. It will teach respect for authority, bring about obedience, prevent wrongdoing, and teach wisdom. Love your children enough to properly discipline them (in all that discipline means); failure to do so is to "sin

against the child."

MH

Continued from Page 1

things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33).

Important to a discussion about the providence of God is the question: "How does God operate in providence?" During the miraculous age, both natural (indirect) and supernatural (direct) means were employed by God to accomplish His purpose or providence. Until recent years, most brethren understood that today God works His providence through the use of **natural laws**, indirectly, not by supernatural means and directly. To justify his allegation that the Holy Spirit aids the Christian, directly, separate and apart from the Word of God, Mac Deaver suggests that God's providence is always a direct operation of varying degree. Accordingly, if brethren can understand that God operates directly on men in providence, then they can also understand that it is no big deal to have the Holy Spirit directly operating on the heart of the Christian. Hence, according to Mac Deaver, the Bible teaches something he calls **providence internal**, which is his direct operation on the heart of the saint, separate and apart from God's Word (*Debate* 81). Furthermore, Mac claims that the difference between providence and the miraculous is simply the "degree of power released" (*Prayer*). Additionally, brother Deaver alleges that when a brother denies the direct operation of God in providence today he is a deist who stifles, weakens, cripples, and kills the church (*Debate* 61, 147, 157).

Mac Deaver's allegation represents a serious departure from the well-studied and biblically true position faithful brethren once held on the subject of providence. Roy Deaver, while discussing Joseph and providence correctly observed:

Only twice in the entire story was there direct, miraculous involvement of God: (1) when God gave Joseph power to interpret the dreams of the butler and the baker, and (2) when God gave Joseph the power to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh. God's providence relates to his marvelous power to overrule all the details and affairs of our lives to the accomplishing of His will—and this, without in any way, becoming responsible for the things we do that are not according to His will. God was not responsible for the brothers [*sic*] hatred, nor for the woman's sinful solicitations, not for her lying—but He could and did overrule even these things (123).

Roy Deaver's comments are exactly correct and reveal one of the real dangers associated with Mac's doctrine.

If it is the case that **all** providence is a direct operation of God on men, then it necessarily follows that God is responsible for the sins of Joseph's brothers, Potiphar's wife, et al. Understanding this fundamental truth, Roy Deaver thoughtfully and carefully pointed out that God only directly intervened twice in the recorded account of Joseph saving his family. Additionally, if Mac's allegation is true, then what about all of the ungodly abominations committed by God's

servant Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:9)? The list can go one and on! If Mac Deaver's allegation is true, then the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination and foreordination is true. If not, why not? Taking the position that God's providence must always involve a direct operation is to limit the power by which God sustains all life! One does not have to be able to explain **how** God works indirectly through natural means to know that He does (Deu. 29:29).

Works Cited

- Deaver, Mac. "God, Providence & Prayer." *Spiritual Renewal Week*. Cookeville, TN: Tennessee Bible College, April 28, 2004. Audiotape.
- . *The Deaver-Lockwood Debate*. Austin, TX: Biblical Notes, 1998.
- Deaver, Roy. "What Does The Life Of Joseph Teach About The Providence Of God?" *The Providence of God*. Eds. Thomas B. Warren and Garland Elkins. Southaven, MS: Southaven Church of Christ, [1989].
- 4852 Saufley Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526

Change Agents and Their "Pharisaical" Accusations

Lee Moses

No one wants to be called a "Pharisee." While the Pharisees were religious leaders generally respected by the people, Jesus repeatedly took them to task for their defective doctrine, self-promoting attitude, misplaced accusations, and inconsistent actions. So, for any who professes to follow Christ, being called a "Pharisee" is a serious insult to one's faith. This is an insult that the change agents in the church love to hurl. The change agents' agenda is more or less to transform the Lord's church from strictly adhering to the biblical pattern to becoming a people-pleasing denomination. When they find in the road to their desired transformation an impediment (a faithful Christian who points out the error of such transformation), they deride that impediment as a "Pharisee." "Don't listen to that old Pharisee, he thinks that he is going to be saved by his works." "Those Pharisees condemn others for not following their views of the Bible." "Those Pharisees are stuck in the mire of past traditions, failing to realize that the world and the church are passing them by." However, what the change agents fail to realize is their accusations of oth-

ers as "Pharisaical" come back upon themselves.

Change agents accuse many in the church of being Pharisaical for alleged traditionalism. If this pertains to **traditionalism** as observed in the Pharisees, this is a serious allegation. When the Pharisees and scribes attempted to bind their tradition on Christ's disciples, Jesus applied Isaiah's rebuke to them: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7; quoting Isa. 29:13). Likewise, if any today were to teach manmade commandments as authoritative religious doctrine, that person's worship to God would be rendered vain.

Two primary areas in which change agents have accused churches of Christ of being traditionalistic are a cappella singing in worship and women's roles in the church. They claim that a cappella singing is merely a **tradition** of the churches of Christ, and not essential to scriptural worship. Yes, a cappella singing was certainly the type of music found in the worship of the church of Christ, or of any church claiming to be such, for over 1200 years following its

inception. Hence the name *a cappella*, literally, "in the manner of the chapel." Were the churches observing a manmade tradition, or a Divine principle? God must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24), and God's Word is truth (17:17). Christians must do all they do with Christ's authority (Col. 3:17), and singing is the only music in worship authorized by Christ (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; compare with Mat. 26:30).

Likewise, one can find that women have not historically served in leadership roles in the church. Obviously, things have changed in many churches that profess to follow Christ; which is why the change agents believe churches of Christ must likewise change to remain "current and relevant." However, reserving leadership roles for men is not just a "Church of Christ tradition," as per the Ashdodic speech of the change agents. The apostle Paul said, "I will therefore that men pray every where" (1 Tim. 2:8). This alludes to leading prayer in public worship, and *men* refers specifically to males in contrast to females (*aneer* 79). Paul went on to say, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I

2009 Spring CFTF Lectures

“Religion and Morality—From God Or Man?”

February 22 - 25, 2009

Elders: Kenneth Cohn, Buddy Roth, and Jack Stephens

David P. Brown, Director

Sunday, February 22

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

Monday, February 23

9:00 AM	Marriage—Who Originated It and Governs It?	Jack Stevens
10:00 AM	The Resurrection Christ—Is Jesus Christ Alive Today?	Michael Hatcher
10:00 AM	The Feminist Movement—“You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” But Was it Up or Down? (I)**	Sonya West
11:00 AM	Humanism and Pluralism—Is Man the Measure of All Things?	Wayne Blake
1:30 PM	Darwinism Evolution—Is Man Only an Improved Ape?	Skip Francis
2:30 PM	The Bible—Inspired by Man or God?	Paul Vaughn
3:30 PM	Abortion—Murdering a Baby or Removing a Blob of Protoplasm?	Dub Mowery
6:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 PM	The Nature of Truth—What is the Truth about Truth?	Daniel Denham
8:00 PM	Homosexuality—Didn’t He Make Them Male and Female?	Jess Whitlock

Tuesday, February 24

9:00 AM	Theistic Evolution—Is Evolution the Mechanism God Used to Create the Universe?	Ken Cohn
10:00 AM	Agnosticism—Can We Know Anything?	Ken Chumbley
10:00 AM	The Feminist Movement—“You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” But Was it Up or Down? (II)**	Sonya West
11:00 AM	The Age of the Earth—Young or Old?	Gene Litke
1:30 PM	The Sexual Revolution—Are We Dressing Fornication and Adultery in Formal Wear?	Johnny Oxendine
2:30 PM	Preacher Training Schools—Are They Living Up to the Reason They Were Begun?	Gene Hill
3:30 PM	Atheist Ethics—Are Ethics Without God Possible?	David Brown
6:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 PM	The Humanity of Christ—Is He Truly Human?	Danny Douglas
8:00 PM	Modesty—What Is the Bible’s Definition?	Lynn Parker

Wednesday, February 25

9:00 AM	Medical Doctors—Killers or Healers?	Buddy Roth
10:00 AM	The Historical Jesus—Is Christ a Mythological Being?	Lee Moses
11:00 AM	Post Modernism—Is My God Not Your God and My Truth Not Your Truth?	Gary Summers
1:30 PM	The Miracles of Christ—Did Jesus Work Miracles? If He Did, Why Did He?	Tim Cozad
2:30 PM	Deity of Christ—Is Jesus of Nazareth God?	Bruce Stulting
3:30 PM	“Good Ole Noah Built an Ark Like God Told Him to”—Are You Kidding Me?	John West
6:30 PM	CONGREGATIONAL SINGING	
7:00 PM	Christians Must Be Militant—Does Jesus Demand That the Church Confront Error?	David Watson
8:00 PM	Higher “Christian” Education—What Should You Expect Your Child to Be Taught?	Dub McClish

Lunch Provided by the Spring Congregation • Hardback Book of Lectures Available
 R. V. Hook-Ups • Video and Audio Recordings • Approved Displays
 Spring Church Secretary: Sonya West

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST, 1327 SPRING CYPRESS ROAD, SPRING, TX 77383

Church Office Phone (281) 353-2707

** LADIES ONLY*

E-mail: sonyawest@gmail.com

suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Tim. 2:11-12). Mere manmade tradition? Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and thus his writings reveal the mind and will of Christ (1 Cor. 2:9-16). In another passage that alludes to the Divine prohibition on women’s leadership roles in the church, Paul cautioned, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37; see 14:34).

Traditionalism has two definitions in *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*: (1) The doctrines or practices of those who follow or accept tradition and (2) The beliefs of those opposed to modernism, liberalism, or radicalism. Now certainly the church is to oppose modernism (John 20:30-31), liberalism (Rev. 22:19), and radicalism (Gal. 6:12-13; Col. 2:20-23). If the change agents’ charge against the church of our Lord is that we follow or accept manmade traditions as authoritative, the charge cannot stand. Furthermore, many change agents worship with churches that generally practice both a cappella singing in worship and male leadership in the church. When asked why, they allude to their “heritage” or “tradition.” So who is following manmade tradition? Who is more like the Pharisees, “teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”? The change agents’ *Pharisaical* accusations of tra-

ditionalism turn back on themselves.

Change agents accuse many in the church of being Pharisaical for alleged legalism. They hurl, “You Pharisees think you are going to be saved by meticulous law-keeping.” “You Pharisees don’t believe in grace.” I am unaware of any of their objects of criticism who believes that meticulous law-keeping in and of itself is going to save anyone. We readily affirm the same truth Paul affirmed:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:8-10).

We are fully dependent upon the grace of God for salvation. We cannot concoct a system that produces salvation, but notice in the same context that speaks of salvation by grace through faith, Paul says that Christians are created for the purpose of walking in the good works which God has prepared for them.

Can we as Christians brazenly reject the good works God has prepared for us, and still be saved? Can we merely believe in **some** truths Christ gave, and obey **some** works (or none of them) that Christ gave, and still be saved? One influential change agent went so far as to write: “A man need not have New Testament writings to know the will of God for holy living” (Hook 135). Such a statement might well prompt the question: “How then can I know the will of God for holy

living?” The response given: “New Testament Scriptures will not be necessary as [new Christians—LM] continue to call on their God in Christ.... Each will serve in his individual relationship with God” (Hook 136). This is to reject the grace of God: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Tit. 2:11-12). God’s grace reveals to us His will for holy living in the New Testament Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17; compare with John 12:48; Col. 2:14). If we do not have the New Testament Scriptures, or if we brazenly refuse to adhere to them, yet claim to have the sanction and salvation of God; we become like those of Israel who “going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. 10:3). Never has God allowed man to choose his own course of action for salvation (compare with Jud. 17:6; Pro. 14:12). And “faith without works is dead?” (Jam. 2:20).

Legalism is defined as “excessive adherence to law or formula” (Oxford). How does one adhere excessively, or too closely, to the teachings of the New Testament? “I give thee charge in the sight of God...That thou keep *this* commandment **without spot, unrebukeable**, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:13-14). We can be satisfied with nothing less than complete

34th Annual Bellview Lectureship

June 13-17, 2009

Preaching from the Minor Prophets

obedience to God's will.

Just as the change agents are satisfied with less than complete obedience to God's will, so were the Pharisees. The Pharisees loosed many commandments of God they apparently felt were superfluous. Jesus told them:

Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother (Mark 7:9-12).

Like the Pharisees, the change agents love making loopholes in God's law, and telling them "you are free" from complete obedience. Like the change agents, the Pharisees chose their own course of action for salvation. Again, the change agents' *Pharisaical* accusations come back on them. Change agents accuse others of Pharisaism for alleged *unbalance*. The change agents despise preaching that includes the more uncomfortable parts of God's counsel. Clearly, the balanced and necessary approach is to include **all** the counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27), something the Pharisees failed to do (Mat. 23:23).

Like the Pharisees, the change agents are often able to gain the favor

of the people. Part of the way they accomplish this is by hurling against faithful churches accusations and key pejorative terms, a prime example being *Pharisee*, but whether they accuse faithful Christians of hypocrisy, irrelevance, unlovingness, traditionalism, legalism, or unbalance; they end up accusing themselves. They stand self-accused as "Pharisaical."

Works Cited

Aneer. Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago, IL: Univ. of Chicago, 2000. Every lexicon of which this writer is aware concurs.
Hook, Cecil. *Free in Christ*. New Braunfels, TX: Cecil and Lea Hook, 1985.
Oxford American College Dictionary
PO Box 251; Mammoth Springs, AR 72554

Spiritual Blindness

Danny Douglas

An old fellow in Tennessee was undergoing an eye examination to see whether or not he should continue to drive. The examiner asked him: "How far can you see?" He replied: "How fer is it to the moon?"

Today, there are many who think that

their spiritual eyesight is in tiptop shape, when in reality their spiritual weakness indicates otherwise. Peter said regarding the Christian virtues: "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

Christ. But **he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off**, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Pet. 1:5-9). If one is not growing in Christ then he has a serious problem with his *eyesight* (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18).

704 Azalea Dr; Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2008 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2007, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2007, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$80 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$81.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. If you would like only the 2008 book, it can be purchased for \$6.75 which includes postage. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States*. All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

March 2009

Number 03

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Christian Spirit of Sacrifice

Edward R. Henderson, Jr.

For several years this penman has remained somewhat content with his efforts to place his words within the pages of an occasional sermon outline or in one of many Bible study lessons to be shared with various age groups of God's children. However, because of one particular in-depth study which I undertook a little over a year ago of the multitude of evidence that has been compiled and freely provided, by what sadly seems to be a decreasing number of true soldiers of Christ, I now feel it is time for me to at least put forth my own meager effort to reach out to our erring brother in Christ—Dave Miller. The following article is written primarily with brother Miller in mind, but certainly applies to the host of brethren in whom brother Miller has chosen to place so much confidence when it comes to the subject of bringing forth "fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8—NJKV) concerning his false teaching on elder reaffirmation and marriage intent. My studies are those of a simple "Truth Seeker" (Ecc. 12:10; Jer. 5:1), not those of one that can be simply lumped into an **imaginary** group of brethren with some supposed "hidden agenda." I am not one who

is well-known among our brotherhood because of the many Gospel meetings I have held, the various lectureships I have taken part in, or in the divers kind of periodicals that I have written for that are being produced by our brethren. I am not a *homegrown* Christian (one which was raised up in the Lord's church), but rather one that obeyed the Gospel later in life. My obedience came after taking time to truly examine my life and realizing the truth about the condition of my own soul, an attitude I have tried hard to make part of my daily mindset—a "Truth seeker!"

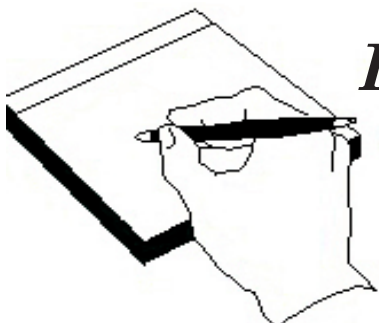
Concerning my in-depth study of the issues surrounding brother Miller, I cannot begin to claim that the material I have obtained is exhaustive, though I can honestly say that I have made great efforts to obtain a "balanced" amount of material. I can also honestly say (again in sadness as well as sheer amazement) that there has been only a select group of our brethren associated with this matter that has seemed willing to provide any material for an honest "Truth Seeker" to examine. The strange silence from brother Miller and those who surround him speaks volumes if

one is just willing to listen! Though I have read many thorough lessons dealing with brother Miller's error, I do not recall having read any one dedicated primarily to what I believe to be one of the most important, yet elementary, aspects of Christian living that seems to be missing from brother Miller's life, and that is the "Christian Spirit of Sacrifice."

The first time we read about the biblical principal of *sacrifice* in God's Holy Word is concerning the need to cover up the sin of immodest dress of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). Their realization of their own nakedness was due to Eve giving in to Satan's temptation to partake of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It as a sin which began at the point of touching the forbidden fruit (3:3) and continued on to her partaking of it and then influencing Adam to do the same (though we remember that Eve was created for the purpose of helping Adam and not hindering him as she did on this occasion).

The next account we read about the subject of sacrifice concerns the offspring of Adam and Eve: Cain and Abel (Gen. 4). From this familiar

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Marriage Or Not?

My wife came across a *strange* situation recently. She was speaking with a young lady who was going to be moving to Hawaii to be with her husband. This was strange because she had just broken up with her boyfriend of 5 ½ years. Yet, she had been *married* for six years. She went on to explain. She had *married* her teenage boyfriend six years ago prior to his entering the military—a married man who is in the military receives more money (benefits) than a non-married man. He had been transferred to Hawaii, and now she had broken up with her boyfriend, she was going to move to Hawaii to “try to make the *marriage* work.” They had gotten *married* so he could defraud the United States government out of some added money.

In 2000, Dave Miller answered questions relating to a similar situation. Questions were asked of brother Miller regarding a couple who *married* for one of them to gain entrance into the United States (defrauding the government). Brother Miller in what he claims was a “completely off-the-cuff response” (an off-the-cuff response that took place not once, not twice, not three times, not four times, but five times on not once, not twice, but on three different occasions) stated there must be mutual intention for a marriage to take place. (The situation that the questions related to was Everett Chambers *marring* a relative to defraud the government and gain entrance into the United States. After gaining entrance, they divorced. Miller’s “off the top of my head” response stated that it was not a marriage since they did not intend to be married, and, thus, Chambers would have the right to get married.) If the mutual intention did not exist, then it was not a marriage—according to brother Miller. (If you would like to listen to the actual responses made by brother Miller you can listen to them by obtaining the CD that I

created and is being made available for free by *Contending For The Faith*. Pay special attention to the answer given on August 20, 2000.)

Let us apply brother Miller’s standard to the first situation. Since this couple *married* to defraud the government (get more money or benefits while in the military), according to Miller, they are not married. During those 5 ½ years while she was with her boyfriend (even though *married*), she could have gotten a legal divorce from her *husband* and married her boyfriend supposedly with God’s approval. However, as previously noticed, she broke up with her boyfriend and now plans to try and make things work with the one she *married*. However, since it was a sham *marriage* (to defraud the government), will they need to get married for real (since they are not really married according to Miller’s stated views)? If they need to get married (for real), must they get a legal divorce prior to getting married?

There is no doubt that this couple is in a tangled web of sin and deceit. Brother Miller’s false views on marriage intent certainly do not help in this situation. As one can clearly see, brother Miller’s false view only confuses the situation more. While brother Miller claims the situation with Chambers is an “extremely rare, unusual, unique situation,” with the lack of morals in today’s society, we are likely to see more and more of these type of situations arise. Also, what is so “extremely rare, unusual, unique situation” with someone trying to defraud the United States Government by entering into a marriage to gain entrance into this country? While there are no statistics that I know of concerning these types of marriages, there are hundreds if not thousands of these that take place every year. Additionally, how many times (if brother Miller’s doctrine is true) could this be used by a couple who wanted to escape a “bad” marriage. They could claim it was simply a *marriage* of convenience or a sham *marriage*.

The truth of the matter is that if we stay with truth and refuse to enter into the false intent doctrine of Dave Miller, we will be safe. These people intended to get married: they intended to get a license, they intended to go to a person who has the legal right to marry them, they intended to go through the ceremony, they intended to file the marriage papers with the appropriate agency. They were contracting both a legal and God ordained marriage. (While Chambers had the right to get married, it might have been that the woman he married did not have that right. This does not change the answer brother Miller gave to the questions to which he responded.)

The purpose of these marriages was not what it should

have been. While they intended to get married (and in fact did get married), the purpose was to defraud the government. There are numerous other *purposes* for marriage that would certainly **not** be what they should be and what God intended. Marriage should be between two eligible partners (one who has never married, one whose spouse died, or one who put away their spouse because the spouse committed fornication) who love one another and have a desire to live as husband and wife till death do them part. Each partner should have the desire to bring about happiness in the one they are marrying and help their partner live a Christian life and obtain heaven's home. Brother Thomas B. Warren was correct when he titled his book: *Marriage is for Those Who Love God—and One Another*. However, even if two eligible partners get married for a purpose that is not the lofty elevated purpose God would have and instead marry for sordid, dishonorable purposes, they are still married.

MH

Continued from Page 1

Bible lesson we know that Cain would eventually murder his own brother because of the anger he felt due to God's respect for Abel's sacrifice. Able's sacrifice was one offered by faith (Heb. 11:4) and included direct instructions from God (Rom. 10:17), although the exact instructions are not recorded as such in the Old Testament record.

As we continue on into the pages of the Old Testament, we see another very important biblical account concerning sacrifice: Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac (Gen. 22). From this story we learn the true importance of biblical faith and the spirit of sacrifice, even when we are faced with what may seem to be the most difficult decision we will ever have to make in our lifetime. If our faith is as it should be, we can have the assurance of Abraham as he was about to embark upon his journey up Mt. Moriah with Isaac as he spoke to his young men: "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you" (22:5). This verse of Scripture implies that, though Abraham went up the mountainside with the full intention of taking his own son's life in obedience to God, he had a faith that knew God would not make him walk back down that mountainside alone (Heb. 11:17-19)!

As we enter the New Testament record, only one biblical account concerning the subject of sacrifice is really needed to illustrate the true importance of this topic:

God's giving of His Only Begotten Son as the sacrificial Lamb for the sins of all mankind! God's willingness to offer up Jesus Christ in sacrifice was foreordained from the very beginning of time (1 Pet. 1:20). Numerous Old Testament prophecies were given concerning this sacrifice (Dan. 2; Joel 2; Isa. 2). Four witnesses recorded in written detailed accuracy the fulfillment of God's sacrifice (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). It was the topic under consideration in the first Gospel sermon given by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Because of this sacrifice, the world has hope that would have otherwise been impossible to have (Eph. 2:12; Heb. 10:4). We have hope only when we by humble obedience to the Gospel plan of salvation live a life of faithfulness unto death (2 The. 1:8; Rev. 2:10), which includes a life that will repent when sin has been committed.

Though many other biblical examples of sacrifice are mentioned in Holy Writ, these four are well sufficient to illustrate the point I wish to make regarding brother Dave Miller and those who are choosing to support him in his error. They have a desperate need of the "**Christian Spirit of Sacrifice**." This need can be seen in the following points derived from the four areas of sacrifice we have just briefly studied:

Adam and Eve (Gen. 3)

Once sin has entered the family of God, its *leavening* nature soon involves others in that sin. As Christians we are suppose to be helping each other to stay away from sin instead of hindering them, even if it might mean sacrificing some of our own Christian liberties (2 Cor. 8).

Cain and Abel (Gen. 4)

Though Cain may have thought that he put forth his best effort by his definition of sacrifice, God had given explicit directions to the contrary. In similar fashion, brother Miller (as well as other brethren) may think that simply circulating a vague letter among a chosen few in the brotherhood is his best effort of what some have called his repentance. God has given explicit directions as to repentance (Jam. 5:16; 1 John 1:9; 5:16-17) and this is not it but instead is contrary to God's Word.

Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 22)

If we are truly striving to have a faith like Abraham, we can rest assured that God will take care of His children even in their most trying hour, regardless of how difficult the circumstances may seem at the time. The fact that it will certainly not be easy for brother Miller, or the once sound brethren who uphold him in his error, to do the right thing by making public repentance of the sins he has committed, that is still what God demands!

But, with a faith like Abraham, these brethren **could** once again pillow their head at the end of the day and have the “peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” (Phi. 4:7), due to a renewed zeal to be pleasing to God by doing only what His Word authorizes and by being reunited with the faithful children of God by their repentance!

God the Father and God the Son (Various Passages)

We know from the Bible that Jesus Christ was not guilty of any sin as He hung upon that cross between Heaven and earth as though unfit to be in either (1 Pet. 2:22). Yet we also know that He left the comfort of His heavenly home knowing

that sacrifice was necessary because of sin! How much more should a proclaimed disciple of Christ be ready to sacrifice himself if it would mean the salvation of even one soul (primarily being his own)? When teaching Bible study classes, regardless of the age of the students, I have often said that to be a “Christian means to be Christ-like,” and to be “Christ-like means to be like Christ.” Being “like Christ” demands a true “Christian Spirit of Sacrifice.”

In closing I must say that, as a “Truth Seeker,” I am well aware of my own frailties and shortcomings. I also am well aware of my own willingness to sacrifice, even when it may seem like the most difficult

decision I will ever have to make in my life. Having said that, I believe I would be safe to say that I, along with many other caring brethren, would be most willing to repent **for** brother Miller and our other erring brethren who uphold him in his rebellion, **should we have Bible authority for doing so.** However, **we do not have Bible authority for doing so!** Only these brethren can repent of their individual sins and start the healing process to the schism that has entered the Lord’s church on their watch. Will they? I pray that they will, but until they do I must ask: **Brethren, where is your *Christian Spirit of Sacrifice*?**

2707 CR 115; Fort Payne, AL 35967

Does Forgiveness Plus the Direct Touch of the Holy Spirit Equal Spiritual Life? A New View of the Double Cure

Darrell Broking

Gus Nichols once said:

To be “born of the Spirit” (John 3:8) one must be led by the Spirit. When a man has been “led” by the Spirit of God, he is a “son” of God, he is a child of God. The Holy Spirit’s work in the process of the new birth is defined as “leading” us—which he does through the inspired word he revealed. Those who follow as the Spirit guides, have the new birth, or are “born of the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit, then, makes us children of God. There is no controversy about that, I presume, among any of us” (12).

Brother Nichols was obviously speaking to a generation of brethren who disagreed on the manner of the Spirit’s indwelling the Christian, but agreed on the biblical truth that the Holy Spirit does not work directly upon the heart of the sinner or the saint. In Nichol’s day it was generally

understood that the Holy Spirit provides spiritual life by leading men to obey God’s Word. If brother Nichols were alive today, he would have to conclude the aforementioned statement by saying: “There is controversy about that, it is obvious, among some of us today.”

It is strange for a student of the Bible to hear it said that the forgiveness of sins and obtaining spiritual life are not one and the same thing. The idea expressed herein is that when one is baptized for the remission of sins he is forgiven, but the forgiven one needs something in addition to his newfound forgiveness to be revived spiritually. He needs, it is alleged, a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon his heart to receive spiritual life. If it were true that the Holy Spirit must directly operate upon the

heart of the forgiven for him to have spiritual life, the Holy Spirit did not know it when He inspired Holy Writ. The Holy Spirit said that the Gospel saves man (1 Cor. 15:2). He went on to explain the facts of the Gospel as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (15:3-4). In another place, the Holy Spirit explained how the facts of the Gospel are obeyed. An alien sinner dies and is buried with Christ in baptism, and when he comes up out of the water as a new creature he stands in the likeness of Jesus’ resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4). Sin separates men from God, and proper baptism removes that separation at the moment of forgiveness!

From whence comes the idea that one must have a direct (Deaver-Fox 239)¹ operation of the Holy Spirit upon his heart to become spiritu-

ally alive? Mac Deaver argues that Romans 8:11 teaches that the Holy Spirit directly operates upon the heart of the forgiven to make him alive. This doctrine has been evolving with Mac Deaver for several years. While debating Marion Fox in 1994 Mac used a chart upon which it was written: "...and which is the means of God's giving life to the mortal bodies of the brethren (Rom. 8:11 [sic])" (Deaver-Moffitt 132). In this context Mac Deaver was arguing that the indwelling of the Spirit accomplished this. In his debate with Bill Lockwood Mac said:

By the way, forgiveness and having life are not the same things. But it is only to forgiven parties that God gives, or bestows, the Holy Spirit. In Romans 8:11, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, then He that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall give life to your mortal bodies, through His Spirit that dwelleth in you." You are not spiritually alive until the Spirit takes up His abode (Deaver-Lockwood 14).

Mac continued this argument in the Deaver-Moffitt debate:

Well he (Moffitt) says Romans 6:11. Dead to sin, but alive unto God. That's right. And in Romans 8:11, he says how that is. Romans 6, he says you are baptized into Christ and Romans 8, he says you've got the Holy Spirit. That's what made you alive (88-89).

Hence, Mac Deaver believes he has a passage of Scripture that explicitly teaches his direct help (operation) theory. Mac Deaver's view of Romans 8:11 is developed around the comments of Roy Deaver, who suggests that Romans 8:11 is not looking to the general resurrection of the dead because that resurrection "will not be dependent upon the indwelling of the Holy Spirit" (264-266). Roy Deaver's a prior assumption that quickening the mortal body is depen-

dent upon the indwelling of the Holy Spirit does not help his case when it comes to Romans 8:11 and Paul's use of the future tense.

To circumvent the effect and meaning of the future tense verb "shall quicken," Deaver attributes it to the category of the "progressive future" (Deaver-Moffitt 218-220)². By this Roy Deaver means that the future tense of "shall quicken" functions grammatically like a progressive or descriptive present tense verb; therefore, according to the way Mac teaches it, the Spirit directly touches the forgiven and makes him spiritually alive. To make his argument, Roy Deaver actually redefined how the progressive future functions to force the verb "shall quicken" into a present tense mold. If Paul intended to communicate Roy Deaver's concept, he would have used a present tense verb. Please understand that there are events that take place in the future and will continue in a progressive manner. This is true with regard to the resurrected body. God will raise our bodies and make our mortal bodies alive by clothing them with immortality, and He will keep those bodies alive in a progressive sense. If there is a progressive function to the verb "shall quicken" in Romans 8:11 this is it.

Daniel B. Wallace notes: "With reference to time, the future tense is always future from the speaker's presentation (or, when in participle form, in relation to the time of the main verb)" (567). As Paul was writing Romans 8:11 he said: "if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you [right now in the present], he that raised up Christ from the dead [God] shall also quicken [sometime in the future] your mortal bodies by his Spirit [the agency God will use to do this in the

future] that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11). Grammatically, it is impossible to take the future tense of "shall quicken" and transform it into the present tense Roy Deaver needed to make his argument. Because Paul discussed the blessings of the life that now exists in Christ and the future resurrection from the Christian perspective, does not mean that his statement about giving life to the mortal bodies of men refers only to Christians. Because the Christian has spiritual life now, he can long and hope for his immortal body and all that is associated with it. Those who practice sin do not enjoy the life that comes through Gospel obedience; hence, they will have no joy or peace when they are clothed with their immortal bodies.

Please understand the seriousness of the error being taught publicly by Mac Deaver, W. Terry Varner, (Varner iii-iv)³ and others. The argument, that is the error, that alleges that at baptism one receives the forgiveness of his sins and then the Holy Spirit directly works on his heart to give him life, is a doctrine in evolution. The natural progression of this error is for it to evolve into the false doctrine that the Christian today receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but it will not stop there, it cannot stop there. The progression of this error will further develop into the full-blown Calvinistic error that the Holy Spirit must work directly upon the heart of the alien sinner in the same manner brother Deaver has him now working directly upon the saint. Mac Deaver can already sing the hymn, Rock of Ages, and express the double cure of the song as forgiveness followed by a direct touch of the Holy Spirit. How long will it be until he sings it with the mindset of a full-blown Calvinist?

Works Cited

- Nichols, Gus. "Lectures on The Holy Spirit." Montgomery, AL: Southern Christian University, 1994.
- Deaver, Mac. *The Deaver-Fox Debate*. Spring, TX: Bible Resource, 1995.
- . *The Deaver-Moffitt Debate*. Marietta, GA: Therefore Stand Pub., 2002.
- . *The Deaver Lockwood Debate*. Austin, TX: Biblical Notes, 1998.
- Deaver, Roy C. *Romans God's Plan For Man's Righteousness*. Austin, TX: Biblical Notes, 1992.
- Varner, W. Terry. "Preface." *The Deaver-Moffitt Debate*. Marietta, GA: Therefore Stand Pub., 2002.
- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond The Basics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.

Endnotes

¹Mac Deaver does not like his position explained as a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in one's heart. He prefers to describe his doctrine as the "direct help" of the Holy Spirit instead of a "direct operation" of the Holy Spirit, because the idea of a direct operation is associated with Calvinism. The fact of the matter is that Mac Deaver is teaching a modified brand of Augustinian/Calvinism which will continue to evolve into full blown Calvinistic error.

²Jerry Moffitt thoroughly defeated Deaver's position on Romans

8:11 in his final negative speech. Deaver.

³W. Terry Varner, an instructor and frequent lecturer at the West Virginia School of Preaching wrote the preface in the Deaver-Moffitt debate book. Brother Varner wrote: "Brother Deaver set forth evidence showing clearly that it is the case that the Word of God is not the only thing involved in the Christian's sanctification, but that the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Word of God operates directly to sanctify the heart of the Christian." *4852 Saufley Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526*

34th Annual Bellview Lectureship

June 13-17, 2009

Preaching from the Minor Prophets

Voting on Elders

Michael Hatcher

Brethren C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside have long been known for their soundness and wisdom. Many hold them in high esteem. Multitude is those who have profited by the use of the excellent material they produced. They worked together to write a series of short books titled *Sound Doctrine* with the first volume copyrighted by brother Nichol in 1920 and the last volume (Vol. 5) having a copyright of 1952.

In looking through these books, there are an interesting couple of paragraphs dealing with the eldership and members of the congregation. It appears they were able to *see* into the future and warn brethren of actions that now some have practiced and many are now defending. Read what they wrote first in 1923.

Deposing Elders

A man who possesses the qualifications and has been selected by the congregation for one of the bishops will remain an elder in that congregation so long as he possesses the qualifications, or till he moves away. Let it be remembered that elders are humans, and though they make mistakes, as well as all humans do, it is better to assist them in overcoming such mistakes, knowing that "they watch for your souls," than to organize a mob, attempt to depose them, or demand their resignation. Let it be remembered that if in your congregation there is an elder—a man possessing the qualifications, whom you have selected as one of the overseers of the congregation—he is an elder made by the Holy Spirit, and for you to seek to oust him is to antagonize the Holy Spirit. It is possible that he may appear

to be guilty of things which disqualify him for the eldership, but even then he should be accorded a fair hearing. For some one to form a dislike for the elders, and make a motion to depose them, and attempt to carry such by a popular vote, without the elders having been given a fair trial, is nothing short of the mob spirit (3:98-99).

Possibly the first warning was not sufficient to emphasize the danger in such a practice, so in the next volume (Vol. 4) having a copyright of 1924 they again give a warning.

Churches Not Careful

Many churches are not careful as to their teachers. They send for preachers whom they know only through reports in the papers. As a result they frequently get trouble on their hands, and the church is injured so that it may never recover. When the tide of

innovations swept over Texas many churches could have been saved had the leaders been watchful, and kept designing preachers out. Many elders realized this after it was too late. They were not watchful. Another innovation is now springing up, namely, settling matters by majority vote; and churches are being disturbed, and some of them divided. When it suits their purpose they vote the elders out. Will the elders protect themselves and the churches against this danger? (4:169-170).

Yet, we come to recent events, in 1990 Dave Miller preached a sermon advocating the reevaluation and reaffirmation of elders (which is nothing more than “vote the elders out”) and which the Brown Trail Church of Christ practiced. They practiced it again in 2002 and both times they voted some of the elders out. To Brown Trail elders credit, they did eventually repent after the second time they practiced it.

Other brethren have arisen who have supported what brother Miller taught and the practice of it (i.e., Mac Deaver, B. J. Clarke, Joshua

Day, et al.). These brethren say this is simply an expedient which a congregation has the right to use. There are others who will state the sinfulness of the practice, yet defend Dave Miller and Brown Trail’s practice of it (i.e., Tommy Hicks, Curtis Cates, “they just had to do it” which is nothing more than situation ethics).

Then there are what seems to be a growing number who admit the practice is sinful, but do not believe it is a fellowship matter (i.e., Keith Mosher, Wesley Simons, et al.). These type of brethren do not believe this sin should divide the beautiful bride of Christ. I do not understand how sin does not affect fellowship. If this sin does not and will not affect fellowship among brethren, then why should any sin affect it?

Many others seem to take the coward’s way out and simply not say anything. Then there is at least one who wants you to sign a confidentiality statement before talking about it (Garland Elkins did this to John Rose a former MSOP student). Can

you imagine the apostle Paul going to Corinth and then saying something like this: “Unless you sign this confidentiality statement, I will not talk to you about the problems you are having here at Corinth.” To even suggest the apostles (any of them) would act in such a way in ludicrous. Why would a man act in such a way if he did not have something to hide?

Brethren, we need to return to standing fast for the truth and not being swayed by big names or organizations. Brethren Nichol and Whiteside knew beforehand the evil nature of elder reevaluation and reaffirmation. They warned brethren about it. Sadly, many, it seems, simply will not listen. Years ago brother Ira Y. Rice made the statement: “You just cannot warn some brethren.”

Works Cited

- Nichol, C. R. and R. L. Whiteside. “Elders.” *Sound Doctrine*. Vol. III. Clifton, TX: Nichol Publishing, 1923. 88-100.
 ---. “Letter to the Church at Ephesus.” *Sound Doctrine*. Vol. IV. Clifton, TX: Nichol Publishing, 1924. 163-176.
 4852 Sauflley Field Rd; Pensacola FL 32526

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2008 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2007, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2007, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as “baptism for the remission of sins” in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$80 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$81.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. If you would like only the 2008 book, it can be purchased for \$6.75 which includes postage. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

April 2009

Number 04

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



The Triviliization of Truth (The Circle)

Gary W. Summers

The following piece of writing has occasionally been used by some over the years; on February 10, 2009, it (surprisingly) appeared in *The Forest Hill News*, edited by Barry Grider.

I DREW MY CIRCLE AGAIN

When I first became a member of the church, my circle was very big...for it included all who, like myself, had believed and been baptized. I was happy in the thought that my brethren were many...but—having a keen and observant mind—I soon learned that many of my brethren were erring. I could not tolerate any people within my circle but those who, like myself, were right on all points of doctrine and practice. Too, some made mistakes and sinned. What could I do? I had to do something! I drew my circle, placed myself and a few as righteous as I within, and the others without. I soon observed that some within my circle were self-righteous, unforgiving, jealous, and proud, so in righteous indignation, my circle I drew again, leaving the Publicans and sinners outside, excluding the Pharisees in all their pride, with myself and the righteous and humble within. I heard ugly rumors about some brethren. I saw then that some of them were worldly minded; their thoughts were constantly on things of a worldly nature, they drank cof-

fee, when, like me, they should drink tea. So duty bound, to save my reputation, I drew my circle again, leaving those reputable, spiritually-minded within. I soon realized in time that only my family and I remained in the circle. I had a good family, but to my surprise, my family finally disagreed with me. I was always right. A man must be steadfast. I have never been a factious man! So in strong determination I drew my circle again, leaving me quite alone.

Some observations are in order concerning this variation of an old theme. The first is that the fanciful outlook described in these lines could just as easily go in the opposite direction. Below is an alternate version.

I DREW MY CIRCLE AGAIN

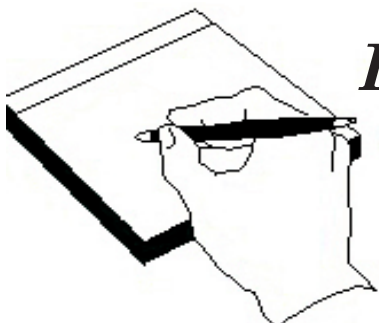
When I first became a member of the church, my circle was quite small, for it excluded all who, unlike myself, had not been baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. I was happy in the thought that I had obeyed the Gospel—but sad to see so many religious folks in error. I could not tolerate those outside my circle in denominations who were wrong on points of doctrine and practice. But then I noticed that some in my fellowship were wrong on certain issues, also. What could I do? I drew my circle

again and placed inside all who were as righteous as we were, whose fruits were as good as ours. I soon observed that some in the church were legalistic and dogmatic; so in rebellion against such attitudes I drew my circle again to include all immersed individuals, regardless of the reason, since they at least were involved in the right action. When some brethren complained about my "liberal" attitude, I began to wonder if I were too exclusive yet. Why, there are so many who have only been sprinkled as children, and they seemed as sincere as anyone. And why should some be excluded just because they wear immodest apparel, drink socially, and take trips to Las Vegas? I drew my circle to include them. Now I felt comfortable that I had included a great number, but Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and atheists were still outside my circle, and some of these were my friends! I have never been a "grace only" type of guy, but how could I exclude all of these? I proudly abolished my circle, and now I love everyone.

Although both of these versions make the point not to be too exclusive or too inclusive, they are both too exaggerated and too simplistic to be of any real value. The original deserves an evaluation.

First, it either unwittingly or

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Numbers

Numbers are everywhere. However, what we have in mind here is the desire for big numbers regarding how many are members of specific congregations. There should be the desire of every member to gain numbers. Why? Numbers represent souls. Every Christian will be concerned about the salvation of souls.

Jesus left heaven's abode to come to this world to save souls. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He says this same basic statement prior to giving the parable of the lost sheep: "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Mat. 18:11). Jesus had told the scribes and Pharisees: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). When the disciples argued who would be the greatest, Jesus told them: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mat. 20:28). In teaching that He was the door of the sheepfold and the good shepherd, He said: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Jesus also taught His disciples to be concerned about souls. Jesus sent His disciples out on a limited commission to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" to "preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 10:6, 7). Prior to returning to heaven, Jesus gave His apostles a Great Commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mat. 28:19-20). Mark records: "And he said unto

them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Jesus wanted His disciples concerned about the soul of every man.

All Christians should be concerned with every man's soul. What Jesus taught His apostles in the Great Commission in preaching the Gospel to every creature is just as applicable to all Christians as it was the apostles. Notice in Matthew's account of the Great Commission, the apostles were to teach the ones they were making disciples "to observe all things" He had commanded them. He had just commanded them to go preach the Gospel to every creature. Thus, all disciples (Christians) are to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. The early church realized this obligation: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). With such marching orders it is no wonder that in the space of about thirty years Paul would state: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was **preached to every creature which is under heaven**; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Col. 1:23). So every Christian should be concerned about numbers as they represent souls.

We, however, have an alarming trend in the church today. Many congregations are concerned about numbers for numbers sake. They want a big congregation. A few years ago a preacher told me he was looking to move from the congregations for which he preached because he wanted to preach for a larger congregation (it was not that the congregation he was preaching for was not paying him sufficiently, but he thought more of himself than he should and wanted a congregation with larger numbers). While this preacher verbalized his desires, many by their actions show they have the same desire. When the desire to have large numbers in attendance begins to take precedence, then truth take a backseat to the numbers. Compromise with God's Word follows when numbers become more important. Initially the compromise is slight with just small almost imperceptible changes taking place. However, once the compromise begins, it moves to others compromises because if one can compromise in one area, then he can compromise in every area. There is no stopping point with compromise.

The bulletin of the Forest Hill Church of Christ, edited by Barry Grider, dated February 10, 2009, is certainly cause for concern among faithful brethren (this congregation oversees Memphis School of Preaching and Barry

Grider is one of the instructors in the school). Brother Grider's article, "I Got Used to It," makes a valid point that we should not bind what God has not bound. However, he goes beyond what we would call our *anti* brethren to what he would view a new anti-ism—those who have just gotten use to doing things a certain way and do not want change. Should we no longer oppose any change? One might believe such from what brother Grider wrote especially seeing the next two articles. However, at least he did forbid those who would add mechanical instrumental music in worship to God, but what about all those other changes the "change agents" would make?

Brother Tyler Young (preacher for the church of Christ in Roanoke, TX) wrote the second article and given full endorsement by brother Grider, titled "Binding Where God Has Not." While there are things in the article in which all would agree, there are also some very worrisome ideas. He states we should not have fellowship concerns about things such as what version of the Bible one might use in teaching and preaching (I wonder if that would include the Readers Digest Bible, the NIV, and others), dismissing Sunday evening services for small group meetings or for the Super Bowl, serving coffee and doughnuts in Bible classes or missing services for sporting events. Are not all these things (and maybe others) not simply compromising our standards to appeal to the masses to gain larger numbers for the congregation?

Last, but certainly not least, brother Grider printed the old article that so many rank liberal congregations have run, "I Drew My Circle Again." Sound brethren have exposed and shown the error of this circle article for years. Man has no right to draw his circle, only to recognize the "circle" drawn by the Lord. This article implies the need to fellowship everyone and there are no restrictions given by God regarding our fellowship. Was this placed in the Forest Hill bulletin to condition brethren for a wider fellowship (more numbers no matter what people believe and practice)?

Brethren, these are troublesome times. However, God will be with those who remain steadfastly faithful to His Word. This is true no matter how large or small the number might be. Let us continue to "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."

MH

Continued from Page 1

intentionally mocks the Scriptures. Jesus did say that only few would seek and find the narrow gate that leads to salvation (Mat. 7:13-14). Furthermore, only two who

left Egypt entered into the Promised Land (although Moses was certainly saved). Most of those who died in the wilderness lacked faith. How many were saved on the ark when God destroyed the world with a Flood? Only eight human beings survived. Did Noah draw his circle too small?

In Jesus' parable of the sower, three types of people who actually received the seed became Christians. Of those, two types fell away (13:3-9, 18-23). The number of those who are faithful to God in any generation is always few. Therefore, to ridicule brethren who exclude from fellowship those whom God excludes makes fun of both God who gave such commandments and those who follow them (1 Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:8-12; Rom. 16:17-18; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 9-11).

Second, the Bible tells us what to do about brethren who are erring. Whether they are wrong in a doctrinal or a moral matter, we have the responsibility to speak to them (Gal. 6:1; Jam. 5:19-20). Of course, some do not want to be spoken to. They refuse to return telephone calls, e-mails, or letters; they do not want anyone to visit them, either. Usually, this type of behavior is an admission of guilt. They do not want to discuss what they have already made their minds up to do anyway. Those who are in sin know it; they have made their decision and do not want to be confronted about it. They give members of the church no choice but to draw their circle smaller.

Third, the "self-righteous, unforgiving, jealous, and proud" are in as much danger as those morally or doctrinally astray, for those attitudes will lead to the commission of a great many sins. Jealousy (envy), for example, led to the crucifixion of Christ (Mat. 27:18). Pride and self-righteousness were also problems of the Pharisees, and they led to a rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. They could not even entertain the idea that God might be concerned about the Gentiles (Acts 22). Of course, to be unforgiving is to exclude oneself from being forgiven by God (Mat. 6:14-15). However, those who possess such attitudes cannot be excluded from fellowship unless one has first discussed with them the danger they are in.

Fourth, the use of the phrase, *righteous indignation*, is intended to be a humorous counterpoint to *self-righteous*, as *humble* corresponds to *proud*. This contrast does not consider that the humble do truly attempt to walk in obedience to God (Jam. 4:6, 10) and that a genuine righteous indignation exists. God has acted out of indignation on numerous occasions (Deu. 29:28; Psa. 78:49; Isa. 34:1-2; Heb. 10:27; et al.). It should be so that, when human beings take offense, we must be certain that it is against

actual sin and injustice.

Fifth, truth is trivialized in the statement that some “drank coffee, when, like me, they should drink tea.” Although this probably was an attempt at humor to indicate that brethren divide over non-essential things at times, it does not succeed because it implies that all divisions among Christians are matters of option. Perhaps the writer could define more precisely what he thinks are issues of no consequence. Below is a list of doctrines. Which ones are unimportant?

1. People can be saved without being immersed for the forgiveness of their sins.

2. Jesus built and died for all denominations.

3. Instrumental music in worship to God is pleasing to God.

4. A Christian (one who has truly been saved) cannot fall from grace.

5. All prophecies in the New Testament (including ones in the book of Revelation) were fulfilled by A.D. 70.

6. All of life is worship.

7. The Holy Spirit operates on the Christian directly—in addition to Divine Providence or through His Word.

8. Abortion and homosexuality are not sins.

Which of these requires “circles”? Can a Christian fellowship those who are sprinkled (#1)? Can he fellowship all who are in manmade denominations (#2)? Can he fellowship those who use instruments of music in their worship (#3)? Can he fellowship those who believe that they can never fall from grace (#4)? Can he fellowship those who hold to the Max King error (#5), the Dobbs’ falsehood (#6), or to the Deaver doctrine (#7)? Are there any moral issues upon which he must take a stand (#8)? Do these things involve the difference between drinking coffee and tea?

Sixth, “I was always right.” Although the statement is made out of sarcasm, how many people, including the writer of this “circle” bit would

affirm, “I am usually wrong”? Do not most of us operate under the assumption that we are right? Do we desire to follow the Lord and **not** be right? Were those who “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42) right? Is being right attainable or not? If the author answers, “No,” is he certain that he is right?

Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb were alone in their insistence that they go up and conquer the land. Stephen stood alone against the Jews (Acts 7). All men fled and left Jesus alone. Should all of these have started drawing bigger circles? Doing what is right is not determined by the majority; it is determined by Truth. The fact that Jeremiah was ignored while the false prophets were heeded did not prevent Jerusalem from being destroyed. To be sure, some men invent their own traditions (Mat. 15:8-9), but such cannot deter us from taking a stand for the truth when it ought to be defended.

3671 Oak Vista Ln; Winter Park, FL 32792

How to Avoid Facing Our Failures

Darrell Broking

Change is Cyclic

One of the lessons to be learned from studying the Old Testament is that apostasy can happen quickly. It was not long after the death of Joshua that the children of Israel went into their cyclic behavior of sin, separation, sorrow, supplication, and salvation that was so often characterized by Judges 21:25: “In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which was* right in his own eyes.” Joshua’s stalwart faith and leadership was quickly forgotten by the new generation in Israel. That we are always one generation away from apostasy is nothing new. Judges 18:30 reads, “And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of

Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.” This verse is not without controversy. It is suggested by many that the rendering of the name Manessah in the text is a variant reading, which when corrected should read Moses. Barnes noted, “In the Hebrew text the name here rendered Manasseh is written M^NSH. Without the N [nun] suspended over the line, the word may be read: Moses, whose son was Gershom Exo. 2:22, whose son or descendant Jonathan clearly was” (461). Knowing how quickly change can take place, it would not be surprising to find Moses’ grandson leading people in unauthorized worship. This is no more surprising than finding Roy Deaver’s

grandson throwing Bible authority out the window!

The New Testament also denotes how quickly change can take place. The reason that we have the New Testament epistles is because of all of the attempts to change the doctrine of Christ. Troubling Judaizers were constantly stirring up trouble in churches established by Paul. First and Second Thessalonians have an amazing example of how quickly change can take place. For example, the brethren in Thessalonica were in a state of confusion and despair, which was due to their ignorance about the resurrection from the dead. They were concerned that the dead in the Lord would not have the same advantage that they had. The problem addressed in 1 Thessalonians

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

34th Annual Bellview Lectures

June 13 - 17, 2009

Saturday, June 13			Tuesday, June 16		
7:00 PM	The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 3:7-12)	Danny Douglas	9:00 AM	The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13)	Gary Summers
7:45 PM	Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12)	Doug Post	10:00 AM	God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2)	Jess Whitlock
Sunday, June 14			11:00 AM	Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14)	Roelf Ruffner
9:00 AM	Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17)	Ken Chumbley	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
10:00 AM	Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7)	Wayne Blake	1:30 PM	Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1)	Johnny Oxendine
<i>Lunch Break</i>			2:30 PM	Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)	David Brown
2:00 PM	Polluted Worship (Mal. 1:7-14)	Loy Hardesty	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:00 PM	God's Goodness and Severity (Joel)	Dennis "Skip" Francis	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6)	Dub McClish
7:00 PM	The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12)	John West	7:45 PM	Consider Your Ways (Haggai)	Harrell Davidson
7:45 PM	Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12))	Paul Vaughn	Wednesday, June 17		
Monday, June 15			9:00 AM	How Long? (Hab. 1:2)	Lester Kamp
9:00 AM	Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah)	Michael Hatcher	10:00 AM	The Opened Fountains (Zec. 13:1)	Tim Smith
10:00 AM	Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2)	Terry Hightower	11:00 AM	What Doth the Lord Require (Mic. 6:8)	Jimmy Gribble
11:00 AM	Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3)	Fred Stancliff	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
<i>Lunch Break</i>			1:30 PM	Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1)	David Watson
1:30 PM	Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3)	Darrell Broking	2:30 PM	God's Love (Hos. 1-3)	Gene Hill
2:30 PM	The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17)	Daniel Denham	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM		<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5)	Darrell Broking
7:00 PM	Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6)	Bruce Stulting	7:45 PM	A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11)	Lynn Parker
7:45 PM	Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14)	Tim Cozad			

Bellview Lectures Information

Housing

The Ramada (7051 Pensacola Boulevard; Pensacola, FL 32505) is providing a special rate for those attending the Bellview Lectures. The price (tax not included) is \$55—1 to 2 people per room. Their phone number is 850/476-9091. Tell them you are attending the Bellview Lectures when making your reservations. If you are planning on attending the lecture-ship you may want to make your motel reservations early.

Meals

The women of the Bellview Church of Christ will provide a free lunch Monday through Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants will be available at the registration table in the foyer.

Books

The lectureship book, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets* will be available to those attending the Bellview Lectures at a reduced rate (the cost of the book has yet to be determined). The book will contain 29 chapters and approximately 400 pages. Everyone will want to purchase a copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

Books-on-CD

The Bellview lectureship books (1975-1976, 1978, 1988-2005, 2007-2009) will be available on CD in Adobe PDF. The CD also includes Defender (1970, 1972-2008), Beacon (1972, 1974-2008), and other material. The cost of the CD has yet to be determined.

DVDs

All lectures will be recorded on DVDs. They may be purchased during the Bellview Lectures or by mail order afterwards. (We request the cooperation of all who attend the Bellview Lectures in keeping the pulpit area free of privately-owned recorders and microphones.) If you would like to make your own recordings, please see one of our sound technicians in the sound room.

Transportation

If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office. We will arrange to meet you, at no charge, if we know when, where, airline, flight number, and the number in your party.

is that they believed that the “day of the Lord” was about to come, and that they were not educated about that subject. The brethren in Thessalonica had falsely concluded that the Lord would return before any of them would taste of death. Remember that this church was mainly a Gentile church (1 The. 1:9-10). Therefore, the brethren in Thessalonica were not grounded in the teaching of the resurrection as Jews would have been. Paul identified that the church in Thessalonica was lacking something (3:10). The brethren were obviously not lacking the teaching they needed to be faithful (1:3), or to serve God (1:10). What they lacked was an apparent lack of knowledge about the second coming of Christ.

The main problem addressed in 2 Thessalonians is much different than that of 1 Thessalonians (cf. 2:2; 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:18.) Keep in mind that *at hand* in 2 Thessalonians 2:2 is a perfect tense verb. The perfect tense in the indicative mood focuses on the present state resulting from a past action; therefore, this word should be translated with “has come.” The perfect participle of this verb is translated with “things present” in Romans 8:38 and 1 Corinthians 3:22. When 2 Thessalonians was written, the brethren were in fear and despair because they had been taught by someone personally or through a forged letter that the “day of the Lord,” or the coming again of Christ, had passed them by (2 The. 2:2-3). The Thessalonians felt as if their hope of salvation was lost, but their persecutions continued (1:4-7); therefore, they may have surmised that God was unjust. This false teaching probably came through some forged document attributed to Paul, which would explain why Paul reminded the brethren that his salutation was a token of all of his epistles (3:17). How could the brethren have gone from the understanding they had of the second coming of Christ in 1 Thessalonians, to the understanding they had of the second coming when 2 Thessalonians was written, which was a period of only a few months? As noted in 1 Thessalonians, the church in Thessa-

lonica was not grounded in the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. The brethren in Thessalonica were having trouble accepting healthy teaching about the Day of the Lord (1 The. 5:12, 19-22). The Thessalonians wanted to hear from Paul about the second coming of Christ. It may be the case that some troubler of the church, who knew what was happening in Thessalonica, wrote a letter to the Thessalonians and told the brethren that the Day of the Lord had passed them by, and tried to credit Paul as the author of the letter. At any rate, this problem highlights just how quickly change can take place among God’s people, especially when members of the Lord’s church are uneducated in the Scriptures.

The Cycle Continues

Recent issues of *Defender* have denoted Mac Deaver’s departure from the New Testament pattern. It should not be surprising to find changes like this happening in the church. Roy Deaver, for example, taught the gap theory of theistic evolution in his commentary on Romans and received a free pass as his error was largely ignored (167-174). It may be that Mac felt that he too would get a free pass to teach his newly founded error about a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men. At any rate, Mac Deaver clearly departed from the sound doctrine of the New Testament and is now teaching that we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit. All of the compromise and change that transpired among the Deavers must have created tremendous stress in the family unit. It is not surprising to know that Todd Deaver is now teaching Al Maxey’s brand of anti-patternism. Todd’s new book *Facing Our Failure* is the complete opposite of Roy Deaver’s book *Ascertaining Bible Authority*.

Todd suggests that “The thesis of this book is simple: we, in conservative Churches of Christ, are inconsistent in our practice of fellowship” (6). Todd is partially correct on that point. Many examples of inconsistency in the fellowship practices of brethren in what Todd calls “conservative Churches of Christ”

can be noted. Men like Curtis A. Cates, Keith Mosher, Sr., Bobby Liddell, Barry Grider, Wesley Simons, Eddy Craft, Clifford Newell, and many others can be cited as recent examples of this ungodly practice. According to Todd Deaver, we try to follow a theology that cannot be consistently applied (6). Accordingly Todd confesses: “I no longer accept many of the traditional interpretations and beliefs, such as the ‘detailed blueprint’ view of the New Testament” (6). He further states: “our doctrine of fellowship cannot be logically maintained. That is the point of this book” (7).

However, not all brethren are guilty of inconsistent fellowship practices. There are some brethren who allow the New Testament pattern to be their guide in fellowship. While Todd Deaver does not agree that there are brethren who consistently apply the biblical doctrine of fellowship, he at least acknowledges that this group is working toward that end. It is important to point out the fact that Todd Deaver cannot agree that this group is correct about consistency in fellowship and honor the thesis of his book. Notice Todd’s own words about what many of us recognize is consistent application of fellowship:

I hope by now the point is obvious: if our theology is correct, we have a lot of dividing left to do. We simply cannot continue to hold our present paradigm, maintain our existing circle of fellowship, and claim we are consistent.

It is interesting that there are in fact some brethren who are trying to be more consistent in applying our doctrine of fellowship by being more exclusive, but those of us who pride ourselves on being “balanced” see them as radical—i.e., *excessively* exclusive. I submit that it is only our refusal to be consistent that keeps us from being “radical” ourselves, for we have a radical theology—a paradigm that demands withdrawing over every perceived sin and every alleged departure from New Testament doctrine (71).

These words speak loudly about the problem the church is facing today. Many brethren are sick and tired of fighting the good fight and actually trying to maintain consistency in regard

to what the Bible actually teaches on the subject of New Testament fellowship. The church in America is declining at a startling pace and as that decline continues it is clear that many brethren are more concerned with numbers rather than truth. The cry and demand is now being made by a new, younger generation of preachers to change paradigms (patterns) to a less divisive pattern. We are witnessing that new generation of apostasy, i.e., the one that used to be one generation away. All of this change should not surprise anyone who reads the Bible, because the Bible discusses this cycle of change throughout its pages. People who refuse to study and apply the truth are easy prey for church leaders who are driven by the numbers rather than the truth.

Who Would Have Imagined It?

One additional note is needed before this article closes. It is of interest to direct attention to the article Barry Grider ran in the February 10, 2009, issue of *The Forest Hill News*. It was the old "I Drew My Circle Again" article that has been recycled and used by many who want to try to justify unscriptural fellowship practices. Terry Hightower remembers when this anonymous article

was used by the Crossroads movement to get brethren to allow the movement growing room. Many of us remember the piece as it appeared in *Mission Magazine*. A simple internet search will find this piece on denomination web sites, where it is used to promote unity in diversity. Who would have thought that this article would have found its way into the Forrest Hill Church of Christ bulletin, and following an article that justified the small group—house church concept and cancelling services for the Super Bowl. If you want to read more about the small group—house church connection at the home of the Memphis School of Preaching then you will need to read my chapter "No Shame For Sin" in the 2009 Bellview Lectureship book. The point to be made here is that Barry Grider is closer to Todd Deaver's anti-patternism than he is to the New Testament pattern for fellowship and salvation. Barry Grider is the "balanced model" of the new generation of apostate preachers.

Is Something Wrong With a Small Circle?

The point of Deaver, Grider, et.al., is that if you try to be consistent you will wind up like Noah of old who was only

able to fellowship a few people because he drew his circle tightly around God's Word. Poor old Noah was isolated and ignored. Poor old Noah just could not get along with anyone. Happily, I would rather suffer reproach for Christ and sail with the Noahs than to sink with all of those balanced people who perished in the flood. The Bible teaches that righteousness is cyclic. God's people have demonstrated the keen ability to ignore the Truth and change quickly. Regardless of what others say or do, the only way to avoid facing failure as a Christian is to be faithful to the Christ and follow Him regardless of the temporal consequences.

Works Cited

- Barnes, Albert. *Bible Commentary on the Old Testament: The Bible Commentary: Exodus - Ruth*. Ed. F. C. Cook. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1971.
- Deaver, Roy. *Romans God's Plan For Man's Righteousness*. Austin, TX: Biblical Notes, 1992.
- Deaver, Todd. *Facing Our Failures*. E-Book (2008). Note, this e-book is no longer available on the internet. The book has subsequently been printed and is available in print format.
- Grider, Barry. "I Draw My Circle Again." *The Forest Hill News* 36.6 (2009): 4. 4852 Saufley Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2008 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2007, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2007, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$80 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$81.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. If you would like only the 2008 book, it can be purchased for \$6.75 which includes postage. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States*. All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

May 2009

Number 05

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Florida School of Preaching Board of Directors and/or To Whom It May Concern

David Watson

A published piece (of junk) appeared in the April 2009 issue of *The Harvester*, the official publication of the Florida School of Preaching in Lakeland, FL, titled "To Whom It May Concern." The piece began by stating: "Occasionally the Florida School of Preaching receives requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue. The questions may come to a faculty member or a member of the Board of Directors."

I would certainly hope that the school would receive requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school since the school solicits the support of the brotherhood. In that very same issue of *The Harvester* Brian R. Kenyon published an article in which he solicited support for the school saying:

Since 1969, the Lord's work through us has faithfully involved training men to preach the Gospel and preparing souls to better serve the Lord. We thank our supporters for making this possible. If you are not familiar with this work and would like to know more, feel free to contact the school. Gene Burgett or I would be happy to visit and inform you or your congregation.

Also, that very same issue of *The Harvester* printed, "Special Thanks To Our Wonderful Supporters in February 2009" naming "Florida Churches of Christ," "Out of State Churches of Christ," "Individuals," "Memorials," and "Special Gifts" that were contributors to the school.

The published piece (of junk) continued: "One dismissed faculty member of years gone by addresses us through publications that we do not receive. However, others send it to us desiring that we see the great love and concern our former traveler has for us."

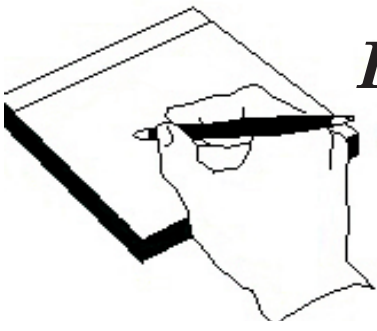
Would the "one dismissed faculty member of years gone by" happen to be brother Terry Hightower? Would "the publications that we do not receive" happen to include *Defender*? Would the address happen to be brother Terry Hightower's, "Open Letter to Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board" which was published in the September 2008 issue of *Defender*?

If so, the reference to brother Hightower as "one dismissed faculty member of years gone by" sounds very much like the attempts made by the

Pharisees and lawyers who rejected the council of God against themselves (Luke 7:30) when they tried to discredit what John said by saying "He hath a devil" (Mat. 11:18; Luke 7:33). This snide remark concerning brother Hightower also sounds very much like the attempts made by those same Pharisees and lawyers who rejected the council of God against themselves (Luke 7:30) when they tried to discredit what Jesus said by saying that He was "a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners" (Mat. 11:19; Luke 7:34).

Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to publish a full and complete account concerning the "one dismissed faculty member of years gone by"? Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to make it known that the "one dismissed faculty member of years gone by" was dismissed simply because he was ready to give an answer (1 Pet. 3:15) to every man that asked him a reason concerning his position on the subject of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Past

At one time the churches of Christ were known by all as a Bible knowing people. Those in the community knew us as a Bible totin', Bible quotin' people. Sadly those days are long past. At one time, so the story goes, they had misplaced a Bible that was used in a courtroom. The judge said to get a certain member of the Lord's church and have the witness put his hand on his head because members of the church knew the Bible so well. However, those days are long past. Others no longer identify members of the church in such a way as this.

We use to know that we must have authority for everything we do. Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17). A few decades ago, we not only knew we must have authority from God for everything one does; we also knew how to ascertain that authority. People then knew the difference between explicitly stated and those that are implicit in nature. They also knew that whether explicit or implicit, the action was still authorized. Brethren knew about expedience and that one must have authority from God before something could be an expedient, and, likewise, all expedients were thus authorized. Yet, the Lord's church seems to have forgotten these very basic points. Now we often hear phrases like: "Where does the Bible condemn it [an action they are trying to defend which has no Bible authority]," or "The Bible does not say not to do it." Brethren were familiar with this speech of Ashdod from the denominational world, but it has now made its way into the church.

We use to know that if God did not authorize an action, that action was sinful. Slowly we began hearing brethren trying to defend the use of mechanical instrumental music in worship by saying that we have a lot of

things that are not authorized. They would then mention things like the building the church assembles in to worship, the air conditioners, pews, song books, etc. They had no idea how to ascertain Bible authority plus using a flawed argument to begin with. If those things are not authorized, then it is sinful to use them (however, all those things are authorized by God's Word). However, they then believed they had proven that using mechanical instruments in worship to God was all right and we are now seeing the end result of such thinking when congregations begin including the instrument in worship.

Now we are seeing the same thing take place with elder reevaluation/reaffirmation. We are hearing all sorts of excuses in defense of the actions in which Brown Trail congregation engaged in 1990 and again in 2002 (which actions the elders of Brown Trail repented for engaging in) and proclaimed by Dave Miller. Instead of brethren getting out their Bibles and turning in God's Word to show where what Dave Miller proclaimed is authorized, they simply make excuses for. Every once in a while, we come across some who claim that the action Dave Miller proclaimed (elder reevaluation/reaffirmation) is a matter of expediency (as opposed to those who make excuses for Miller who state that elder reevaluation/reaffirmation is sinful), yet they make no attempt to show where it is authorized (before an action can be expedient, it must be authorized).

The Bible teaches us that we are to "*be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Yet, these brethren are not ready to give an answer (even as Florida School of Preaching was not ready to give an answer but instead unjustly attacked the questioner) as to elder reevaluation/reaffirmation. Why? The reason is that there is no authority for the practice. Now, however, we are being told that somehow this sinful action does not measure up to the extent that fellowship should be affected. Surely these brethren jest? No, they are serious because they refuse to honor the fellowship God has established.

Hosea in writing for God, wrote, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6). Brethren, we are seeing this today, and it appears that it is only getting worse. Let us get back to the Book and become people of the Book once again.

MH

Continued from Page 1

Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board also be willing to make it known that Jackie Stearsman holds and teaches the same position on the same subject, as does the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by”? Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board further be willing to make it known that the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by” who was dismissed by the former Director of the school has since then been employed by the current Director of the school (Jackie Stearsman) to do “the Lord’s work” by “faithfully... training men to preach the Gospel and preparing souls to better serve the Lord.” Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to tell people that the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by” has since then been repeatedly invited to write and speak for and on the Florida School of Preaching Lectureship? Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to document the fact that the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by” has since then been used repeatedly to substitute teach for Brian Kenyon? Would the Florida School of Preaching Board members who are also elders of the South Florida Avenue congregation be willing to reveal the fact that they have repeatedly used the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by” since then in a few VBS series for the South Florida Avenue congregation? How hypocritical they are!

Several years ago when I was serving as the Associate Editor of the original *Gospel Journal*, I received a published piece from Jackie Stearsman. The published piece was Stan Crowley’s Beeville, TX, lecture wherein he set forth his errors on the subject of marriage and divorce and remarriage. Jackie Stearsman called this published piece a “masterpiece.” Jackie Stearsman suggested that this piece be published in the original *Gospel Journal*. Now, if I were to stop right here and say no more concerning this incident I would be doing Jackie Stearsman a great disservice. It is true that I received a copy of Stan Crowley’s Beeville, TX, lecture from Jackie Stearsman. Further, it is true that Jackie Stearsman called this published piece a “masterpiece.” It is also true that Jackie Stearsman suggested that this piece be published in the original *Gospel Journal*. But, it is not true that Jackie Stearsman agreed with the material. Jackie Stearsman did all of this with sarcasm. Jackie Stearsman actually viewed the published piece of Stan Crowley as error. I am sure that Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board would not want to be done such a disservice. Yet, they now do such a disservice to “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by.” How despicable!

The published piece (of junk) went on to say: “However, others send it to us desiring that we see the great love and concern our former traveler has for us.” I believe that this statement is saturated with sarcasm. But whether it is or not, it is still the case that brother Hightower’s address did indeed express great love and concern for Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board. I quote from brother Hightower’s opening remarks:

Beloved Jackie and Board of the Florida School of Preaching: I pray that this Open Letter will be received with the recognition of my love for you and the school not as some hostile critic, but as one who has been privileged to teach for eight years part-time and two wonderful years (84-86) full-time at Florida School Of Preaching (hereafter FSOP), as one who has encouraged many persons over the years to contribute financially to this much-loved and valuable institution begun so many years ago by brother B. C. Carr, and as one who has even fairly recently encouraged a young man to move from Texas to central Florida to attend classes with you. Surely through your request that I write chapters for and return to speak at numerous FSOP lectureships you have implied and recognized my high regard for you and the school you oversee. Thus, you know that my attitude toward you is that of Paul’s when he wrote to the Galatian brethren: “So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16).

Is this published piece (of junk) in *The Harvester* a display of the great love and concern that Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board of Directors have for brother Hightower? To say that the person who wrote this published piece (of junk) was/is lower than a snake’s belly might seem too harsh to some so instead I will quote the words of Jesus who said: “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers” (Mat. 23:33).

Notice also that this published piece (of junk) called brother Hightower their “former traveler.” The Bible says that two cannot walk together except they be agreed (Amos 3:3). Obviously, Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board are admitting that they are no longer in agreement with brother Terry Hightower as they once were. The fact is that Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board have changed from the path that they once walked concerning fellowship of false teachers (like Dave Miller). That change of path is what prompted brother Hightower’s open letter.

The published piece (of junk) went on to state: “Each year at the annual lectureship, time is spent studying topics and responding to written questions on these topics.” Does this mean that “requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue” will be addressed at the annual lectureship? Would Jackie Stearsman and the

Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to publish a full and complete account of the time a prospective student from Texas traveled to the Florida School of Preaching annual lectureship to request information regarding the policy and position of the school of the given subject of fellowship of false teachers (like Dave Miller)? Would they be willing to reveal that the prospective student was, in a very unchristian like manner, told that his questions would not be answered at all? So much for Jackie Stearsman and/or the Florida School of Preaching Board responding biblically to requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on any given subject.

The published piece (of junk) next stated: "Those who are truly interested in the position of the school on a given issue may consult the school publication, *The Harvester*, for insight into such matters." Would Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board be willing to publish a full and complete response in *The Harvester* to requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue? The fact is that if they had done so there would have been no need for brother Hightower to write and publish his open letter. It is also a fact that since brother Hightower published his open letter, Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board have made at least three attempts to answer brother Hightower in *The Harvester*. The first attempt was when they published an article by Wayne Jackson on "Church Controversies" in October 2008. That article had already received a review by brother Bruce Stulting in the September 2008 issue of *Contending For The Faith*. A second attempt was

made when Jackie Stearsman published "Some Reflections On The Interrogation Of Jesus" in the same October 2008 issue. Obviously they were not satisfied with their first or second attempts, so a third attempt was made when Jackie Stearsman published his article "Is the Bible Vague? Can We Learn by Logical Implication?" in the November 2008 issue. Notice that all three of these articles are referenced in the published piece (of junk) under review.

The published piece (of junk) made the following claim: "It has been a principle of the school to avoid, as much as possible, the controversies that may arise from those whom the Board considers to be sowing discord among brethren." This claim is known to be false to anyone who has any knowledge of the school since its beginning in 1969 under its original Director, brother B. C. Carr. Do the publishers of this piece (of junk) not know the

the policy or position of the school on a given subject (such as fellowship of the false teacher Dave Miller)? What a smear tactic!

This published piece (of junk) continued: "Some who have spoken on lectures and even taught classes for the school would not be used today. Why? Because the Board does not have confidence in them." I can certainly understand why they do not want brother Terry Hightower or a number of other faithful brethren speaking on their lectureship or teaching classes for the school now since they know that he/they would expose their fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness as the Bible demands (Eph. 5:11). The fact is they do indeed have confidence that brother Hightower and other faithful brethren would obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). They do in fact have confidence that brother Hightower and other faithful brethren would be

unwilling to comply with the judgments of the Board and Director of the school to extend fellowship to false teachers (like Dave Miller). They have not lost confidence in brother Hightower or in other faithful brethren. They have lost confidence in

Is it possible that Florida School of Preaching did not realize that brethren might be asking questions of them because they no longer have any confidence in them?

history of the school they work for and with, or are they purposely ignoring the facts of history? A refresher course can be provided to them if needed.

This published piece (of junk) stated: "Men have been dismissed in the past from being faculty members whom the Board considered lacking in wisdom and unwilling to comply with the judgments of the Board and Director of the school." Is this another reference to the "one dismissed faculty member of years gone by" in an attempt to discredit his open letter without even identifying him by name or having to deal with his request for information regarding

the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).

This published piece (of junk) further stated: "The Board will not be dominated by any individual or group of individuals whether near or from afar in whom the Board has no confidence." Since when do "requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue" constitute an attempt to "dominate"? The fact is that they cannot respond truthfully to requests for information regarding the policy or position of the school on the given issue of fellowship of false teachers (like Dave Miller) without involving themselves in obvious inconsisten-

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

34th Annual Bellview Lectures

TM June 13 - 17, 2009

Saturday, June 13			Tuesday, June 16		
7:00 PM	The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 3:7-12)	Danny Douglas	9:00 AM	The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13)	Gary Summers
7:45 PM	Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12)	Doug Post	10:00 AM	God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2)	Jess Whitlock
Sunday, June 14			11:00 AM	Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14)	Roelf Ruffner
9:00 AM	Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17)	Ken Chumbley	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
10:00 AM	Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7)	Wayne Blake	1:30 PM	Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1)	Johnny Oxendine
<i>Lunch Break</i>			2:30 PM	Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)	David Brown
2:00 PM	Polluted Worship (Mal. 1:7-14)	Loy Hardesty	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:00 PM	God's Goodness and Severity (Joel)	Dennis "Skip" Francis	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6)	Dub McClish
7:00 PM	The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12)	John West	7:45 PM	Consider Your Ways (Haggai)	Harrell Davidson
7:45 PM	Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12))	Paul Vaughn	Wednesday, June 17		
Monday, June 15			9:00 AM	How Long? (Hab. 1:2)	Lester Kamp
9:00 AM	Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah)	Michael Hatcher	10:00 AM	The Opened Fountains (Zec. 13:1)	Tim Smith
10:00 AM	Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2)	Terry Hightower	11:00 AM	What Doth the Lord Require (Mic. 6:8)	Jimmy Gribble
11:00 AM	Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3)	Fred Stancliff	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
<i>Lunch Break</i>			1:30 PM	Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1)	David Watson
1:30 PM	Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3)	Darrell Broking	2:30 PM	God's Love (Hos. 1-3)	Gene Hill
2:30 PM	The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17)	Daniel Denham	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM		<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5)	Darrell Broking
7:00 PM	Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6)	Bruce Stulting	7:45 PM	A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11)	Lynn Parker
7:45 PM	Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14)	Tim Cozad			

Bellview Lectures Information

Housing

The Ramada (7051 Pensacola Blvd; Pensacola, FL 32505) is providing a special rate for those attending the Bellview Lectures. The price (tax not included) is \$55—1 to 2 people per room. Their phone number is 850/476-9091. *Tell them you are attending the Bellview Lectures when making your reservations.* If you are planning on attending the lectureship you may want to make your motel reservations early. If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office.

Meals

The women of the Bellview Church of Christ will provide a free lunch Monday – Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants will be available at the registration tables.

Books

The lectureship book, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*, may be

purchased at the pre-publication price of \$16 (plus \$3 per book for postage) prior to June 30, 2009, or afterwards at the regular price of \$18 (plus \$3 per book for postage). The book will contain 29 chapters and over 500 pages. Everyone will want to purchase a copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

Books-on-CD

The Bellview lectureship books (1975-1976, 1978, 1988-2005, 2007-2009) will be available on CD in Adobe PDF for \$85 (plus \$1.75 for postage). The CD also includes the *Defender* (1970, 1972-2008), *Beacon* (1972, 1974-2008), and other material. If you have a previous CD contact our office for the cost of an update.

DVDs

All lectures will be recorded on DVDs. They may be purchased during the Bellview Lectures or by mail order afterwards.

cies concerning their preaching and practice. Thus they claim that such requests coming from faithful former and prospective students, and from faithful former faculty members, and from faithful truly concerned brethren constitute an attempt to “dominate.” How pathetic!

The published piece (of junk) proclaimed: “When asked questions, we must make a judgment as to the purpose and objective of the questioner.” Jesus commanded that such a judgment be righteous and not be according to appearance (John 7:24). Yet, they have made an unrighteous judgment concerning the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by” and they have attempted to mislead the readers of their published piece (of junk) into making a judgment according to appearance concerning the “one dismissed faculty member of years gone by.” When they receive a request for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue why not just answer the question and then cite Bible to back it up? How hard is that for the Director and/or the Board and/or a faculty member of a school of preaching?

The published piece (of junk) declared: “However, we will not violate our conscience (Rom. 14:23; 1 John 3:20-22) in order to provide a momentary acceptance to those whom we do not trust or with whom we may have lost confidence.” This is an amazing statement! Are they now saying that if they respond to a request for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given issue (such as

fellowship of false teachers like Dave Miller) that such a response will violate their conscience and damn or condemn their souls (Rom. 14:23; 1 John 3:20-21)? Are they now saying that if they respond to a request for information regarding the policy or position of the school on a given subject (such as fellowship of false teachers like Dave Miller) that a refusal to respond is actually according to God’s commandments

But their actions do indicate cowardice and fearfulness.

The published piece (of junk) claimed: “Only one reason would keep the Board from responding to questions from any inquirer, ‘The Board does not trust nor have confidence in the questioner.’” What difference does it really make as to whether the Board trusts the inquirer? What difference does it really make as to whether the

Board has confidence in the person or persons making the request for information? Are Jackie Stearsman and the Florida School of Preaching Board claiming omniscience when it comes to making “a judgment as to the purpose and objective of the questioner”? The apostle Peter said: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be*

ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15).

The published piece (of junk) concludes: “This is not a new policy, and it has characterized the school for forty years.” This is not true! Their present policy is in fact a new policy. Their policy has not characterized the school for forty years. I know this from the following facts: I have been a student of the school; I am a graduate of the school; I am a former instructor for the school; I am a former director of an extension branch of the school; I am a former supporter of the school; I am a former speaker on the school lecture-ship program. I have been associated with the school since 1973 and thus go back to within just a few years of the schools beginning.

2490 Larkspur Ave; Middleburg, FL 32068

Defender Via E-Mail

Defender (along with our weekly bulletin *Beacon*) is available to those who would like to receive it by e-mail. With the continued increase of expenses (paper, printing material, mailing expense, etc.) sending out the publication via e-mail will save us money. It will also enable you to receive the paper the most expeditious way. We will e-mail you an Adobe Acrobat PDF. We will send you the file with the ability to print it on your printer. If you would like to receive these publications sent directly to your e-mail please send us your e-mail address at bellviewcoc@gmail.com.

and is actually pleasing to God (1 John 3:22)? If that is what they are now saying then they have departed from the faith, they have given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, they have started speaking lies in hypocrisy, and their conscience has been seared with a hot iron (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

The published piece (of junk) continued: “Therefore, when questions are ignored from the school administration or Board it should not be considered as cowardice, fearfulness, or ignorance.” The questions of brother Hightower and others are obviously not being ignored. This is now the fourth time an attempt has been made to deal with them but not in the way that the Bible would demand. These men are not ignorant of what the Bible teaches. Their knowledge of what the Bible teaches is, in fact, the very reason they will not deal with the questions, as they should.

The Personal Indwelling and Direct Touch of Satan in the Heart of Sinners: The Logical Conclusion to the “Direct Help” Doctrine

Darrell Broking

Ephesians 2:2 is a verse that places those in the “direct help” (Deaver 132)¹ camp on the horns of a dilemma. Brethren who embrace the “direct help” error and apply the same method of study to Ephesians 2:2 as they do to their “direct help” passages are plunged deeper into the abyss of apostasy!

Paul wrote, “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). The “prince of the power of the air” is Satan, and Satan is “that spirit that now **worketh** in the children of disobedience.” If it is true that the Holy Spirit directly helps the Christian, as W. Terry Varner suggests, “to produce spiritual life (Romans 8:11-13)...by strengthening the inner man (Ephesians 3:14-17)...by helping the saint to produce the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)” (iii-iv),² then is it also true that Satan directly helps the children of disobedience to continue to practice sin and stand firm in their rebellion against God? Consistency demands an answer in the affirmative.

In the summer of 1998, I found myself forced into a discussion about the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian with Ronnie Clemment, who was at that time an elder at the Bailey Street Church of Christ in Jacksonville, AR. During the course of our discussion, Ronnie took the position that Satan literally indwells the alien sinner’s body and influences him until the point of baptism, at which time Satan leaves the sinner’s body and the

Holy Spirit takes his place and begins to aid the newly forgiven one. At that time of our discussion, Owen Olbricht, Ron’s good friend, was writing his book on the Holy Spirit. To support his position, brother Clemment brought me a copy of Olbricht’s manuscript for chapter 11 of his book. Ron told me that brother Olbricht, a Bible scholar, held this same view and suggested that I study his material. I still have a copy of this manuscript in my files. In his manuscript Olbricht wrote:

The one in the world is Satan as John wrote, “...the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). The world has Satan in them, but we have the Spirit of God in us. If Satan can be in people to move them to do evil things (John 13:27), surely the Holy Spirit can enter Christians to help them do good things (178).

Recently I purchased a copy of Olbricht’s book to see if he changed his mind before going into print. Olbricht edited the passage slightly without changing its gist and meaning at all. At least brother Olbricht is consistent with his error. The erring among us who are now teaching the baptism of the Holy Spirit will have to be consistent, as is Owen Olbricht, and teach the direct help doctrine of Satan in the children of disobedience. Why is it not obvious to all that Deaver, Varner, and others are trying to take the church of Christ into Calvinism? In his debate with Mac Deaver, brother Moffitt diligently tried to get Mac to understand that his error deprives man of his free will (3-4), but Mac did not, and apparently does not, understand what brother Moffitt was trying

to teach him. If it is the case that Satan is directly working in those who practice sin and the Holy Spirit is directly working in Christians, then sinners can blame Satan for their habitual sin and Christians can blame the Holy Spirit for not giving them enough strength to keep from sinning. This entire concept is the basic make up of Augustinian/Calvinism, and it does not belong in the church of Christ!

Works Cited

- Deaver, Mac. *The Deaver-Moffitt Debate*. Marietta, GA: Therefore Stand, 2002.
Moffitt, Jerry. *The Deaver-Moffitt Debate*. Marietta, GA: Therefore Stand, 2002.
Olbricht, Owen. *The Holy Spirit: Person and Work - What Is the Relationship Between the Holy Spirit and the Christian?* Ventura, CA: Gospel Light Publishing, 1999.
Varner, W. Terry. “Preface.” *The Deaver-Moffitt Debate*. Marietta, GA: Therefore Stand, 2002.

Endnotes

¹Mac Deaver does not like his position explained as a direct operation of the Holy Spirit in one’s heart. He prefers to describe his doctrine as the “direct help” of the Holy Spirit instead of a “direct operation” of the Holy Spirit, because the idea of a direct operation is associated with Calvinism. The fact of the matter is that Mac Deaver is teaching a modified brand of Augustinian/Calvinism which will continue to evolve into full-blown Calvinistic error.

²W. Terry Varner is an instructor and frequent lecturer at the West Virginia School of Preaching. A school of preaching is to be a lighthouse of truth, but by fellowshipping brother Varner the WVSOP is only creating more factionalism and division in the church.

4852 Sauflay Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflay Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

June 2009

Number 06

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



I Am a Victim

Delbert Goins

Modern selfishness ensnares by oozing needless twists on brethren with an eye toward disarming unity of the faith. Each of us has expectations that fit our capabilities. However, we often allow victimization by social settings (which is definitely a misuse of the personality God has provided for our use to His glory) for "all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). God created the world for our use. But why? It is "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6)! Our purpose is to make known to others the manifold wisdom of God (3:10). Yet, our lying adversary convinces multitudes of brethren to hinder the spread of truth by a simple method of deceitful mind contortion called: "I'm a victim!"

A most common way we feel victimized is from our family. Yet, beyond the coercions of family, one often undergoes a sense of victimization by constraints of vocation, by manipulations, by intimidations, and by feeling completely held in servitude as the chattel of another. Some professionals thrive on making victims seek fellow victims for

support, tending to make it easy for weak persons to follow them.

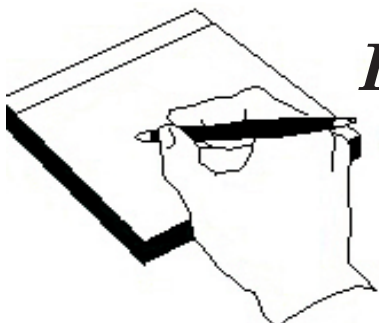
We often victimize ourselves with evil thoughts by saying we have to stay on a job no matter what. We think we might not get another job, which brings one right into the victimization philosophy—what the world holds as a dear possession calling it job security. Government and Union employees use this victimization as a way of life. Preachers too cry victimization, saying: "The church owes me this job, and as such, I feel I should never get fired or terminated for any reason." When they are asked to leave, they use the "I'm a victim" characterization. They cry: "The elders are at fault. They need to be removed. You members ought to leave them and join me in starting a new congregation a few blocks from here." [Sometimes elders or the leaders of the congregation are at fault—when they sin or teach/practice false doctrine and will not repent—and brethren should leave and start a new congregation or go to another congregation if they no longer can influence that congregation in the right—editor.]

Sometimes members do not get

their way, and it is they who cry: "I'm a victim." This makes for perilous times because "holding a form of godliness," its power is denied. They hurriedly creep from house to house to "lead captive" others of little faith (2 Tim. 3:5-6). Like the preacher, they run off (sometimes with the preacher) mouthing the *bad things* the church has done, according to them, and hatefully speaking evil in violation of Titus 3:2. Would you say these are examples of love, tenderness, kindness, goodness, lowliness, long-suffering, forbearing, and endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Obviously, these brethren find themselves going out: "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 John 2:19). The spirit of "I'm a victim" does not allow one "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Mic. 6:8).

When I was in Chaing Mai, Thailand, in November 2007, this occurred by the American preacher Michael Mayo, son of well-known

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Fight

Paul wrote to his son in the faith: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses (1 Tim. 6:12). The original word translated *fight* is defined as: “1. of a(n athletic) contest, literal and figurative engage in a contest... 2. generally to fight, struggle” (BDAG 17). This is given with other imperatives (a command requiring full obedience on the part of those addressed). We are commanded to flee certain things (the context shows we are to flee false teaching, the love of money, along with anything which would be contrary to godly living), we are to follow certain qualities (righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness), and we are to fight the good fight of the faith. The fact we have the obligation to fight implies that when one becomes a Christian, he enters into a conflict that continues throughout his life.

When one becomes a Christian, he enlists in the army of God. We, like Timothy, are given a solemn charge: “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare” (1 Tim. 1:18). As soldiers in an army, we must: “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3). Yet, it seems as if many enter this warfare with the idea it is a rose garden where we simply stroll along to smell the roses. The idea of fighting, struggling, contending is not in their psyche. While we might like to discuss “the common salvation” it is needful for us to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

As Christians who are entering this battle, we must prepare ourselves for the fight. One who is sent to the

battlefield first learns the weapons he will be using. The Christian must also prepare himself properly for the spiritual fight we are entering realizing that “the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds” (2 Cor. 10:4). Thus, there is the imperative to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15) so we will “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15).

As a warrior in the army of God, Christians cannot be passive. We must forcefully carry the fight to the enemy. Yet, our society today and, sadly, many in the church would like us to remain docile. Notice in the imperatives Paul uses there is fleeing which is a fighting against certain things and there is following which is fighting for certain things. Both imperatives involve fighting. We also see both principles when Paul writes: “Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:13). Here *instruments* is a word which can properly be translated “weapon” as by definition it means, “an instrument designed to make ready for military engagement, *weapon*” (BDAG 716). We must use our *members* as weapons against unrighteousness and for righteousness.

As Christians we have the imperative to fight for God’s plan of saving sinful mankind (upon hearing God’s Word, man must believe, he must repent of his sins, confess his faith in Jesus as God’s Son, and be baptized in water for salvation whereupon the Lord adds you to His church). We must fight for the uniqueness of the Lord’s church. The Bible still teaches there is only one church. The battle continues regarding the worship of Christ’s church (singing which excludes the use of mechanical instrumental music, prayer to the Father through Christ, communion in memory of the death of Christ, preaching of the Word, and giving as we have been prospered). We must fight for the organization of the church (Christ is the head, in local congregations there are to be elders who oversee the work and deacons serving under the elders). The work of the church is something for which we must continue to fight (the spiritual mission of saving souls through preaching to the lost, edifying the saved, and benevolent works to those who are in need). We have an obligation to wage war for the ethic that originates with God (the thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech).

In like manner, we not only have the obligation to fight for righteousness, we also have the imperative to fight against error. When someone teaches false doctrine regarding man's obedient response to God's grace, Christians are obligated to fight against such teachings (whether it be grace only salvation, faith only salvation, baptism is not necessary for salvation, etc.). Those who would teach that the church is simply one among many and destroy the uniqueness of the church (that the church is one and it is the church of Christ) must be opposed. The same is true of all those points made in the previous paragraph. When someone teaches or practices error, they must be fought against.

Christians must never lay down the sword of the Spirit, but take it up and wield it properly. Alexander Campbell wrote of Christ: "Hence the Prince of Peace never sheathed the sword of the Spirit while he lived. He drew it on the banks of the Jordan and threw the scabbard away. Hence the Prince of Peace never sheathed the sword of the Spirit while he lived. He drew it on the banks of the Jordan and threw the scabbard away" (41). We must follow the example Christ gave us—unsheathe the sword of the Spirit and throw away the scabbard.

Work Cited:

- Arndt William, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000.
- Campbell, Alexander. "Religious Controversy." *Millennial Harbinger*. 1 (1830): 40-44.

MH

Continued from Page 1

missionary Lawson Mayo. He was asked to leave the congregation in Chaing Mai, but he would not leave. He has now divided the church drawing away disciples after him. I visited his home when I was there in 2008. He has not repented of his action nor of his false teaching that **women must be silent in Bible classes**. Brother Mayo cited 1 Corinthians 14:34 (a passage referring to a first century church assembly and not a Bible class) arguing that when a woman reads the Scripture amid such an audience with men present, it is parallel to using instruments of music in worship periods. Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos and

"expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" in a *Bible class* (Acts 18:26). Priscilla did participate in the teaching process as the pronoun *they* indicates.

Second, the Chaing Mai brethren found Michael Mayo practicing the victimization philosophy to draw away disciples after him. Brother Mayo convinced a dozen *offended victims* from the Chaing Mai congregation to leave. In 2009, he continues to recruit *victimized* brethren from congregations throughout northern Thailand. These supposed *victimized* brethren rehash every incident they can remember that the Chaing Mai brethren had properly dealt with in previous times. In the last decade the devil has thrown many false teachers at the Chaing Mai brethren who scripturally rebuffed each one. Now the devil though Michael Mayo is using the "I'm a victim" approach against the faithful brethren at Chaing Mai. None of the *victims* will repent; therefore, in 2008 the brethren withdrew their fellowship from Michael Mayo and those who have followed him.

Michael's father, Lawson, writes in his newsletters of the great joy to preach and encourage this divisive group who are out of fellowship with the faithful Chaing Mai brethren and with God. Should these men be praised for walking disorderly? No! Obviously, they care little for the truth as they continue to spread division and false doctrine throughout the region.

Also, the Macland Church of Christ of Marietta, Georgia, believes it is correct to sponsor this division and false teaching. They are violating 2 John 9-11 and have become guilty of the evil by association and contribution (fellowship). All people who give encouragement and financial support for this divided false group also stand guilty before the Lord by their association with error.

We encourage our readers and all brethren to disassociate with any of these erroneous persons, lest ye also be guilty of giving Godspeed to division and error.

God hates unauthorized division. He loves New Testament unity within the boundaries of love and Truth, but He hates the deceitful tactics of victimization. Let us look into the mirror of self to see if we are practicing this evil craft of the devil. Let us lay hold to accountability for what we do and say.

PO Box 24; Hubbard, TX 76648

If you cannot attend this year's lectureship in person, we plan on broadcasting them live on the internet. Simply go to our web page (www.bellview.com) and view them there (however, being here in person is much better).

If you have questions for the open forum (each afternoon Monday - Wednesday) e-mail your questions to Michael Hatcher at: mhatcher@gmail.com.

When Will the Millertites Practice Brotherly Love?

Darrell Broking

Introduction

Is 1 Peter 3:15 now one of the lost commandments of Christ: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”? The idea that Christians are to be prepared to make a defense for the hope of their heart, and to be ready to present that defense to any honest enquirer is seldom seen in today’s Christendom. Exactly why this is the case is a difficult matter to discern. Is it the result of Postmodernism? To a large degree that is true. Is it the result of ignorance? This is also one of the leading causes of brethren being unprepared and unwilling to defend the hope of their hearts. The Diotrophes factor, the love of money, and numerous other issues all contribute to the current unwillingness for brethren to obey the truth of the Bible and defend the hope of their hearts. Overwhelmingly this problem is the result of failing to understand brotherly love and to allow it to continue.

Just a Few Examples

After preaching for many years and trying to attend some kind of biblical academy, my dream was finally realized in 1996 when I began my studies at the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP). I knew some

of the older MSOP alumni and felt that the Biblical education I would receive at the MSOP would be about the best that could be obtained at that time. Neither time nor space will afford an opportunity to write about all of the positive and negative lessons I learned while attending the MSOP. One lesson that was preached loud and proud is that the school’s alumni

brother Cates advised us to write “refused” on the letters we received and place them back in our mailboxes. Apparently brother Pigg was not an honest enquirer and needed to be ignored. As a loyal student to the school I loved, I followed Cates’ instructions, and to this day I regret that decision.

A couple of years ago, the church for which I preached was being ripped

asunder by men who were opposed to my stand against the support and fellowship of brethren who were fellowshipping the Highland Church of Christ (home of GBN), and ignoring the fact that the Gospel Broadcasting Network (GBN) was fellowshipping Dave Miller and

Defender Via E-Mail

Defender (along with our weekly bulletin *Beacon*) is available to those who would like to receive it by e-mail. With the continued increase of expenses (paper, printing material, mailing expense, etc.) sending out the publication via e-mail will save us some expenses. It will also enable you to receive the paper the most expeditious way (you will receive it before others who have it being sent by regular mail). We will e-mail you an Adobe Acrobat PDF (a free reader is available from www.adobe.com). We will send you the file with the ability to print it on your printer if you desire. If you would like to receive either or both of these publications sent directly to your e-mail please send us your e-mail address at bellviewcoc@gmail.com. Your e-mail address will not be used for any other purpose than to send you these publications or information relating to them.

are indebted to the school and owe it their loyalty. Furthermore, that debt means not questioning the judgment and teaching of the school. Why, who could ever believe that the MSOP would ever take the wrong side of an issue—outrageous!

While I was a student at the MSOP, Walter Pigg had his falling out with the Forest Hill Eldership and the MSOP. Brother Pigg did what many associated with MSOP have been known to do, i.e., operation information. Having access to the school’s directory, Walter went to work with a direct mail out to the school’s students. As Pigg’s information began hitting our mailboxes,

squashing all opposing voices. One of the key components of the methodology employed by the brethren who demanded that I step down from the eldership and pulpit was that of a man we all respected, David B. Smith. David had preached for us many times and the entire church loved and respected David B. Smith. What a great friend of the truth and rising star David was. The opposing voices were saying that David had changed his position about fellowshipping GBN and those who continued to support Apologetics Press (AP) and GBN; thus, we too needed to reposition ourselves. The strange thing about all of this was that David was singing a dif-

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

34th Annual Bellview Lectures

June 13 - 17, 2009

Saturday, June 13			Tuesday, June 16		
7:00 PM	The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 3:7-12)	Danny Douglas	9:00 AM	The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13)	Gary Summers
7:45 PM	Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12)	Doug Post	10:00 AM	God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2)	Jess Whitlock
Sunday, June 14			11:00 AM	Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14)	Roelf Ruffner
9:00 AM	Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17)	Ken Chumbley	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
10:00 AM	Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7)	Wayne Blake	1:30 PM	Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1)	Johnny Oxendine
<i>Lunch Break</i>			2:30 PM	Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32)	David Brown
2:00 PM	Polluted Worship (Mal. 1:7-14)	Loy Hardesty	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:00 PM	How Long? (Hab. 1:2)	Lester Kamp	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6)	Dub McClish
7:00 PM	Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6)	Bruce Stulting	7:45 PM	Consider Your Ways (Haggai)	Harrell Davidson
7:45 PM	Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12)	Paul Vaughn	Wednesday, June 17		
Monday, June 15			9:00 AM	God's Goodness and Severity (Joel)	Dennis "Skip" Francis
9:00 AM	Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah)	Michael Hatcher	10:00 AM	The Opened Fountain (Zec. 13:1)	Tim Smith
10:00 AM	Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2)	Terry Hightower	11:00 AM	What Doth the Lord Require (Mic. 6:8)	Jimmy Gribble
11:00 AM	Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3)	Fred Stancliff	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
<i>Lunch Break</i>			1:30 PM	Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1)	David Watson
1:30 PM	Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3)	Darrell Broking	2:30 PM	God's Love (Hos. 1-3)	Gene Hill
2:30 PM	The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17)	Daniel Denham	3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM	
3:30 PM	OPEN FORUM		<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 PM	No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5)	Darrell Broking
7:00 PM	The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12)	John West	7:45 PM	A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11)	Lynn Parker
7:45 PM	Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14)	Tim Cozad			

Bellview Lectures Information

Housing

The Ramada (7051 Pensacola Blvd; Pensacola, FL 32505) is providing a special rate for those attending the Bellview Lectures. The price (tax not included) is \$55—1 to 2 people per room. Their phone number is 850/476-9091. *Tell them you are attending the Bellview Lectures when making your reservations.* If you are planning on attending the lectureship you may want to make your motel reservations early. If you will be flying to the Pensacola Regional Airport and will need transportation, please call or write our office.

Meals

The women of the Bellview Church of Christ will provide a free lunch Monday – Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants will be available at the registration tables.

Books

The lectureship book, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*, may be

purchased at the pre-publication price of \$16 (plus \$3 per book for postage) prior to June 30, 2009, or afterwards at the regular price of \$18 (plus \$3 per book for postage). The book will contain 29 chapters and over 500 pages. Everyone will want to purchase a copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

Books-on-CD

The Bellview lectureship books (1975-1976, 1978, 1988-2005, 2007-2009) will be available on CD in Adobe PDF for \$85 (plus \$1.75 for postage). The CD also includes the *Defender* (1970, 1972-2008), *Beacon* (1972, 1974-2008), and other material. If you have a previous CD contact our office for the cost of an update.

DVDs

All lectures will be recorded on DVDs. They may be purchased during the Bellview Lectures or by mail order afterwards.

ferent tune to his elders and those of us who oppose the GBN, AP, et. al. This situation intensified at the 2007 Spring Church of Christ lectureship when Barry Gilreth made his long distance announcement that David B. Smith was in fellowship with the Highland Church of Christ. Terry York (one of the elders where David B. Smith preached) was present on that occasion. Brother York immediately called David and was given permission by David to state that he removed himself from a lectureship in the Carolinas because Dave Miller was on that program. Nevertheless, Smith continued to tell two stories about his position in regard to this matter. Unable to get some brethren to weigh the conflicting evidence presented by David, I called David and recorded his statement to me about this matter. I also called Chad DalloHITE of the GBN and recorded his statement in regard to what Smith told him, as Chad was loudly declaring David as a GBN supporter. The recordings proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that David was telling two different stories.

I allowed David B. Smith time to make a public statement in this matter, which he failed to do; therefore, I released the recordings. After releasing those recordings I was amazed at how many brethren said that what I did was unethical and at the same time refused to acknowledge that David B. Smith is a liar and fraud! Is it not the case that God recorded every word of Smith? Why then was it unethical to let everyone hear what David had to say? Are we not to allow our yeas to be yeas and our nays to be nays? We were in the heat of a battle for the truth and Smith's double mindedness was tearing the church apart and he needed to be exposed, but those who regard institutions and

friends above the truth ignored this all together.

What Happen to Critical Thinking?

The problem here, to a large degree, is that we have failed to teach brethren to think critically and learn to examine the evidence as did the noble Jews of Berea. Additionally, it is not telling that men like Garland Elkins, the once great defender of the truth, refuse to discuss the Miller issue with a brother until he signed a confidentiality statement. What a strange time in the Lord's body. Think about it—today a brother can write a lectureship manuscript promoting error, have his error edited out of his manuscript and still be allowed to speak on the program, preach what was edited, have the tape destroyed, and then have Barry Grider of Forest Hill (MSOP) fame run with part of the edited content of that manuscript, which unmistakably teaches error, and be ignored by the pillars that be. The real head-jerker is that regardless of the printed record in the Forest Hill bulletin, brethren are still saying that Tyler Young does not teach the error he wrote in his manuscript. Wow—we have created a generation of lazy, slothful, students of truth. Have we arrived at the day when men like the eminent Curtis A. Cates, Dave Miller, et al., are more faithful than the apostle Peter who led brethren into sin in Antioch because he feared certain men (Gal. 2)? The party loyalists among us are doing much damage to the cause of Christ and seemingly without regard for the eternal fruit of their deeds. Where is their love for the brethren?

While at the MSOP, I spent two years mainly engaged in rote memorization. Rote memorization is important, but when brethren are not taught to engage in higher order

thinking they are merely data spewers who are unable to think their way out of a wet paper bag. When Walter Pigg sent the aforementioned direct mail out to the students at the MSOP, would it not have been good to use that opportunity to lead the students through an examination of the evidence, thereby teaching them to engage the material learned via rote memorization in a meaningful way? Instead, Walter was presented as an unworthy troubler. (I am not saying that Pigg was correct.) To this day, I regret not reading what Pigg sent us instead of just taking Cates at his word. Look at the church today. Anyone today who opposes those who stand against the Millerite network is branded as an unworthy trouble maker and the party loyalists refuse to examine the evidence. Brethren in many congregations have not been allowed to engage the evidence. Brethren have been lied to about the facts and because men who are pillars in the church submit the lies, many just accept it as truth and Satan loves it so! Thus, the "open forums" are dissipating into a relic of the past and so few today are willing and/or able to give a defense of the hope that is in them. It is amazing that the great debaters of the past, e. g., Wesley Simons, Garland Elkins, and men like the verbal and robust Keith Mosher, Sr. and the master penman Curtis A. Cates absolutely refuse to allow their *ironclad* defense of the Millerite network to be examined. Those who dare to ask are just troublemakers—my how we have not the ability to engage in critical thinking today!

A fellow preacher recently told me that we are simply not able to teach many things in the church because the brethren are unable to sort through various issues. He is

exactly correct on that matter and until we get brethren to engage in critical thinking this will not change. This was also true in Paul's day (Heb. 5:11), but I doubt that the problem then was as developed as it is today. If brethren would start examining the evidence based on Scripture, instead of dealing with personalities and expressing loyalty to our favorite teachers, just imagine how the church would grow. If the *pillars* of the Millerite network would actually make a public declaration of their ironclad argument that allegedly relegates the Miller issue to a non-fellowship issue, and allow that alleged rock solid teaching to be examined, the church

may actually be able to start healing from its current digression.

Conclusion

Calling those who want to examine the evidence (all of it) troublers does a disservice to the cause of Christ. It totally disregards everything the Bible teaches about loving the brethren. In prior years brethren were neither afraid nor ashamed to debate the issues that were fracturing the church thereby getting all of the evidence out to enquiring minds who truly want to serve Christ. Sadly, this is not true today. For whatever their reasons, the elite *pillars* of the church refuse to discuss this issue and are thereby helping brethren stay

in ignorance and sin. If those men really loved brethren, on both sides of the issue, then they would allow the evidence to be engaged. How sad it is that they will not allow that to happen. One day the Christ will tell all of us exactly who the troublers really were. One day the troublers will stand and give account. If our souls are worth more than all that is in the world, then why are we faced with this communist styled information blackout? There can be only one answer to this question. The real troublers cannot afford to discuss what they know to be a weak and fragile position.

4852 Sauflley Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526

Debate

As a result of articles in *Defender*, Mac Deaver contacted us and challenged us for a debate. We accepted the debate on the condition that we debate the subject of Holy Spirit baptism. Mac agreed to such, so he and I began negotiations. The date for the debate will be July 19-20, 22-23, 2010, and will be held in the Denton Civic Center in Denton, Texas. The first two nights, Daniel Denham will be affirming: The Scriptures teach that Holy Spirit baptism has ceased. The last two nights of the debate, Mac Deaver will be affirming: The Scriptures teach that in order for a sinner to become a Christian, he must be baptized in water and in the Holy Spirit. We look forward to a profitable study at that time. I would encourage all to go back to the January 2008 issue of *Defender* and read the excellent article by Mac's daddy, brother Roy Deaver, titled: "Water Baptism Not Holy Spirit—is the One Baptism."

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

Defender is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

July 2009

Number 07

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Recommended Reading: *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*

Gary W. Summers

This 34th Annual Lectureship book from the Bellview Church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida, contains 559 pages of excellent information and is a companion volume to the previous year's book on the Major Prophets. Neither volume was designed as a verse-by-verse commentary, but they contain expositions of several key passages. All of the material examines and explains the Word of God.

The introduction contains a two-page chart that dates and shows the overlapping reigns of the 19 kings of Israel and Judah. The Scriptures showing the relationship between the kings' reigns are also provided (2-3). The next page has a chart of all the Minor Prophets, including the traditional dates, as well as the date of each based on the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom. All the prophets are then examined in what is thought to be chronological order. Each of the twelve sections contains the rationale for the date, a summary of the message, and three key lessons from the book.

The remainder of the book contains major messages from the Minor

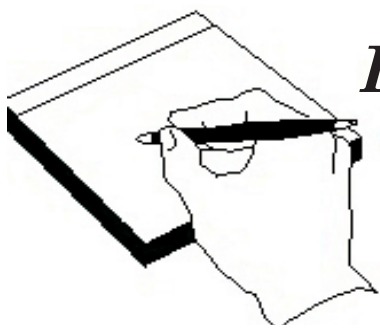
Prophets. The four that come from Hosea are: "God's Love," "Destroyed for a Lack of Knowledge," "Forbidden Fellowship," and "Improper Rejoicing." Among other things is a description of the two possibilities that occur when the mind is confronted with truth (56). The author also contrasts two views of Gomer and includes a short essay by J. W. McGarvey (67-69).

The next chapter discusses who was responsible for Israel's sad spiritual condition (76-77) and also deals with the consequences of spiritual ignorance (78-84), along with its cure. The third lesson from Hosea, "Forbidden Fellowship," describes "The Silly Dove Syndrome" (101-102), which brings certain parallels to mind. The final message based on Hosea is "Improper Rejoicing"—something all of us should want to avoid, yet some prefer rejoicing in iniquity (1 Cor. 13:6).

"God's Goodness and Severity" is the first subject treated from Joel; the second is an examination of the prophecy and fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (2:28-32), which Peter cited on the Day of Pentecost. After a

discussion of the five baptisms in the New Testament (138-41), the writer considers what is meant by the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The reader finds a section that explores the signs of Jesus, the signs of Moses, and the signs of the apostles (146-48). What is the gift of the Holy Spirit? What is the promise of the Holy Spirit? Several scholars who have researched words and phrases are cited in the course of answering these questions. The reader may agree or disagree with the conclusions, but the material is well worth consideration.

Four themes from Amos follow. The first of these deals with another aspect of fellowship ("Can Two Walk Together?"). The second is the always-sobering declaration given to Israel: "Prepare to Meet Thy God." Given attention are "The Transgressions of the Atheist," "Transgressions of Religious Divisions," and "Transgressions of Selective Blindness" (185-89). Two more chapters are particularly appropriate for this age: "Woe to Them at Ease in Zion" and "A Famine in the Land," which includes an article by Bill Jackson—"The Best Hamburgers



Notes From The Editor

*Michael
Hatcher*

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

in Town” (220-21).

The one lesson from Jonah is: “Comfort for the Afflicted,” which God promised to Israel when Edom, their troubler, was herself troubled. Jonah was a unique prophet from several standpoints; a significant one is found on page 244 in the chapter titled, “A Whale of a Tale.” How should the story of Jonah and the big fish be regarded? The author here presents the allegorical view, as well as the parabolic, the mythical, and the literal. The rationale behind each view is submitted and analyzed. Each Christian could surely profit from this study of the four views and be better able to defend the truth.

Terry Hightower’s chapter on “Preaching That I Bid Thee” ought to be required reading for every Christian college student majoring in Bible and for every school of preaching. It is both practical and thoroughly Biblical. He starts with a quote from Joel Osteen that represents his philosophy of preaching (such as it is) (264). He points out that Osteen had a difficult time on television shows hosted by Larry King and Bill O’Reilly in answering the simple question: “Is Jesus the way, the truth, and the life”? The audience knows that someone is in trouble when a guest cannot answer the softball questions usually served up by Larry King. Robert Schuller’s philosophy of communicating Scriptures is also examined. One might wonder what convicted criminal, Robert Courtney, has to do with preaching, but he is entirely relevant (269).

Quotations from Brian D. McLaren of the “Emergent Church” also have a bearing on what is happening in today’s churches. Quotations from him will absolutely amaze the reader and make one wonder what would have happened to the Ninevites if God had sent someone like him (271-72). Roy F. Osborne actually had enough arrogance to question whether God gave Jonah the right message (273-74). The kind of preaching that God wants

then is discussed for 37 more pages, all of which is well worth reading carefully.

As the section on Micah begins, the first theme is—“Prophecy Ye Not” (2:6). After a consideration of the context, the remainder of the material involves applications to current situations. For example, brethren in a local congregation can sometimes adopt the same attitude as the enemies of the Gospel, demanding that an evangelist not preach on certain topics.

Another reliable test of faithfulness to the Truth is preaching on holiness and righteousness, if specifically applied to such things as drinking, wearing immodest apparel, smoking, dancing, and buying lottery tickets (316-17).

Another problem in the church is compromising on fellowship. This portion refers to at least three current situations in which the Biblical principles concerning fellowship, once upheld by all, are currently being ignored by many (318-28). This essay concludes with a look at various forces in society who likewise wish to silence those who proclaim God’s Word (328-33).

Two more chapters include themes from Micah. The first centers on “Evil Leaders” (3:1-3) and presents a thorough Biblical summary of those found within the Scriptures—from Satan to Diotrephes. Then evil leaders in society are mentioned, as well as others. The final Micah text is one that is frequently studied (6:8): “What Does the Lord Require of Thee?” A thorough analysis is provided with a look at misapplications as well the true meaning of the verse.

The first message from Nahum is “God’s Jealousy” (1:2). This attribute of God seldom receives attention. The writer includes a chart of the kings of Assyria, from Tiglath-Pileser III (747 B.C.) to Esarhaddon (612 B.C.) (369-700), which aids in understanding the book’s background. The message concerning God’s jealous nature is set forth in the form of an acronym, beginning with “Jehovah is a Jealous God” and ending with “Studied Scripture” (372-88). The other text examined from the prophet Nahum is: “Woe to the Bloody City!” (3:1). Although Nineveh was spared in the days of Jonah, she is now to be destroyed; the prophet enumerates her many sins that make her worthy of destruction.

“How Long?” (1:2) and “The Just Shall Live by Faith” (2:4) are the two messages taken from Habakkuk. The first of these looks at Habakkuk’s verbal wrestling with God; the latter one deals with the popular theme of living by faith; the author cites ten sources used in providing a thorough discussion of the matter.

The people of Zephaniah's day were complacent, thinking that the Lord would neither do good or evil to them, yet within 25 years they had experienced their first captivity by Babylon, thus learning in a painful way that "The Lord Will Act" (1:12). "No Shame for Sin" (3: 5) usually accompanies complacency. Pertinent data from both of these lectures should provoke us to think about our current condition in America. The chapter on "Shame" includes an Appendix, which also reflects the attitude of many in the church. One of "our" institutions of higher learning, often recommended by conservative brethren, has a teacher which provides students a "Home Cell Group Leader's Manual." Brethren need to read these in order to believe them (467-73). Or are we

also too complacent?

"Consider Your Ways" is the theme of the only lesson from Haggai. All four of the prophet's sermons receive attention. The first chapter based on Zechariah is "The Priest King," which considers seven prophecies about Jesus before explaining the significance of Jesus being king and priest individually, as well as that of the combined meaning. Zechariah 7:1-14 explores "Refusing to Obey." The author states the formula many are using today to justify unauthorized practices (502).

This outstanding lectureship book closes with three messages from Malachi. The first, "Polluting the Worship" (1:7-14), refutes a common error, as voiced by one editorial writer: "I can't believe that God cares

how He is worshipped, just as long as He is worshipped" (513). The second, "The Wife of Thy Youth," provides the background for Malachi 2:14-17. Provided is an in-depth analysis of verse 14, and it is unlikely that anyone would find material of this caliber anywhere else—without doing hours and hours of research. The writer lists 27 sources for the information he provides. This information alone is worth the price of the book. Brethren ought to read it studiously. The third reminds us to evaluate ourselves to see if we are guilty of "Robbing God?" (3:7-12).

Preaching from the Major Prophets is available from the Bellview Church of Christ in Pensacola, Florida. One may call (850) 455-7595 for more information.

3671 Oak Vista Ln; Winter Park, FL 32792

The 34th Annual Bellview Lectures

Dennis (Skip) Francis

The apostle Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). Studies involving the Old Testament fall into the category of the "things written aforetime" at the time of Paul's writings. This would of necessity include the Minor Prophets. This collection of Old Testament books may be minor in the sense of the length of their writing, but they are, by no means, minor in the content of the material. The same can also be said of this year's Bellview Lectures, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*, which took place from June 13 through June 17, 2009 at the facilities of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Field Road, in Pensacola, Florida.

The 34th Annual Bellview Lectures, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*, demonstrates, once again, the good judgment and soundness of the eldership of the Bellview Church of Christ and its most capable preacher who directs this lectureship. It is no small feat to put together such a collection of sound and accomplished Gospel preachers as have appeared at the Bellview Lectures over the 34 years of its existence, and this year is no exception. The speakers and writers from the 2009 lectureship encompassed a broad range of both experience and talent. In serving up the "bread of life" these men brought a great deal to the table. Their vast array of experience as elders, former elders, teachers, directors of schools of preaching, Gospel preachers, writers, and editors, along with

those with broadcasting experience, was not at all lost on the attendees and those who were watching the lectureship over the Internet (still available in archive format). Beside the lecture format, there were several who utilized the benefits of modern technology in the form of Power-Point style visual formats, as well as some practical demonstrations as visual aids. During the course of the lectures, a lot of fun was made over the age of one particular participant, yet he is the very embodiment of the kind of experience demonstrated by the men of this lectureship, having been an elder, Gospel preacher, lectureship director, writer, publisher, and editor. Such was the caliber of those involved in the 34th Annual Bellview Lectures.

The resulting book, *Preaching*

From The Minor Prophets, is an outstanding companion to last year's book, *Preaching From The Major Prophets*, and is an asset to anyone's spiritual library. The lessons that are taught within these pages, as well as the lectures that were given at the lectureship (and archived on the Bellview website) will stand the test of time. Though the instructions given within the pages of that section of the Holy Scriptures known as the "minor prophets" were given to a people of the past, the lessons to be gleaned from them for today's world demonstrate that these books stand up well to the age of our day. The Gospel preachers at this year's lectureship handily demonstrated such as they did the expository work of their assigned passages and then explained the pertinence of each passage to the world in which we live. As recorded in Nehemiah, this is the work of a Gospel preacher: "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (8:8).

The lectureship began on Saturday night with two wonderful lessons. First, it was demonstrated that "The Just Shall Live by Faith" from Habakkuk 2:4. Though this was only one of many fine lessons, it can be rightly stated that this could easily be the minor theme of this lectureship. Then we were graced with a lesson on "Robbing God" from Malachi 3:7-12. These two lectures began the 34th Annual Bellview Lectures with the proverbial bang.

Sunday began with a "Whale of a Tale" from Jonah 1:17. We then learned the dangers of ease in the kingdom of God, from Amos 6:1-7: "Woe to Them at Ease in Zion." Following the lunch hour, the problems of "Polluted Worship" were expound-

ed from Malachi 1:7-14, followed by another lesson from the book of Habakkuk, "How Long," which asks the question "How long shall I cry" to God to punish the sins of men. At the Sunday evening session, the powerful lesson about the need to know God's Word, given in Hosea 4:6, "Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge," showed us why we should all be students of the Scriptures. This was followed by the admonition, "Prepare to Meet Thy God" from Amos 4:12.

Monday began with a lesson on "Comfort for the Afflicted," from the one-chapter book of Obadiah, and followed with a lesson for all Gospel preachers, given in Jonah 3:2, "Preaching That I Bid Thee," showing that we should all preach the things of God and not of man. Then one of the elders from Bellview, Fred Stancliff, spoke of the dangers experienced when we have "Evil Leaders," from Micah 3:1-3. After lunch, we were fed a second time, this time on the spiritual food from Amos 3:3, "Two Walking Together," and the need for spiritual agreement. This was followed by a lesson on the problems of divorce and remarriage from Malachi 2:14-17: "The Wife of Thy Youth." We were then led in the first of three open forums, during which several questions on Bible and spiritual matters were discussed and answered by men well-schooled in God's Word. In the evening, during the first session, we learned that "The Lord Will Act" from Zephaniah 1:12, and this lesson was followed by a much needed lesson in today's church, "Forbidden Fellowship" from Hosea 7:11-14. This brought to a satisfying close the third day of the lectureship.

On Tuesday morning, from the prophet Zechariah we learned of "The Priest King," concerning the dual nature of that office, and the

comparisons with Jesus Christ (Zec. 6:12-13). From the prophet Nahum, we learned about "God's Jealousy" (Nah. 1:2) and how that should affect our relationship with Him. The morning session was capped off with a lesson again from Zechariah on "Refusing to Obey" (Zec. 7:1-14). After lunch, we were again fed with Hosea's lesson on "Improper Rejoicing," which demonstrates our need to be careful over what we rejoice (Hos. 9:1). This lesson was followed by the "Pouring Out of the Spirit" lesson from Joel 2:28-32, and its parallel in Acts 2. We were then blessed with yet another open forum. The evening session began with one of our elder statesmen and a lesson on "Prophecy Ye Not" from Micah 2:6, wherein we see the problems of not preaching the whole counsel of God. The evening concluded with a lesson from Haggai, "Consider Your Ways," in which we are instructed to do self-examination.

After another restful evening, Wednesday morning began with a consideration of "The Goodness and Severity of God" by examining the circumstances given in the prophet Joel. We then studied what Nahum taught us concerning violence in "Woe to the Bloody City" (Nah. 3:1). The morning session was completed by finding out "What Doth God Require" from Micah 6:8. The afternoon began by learning about "The Opened Fountain," from Zechariah 13:1, and was followed by a lesson on "God's Love" from the book of Hosea 1-3. We were then led in the last of three open forums, a venue which seems to be dying out as folks no longer have an answer for the cause of their own hope. As the final session was upon us, there was a sense of both completion and loss. We were instructed in a lesson on the problems of sin in "No Shame for

Sin” from Zephaniah 3:5, which was followed by the final lecture of this year’s lectureship, and a fitting book-end to the first session, “A Famine in the Land” from Amos 8:11.

As we consider “The Goodness and Severity of God,” it is fitting that this lectureship on the Minor Prophets should begin with “The Just Shall Live by Faith,” and end

with “A Famine in the Land,” as there is, indeed, a famine in our land concerning spiritual things. In this we see both the goodness and severity of God.

Whether from Amos to Zephaniah (taken alphabetically), or from Hosea to Malachi (taken sequentially), the Minor Prophets contain powerful lessons that are still pithy

and pertinent today. They must not only be studied but also preached today. You will not find a better source for such study, other than the Bible itself, than the 34th Annual Bellview Lectures and the fine book that was produced from the associated manuscripts, *Preaching From The Minor Prophets*.

1334 Carpenter Dr; Liberal, KS 67901

Millerites Set for the Destruction of the Gospel: The Shelly Paradigm Finds New Ground!

Darrell Broking

Introduction

One of the many wonderful characteristics of the beloved apostle Paul was that he was set for the defense of the Gospel (Phi. 1:17). The words used by Paul herein are interesting. *For* is a translation of the Greek word *eis*. This is the preposition used in Acts 2:38 to denote that Biblical baptism is *into* the remission of sins (moving from sin into forgiveness). With that in mind, it is easy to see that Paul was set or appointed into a solid or fixed position. *Defense* is from the Greek *apologia*, which means, “to give an answer or defense of oneself” as clearly denoted in 1 Peter 3:15. In Philippians 1:17 *apologia* is followed by *tou euaggeliou* meaning “of the gospel.” *Set* is a verb which is used in Matthew 28:6 and Luke 23:53 to describe what happened to Jesus’ body when His corpse was laid in Joseph’s tomb. When the undertaker lays a body out to rest, it is generally understood that it is set in a fixed position. This is the kind of fixed position into which Paul was set or appointed. Literally this phrase reads, “Into defense of the gospel I am appointed or set,” which stresses the fact that the Gospel’s defense was

the focus of this appointment.

What Happened to Paul as Truth’s Defender?

When Paul went to work defending the Gospel of Christ, many who professed to wear the name of Christ treated him in a harsh and unloving manner. Some circulated the lie that Paul was not really an apostle of Christ (1 Cor. 9:1-2). In 2 Corinthians 11:1 Paul wrote, “Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me.” Apparently the false teachers in Corinth were singing their own praises and representing Paul as being guilty of folly for talking about his work; thus, Paul asks his brethren to bear with him in a little folly while he defended his apostleship. What follows in this chapter is another defense of the truth for which Paul was set. Paul’s critics were never able to silence him! (At times I wonder if this is why Paul generally tried to support himself. Many preachers have fallen into the abyss of sin and compromise to keep receiving their weekly salary. This is one problem Paul never had to face!)

As difficult as it may be to swallow, some in Galatia actually accused Paul of pleasing men. Paul answered

the charge: “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). Paul then went on to defend his Gospel. First, he affirmed that he did not receive it from men but that it came through revelation of Jesus Christ (1:12). He then went on to account for the time spent in his work to prove that his Gospel was not something that another apostle or another brother taught to him. In Galatians 2, he argued, “But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man’s person:) for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me” (2:6). He further argued that James, Peter, and John recognized him to be chosen by God as an apostle and extended to him the “right hands of fellowship” (2:9). The reason Paul argued so vigorously in his own defense is the same reason that he fought so hard to defend the truth against the troubling Judaizers: the truth of the Gospel was being challenged. If Paul’s apostleship were to be brought into question, then his message, the Gospel message, would

be rejected. Thus, as Paul was attacked he simply continued to defend the truth.

Cyclic History

As a student of history, I am fascinated with the fact that people who fail to learn from history are bound to repeat it. Of course most modern historians would disagree with me on this point because their view of history is that the past simply represents unconnected events of random chance. The cause and effect cycle of life is nothing like mixing chemicals and getting a reaction, i.e., adding vinegar to baking soda. The mixing of chemicals is amoral in itself—which is the view that naturalists and atheists have to take on life. To them, life is nothing more than random mutations of some primordial soup gone wild. What an amazing leap of *faith* that bunch has to take to believe their *a priori* big bang assumption. The fact of the matter is that Paul was on fire for the Lord and Satan wanted to silence Paul's voice for the Truth. Satan utilized men, many of whom were influential in the church, to discredit Paul and make him appear to be one unworthy of honest discussion about the hope of his heart. Inasmuch as "we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2:11), honest Bible students should be able to recognize this approach as an effective tool of Satan to hinder the spreading and free course of the Gospel of Christ.

Brethren who love the Truth and who are set for the defense of the Gospel of Christ are always ready to give an answer (a defense) to every man that asks of them a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15). As the restoration history in the United States of America is examined, it is evident that brethren were willing

and able to defend the Truth and discuss it publically so the Gospel could flourish. When the anti movement began to develop in the church, brethren were willing to discuss the anti doctrine openly and publically. Granted, some men refuse to debate these issues because the arguments of the antis have been refuted, and the evidence or record is available for men to study the issues of anti-ism. When Dub McClish defeated the errors of Dan Billingsly, there was no longer a need to allow Billingsly's voice to be heard; his error could not stand up against the defense of the Gospel.

When Rubel Shelly began his transition into an ecumenicist, Garland Elkins was his vocal opponent—much to the displeasure of the Getwell Church of Christ. (Rubel, when sound in the faith worked with the Getwell Church of Christ and was beloved as a servant of Christ.) Rubel basically refused to debate his new teaching with any of the faithful proclaimers of the truth affiliated with the Memphis School of Preaching. When I was a student at the MSOP (August 96-June 98), Curtis A. Cates and Garland Elkins never missed an opportunity to expose the errors of Shelly and ridicule his unwillingness to meet Elkins in public debate. A cursory reading of the New Testament reveals that is exactly what Paul would have done. Paul was not about to allow error to spread without defending the Gospel of Christ, and he was never afraid to call the troublers by name. In Rubel's opinion, the MSOP brethren were unworthy of honest discussion; thus, Shelly pressed on with his error and ignored those who called upon him to give a reason or defense for the hope that is within him as unworthy of honest discussion. Yet, to

Rubel's credit, he did briefly discuss, albeit superficially, some of his new teaching at one of Freed-Hardeman's forums. (The MSOP faculty and staff have been unwilling to do even what Rubel did in giving a defense of their new teaching regarding New Testament fellowship.) Rubel, if he is aware of the current digression of the MSOP brethren, must be overjoyed that they are where he once was in his apostasy!

History is indeed repeating itself once again. Those who are now advocating a new brand of fellowship refuse to openly discuss this issue in any format. If they discuss their position with brethren, they demand confidentiality (as Garland Elkins tried to get John Rose to sign). They lie about the motives and honesty of brethren who are willing and able to point out this drastic change in direction by the MSOP and the Millerite camp. This group influences many congregations to ignore the outcry of their opponents, as did Paul's opposition to the truth. Satan is effective in his campaign to silence his opposition, at least for now. Albeit, those who know the truth of the Gospel are not ignorant of Satan's devices. If the Millerites were to openly defend their new brand of fellowship, they would be exposed for the errorists that they are. They know that if brethren in congregations across America knew what they were doing that their financial base would be adversely affected. Thus, Shelly's *paradigm* of silence seems to be a good fit for them.

What Happened to a "Thus Saith the Lord?"

If the Millerite supporters would read and study the Scriptures, they would be able to see the difference between Miller and his supporters and the beloved apostle Paul (whose

life and defense of the Gospel is the example for all brethren everywhere—1 Cor. 11:1). Paul was set (i.e., planted in a fixed position) to defend the Gospel of Christ. One would never find Paul demanding confidentiality (cf. Acts 26:26)! Instead of being set for the defense of the Gospel, the Millerite bunch are firmly entrenched and planted in a fixed position of absolute silence in regard to their new brand of teaching on fellowship. Additionally, they are set in their campaign of slander and lies in regard to brethren who dare to ask them a reason for the hope that is within them. Avid readers of the New Testament can easily identify these men for the spiritual cowards and tools of Satan that they are. If Paul had been like the Millerites, then Acts 15 and Galatians 2 would not be in the New Testament because brethren would have had to agree to confidentiality before any discussion could have taken place. In fact, the public part of the discussion in Jerusalem would never have taken place! Peter's dissimulation would

have been excused by Paul (cf. Gal. 2:11ff), by one of many excuses: "you don't know what happened because you were not present"; "he really had no other choice because he was trying to save a good work"; "he repented"; "he did nothing for which he needed to repent"; "Peter's error is error but not worthy of splitting the church, it is not a fellowship issue"; et. al."

Conclusion

Be sure that it is not my desire to be caustic and negative toward the Millerites, MSOP, and others. I find no enjoyment at all in writing articles like this one. However, brethren are going to be lost in a real and eternal devil's hell. I find that to be an overwhelming sadness in my heart; therefore, if comparing and contrasting those spiritual terrorists and the apostle Paul opens some eyes to the truth of the Gospel, then the effort has not been in vain. Think about it brethren, are Curtis A. Cates, Garland Elkins—who once quoted Curtis A. Cates, at the request of Bobby Liddell, when he wrote:

Many false teachers seek to remain

in fellowship with the church by demanding that they not only be permitted to teach their heresy, but also be granted immunity from exposure...Brethren, let us ever 'Preach the word' (II Tim. 4:2) and be 'set for the defense of the gospel' (Phil. 1:17). Let us publicly expose false doctrine (Acts 18:28)" (93)

—Bobby Liddell, Barry Grider, Dave Miller, Barry Gilreth, Jr. and Sr., Frank Chesser, Dave Miller, Eddy Craft, Wesley Simons, Milton Mathers, Clifford Newell, and a host of others any better than the men who worked overtime to silence Paul? Absolutely not! It is past time that brethren everywhere refuse to support and fellowship these men until they attempt to set themselves in defense of the new gospel, which is not another gospel! The Millerites simply do not have a "thus saith the Lord" for their indefensible position.

Work Cited

Elkins, Garland. "Is Salvation By Grace Alone." *Current Crises Challenging The Church*. Ed. Bobby Liddell. Pensacola, FL: Bellview Church of Christ, 1992. 89-105.
4852 Sauflay Field Rd; Pensacola, FL 32526

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflay Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflay Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"



Vol. XXXVIII

August 2009

Number 08

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com

The Interrogation of Jesus

Gary W. Summers

Preaching the truth results in criticism and even persecution. John the Baptizer told Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother Philip's wife (Mark 6:17-18), and Herodias, who had left Philip for Herod, became so incensed that she eventually found a way to arrange John's death.

Many did not like Jesus when He talked about God's concern for the Gentiles (Luke 4:25-30), when He healed on the Sabbath day (John 5:1-16), when He taught that He had the ability to forgive sins (Mark 2:1-12), or said God was His Father, making Himself equal with God (John 5:17-18). Needless to say, when Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the scribes and the Pharisees in Matthew 23, they hated Him even more. Eventually, they were able to manipulate the crowd into urging the Romans to crucify Him, but they could not pre-

vent His resurrection. Paul and many others likewise suffered persecution as a result of preaching the Word.

In the course of preaching the Gospel, Jesus and His apostles were asked many questions. **And they answered them!** Sometimes the

"Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?" (Mat. 19:3) or when the Sadducees asked Him whose wife a woman would be in the resurrection, since she had been married to seven brothers (22:23-33).

Jesus answered the questions

designed to trap Him just as much as He did those for information. He might answer a question with a question, as He did when the chief priests and the elders asked Him by what authority He acted, and He answered, "The baptism of

John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?" (21:23-27). They declined to answer, and so did Jesus.

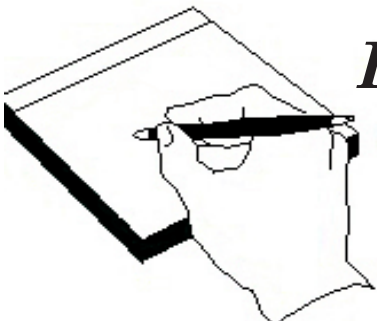
When the woman taken in adultery was brought to Him, and the hypocritical Pharisees asked Jesus: "Now Moses, in the law, commanded

questions were for the purpose of obtaining information. The woman at the well asked Jesus several questions, and He answered them all (John 4). Sometimes opponents asked Him questions to trap Him or to put Him into a difficult situation, such as when the Pharisees asked Him:

Defender Via E-Mail

Defender (along with our weekly bulletin *Beacon*) is available to those who would like to receive it by e-mail. With the continued increase of expenses (paper, printing material, mailing expense, etc.) sending out the publication via e-mail will save us some expenses. It will also enable you to receive the paper the most expeditious way (you will receive it before others who have it being sent by regular mail). We will e-mail you an Adobe Acrobat PDF (a free reader is available from www.adobe.com). We will send you the file with the ability to print it on your printer if you desire. If you would like to receive either or both of these publications sent directly to your e-mail please send us your e-mail address at bellviewcoc@gmail.com. Your e-mail address will not be used for any other purpose than to send you these publications or information relating to them.

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Important

Recently I was visiting with some people and a grandchild asked the grandmother to do something. The grandmother put away what she was doing at the time with the statement that the grandchild's question and desire was more important than what she was doing at the time. The grandmother added that the grandchild would not ask that question again which is why it was so important at that time. She realized that while some things might be important, there are other things that are more important.

Many seem to forget this in the spiritual realm. There are many things that are important, but some things are more important than others. Christians often get lost in those "important" things and forget about what is most important. Twice Peter used the phrase "knowing this first" twice in 2 Peter to express the idea that here is a principle that is extremely important to know. These principles have a greater importance than some other principles that are also important to know. It is understanding what is the priority in life.

Many Christians lose perspective as to what is really important in life. They get caught up in this world and forget what is most important. Some get caught up in the riches of this world. They need to remember: "For we brought nothing into *this* world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows... Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-

minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:7-10, 17). This is especially troubling because money and the things that go with it can be so alluring. Notice that in the previous verse, the first section (verses 7-10) deals with those who seek to be rich while the second section (verse 17) deals with those who are rich.

Some are caught up in things and acquiring more and more things. They live by the creed: "The one with the most toys wins." In our society we observe this when we drive down the street and see mini-storage units being rented out. We filled our houses and garages with so many things, we ran out of room and now must rent these mini-storage units to store all the things we have accumulated. However, the old adage is correct which says that when you die, you cannot take it with you. When you die, you leave it all behind. Jesus stated: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mat. 6:19-21).

Some seek popularity. They want to be liked by others and will do whatever is necessary to accomplish it. They essentially become *yes men* to whatever one will say lest they fall into that person's disfavor. Listen to Jesus as He dealt with this problem: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). The Christian lives the type of lifestyle that is different from the world: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). As such they will be reproving error: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*" (Eph. 5:11). When he rebukes error as he should, he will not be enduring himself to those he rebukes. (Within the past couple of months several highly popular and rich individuals have died. Their popularity and their riches will do them no good as they enter the next life.)

Within the church, we have seen people lose focus on what is really most important. The *Christian* colleges are a good example. It was an important step to have a place of education where there would be a Christian environment and teachers who were members of the Lord's church to help our homes in bringing up children to be faithful Christians. These schools were very effective in

their intended purpose, and by helping the homes the church was also aided. Through the years these schools became more important and some brethren's loyalty was more toward the school than the church and Truth. For many, you could criticize the church, but make sure you do not say anything about their school. This was true even though the school would begin showing signs of liberalism and continued in their wayward path to total apostasy. These brethren lost sight of what was really important—the church. We are now seeing the same things take place regarding Schools of Preaching.

Sometimes some brethren think that an individual is so important to a congregation that the congregation would cease to exist without this one person. Often this person is an elder or preacher. Sometimes they seek that Diotrefes position and viewpoint of others, while at other times it simply is a by-product of the respect the person has gained through the years from the members of the congregation. Yet, as all do, the person passes on into eternity, but the congregation continues on and sometimes flourishes. It is then we are reminded that no one is indispensable. We are now seeing this happen with organizations which some think they must save at all cost because they think they are indispensable to the church. Some are even selling their soul to try and keep alive certain organizations.

What we must learn is what is truly important. That which is ultimately important is the church of our Lord: not denominations, colleges and universities, Schools of Preaching, organizations (other than the church), et. al. It is the church for which Jesus died. It is His church, which He built, and He will save. Additionally, our souls are our most precious commodities. All the popularity, riches and wealth, toys, or anything else is not worth losing our souls over (those who recently died now know this). We are all going to stand before God in judgment. We will either spend eternity in heaven being blessed by God, or we will spend eternity in a devil's hell being tormented. Being saved in heaven is really the only thing that is important in our life. Let us never forget what is truly important.

MH

Continued from Page 1

us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" (John 8:5), He was silent—for a few moments. Then He raised Himself up and responded to them: "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first"

(8:7). Now it was their turn to be silent, and they all left.

Not only did Jesus and the apostles set forth and defend their beliefs in the first century, our brethren in the 19th and 20th centuries did also. We have always been willing to defend what we believe in debate. How many times have we told others: "Truth has nothing to fear"? How often have we pleaded with others: "Come now, and let us reason together"? How often have we urged an honest discussion of the Scriptures? How many of us have echoed the sentiments of N. B. Hardeman, who said, "I can state my position on any Bible subject on a postcard and still have room to ask about the wife and children"?

Yet now it is the case that many have taken vows of silence instead of being forthright. When asked questions that could easily be answered, they refuse to speak, to correspond, to communicate in any fashion. It is kindly pointed out that this attitude is unscriptural and breaks with the tradition established by Jesus and the apostles, which faithful brethren have upheld until this postmodern 21st century.

"Some Reflections"

In the October 2008 *Harvester*, published by the Florida School of Preaching, Jackie Stearsman wrote a brief article in which he apparently is trying to defend the school's silence with respect to questions asked of them. The analysis that follows does not spring from any malice on the part of this writer with that institution or anyone who is a part of it.

The fact is that I have spoken on lectureships with Gene Burgett, Brian Kenyon, and Jackie Stearsman, the latter of which recommended me to the brethren at South Seminole, which may have contributed to them asking me to come work with them. In other words, there is no personal ill will whatsoever against the school, as a whole, or the instructors individually. What follows deals with an issue; it is not an ad hominem attack.

Brother Stearsman begins his article by asking if his readers have ever considered why the Lord stood silent before Pilate and Herod? He cites Matthew 27:12-14, Mark 15:4-5, and Luke 23:8-11. Many of us have studied these passages and believe there is a logical answer to the question. The questioning of Pilate and Herod were not to obtain information. They were not for the purpose of posing an *insoluble* predicament. The determination to crucify Jesus would not be altered by Him fielding questions at this point. Herod only wanted to be entertained by Jesus. His questions were pointless and basically for the sport of him and his soldiers.

Pilate actually did ask some serious questions, and

although the gospel of John was not cited above, Jesus did answer a few of them, after having first remained silent (John 18:33-38). It was during this conversation that Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world,” a passage we often quote to refute Premillennialism. After being scourged, Pilate asked further questions, and Jesus remained silent once more, and when the governor became upset with that silence, he reminded Him that he held the power of life and death over Him. Jesus spoke once again: “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin” (19:11). Jesus was mostly silent, but He did say some significant things.

Is it the intention of the brief article under review to equate FSOP with Jesus under trial for His life? If so, who corresponds to Pilate and Herod? Is it appropriate to cite the only time Jesus refused to answer questions (when He was on trial and about to be crucified), and then use that as a defense for being silent as a matter of course? The reader can judge for himself how accurate such a parallel might be.

The article puts forth another question: “Do you think some might label Jesus a sinner because He did not answer every question posed to Him?” Apparently, those who have wondered why FSOP refuses to answer questions about where they stand on certain issues are now accused of being so heartless and mean that they would accuse Jesus of being a sinner!

Before answering this charge, the reader should ask himself something. Suppose that a school or a college did have something to hide. Perhaps funds had been misused, or there actually was a false teacher on the

staff (this is hypothetical). Could not the school respond with precisely the same argument that brother Stearsman has used to avoid scrutiny?

The Reason for Silence

Having already noticed that Jesus was not totally silent, we should look at Matthew 27:11, which precedes the text of 12-14 in the article under review:

Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, “Are You the king of the Jews?” Jesus said to him, “*It is as you say.*”

Jesus then remained silent because He had already answered the question. His kingship, however, was not of this world. The other questions that they asked before the governor He had already addressed. He had taught the people the gospel, and He had done noteworthy miracles all throughout Judea and Galilee to prove the claims He had made. They already had all the evidence they needed, yet they still desired to destroy Him. Of what further use would anything He said be at this point? Were they about to be persuaded by what He might now say? Hah!

But how does any of this parallel FSOP’s refusal to answer questions, period? Any school of preaching or college that seeks the financial support and good will of brethren ought to be able to explain where they stand on a few doctrinal points since they ask brethren to trust their judgment in the spending of money and in providing prospective students. In fact, they should welcome the opportunity to show that they stand where the Scriptures do.

Terry Hightower’s Three True — False Questions

It may be that brother Stearsman’s article was in response to the “Open Letter” (dated August 25, 2008) that brother Terry Hightower sent to the

school. Certainly, as a former student and instructor, with close ties to Jackie Stearsman and Gene Burgett, no one would accuse him of having anything but the best interest of FSOP in mind. Now it would be cumbersome if he had sent the director and the board 100 questions or even 50. Such would be a time-consuming chore to answer, but brother Hightower only sent three, and they are not difficult to answer. They are True — False questions and are listed below.

1. T or F: We at the Florida School of Preaching hold and support the scripturalness of Elder Reevaluation and Reaffirmation as taught and practiced by Dave Miller, Director of Apologetics Press (Montgomery AL), and the Brown Trail eldership (Hurst TX).
2. T or F: We at the Florida School of Preaching hold and support the scripturalness of “mental intent” in regard to commitment in marriage with its subsequent implications for divorce and remarriage as taught and practiced by Dave Miller, Director of Apologetics Press (Montgomery, AL) and the Brown Trail eldership (Hurst TX).
3. T or F: Along with Dave Miller, Director of Apologetics Press (Montgomery AL), we at the Florida School of Preaching hold and support the scripturalness of fellowshiping false teachers [like Mac Deaver (Denton, TX)] who teach the Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit and/or the present-day Baptism of the Spirit.

All three of these could have been answered false, which is the way sound brethren would answer them. So why would brother Stearsman write an article, misapplying the silence of Jesus at portions of His trial, instead of just answering these questions?

“Church Controversies”

However, there is more. In the same issue of *The Harvester*, an article by Wayne Jackson also appears; in

fact, it is the lead article. “Church Controversies” was originally published by ChristianCourier.com on July 8, 2008. Before mentioning its contents, however, we affirm that the article, for all of its good points, is too vague to be of value. Jesus did not have any trouble identifying the Nicolaitans by name, saying that He hated their deeds and their doctrine (Rev. 2:6, 15). He also mentioned that there were false apostles (2:2) and a false prophetess named Jezebel (2:20). Paul listed individuals (1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:16-18; 4:14). When specific names are not given, then usually their false teaching is singled out and examined. In the instance of Revelation 2:6, the recipients of the letter obviously knew who the false apostles were whom they had tested.

Brother Jackson, however, speaks of “little people” who make “big issues” out of “non-issues.” Unfortunately, he provides no examples so anyone would know who he means by “little people.” And what does he regard as a “non-issue”? Since this article appears in the same *The Harvester* as the one previously reviewed, the reader finds himself wondering, “Does brother Jackson think that the elder reevaluation/reaffirmation practice is a non-issue?” Would he refuse to answer the three True – False questions?

He goes on to state that some brethren are “chronic complainers” and “perpetually factious,” which is true, and we have all known some who, as the expression used to go, were “born in the kickative mood and the objective case.”

We can also agree that internal “personal problems...should not be broadcast throughout the brotherhood,” and his reasons for saying so are valid. He does not address, however, the situation of one congrega-

tion withdrawing from another—or from the elders of another congregation—which then places all the other brethren in the geographical area in a difficult situation. All brethren can do in such a situation is investigate the matter to decide whether the withdrawal was necessary and valid or not. Likewise, if a troublemaker leaves one church for another, brethren cannot just plead ignorance.

Brother Jackson provides five guiding principles for brethren to use in dealing with church controversies, which would be fine, if he had just stated the tenets he thought were helpful, but he peppers these good ideas with blanket condemnations of certain anonymous brethren. One may be reminded of those times when elders have come to a preacher and said, “We’ve had some complaints about you.” When asked, “From whom?” the answer invariably is, “Well, that doesn’t matter.” Other preachers have fallen victim to the “they say” mentality. The Bill of Rights does not, in some instances, apply to the accused in the church; some apparently believe in trial by innuendo.

Some of the accusations brother Jackson levies at others (without mentioning specifics) are that a few brethren “are masters at taking words and phrases and twisting them to form an indictment alien to the meaning included by the original writer or authors.” It would be nice to have an example of such master word twisting; surely brethren would profit in seeing how someone does such a thing.

Who are the “long-distant critics” who desire to hand down “dictums to be bound upon other churches”? Would it be possible to identify the “small mob of Christians scattered around the country” who are issuing

ultimatums to which “all churches are expected to yield”? Who are the “misdirected, lathered-up radicals” who are threatening to impose disfellowship on others? Should not these ill-tempered brethren be exposed? They sound dangerous enough that they need to be named; this is no time for vagueness to prevail.

Who are these “rabble rousers” who enjoy fanning “the flames of local church problems,” who have “dirty laundry” of their own? And why do they think they can monitor “the nationwide church”? If we have “self-deputized” cowboys who are “constantly caught up in the frenzy of a new fight,” should they not be marked and rejected as divisive (Tit. 3:10)? Brother Jackson closes his article with this sentence: “Jesus pronounced a blessing upon the peacemakers, not upon the strife-causers.” Amen. But how is someone supposed to make peace when one party refuses to talk?

Scriptural Principles

Jesus said that if you have something against a brother, go to him and talk to him about it (Mat. 18:15-17). Issues, conflicts, and problems between brethren need to be resolved, and everyone has the obligation to do what it takes to bring about peace. In some cases people have asked brethren, as Terry Hightower did, why they fellowship those teaching false doctrines. The reply is silence.

Our Lord also said that, if you know that your brother has something against you, the first thing you should do (before worshipping God) is to first seek reconciliation with your brother. Many of us have something against those who fellowship error and have made it known. It is not Scriptural to prefer silence to resolution.

3671 Oak Vista Ln; Winter Park, FL 32792

Problem of Discipline

Gus Nichols

Discipline is one of the most difficult problems in the church. In all orderly societies there must be some sort of discipline. Otherwise a few lawless characters would disturb the peace of decent and law-abiding citizens. Hence, there is discipline in the army and navy and in all civil governments. The church must be no exception. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that all the members of the church will be faithful and true to the Lord and His Word. Those who know the fickleness of human nature know that imperfection is to be expected even among the best of people. Much more are we to expect trouble to arise from among backsliders and plain hypocrites in our fellowship. Furthermore, there are ignorant and weak brethren whose zeal surpasses their wisdom and knowledge. In their conceit and exalted opinion of themselves they may try to take over and run the church to the disturbance of the peace. Then there may be some who did not obey the Gospel from the heart, but came into our fellowship without genuine conversion. What is more natural than for trouble to come from such a source? Unless proper discipline is exercised over such characters the church is certain to suffer.

Jehovah for System and Order

God stands for system and order in the church. In fact, He is for discipline among men everywhere. He "is not the author of confusion" (1 Cor. 14:33). He demands that all men respect proper authority: whether it be in the home, in civil government, or in the church. When Adam and Eve sinned, the Lord disciplined

them with painful expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3). When Cain sinned in worship and killed his own brother, Jehovah expelled him from among orderly people and sent him off to the land of Nod (Gen. 4). Later, when the world became hopelessly wicked, God sent a flood of water and expelled the wicked from among the righteous (Gen. 6). Later when the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah became wicked, God rained fire and brimstone upon them to further purify the earth (Gen. 19). When Nadab and Abihu offered "strange" fire in worship, God smote them with death and separated them from among the faithful (Lev. 10). Then when Israel rebelled in the wilderness, God scattered their dead bodies from one side of the wilderness to the other and permitted only the few faithful to enter the promised land (Deu. 1; 1 Cor. 10). Of course those now opposed to discipline in the church would have objected to all of this restraint, but such persons would have been destroyed for their efforts to block the administration of orderly government. That is what happened to those arrayed against Moses and Aaron, who acted by the authority of God (Num. 16). The prophet who ate with false worshipers and failed to withdraw from them was killed for his sin (1 Kin. 13).

Discipline in the Church

When Ananias and Sapphira brought shame upon themselves and the church by their covetousness, love of human praise, and lying, God killed them to remove them from the fellowship of the Jerusalem church (Acts 5). The church did not

so much as stop the worship because of their death. Had those who opposed discipline in the church been there, would they not have objected to all this? Would they not have at least claimed that God acted too hastily? In process of time God turned the discipline of the church over to His faithful servants. He says: "put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13). "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:5). Since he now belongs to Satan, turn him over to his owner. Maybe he will repent and crucify the flesh and so live that his soul may be finally saved in heaven. He is to be "taken away from among you" (5:2). The Lord says: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump" (5:7). Again He says: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 The. 3:6). He further says "not to keep company" with him (1 Cor. 5:11). Again: "have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 The. 3:14); and, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11). No social meal with such is permitted. A prophet of God was once destroyed for eating with an old lying prophet after God told him not to have fellowship with him

nor his brethren in false worship (1 Kin. 13). He failed to make his message effective by example, and God required it of him.

Three Kinds of Offense

There are three kinds of offense coming under the general discipline of the church:

1. One who gets drunk, or in any way so sins as to bring reproach upon the church, is to be disciplined. God says: "Give none of fence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (1 Cor. 10:32). Fellowship in the church means partnership. It is some of the merchant's business if his partner gets drunk and drives the customers away with his disorderly conduct; and it is some of our business if sinful men in the church begin to destroy what we are trying to build up. Hence, discipline immoral characters among us (1 Cor. 5).

2. Then there may be a case in which some brother offends another brother, and the church knows not of it. The offended is to tell the offender privately of his grievance and

try to settle the matter. If he fails, he is to take one or two others and try again. If he still fails to settle the matter, he is to tell it to the church, and the church is to try to settle the matter. But if it fails, the offender is to be excluded (Mat. 18:15-18).

3. Finally, there is the case of one who offends another without knowing of the matter, and the offended has not obeyed the injunction to come and tell him of his fault. This man is to leave whatever he may be doing and go be reconciled to his brother (5:23-26).

Solution of the Problem

The solution of the problem of discipline is teaching. We should so teach and build up the church that the members will be so strong and well informed that trouble and sin in the church may be kept at a minimum and the church fortified against taking any unscriptural action in any case. Sin must be re-proved and rebuked among us at all times (2 Tim. 4:1-5). The impenitent will not accept such with good grace. Those who need to be disciplined are

not to be expected to "be nice about the matter." Also their kin are prone to take sides with them, right or wrong. Their former friends also feel it their duty to oppose the church and be for them. Those who thus oppose the church are sure to say the church was too hasty, or give some other objection to stir up sentiment in favor of the disciplined brother. All of this is wrong, and the church must not be swayed by such appeals. When patience and prudence, proper teaching and exhortation fail, the church must act. It must not waver. But nothing must be done through strife (Phi. 2). All scriptural means of restoring the disorderly must first be exhausted (Gal. 6:1-6). But the church must not be made to suffer too long. Meekness and gentleness must characterize all that the church does. But the announcement once having been made that a disorderly brother is excluded, one hundred per cent of the members must endorse the stand taken by making the discipline effective.

Deceased

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

Defender is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

September 2009

Number 09

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Is This What They Mean By *Balance*?

Dub McClish

The Forest Hill congregation (FH) in Memphis, Tennessee, oversees and is the home of Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP), both of which have for years commanded my utmost respect, support, and commendation. Brother Barry Grider is the FH preacher and is also on the faculty of MSOP. On February 10, brother Grider published an article in *The Forest Hill News* titled, "I Got Used to It" (see www.foresthillcofc.org/bulletinarticles.html). It is evident from his article that he has "got used to" some things that he at one time had not "got used to" and that he did not learn to "get used to" from either the New Testament or from his instructors at MSOP several years ago.

To be fair, he stated several things in principle with which no faithful brother disagrees in the least. However, in applying those principles, he also said some things with which faithful brethren **will** disagree. Among other things, he sees no difference between praising God for the Holy Spirit (as in "Hallelujah, Thine the Glory") and in **directly addressing** the Spirit and praying to Him for His direct influence upon us (as in "Sweet, Sweet Spirit").

He mentioned that "some try to legislate" regarding our songs in worship. I am glad to know that he has read my

2007 Bellview Lectures chapter, "Building up the Church Through Singing." It cannot be a mere coincidence that he specifically denies some of the principles I affirmed and even named some of the same songs I used as illustrations therein. As further indicated below, his long-held and deep-seated animosity toward me triggers his pop-off valve ever so often. It thus appears that his sweet, loving, jovial demeanor is a mere façade, covering a hateful, vindictive heart that will cause him to be lost if he does not repent. The Lord is not pleased with "hateful birds" (Rev. 18:2).

Further, he creates a straw man of those "resistant to any kind of change" and condescendingly judges them to be of "weak faith." It is not that some of us are "resistant to any kind of change," but that some of us are still resistant to **certain kinds** of change, such as singing a Pentecostal song directed to the Holy Spirit demonstrates. Are we to infer that brother Grider is no longer "resistant to any kind of change"? Is this what he and his cohorts mean by their use of *balance* since 2005?

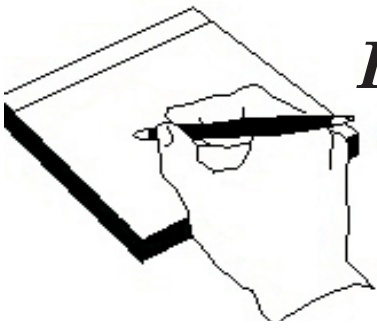
Even more telling than his own article is the article he printed, with obvious endorsement, immediately following his own essay. He prefaced this article, "Binding Where God Has

Not," by Tyler Young, with the following editor's note: "The following article is an excerpt of material prepared by brother Young for the 2008 Lubbock Lectureship." It is noteworthy, however, that he failed to tell readers that Tommy Hicks (Lubbock Lectures Director) had **edited this material from Young's manuscript because of sore disagreement with it.**

In spite of knowing of this disagreement, Young impudently delivered the excised passages orally at the lectureship anyway, much to the chagrin of Hicks and his elders. His doing so provoked a public rebuke by Hicks and an immediate stream of questions from various ones who heard the speech. Hicks's elders were so concerned about this lecture that they had it removed in its entirety from the recordings so no one who heard them could infer that the Southside church endorsed Young's comments.

As in brother Grider's article, there is much in brother Young's essay with which all faithful brethren will agree. However, in his comments (endorsed by Grider, but rejected by Hicks, remember), he questions whether we should have fellowship concerns about various practices that faithful brethren must question seriously. According to Young, such things as using the New International Version for

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Patience

Patience is a virtue. Patience is a vice. While these two statements appear contradictory, they are not. Patience is a virtue as we observe this attribute in God. Peter states, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet 3:9). God is *longsuffering* or patient. God showed His patient nature while Noah prepared the ark: “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (1 Pet. 3:20). Numerous times through the Old Testament God’s longsuffering is mentioned (Exo. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Psa. 86:15; et al.). Likewise, the New Testament speaks of His longsuffering as the previous passages show (also note for example, Rom. 2:4; 15:5; Rev. 2:21).

Paul gives us the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13. Paul writes, “Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up” (13:4). God’s patience is a result of His love. Because God loves us, He desires our salvation (1 Tim. 2:4) and is patient with man. This is the point Peter was making in 2 Peter 3:9.

We are to take upon ourselves the Divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Thus, we are to be patient also. The love we have for others demands our patience as is seen in 1 Corinthians 13:4. Paul encouraged us to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Eph. 4:1-2). He tells the Colossians: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering” (Col. 3:12). There are four areas in which we need to learn patience: (1) with self, (2) with others, (3) with circumstances, and (4) with God. So we, in living the Christian life, must learn

patience because it is a virtue.

However, at times patience is a vice. This point was driven home to me recently in a discussion on one of the lists. I asked a simple “yes” or “no” question regarding two individual’s view on baptism. While both individuals were able to make additional posts, after pointing out they had not responded to my simple “yes” or “no” question, I was chided that I needed to have patience. I guess the patience I was to possess meant that I should continue to learn it because neither one of them ever answered the question. The matter of my having patience was to deflect the question so they would not have to answer it. The person who chided me to use patience was using such as a vice, not a virtue.

Notice some Bible examples of where patience would be a vice and not a virtue. Paul taught the Corinthians that they should not have patience with the man who was committing fornication (1 Cor. 5). Paul rebukes them by saying, “And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you” (5:2). This was a matter where patience was a vice. The Corinthians needed to act, and act immediately in withdrawing fellowship from this fornicator. “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (5:4-5).

The Scriptures also teach that patience would be a vice regarding those who would be divisive. Paul writes, “A man that is an heretick [factious—ASV] after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself” (Tit. 3:10-11). While many would say we must be patient with such factious (divisive) people, God says to give them one admonition (a reprove which leads to correct behavior), then a second admonition. If they do not repent after the second admonition, we have the obligation to reject (refuse, avoid, or withdraw fellowship from) the person, not be patient with them.

A couple decades back, Rubel Shelly began teaching some strange doctrines. Rubel Shelly was known for his soundness so many refused to believe anything of a negative nature concerning him. However, faithful brethren were showing the errors and contradictions from his previous writings and views. Many people were pleading for patience with Rubel instead of marking and avoiding him as God teaches: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom. 16:17-18).

A few years ago Randy Mabe rebuked brethren who pointed out the sinful fellowship of Online Academy of Biblical Studies (OABS). He pleaded for patience as he said they were working out the admittedly (at least at that time) “problems.” I have been wondering for the past almost three years, how long we are to have patience with them while they work out these problems. Or was the plea for patience at that time a ruse to divert attention till maybe brethren forgot the “problems” at OABS and Randy Mabe’s association with it (he is still associated with OABS in spite of their continued sinful fellowship while others obeyed God’s instructions to “come out from among them, and be ye separate”)?

The Rodriguez family is another case in point. In the open forum of the Spring/Contending For The Faith Lectureship in 2008 the Rodriguez family (Edilfonso, Israel, and Joshua) came and defended Joseph Meador (who has since left the church and has been withdrawn from). They had met with Joseph Meador one night and were then able to affirm his soundness (in spite of the fact of his gestalt therapy and yoga teachings). While the Rodriguez family was able to determine Joseph Meador’s supposed soundness, they had information concerning Dave Miller for over two years and could not determine if he taught false doctrine concerning elder reevaluation/reaffirmation in 1990. They wanted brethren to be patient with them while they made a determination concerning it. This call for *patience* was really a vice to allow them to continue to fellowship Dave Miller (and those who fellowship him) as if they are still studying the issue.

Many others have taken this same view regarding Dave Miller and his false teachings. Certainly time should be given for people to study the issues, gather the facts, and come to a conclusion regarding these matters. (However, this should not take years to do.) Yet, many of us who oppose Dave Miller and his damnable doctrines have been condemned by Miller’s supporters because we showed patience with others. They have condemned us of inconsistency in our dealings regarding these matters; when, in actuality, we were simply giving others time to learn about it. (If we had not been patient, these same ones would have condemned us for being impatient and “jumping the gun.”)

Patience is a virtue. However, we cannot allow it to get in the way of doing what needs to be done and allow it to become a vice.

MH

Continued from Page 2

teaching and preaching, dismissing Sunday evening worship in favor of small group meetings or for the Super Bowl, serving coffee and doughnuts in Bible classes, or missing a meeting of

the church to compete in a sporting event should not be considered signs of liberalism and should not affect fellowship. Space forbids further elaboration, but these comments indicate the *flavor* of the article. I applaud brother Hicks and the Southside elders for refusing to publish and endorse this material. I encourage readers to read the entire article.

The point just here is that brother Grider gave this article his imprimatur; **he is in full agreement with it.** However, he was not through. Immediately following the Young article, he printed an article that has been around for many years, titled “I Drew My Circle Again.” It mocks the concept of recognizing fellowship restrictions. While the Lord’s people should not be self-righteously judgmental, this little ditty implies that one should make no judgments at all. Of course, the only justifiable basis anyone has for drawing lines of fellowship, whether circular, triangular, square, rectangular or any other shape, is where the Lord has drawn them in His Word. I kindly suggest to brother Grider that he needs to draw that circle yet again. Over the past almost four years, it is obvious that he has considerably enlarged his circle of late. It seems to be much larger now than it was four or five years ago, and it seems to be getting larger all the time. It is certainly larger than the Lord’s *circle* (Rom. 16:17-18; Eph. 5:11; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 9-11).

The only ones I have seen publish this little “Circle” piece over the years are folks who are much more broadminded than the Lord, mostly rank liberals and denominationalists. A quick Internet search located the “Circle” treatise on the Websites of a Christadelphian, a Nazarene, two Baptists, and three other churches of Christ. Ironically, one of them is the liberal Germantown, Tennessee, congregation, which is “just around the corner” from FH/MSOP, with which they have no fellowship. I assume that brother Grider knew exactly what he was doing when he printed the “Circle” note.

What Will the Forest Hills Do?

In light of the above, what will the FH elders do? Do they agree with and stand behind their preacher in these articles? If they do, they have seriously altered their views concerning some of the things their preacher either said in his article, endorsed in Young’s article, and/or implied in the “Circle” article. Is this what they mean by *balance*?

I had the privilege of delivering the 1998 MSOP graduation address. In my remarks, I addressed not only the students. I also specifically cautioned and reminded the FH elders to be vigilant for any drifting in their convictions and/or direction, noting that if brethren began seeing signs of compromise in them, it would destroy the school’s and the congregation’s great influence for good. They, as well as the faculty, expressed great appreciation for my remarks at the time. (The tape of that speech is probably still stuck away in some dark and forgot-

ten corner of a cabinet in the FH media room, unless someone has remembered [since mid-2005] to destroy it.)

Will the FH elders issue a disclaimer statement relative to the Grider/Young article? If they do not, surely, many are going to have grave concerns about their (and MSOP's) implied endorsement of it and about their sincerity and steadfastness in the faith. Their silence will only compound the sore disappointment of many concerning their fellowship compromises since the summer of 2005, and will make the cloud over the congregation and the school even darker and larger than it has already developed. I suspect the Grider material has already provoked quite a stir among alumni who earnestly want FH and MSOP to be faithful to the Truth (as we all do). Is the Grider/Young article what these *balanced* brethren mean by "balance?"

What Will MSOP Do?

Does brother Bobby Liddell, Director of MSOP, endorse these articles and all of their implications? Do brother Grider's fellow faculty members at MSOP endorse the Grider/Young articles? Do they agree that all versions "are permissible for teaching and preaching" and those who oversee teachers or preachers have no Scriptural right (not to mention responsibility) to prescribe which versions shall be used? Does the school have any right to declare itself on the versions issue? A few years ago it was not bashful to do so. In the twenty-one consecutive years (1985–2005) that I spoke on the MSOP Lectures, instructions to the speakers stated explicitly that we were to use only the King James Version or the American Standard Version (1901) in both manuscript and presentation (a policy with which I fully concur and which I also followed for all of the twenty-one Annual Denton Lectures I directed [1982–2002]). I assume this same policy at one time obtained for the students at MSOP. Does this policy still prevail? If it does, is brother

Grider aware of it? (Freed-Hardeman University had its versions controversy in 1977, and it has apparently all but fully relaxed its restrictions in this regard. Does the Grider/Young article signal the beginning of a version controversy at MSOP?)

At one time in recent years, all of the MSOP faculty considered as liberals those who teach and preach from such modern versions as the TEV, NEB, NIV, and others like them of more recent vintage (they even looked down their noses at those who used the RSV and NASB). They doubtless likewise labeled the congregations that had such versions in their pews and classrooms. Further, MSOP has long endorsed brother Robert Taylor's excellent book, *Challenging Dangers of Modern Versions*, in which he exposes the perversions of several of the pseudo-versions of the Bible. Does MSOP still agree with brother Robert Taylor's conclusions on this subject (and do the FH elders still agree with them)? Do the FH elders have one versions policy for their pulpit, but a different one for the MSOP classrooms? Do the elders now allow brother Grider to preach from the version of his choice in the FH pulpit, but when he steps across the breezeway to teach his MSOP courses, they require him to use only the KJV or the ASV? (If they have separate policies, lectureship week must drive them crazy as the FH pulpit is in constant use by MSOP speakers. Which policy will they follow?)

Are the students now taught that when they enter their preaching work they should turn a blind eye if the decision-makers in the congregation decide to dismiss Sunday evening worship for home meetings or the Super Bowl, as Young's article suggests? Will these young preachers allow members where they preach to forsake the assembly in favor of a sporting event without a word against it? Will brother Liddell issue a disclaimer statement relative to the Grider/Young article? If he does not do so, must we not conclude that he is in agreement with

its contents? Is this what these brethren mean by *balance*?

The New Gospel Journal Implications

The Grider material raises some interesting questions relative to *The New Gospel Journal*, which underwent a rather drastic shakeup as of January 1. The combined November–December 2008 issue of *TNGJ* (which arrived in mailboxes in mid-March) announced the resignations of Grider and his fellow-editor (since August 2005), brother John Moore. In their place, the paper announced that brother Curtis Cates is the new editor as of January, relinquishing his role as board president, held since 1999. John Moore was added to the board, joining Ratcliff (president, treasurer, and business manager), Hicks (secretary), and Paul Sain (added to the board several months ago). In his departing editorial, brother Grider made sure readers understood his indispensability to *TNGJ* by stating that he would continue to serve as an "adviser" to the board and the new editor.

Tommy Hicks, who refused to publish Young's material because he considered it Scripturally unjustifiable, could not have appreciated Grider's endorsement and publication of Young's material. Hicks would not be the first board member to have cause for such trepidation about Grider's convictions, however. Ratcliff, Hicks's fellow board member, objected to similar material from Grider in 2003. During my tenure as editor of *The Gospel Journal* (1/2000–7/2005), I published an article by brother Grider (9/2003) in which he made statements similar to, but not as far-reaching as, the ones in his recent FH bulletin article. Some of his comments made me wonder at the time, but with no previous negative *vibes* otherwise from him, I decided to give him the benefit of the doubt. Ratcliff, however, did more than merely wonder about his statements. He was much displeased with Grider's article when he got the paper, so much so that he insisted on a disclaimer

in the next issue.

I discussed the matter with brother Cates, *TGJ* board president and then director of MSOP, and he talked to brother Grider about it, suggesting he write a statement of clarification. He refused, saying he stood by what he had written as he wrote it (which then got my attention more fully). Accordingly, brother Cates and I worded the following disclaimer for the next issue:

Our September issue carried an excellent article, titled “Jesus’ Prayer for Unity,” by Barry Grider, whom I hold in the highest esteem as a devout and faithful brother. In his article he issued a caution about allowing undue suspicion to become a barrier to Biblical unity—a caution well taken. A few of our readers have thought that some might get the impression he was somehow encouraging the adoption of the three practices he used as illustrations (i.e., projecting hymns on a screen, moving the time of midweek service because of a holiday, or allowing a mechanical instrument to be used in the building to accompany secular songs in weddings). These few have further been concerned that *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL* might have left that impression as well by printing the article. Neither impression was intended. The point was simply made that these practices in another congregation should not, **in and of themselves**, be causes of disunity, even though we would not personally encourage their adoption. While granting that many brethren are not nearly as suspicious as they should be about various grievous errors and their purveyors, it is possible to fall into the radicalism of being overly suspicious. This was the point of the illustrations, with which *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL* agrees completely.

When Tommy Hicks proof read the October 2003 issue with the disclaimer, he sent a pre-publication copy of it to Ken Ratcliff, since he was the one who had suggested the need for a disclaimer. The statement was not strong enough to suit Ratcliff, so he submitted the following in its place:

Our September issue carried an excellent article, titled “Jesus’ Prayer for Unity,” by Barry Grider. In his article he issued a caution about allowing undue suspicion to become a barrier to Biblical unity—a caution well taken. It has been asked whether the article approves of the three practices he used as illustrations (i.e., projecting hymns on a screen, moving the time of midweek service because of a holiday, or allowing a mechanical instrument to be used in the building to accompany secular songs in a wedding). To many, a wedding ceremony is a religious service when conducted in the church building by a preacher. Even if instruments are only used with secular songs, it can easily be assumed that the church therefore approves of instruments in a worship service. Also, the changing of the time of a mid-week service because of holidays, sports activities, etc. may be an indication of our real priorities. However, the basic point of the article is that we must exercise caution against undue suspicion. While granting that many brethren are not nearly as suspicious as they should be about various grievous errors and their purveyors, it is possible to fall into the radicalism of being overly suspicious. This was the point of the article, with which *The Gospel Journal* agrees completely.

Note that he particularly **removed the commendation of brother Grider** that brother Cates and I had included, as well as making the disclaimer much more specific. Ken’s wording was OK by me, and we ran it in the October issue. (Thinking that I was behind the disclaimer and its wording, I strongly suspect that I have been in the Grider *doghouse* ever since, which animosity he has openly indicated on various occasions since July 2005. Now that he knows who was responsible for the disclaimer, will Ratcliff now be in his *doghouse*?) Obviously, Ratcliff had a considerable problem with brother Grider’s statements at the time, so much so that he could not bring himself to commend him in the disclaimer. Hicks’s objections to Young’s material that he

excised, endorsed by Grider, are basically the same as Ratcliff’s were to Grider’s 2003 article relating to the convictions expressed. Furthermore, from the foregoing material, it is obvious that Hicks was fully aware of, and apparently agreed with, Ratcliff’s concerns as expressed in the disclaimer. In spite of these facts, both seemingly were content to turn *The New Gospel Journal* over to him in August 2005, demonstrating thereby either blatant hypocrisy or a drastic change in conviction. Politics indeed makes strange bedfellows, whether in government or in the church.

According to the Grider announcement in the November–December issue of *TNGJ*, he will remain in an “advisory capacity” to the board and the new editor, thus still closely associated with the paper and its principals. Will this latest Grider article stir Ratcliff’s 2003 concerns anew, or has he swallowed those so long ago he can no longer taste them? Will Hicks be able to keep a lid on his pride at Grider’s implied rebuff in printing, with endorsement, that which he (Hicks) refused to publish? If Hicks could not stand Young’s material, how can he possibly stomach Grider’s? Will Hicks and Ratcliff now get together and call upon new editor Cates to publish a disclaimer regarding new “advisor” Grider’s article, as Ratcliff did in 2003 when Grider was only a lowly writer? Do Ratcliff and Hicks have any convictions left on these issues that they once counted grave? Verily, the mess and maze of political loyalties and compromises that has surfaced among these brethren since July 2005 rivals the long-standing mess of advise, consent, and compromise in Washington D.C.

If they call for a disclaimer, will the other half of *TGJ*’s board agree? Brother Moore might not take too kindly to embarrassing his former co-editor. Brother Sain has not always had the highest opinion of Hicks, calling him a “liar” in one heated phone conversation over a

grievously late manuscript a few years ago. If the board splits on the disclaimer, will editor Cates, still closely associated with FH and MSOP, and thus with Grider, be able to palliate the understandable indignation Ratcliff and Hicks must be feeling toward Grider, and thus avoid the disclaimer? If the board fails to issue a disclaimer, must not readers of *TNGJ* rightly conclude that **the board and its new editor agree with the things both Grider and Young wrote?** Perhaps it is time for brother Cates once again to remind the board that “if they all don’t hang together they will all hang separately,” as he did in

another crisis a few years ago. Is this what *The New Gospel Journal* folks mean by *balance*?

Conclusion

Brother Grider’s publication of the “Circle” is but the latest symptom of religious evolution in him and his cohorts that, unlike the Darwinian sort, is **not** taking eons to demonstrate and continue its development. It began to manifest itself in earnest about four years ago when they decided to put monetary, friendship, family, and/or brotherhood political interests ahead of the Gospel Truth and its fellowship demands (Eph. 5:11;

2 John 9-11). However, the seeds of such behavior must have long been lying latent, just awaiting the right circumstance to call them to the surface. Men do not make such radical reversals of conviction and behavior instantaneously. If the FH elders, the MSOP director, and *The Gospel Journal* board observe the passover regarding the Grider/Young article, they will all have proved their utter hypocrisy by continuing to profess concern for sound doctrine and Scriptural fellowship. We will have further vivid proof of what they mean by *balance*.

908 Imperial Dr; Denton, TX 76209

Who Is in Authority?

David P. Brown

“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (1 Tim. 2: 12).

Some think that the man in 1 Timothy 2:12 should be translated *husband*. Is that the case?

Regarding the view of the last sentence of the preceding paragraph, please consider the following thoughts. I do not see how *man* in 1 Timothy 2:12 could be correctly translated *husband*. The context pertains to male and female relationships in general. It does not only deal with the husband and wife relationship. It is not husbands pray, but men pray (2:8). It is not wives dress modestly, but women dress modestly (2:9-10). It is not husbands teach, but men teach (2:12). It is not wives learn, but women learn (2:11-12). Thus, Eve (the female) and not Adam (the male), was deceived and by the deception fell into sin. Adam, however, went into the sin with his “eyes wide open.” He abdicated his responsibility as the head of the race of man (1 Cor. 11:3). Certainly Adam and Eve were husband and wife, but they were the only male and female on the earth at the time.

Women may be saved from sin (be faithful to God) by remaining in their

God-given role: which role is designated by *childbearing*—that which is peculiar to the female and not the male. It is my conviction (though I am not dogmatic) that *childbearing* is used in this passage as a synecdoche (where a part stands for the whole or the whole for one of its parts). Hence, *childbearing* in verse 15 references the sphere of activity of or role that God intended for women. Just as man sins if he abdicates his God-given role, so also does a woman sin if she forsakes her sphere of activity assigned to her by her Creator (1 Tim. 1:13-15). In the great majority of cases this involves the home—husband, wife, and children. However, such direction also covers the single woman and her relationship to men. In other words, it would govern Lydia of Act 16 as well as the apostle Paul. Therefore, a single woman must respect the headship of a man, not in the husband and wife relationship, because such biblical principles peculiar to husbands and wives are not bound on the single person, but by that set out in 1 Corinthians 11:3 and, I believe, elaborated on by the apostle in 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

With the previous remarks in mind, please consider the following. Some

time ago I read where a person took the position that if at any time or any place a woman imparted Bible knowledge to a man she was by her action necessarily exercising dominion over him and thereby in violation of 1 Timothy 2:12. Such a view is palpably false. If that were the case, a woman could not by her remarks in a Bible class enlighten the male members of the class on some Scripture. A wife could not enlighten her husband regarding the meaning of Scripture. In fact, no woman anywhere or at anytime could engage in the discussion of the Bible with a man or in the presence of men lest she risk saying something that might enlighten one of the men regarding the meaning of some Scriptures and in so doing (according to some) exercising dominion over men and, thereby, sinning. She could not write a letter to her adult son and refer to the Scriptures lest she impart Biblical information to him. If a man asked her what to do to be saved, she could not tell him. Of course, this would mean that it would be a sin for a man to read any religious article, tract, or book written by a woman lest he learn something from the woman who wrote it. Indeed, a grown man could not even

listen to his aged mother sing a Gospel song lest the words of the song instruct him and thereby she would exercise dominion over him.

What Is Really Affirmed

One who holds such a view is really affirming the following proposition: "The scriptures teach that under any and all circumstances it is a sin for a female to impart Biblical knowledge to an adult male." Therefore, if she writes a religious article, only women are authorized by the New Testament to read the article. Furthermore, that being the case, such a person would be forced to affirm: "The scriptures teach that it is a sin for an adult male to read any religious literature produced by a woman." This would forbid elders to go into a class to learn what a female teacher is teaching and the kind of teacher she is.

The problem with such thinking is this: it equates "imparting of information" by a woman to a man with "exercising dominion over the man." But such is not necessarily the case. That is obvious by Aquila and Priscilla's teaching of Apollos. Priscilla (a woman) taught Apollos in such a way as not to exercise dominion over him.

It does no good (it possibly does a great amount of harm) to say Aquila and Priscilla's teaching of Apollos has no bearing on this study because Apollos was not a Christian. One who holds such a view is affirming far more than he realizes. Does such a one not understand that he is affirming that the Scriptures teach that Christian women may exercise dominion over non-Christian adult males in teaching them the Gospel? By this erroneous logic, a Christian woman could preach the Gospel to a thousand adult males in one assembly just as long as all of them are not Christians. Who believes it? Indeed, 1 Timothy 2:12 deals with the Christian woman's relationship to non-Christian as well as Christian adult males. **This is the case, because, all persons (in and out of the church) are amenable to the perfect law of liberty—the New Testament System, the Faith** (Mat. 28:18; Jam. 1:25; John 12:48; Col. 3:17; Jude 3).

What God Forbids

Indeed, for a woman to exercise dominion over a male in the process of her imparting Bible knowledge to him there must be some other element involved.

What is it? The answer: a woman must be in a position of controlling the man. Likewise, the male must be in a subservient state of mind to the woman. He must be submissive to her as the one who leads, directs, and guides him. Such Inspiration clearly forbids (1 Tim. 2:12).

Thus, we have male song leaders. However, in the assembly lead by the male song leader, women are singing. As they sing they are "teaching and admonishing" all that hear them—including any males who are found in most of our worship assemblies (Col. 3:16). Moreover, these Christian sisters are not in a leading and controlling relationship to the adult males who are taught by them. It is the song leader who occupies that position. Thus, they teach adult males without violating 1 Timothy 2:12.

It is obvious by this Biblical instruction and compliance thereto that the mere impartation of knowledge by a woman to an adult male does not in and of itself alone constitute a woman exercising dominion over a man or men. Hence, there is no sin necessarily inherent in a religious article written by a woman for the public to study.

25403 Lancewood Dr; Spring, TX 77373

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

Defender is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

October 2009

Number 10

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Have You Grown Weary of God?

Danny L. Box

Micah 6:2-3 reads:

Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel. O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.

In these two verses we see the faithful prophet of God delivering a message to the last of the children of Israel. God, through the prophet, reminds them of all that He had done for them. God tells them that it was He who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and that He had fed, protected, guided, and loved them all of those years. He told them that He had shown them what is good and all that He had required of them was that they "do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (6:8).

Regardless of all that God had done for the people, they stopped following Him and chose instead to follow the gods of the heathens around them. They had taken on the name of Baal and Balaam and were not willing to do as the one true God required of them. They had become like their forefathers before them: "What iniquity have your fathers found in

me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?" (Jer. 2:5).

Now because the people were no longer following Him, God asks through the prophet: "What have I done? What has caused you to get tired of me? Tell me what have I done? What is the reason that you no longer follow me?" As we read the rest of the chapter, we see that because they had grown weary of God and were no longer following Him, they were going to face some serious consequences (Mic. 6:13-16).

Let us take a close personal look at ourselves. Have we become like the children of Israel and grown weary of God? If we truthfully examine ourselves we may see a people that act as if indeed we have grown weary of God. Examine some areas in our lives that may indicate our weariness of God the Father.

Have We Grown Weary of His Word?

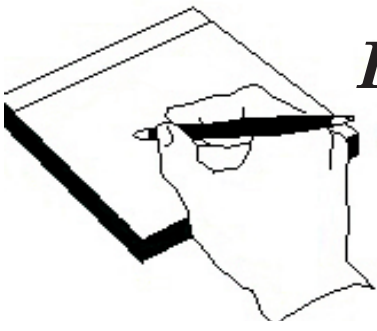
The Word of God was given to man by the inspiration of God. We are to use it for doctrine, for reproof, correction, and instruction, so we might be a complete man of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The Word is to bring us to knowledge of the Lord. It

will help us grow, and it will produce a saving faith (Rom. 10:17). It will also be by this Word that we will be judged in the last day. However, so many of us have grown weary of God's Word. We no longer study the Word (2 Tim. 2:15); we no longer search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). In fact, we have grown so weary of the Word that we no longer teach it to our children (Deu. 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4). I would ask you now, why have you grown weary of God's Word? Is it because you no longer believe that it is the inspired Word of God? Do you believe that it is no longer applicable to us today? Do you think it is incomplete and needs something added to it? Just why have you grown weary of the Word? We need to get back to feeling about God's Word as the people did in Nehemiah 8:1-12. They desired the prophet to read the Word, they were attentive to the reading, they respected the reading of the Word, they understood the Word as read, they wept at the reading of the Word, and they went and did according to the Word.

Have We Grown Weary of His Worship?

When David penned these words: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let

Continued on Page 6



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Denham, Deaver Debate Cancelled

As Mac Deaver prepared for his 1994 debate with Marion Fox on the Holy Spirit's indwelling, Mac began changing his views regarding the Holy Spirit. One of the questions that those who hold to a personal indwelling (as Mac holds) have faced through the years is, if the Spirit is in you, what is He doing? Faithful brethren who have held to the personal indwelling view have always agreed that the only way the Spirit works on the heart of man is through the Word of God. They would answer that, while they believed the Spirit was literally **in** them, He did nothing **to** them (except through the Word). (Many believe that the **knowledge** of the Spirit's indwelling aids them in various ways, but that is not the same as the Spirit's acting upon the human spirit.) Therefore, those holding to a representative view of the Spirit's indwelling and those holding to the personal indwelling of the Spirit never had a breach of fellowship. This, as far as I know, was the view Mac Deaver held prior to his debate with Marion Fox.

As previously mentioned, in preparation for his debate with Fox, Deaver began to change. He abandoned his former belief that the only way the Spirit worked on the heart of the Christian was through the Word of God, but began advocating (in the debate) a "supra-literary" working of the Spirit. *Supra-literary* was both a new term (at least to me) and basically a new concept among faithful brethren. Mac used this term to describe what he believed regarding the personal and **direct** help of the Spirit on the heart of the Christian (something in addition to God's providential working on the Christian's behalf). Since that time, Mac's convictions regarding the operation

of the Spirit upon human hearts and lives has been in a state of transition. (What Mac believes today is not what he believed 5, 10, or 15 years ago, and what he believes today he might not believe tomorrow.) However, his views on the Spirit's work on the Christian's heart have evolved into the Spirit's working on the non-Christian's heart, also. This fact is proven by his views on Holy Spirit baptism—that in the process of becoming a Christian one must be baptized in the Holy Spirit along with being baptized in water.

When *Defender* published some articles written by Darrell Broking (beginning with the February 2009 issue) exposing some of the views Mac Deaver now holds, Mac emailed me on February 20 with his usual whining about being misrepresented (even though the articles in question quoted Mac's direct statements) and challenging us to an oral debate. His desire was to debate at Tennessee Bible College sometime this year. Among other things in my response to Mac (on March 4) was that "I would not debate anyone at Tennessee Bible College on any subject. I would not give them any credibility by allowing them to host a debate of which I was participating." I then stated, "The only place I would debate you is at Sherman Drive in Denton." (This is the former Pearl Street congregation that Mac Deaver helped to destroy. They sold the building and moved to a building on Sherman Drive, changing the name of the congregation. It is the congregation where Mac has preached since August 2005.) In a subsequent email to Mac, I stated to him that a "representative of our choosing will debate you in a 4 night oral debate (at a time to be worked out that will be agreeable to both sides) at Sherman Drive Church of Christ in Denton, TX, on the subject of Holy Spirit baptism."

After checking with his elders, Mac emailed me on March 12 stating, "I was informed in that meeting that there are certain brethren who are not welcome in this building until they repent. So, our building will not be available for the debate." Still seemingly desiring the debate, Mac stated, "We can obtain public facilities for the discussion. Perhaps we could have it at the Denton Civic Center." Upon Mac's reference to "certain brethren who are not welcome in this building" comment, I replied on March 23:

I do not know why you and your elders feel the necessity of bringing up the subject of "certain brethren." Now who are those "certain brethren"? Surely among those "certain brethren" could not be one whom they and you tried and begged to get into a debate in your previous building! If so, then it again shows their hypocrisy. Several years ago they

hounded a “certain brother” to come into your building, but now are they going to forbid him to do so? Assuming these “certain brethren” are the wicked impenitent sinners they accuse them of being, is it now your elders policy to forbid any brother whom they deem to be an impenitent sinner to enter their sacred building? Or is this a very narrowly focused policy that smacks of hatred and vengeance toward one or two “certain brethren” who dared withstand, rebuke, and expose their error? It is obvious they have let their sinful hatred guide them in this policy! If those elders had the same views they hold now back several years ago, then you (along with your moderators, time keepers, et al.) would not have been allowed in the Pearl Street building to debate Jerry Moffitt.

I then added:

Saying your vague comment about “certain brethren” needing to repent certainly keeps you from having to specify who they are but also what sins they committed. However, since we are talking about sins: your elders are the ones who need to repent. The way in which they treated “certain brethren” is deplorable. They were wicked agents of Satan in their dealings with “certain brethren.” They lied and misrepresented facts in their dealings with “certain brethren.” (Maybe they learned their tactics from your “Biblical Ethical Deceit.”)

I then said:

Mac, you could have easily said that your elders wanted the debate in a neutral location in Denton which they would obtain such as the Denton Civic Center (please understand that the Sherman Drive congregation will be hosting the debate and be bearing any such expenses). However, you chose to bring these other matters into the discussion. I do not have a problem with the location being the Denton Civic Center with the provision previously stated.

Having said this, it was to my mind settled that the debate would take place at the Denton Civic Center. I agreed to this location for the debate instead of the Sherman Drive building in Denton. I will return to this point shortly.

In responding to the question concerning “certain brethren,” Mac responded on March 24 saying, “Regarding ‘certain brethren,’ I was told to inform you with regard to that point. The ‘certain brethren’ are Dub McClish and those who endorse him.” Everyone who would be involved in the debate on our side would endorse Dub McClish. In this same email, Mac showed that he was not happy having to negotiate with me and wanted me out of the picture. So Mac wrote, “It is not usual for a man to sign up for a debate not knowing who his opponent will be. However, I did agree to that very thing.” Mac knew and agreed to do the negotiations through me. This was one constant throughout the negotiation process—all

negotiations were to be between Mac and me (rather than the one doing the actual debating, who Mac later learned would be Daniel Denham).

Because of the ungodly attitude demonstrated by the elders at Sherman Drive, I wanted assurances that those on our side of the debate would be treated properly. Thus, on March 31 I responded to Mac by saying:

There is a pertinent point which needs to be addressed since Sherman Drive will be hosting this debate. Since just about all of those (if not all) who are not in agreement with you and your false doctrine are supportive of brother McClish (certainly me and those who will be representing my side on this debate), how will we be treated at the debate (both the one doing the actual debating, his moderator, time keeper, helpers) and those who are simply attending the debate who “endorse” brother Dub McClish? Also how will brother Dub McClish be treated by your ungodly elders if he attends the debate? Your elders do not sound very hospitable to him or those who “endorse” him!

In this same email, I again pointed out that I am the one who would be doing the negotiations and if he did not like it, then the proceedings would end at this point.

In Mac’s next email (also on March 31) all he did was to propose a date for the debate, so on April 12 I again wrote:

First is the concern I expressed in my previous email as to how those of us who “endorse” Dub McClish and how Dub McClish will be treated. Your elders, by their statements, have expressed a major attitude problem toward him and those who endorse him. I do want guarantees that we will be treated with a proper measure of hospitality especially since they are the ones who are hosting the debate. Additionally, will we be provided with those things which we need (copy machine, data/overhead projector, etc.).

I also agreed to a specific date within the timeframe Mac had set for the debate. Mac responded on April 13 that the date would be fine, and we continued to negotiate other matters. Mac also stated: “We will provide the debate site, chairs and tables for the debaters and their assistants, and essential items for a power point presentation of charts. You will need to bring your own laptop computer. My elders and I will treat you as we would want to be treated (Matt. 7:12).”

At this time Mac sent by regular mail forms that included the propositions he wanted to affirm, and also the proposition he wanted us to affirm along with a set of rules for the debate and other matters. Mac and I continued to negotiate specific items concerning the debate (some of which negotiations were rather contentious) till we had finalized agreements regarding the debate. Thus,

in the June issue of *Defender*, we announced the debate. That announcement included the subject, date, and the location for the debate: “in the Denton Civic Center in Denton, Texas.”

In July, more than four months after I assumed the location for the debate had been settled, I called the Denton Civic Center to inquire about such things as availability of equipment and services we would need for the debate. It was then I got some troubling news, so on July 23, I emailed Mac with this note:

I just called the Denton Civic Center to find out some questions concerning the setup. I talked to Myra Anderson the Civic Center Events Coordinator. She told me that the Civic Center had not been booked for a debate on the dates we agreed. She also informed me that she already has something booked for that Friday night (July 23, 2010) along with the rotunda being booked for the daytime (till 6pm) each day for some kids program.

Let me remind you that it was your responsibility along with Sherman Drive congregation to obtain the Civic Center for the debate. Let me encourage you to take care of this responsibility immediately so the planned debate can proceed without disruption. If it is the case the Denton Civic Center cannot be obtained for the debate, I will welcome an alternate solution.

To say that Mac was upset might be a great understatement; he responded the same day, saying:

Why in the world would you call the Civic Center? If you will check your e-mails, you will find that we never said that the debate would take place there for sure. It was suggested only as a possibility. Please just mind your own business, sir. Your attitude needs surgery, brother. And please do not respond to this e-mail. I do not enjoy getting e-mails from you at all. I have had all of that that I want. When the time comes and things are in order,

Daniel will be duly notified of the location, and he can pass the information on to you and Dub. If you need anything further, please have Daniel contact me. I do not wish to receive anything else from you. I weary of having to deal with you, brother. We look forward to a great debate one year from now. I still seek your good.

Even though Mac did not want me to respond, the subject needed to be resolved. So, still on July 23, I emailed him, writing:

As to why I would call the Civic Center, while that is my business and not yours, I did have some questions to ask about the Civic Center itself: what all they had and what would be available for our use. Thus, “sir,” it is my business! Am I supposedly forbidden from contacting the place where we agreed the debate would take place? Mac, you really need to get over yourself! Your sinful arrogance will send you to eternal torment as fast as your false teachings. As to an “attitude surgery,” Mac, it is your attitude that needs surgery.

If you will check your emails, you will find that the Denton Civic Center was agreed upon. In your first email (Feb. 20, 2009), you offered to debate at Tennessee Bible College. Among other things I responded on March 4, by saying: “I would not debate anyone at Tennessee Bible College on any subject. I would not give them any credibility by allowing them to host a debate of which I was participating.” I then stated: “The only place I would debate you is at Sherman Drive in Denton.” Then on March 9, I wrote to you saying: “A representative of our choosing will debate you in a 4 night oral debate (at a time to be worked out that will be agreeable to both sides) at Sherman Drive Church of Christ in Denton, TX.” Then on March 12 you wrote: “My elders met with me last night before services regarding having the proposed discussion in our facilities. I was informed in that meeting that there are certain brethren who are not welcome in this building un-

til they repent. So, our building will not be available for the debate.” You then made the proposition: “However, we are willing to have the debate here in Denton. We can obtain public facilities for the discussion. Perhaps we could have it at the Denton Civic Center where we now have an annual North Texas Summit.” On March 23, I responded to this offer by saying: “Mac, you could have easily said that your elders wanted the debate in a neutral location in Denton which they would obtain such as the Denton Civic Center (please understand that the Sherman Drive congregation will be hosting the debate and be bearing any such expenses). However, you chose to bring these other matters into the discussion. I do not have a problem with the location being the Denton Civic Center with the provision previously stated.”

Mac, please notice: You made the offer of hosting the debate at the Denton Civic Center. I accepted that location with the provision of Sherman Drive hosting the debate and bearing the expenses. Thus, the location of the debate had been settled at that point. There were no more discussions concerning the location of the debate because that point had been settled. You made the offer and I accepted that offer. Now, you want to claim that it was “only as a possibility.” That possibility was accepted! Now you need to meet the responsibility of obtaining that agreed upon location.

Mac, as much as you might dislike me and getting emails from me, I am the one who is doing the negotiations (not Daniel Denham). Those negotiations will continue to go through me and you will continue to have “to deal with” me.

Mac, since it appears as if the Denton Civic Center (where agreement had been made) will not be available for the debate (unless you are able to have them make some changes), then where are you proposing the debate to be held? We have already begun

advertising the debate with the location previously agreed upon (Denton Civic Center). We need to work this out posthaste (yes, I will probably call whatever place you and I agree upon to inquire about various arrangements at the facility).

The next morning, July 24, Mac responded with this email:

In my reference to the Denton Civic Center, there is a "Perhaps." Did you see it? In your own mind you may have concluded what you had no right to conclude. I never promised the Denton Civic Center. I could not have guaranteed that facility for I had never contacted them at the time. It was always only a possibility.

This is the last e-mail from you I plan to read. You wear me out, brother. And I need nothing else from David Brown. I am much disappointed in you brethren, and have been for years. My future correspondence will be with Daniel Denham. I'm sorry but you have worn your e-mail welcome out with me. Send me no more mail, please. It will not be read.

On July 28, I responded to Mac's email by writing:

Mac, I am amazed that you are so easily worn out. Are you in poor health? Surely some simple emails would not wear out a normal person who is in good health. If these emails wear you out, are you going to be able to engage in a debate? While I am concerned about your physical health, your spiritual health is far more important and is certainly (with the views you now hold) in danger. However, the negotiations will continue going through me as per the original arrangement and per what Daniel Denham wrote. So, Mac, you are "much disappointed" in us, and "have been for years." Since you brought this up, you should know that a "whole bunch" of brethren are "much disappointed" in you and your sons, and "have been for years" because of the way you have tarnished the once highly-esteemed Deaver name, have divided brethren by your

errors, and have demonstrated stunning arrogance in the process.

As to the Civic Center: If you never meant to offer the Denton Civic Center, why would you bring it up? If you did not plan on using it, or if it was already taken, you should have said something when I accepted that "perhaps" in lieu of the statement originally made that it must be at the Sherman Drive building. This is the type of deception you have used in the past and is simply wrong. This is why brethren do not trust you, Mac. You knew I accepted the "perhaps" alternative to Sherman Drive and left it that way. You did nothing regarding checking with the Civic Center to see if we could use it, and you did not contact me that my acceptance of your alternative to Sherman Drive was not confirmed and you would have to check to see. (Is this your way to try and control things, Mac, instead of negotiating?)

Mac, what are we to expect now? What new wrinkles are you planning on coming up with? Will we next experience a change in dates, a change in location from Denton, a change in propositions? Again Mac, how can we trust you when you failed to negotiate in good faith concerning the place where the debate would be held?

At this point, seeing the Civic Center will not be able to be used, it is incumbent upon you to find a location immediately and clear that location with me. You cannot simply dictate to me/us where the debate will be held. People have already started making plans (getting vacation time, arranging hotel stays, etc.) to attend the debate. There needs to be an appropriate location (which means not waiting for the last second to try and find a location and then having to settle for some place which will not be adequate or for no place available for the debate).

This will also be sent regular mail since you are "weary" of email.

While the above note was sent by email, I also sent him an exact copy

of it by snail mail to make sure he both received it and read it. After not hearing from Mac, I decided to email him again under the subject: "Debate Cancellation?" Notice the question mark at the end. We needed to know if Mac was planning on continuing with the debate. Without a location and refusing to negotiate any location would effectively end the debate.

Thus, I emailed him on August 14 with this message:

Why are you continuing to drag your feet in procuring a location for the debate? You have now had four months to find a place. Mac, you have been in numerous debates, how many have been arranged without a location in which to debate? How can we properly advertise the debate without a location?

Mac, when can I expect you to contact me with a location for my approval? As I have previously stated, this needs to be done posthaste (it should have already been done), and must have my approval.

Not having any response from Mac, I waited till August 24 to send him a final email. This email also included an email to me from Daniel Denham and a deadline for obtaining a proper location for the debate. This email carried the subject title: "A Message From Daniel Denham: Debate Cancelled." This email stated:

Daniel Denham has written to me as follows and with which I am in full agreement.

We must find out if Mac is going forward in an earnest spirit to obtain a suitable site for the debate. There are brethren who are desirous to attend it and then need to know more as to the specific time and place in order to make reservations well in advance. Some are considering reserving blocks of rooms for those whom they expect

will attend with them, but they are concerned, as well as I am, that no suitable place will be forthcoming in sufficient time to make their reservations or to accommodate the number expected to attend.

It seems passing strange that one seemingly so ready to debate this issue would seem now to be so indifferent to seeing its necessary provisions met well in advance. It is my understanding that the Civic Center in Denton is now unattainable for the purpose, which obviously leaves but a few other options open. I lived in the area for some time and am aware of these limitations. The longer the delay occurs in securing a suitable place the greater the likelihood that the debate cannot occur simply due to the logistics. I'm beginning to wonder if that is really his desire. If so, then let him say so! If not, then he needs to follow through with his end of the preparations on these things, as I am continuing mine here. I do not intend to be played by Mac. This is deadly serious business, and I intend to expose the error into which he has fallen.

You remain my representative in this. You arranged the debate with him, in response to his challenge. If he does not like the arrangement, then he can go looking elsewhere for someone who will kowtow to him. I do

not have the time for such foolishness as the temper tantrums I have seen in his posts to you over this. Again, if Mac is not serious about debating the issue, then he needs to say so. Otherwise, let him man up and let's move on. In keeping with this point, I believe a date ought to be established as a deadline **by which** the major preliminary arrangements including location **must** be finalized for us to move forward.

Daniel Denham

Mac,

Are you attempting to use this resolve of yours in refusing to respond to me as an excuse to cancel the debate? Also are you using the location and obtaining a place as an excuse to have the debate canceled?

The location for the debate must be dealt with. Originally, in response to your challenge to debate, I said the only place would be at Sherman Drive. Because your elders refused to allow Dub McClish or anyone who supports him (which would be everyone associated with the debate on our side) in the building, upon your "perhaps," I agreed to the Denton Civic Center. However, that is not going to be available for our usage on the agreed upon date for the debate. Mac, if you do not intend to negotiate in good faith with me, then you can cancel the debate and you can go looking elsewhere.

Mac, if you wish for this debate to proceed, you must find an available loca-

tion for the debate and contact me for my approval of that location by September 7, 2009. If you are not willing to do this, then consider the debate canceled because of your refusal to negotiate the details of the debate.

Mac, let's get this part of the negotiations (which I believed had already been taken care of on your part) over with so the debate can proceed as planned. You have dragged your feet on this matter too long. Again, if you refuse to take care of this by the deadline (September 7, 2009), you will have to find someone else to debate you.

Mac has never responded to this email or the deadline to contact me with a suitable location. Thus, the debate has been cancelled. While we are sorry this cancellation took place, when one refuses to negotiate the details of a debate, it is impossible to have a debate with that person. Mac Deaver refused to negotiate a location (even though other matters had been agreed upon) for the debate, and his elders refused to allow the debate to be in their building because of their hatred for Dub McClish and those who support or endorse him. While Mac might find someone to debate him on this issue (or his other errors), our dealings with him concerning any debate have ended and will not be resumed. However, it will be our intent to continue to deal with his errors through other means.

MH

Continued from Page 1

us go into the house of the Lord" (Psa. 122:1), how do you think he felt about worshipping God? David was glad to be able to assemble to worship the God that he loved and served. He did not hesitate to pay homage to Him. We can look all around us and see

a big portion of the members of the Lord's body who have grown weary of worship. Paul recognized and addressed this problem even starting in the first century: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*" (Heb. 10:25). God expects those that claim to be

His to worship Him. That worship must be in a specific way (John 4:24), at a specific time (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1), and it must contain all of the specified elements (**singing**—Eph. 5:19, **preaching/teaching**—Acts 20:7, **Lord's Supper**—1 Cor. 11:23-29, **giving**—1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7, and

praying—Acts 2:42). Do we not know members of the body of Christ who will make excuses to stay home, or else if they come they will not take an active part in the worship. There are some who even try to change the elements of the worship. All of these factors are indications that we have grown tired of God's worship. We need to get back to treating our worship to God as important as life and death—because it is. If we persist in being weary of God's worship, we will die a spiritual death in this life and face the second death in the life to come.

Have We Grown Weary of His works?

What did James say was the results of faith without works? He let us all know that it was a dead faith, "being alone." Our Lord encouraged us to let our light "so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 5:16). Even the Lord knew that we must work the works of the Father to be pleasing to Him. The work that we have to be busy doing

in service to God is **teaching the lost** (28:19-20), **edifying the brethren** (1 The. 5:11), and **helping the needy** (Gal. 6:10). Even though this is what God expects of us, many in the church today have gotten away from the works and moved into entertainment. Is it because we have grown weary of working for the Master?

Have We Grown Weary of God's Restrictions?

From the very beginning of time, God has placed certain restrictions on man. In the Garden of Eden, we see the restrictions of God. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). We find restrictive commands from God all through His inspired Word. These restrictions placed by God on man are on all aspects of our lives. Our salvation is restricted only to the plan given by God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; Luke 13:3; Mat. 10:32; Mark 16:16). Our eternal destiny is based on the restrictions given by God on the way we live (Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58). We

are told what we are to avoid: the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), the world and the things of the world (1 John 2:15), and all appearance of evil (1 The. 5:22). We are told what we are to seek: the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24), to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Tit. 2:12), and to add the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:5-10). Today, instead of being guided by the restrictions placed on us by God, some have grown weary of those restrictions and have ventured out on their own, no longer walking in the old paths or by the old ways. We must remember that only those who do the Father's will, and live by His restrictions, will enter heaven (Mat. 7:21).

Now, friends and brethren, what has God done to make you weary of Him? We all can see the blessings given us by God, and He requires so little from us in return except: "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8). Brethren, please, "let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

Deceased

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XXXVIII

November 2009

Number 11

Web Site: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

Email: bellviewcoc@gmail.com



Leaping the Falls of Niagara

Dub McClish

Hicks' Stated Opposition to Mac Deaver's Errors

Brother Tommy J. Hicks is the preacher at Southside Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas, and serves as director of the Annual Lubbock Lectureship each October. I had not known him (at least until recently) to have any affinity for Mac Deaver's assertions that the Holy Spirit **directly**, additionally to His Word, operates upon the hearts of Christians; quite the contrary, in fact. In a June 26, 2001, e-mail to his fellow board members of The Gospel Journal, Inc. (TGJ), and to me, editor of *THE GOSPEL JOURNAL (TGJ)* at the time, he clearly expressed his disagreement with Deaver's initial error on the Holy Spirit and his fear that it might be gaining ground:

Because Mac's view of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit is error, I pray that these reports [are] exaggerated.... But, Mac's teaching on the direct operation of the Holy Spirit is just plain wrong. And, it is no stretch to say that some of the errant implications of his doctrine can be cataclysmic. Thus, for Mac's own good—for the good of those he has influenced doctrinally—and, to prevent others from drawing erroneous implications from his doctrine, ... let us do all we can to expose and refute the false doctrine of the direct operation of the

Holy Spirit.

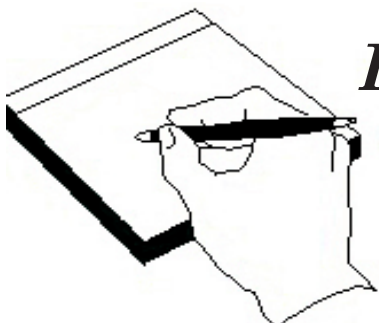
In May 2003, it became known that one of the elders of the Pearl Street congregation in Denton, Texas, had declared his agreement with Deaver's error. I was one of four elders at Pearl Street at the time, and by this time I (along with Gary Summers, Pearl Street's preacher) had been trying for many months to convince this brother of his error in discussions in elders' meetings. We hoped that, if we could not convince him, at least the two other elders would stand with us in opposing him and his error. Unfortunately, we failed in both instances, resulting in a Deaver-doctrine take-over of that congregation that had gained international repute and appreciation among faithful brethren over the previous twenty years for its forthright stand for the Truth. These developments resulted in Gary Summers' dismissal and my resignation and departure from the congregation with which I had been associated for more than twenty-two years. These events also resulted in the irreparable ruination of the congregation's good name and came near causing its utter extirpation.

The initial reactions of the remaining Pearl Street elders were two. **First**, they began issuing venomous letters (eventually three altogether) vilifying

me and seeking to so damage my name as to prevent my further usefulness in the kingdom. They not only mailed these to all of those who were supplying my livelihood, but to thousands of others as well. **Second**, they made repeated denials in print that any of them agreed with Mac Deaver's doctrine. In doing so, they described it as "the erroneous Deaver Holy Spirit Doctrines" (7/24/03), "the false Deaver doctrines" (8/11/03), and "the false Deaver views relative to the work of the Holy Spirit" (9/7/03).

The Pearl Street letters caused considerable discussion among brethren generally, which had the effect of attracting greater attention to the danger of the Deaver errors. By the time of the Schertz, Texas Lectures (successors to the Annual Denton Lectures conducted by Pearl Street for twenty-one years) in November 2003, these discussions were rife. I met with the TGJ board during the lectureship, and, among other things, we discussed the potential inroads of the Deaver errors. One of the board members suggested it was time to hit Deaver's errors head-on through *TGJ*. **That board member—leading the charge against the Deaver error—was Tommy Hicks.** He was

Continued on Page 4



Notes From The Editor

*Michael
Hatcher*

Email address:
mhatcher@gmail.com

Update Regarding Mac Deaver Proposed Debate

First, the debate is still cancelled—that will not change. However, after the October issue was printed, there were a couple of more letters written that needed to be included for the completed picture. We began hearing from others about a letter that Mac Deaver had sent to Daniel Denham (others had received the letter and phoned both brother Denham and myself about it prior to brother Denham's receiving it). Mac sent this letter on September 24, 2009, stating:

Word has reached me this morning from a friend that you all are no longer planning on having the debate next July. Is that correct? If not, why not?

An e-mail reached us some days ago (as you likely know) where the writer was saying that he had heard that I had backed out of the debate. We responded by letting him know that if the debate had been cancelled, someone else had done it. We certainly had not, and we assured the e-mail writer that if he circulated the rumor that I had backed out, he was, in fact, circulating a falsehood.

I assure you, brother, that I want the debate. I think it would be most profitable and insightful and have prepared for it.

I finally refused to receive anything further from McClish and Hatcher or McClish through Hatcher because I was tired of abuse. I stopped accepting mail from them, as you well know, sometime back. This had nothing to do with preventing the debate from taking place at all. The forms had all been signed. But I will no longer deal with them through mail or e-mail and would not advise any other brother in Christ to accept mail from them either.

Now, if McClish and Hatcher have decided that they will not be a part of the debate on the alleged basis that I have backed out, they are wrong. I have not backed out. My refusal to allow them to further impose their will on me after the debate forms had all been signed does not at all indicate (and should not be interpreted to mean) that I want out of the debate.

What I wanted out of was having to deal with either of them or both of them in correspondence. It was torturous. However, if they want to cancel the debate, that is certainly fine with me, but not because I do not want the debate to take place. If they have already cancelled it, I rejoice that they would do so. I am not sure that they ever really wanted the debate to take place anyway. But the question is: **Do you really want the debate to take place?**

Now, Daniel, are you serious about debating me or not? If you are interested in debating the Holy Spirit baptism issue, that is wonderful! If you are simply interested in "church politics" you shouldn't be in the debate anyway. If you are so linked to Hatcher and McClish that you cannot debate me without their permission, then if they are out, I suppose you are out, too. But, in my judgment, you should not allow matters to reach this point. May I kindly suggest that you simply exert some independence. If you really think that you have the truth on this issue, then please come on to Denton and debate me.

If you are independent enough to debate me (if McClish and Hatcher consider themselves no longer bound to the July, 2010 debate), then all you have to do is let me know.

We have looked for the debate site, but have not found it yet. I am hopeful that the old Pearl Street building can be obtained for the debate (and I think it can), but we will not know for sure until after the first of the year. Dub knows about this possibility himself, for he called the new owners of that building even though he has no responsibility at all for getting the debate site! But as I told Michael Hatcher in my final e-mail to him, when we have the site locked down, then I will let you (Daniel Denham) know. If we can't get the old Pearl Street building, we will get some other place. But it now seems that the new owners of that building are presently agreeable to our holding the debate there if the date for the debate does not conflict with a schedule for their young people which will not be published prior to the first of next year. So we have to wait. (If there is a date conflict, maybe we could still have it in the old building if we change the date of our proposed debate to another week). But maybe there will be no conflict at all.

Finally, if McClish and Hatcher are no longer involved in the debate, then you and I can sign the necessary papers and look forward to the July discussion here in Denton. I will be glad to sign the forms again and mail them to you for your own personal signature (since Hatcher did the original signing for you). All you have to do is assure me that McClish and Hatcher are no longer involved in the debate at all so that the previously signed forms are no longer in effect.

Daniel, please do not allow any association with McClish and Hatcher to prevent you from participating in the proposed July, 2010 debate. Please think about this very, very carefully.

P.S. Daniel, I will make it even easier on you. If McClish and Hatcher are out, and if you want the debate but would rather not come this far for it, I would consent to meet you for debate in Cookeville, Tennessee, rather than here in Denton, Texas.

Either place is fine with me.

Before proceeding, a statement is needed regarding Mac's false allegation that somehow brother Dub McClish was going through me to "abuse" Mac. First, holding someone's feet to the fire is not abusing someone. Neither is showing the implications of one's actions and teachings. Mac can use this as an excuse to get out of the debate of which he challenged me and whine all he wants about being abused; however, it simply is not so. Second, all the email's that I sent to Mac were mine and I am the one responsible for them, not someone else (all of the propositions and rules of the debate, with the exception of the information concerning the publication of the debate, did come from Daniel Denham). Once Mac made the challenge, I began discussions with numerous faithful brethren—brother McClish being only one of many. Prior to sending any email to Mac, I would first send the email to all these brethren and ask for any corrections and suggestions. Various brethren during this time offered suggestions, additional information, and corrections. I considered all of those and implemented some and omitted some; however, all the material was mine.

On October 3, 2009, brother Denham responded through me (the only thing I included was this statement at the beginning of the email: "Here is a message from Daniel Denham. Mac, it is my sincere prayer that you will repent of your false doctrine"):

On Wednesday it came to my attention that a letter has been circulating for the past week in which you alibi for your sabotage of the Denton debate and attempt to pompously cajole me into accepting YOUR terms for another debate elsewhere. A couple of good brethren forwarded copies they had already received. My copy did not arrive until Saturday in Newport News. What are you trying to pull? This is reminiscent of your challenging me to debate back in 2004 but conveniently not notifying me of the challenge until I enquired about it when word got back to me through the grapevine.

Having read your letter, I am prompted to comment that you have got to be kidding! You were notified by Michael Hatcher of a deadline in which to comply with what you had AGREED to do. You had a temper fit instead, and, like a spoiled brat, pouted refusing to communicate with Michael. That is YOUR fault. Let me put this in good old South Alabama English—"There ain't gonna be a debate with you"—neither in Denton nor in Cookeville, where some of your cronies hideout at TBC [Tennessee Bible College—editor]. If I cannot trust you to keep your word relative to the first negotiations, I have no reason whatsoever to trust that you will suddenly keep it now, or any other time for that matter. You may try to justify your behavior as "Biblical, ethical deceit," but, down home we just call it "plain old lying."

Mac, as to the notice of the cancellation of the debate due to

your behavior, you either cannot read, or you are simply dishonest in this regard. I will leave it to others to decide which is the case. You agreed to the arrangements involving Michael Hatcher as the personal representative in negotiations, et al. on the side opposing your error before I ever was brought on board by agreeing to debate the issue. I notified you by way of an email that I know Michael forwarded to you concerning his own email on the aforementioned deadline. My email bore record to you that Michael Hatcher was still the personal representative and chief spokesman on our side of things. I also noted that if you failed to respond to us by the deadline and show that you were proceeding in good faith that the debate would be tacitly cancelled by your actions. Pretending that you were unaware of this will not wash. We have the emails showing that you were duly notified of this condition of things effected by your intransigence in the matter. If you did not like that arrangement, then you could have simply gone and peddled your fish elsewhere. No one twisted your arm, but you obviously thought that you could undermine the process after agreeing to it and force terms more to your liking. Instead, you feign not knowing anything of this warning. Well, Mac, it may be a novel idea to you, but I do believe in abiding by the agreements one makes, including those I made to both of you when Michael Hatcher asked me to come onboard to deal with your heresy, which is why I am sending my answer to your letter by email THROUGH Michael.

I was interested in debating this issue from the beginning when you first went off on this wild tangent. I have some 42 books by denominational authors specifically defending present day Spirit baptism, and I can truthfully say that each of them do a better job than you do in trying to prove their false and foolish case. I intend to continue to refute your error on this and other matters through the avenues available to me. You had your chance to deal with it openly and fairly in public debate but you saw to it that no such debate except it be completely on YOUR terms. You know this to be the case! It is reminiscent of the same type of goofy demands and childish petulance that you exhibited in our 2004-2005 exchange, which I still plan to publish. You had your chance and blew it! The best thing you can do is to repent of your sins, including the false doctrines that have occasioned this conflict. In short, adieu!

Under the date of October 5, 2009, Mac Deaver wrote (by USPS) to Daniel Denham stating:

I do not receive mail from McClish/Hatcher. Their latest attempt to reach me went into the "delete" file. If you have something you need to say about the debate proposal made in my September 24 letter, you will need to do it directly. Furthermore, unless you are agreeable to debate me, you need not contact me at all.

Too, any more e-mails from Broking or from any of your little association will not be received. And I would advise you, Daniel, to consider a new group of friends. Please, please consider what I say carefully. I still seek your good, brother.

Brother Denham had me send Mac a response to this letter on October 8, 2009, stating:

Again, I am abiding by the agreement that I made. You may choose to act like a spoiled brat if you wish, but I am again forwarding this through Michael Hatcher. This material will be posted and published for brethren to see for themselves that negotiating with you on anything is virtually pointless. So refuse to read it, if you so choose. I do keep my word, even if you do not keep yours.

You state that you “do not receive mail from McClish/Hatcher,” yet you wrote to me obviously relative to my email forwarded by Michael Hatcher in response to your September 24th letter. Somehow you obviously are aware of the existence and content of that email, which means that you already know my response to

your “debate proposal” of that date. Further, you state: “Too, any more emails from Broking or from any of your little association will not be received.” Fascinating, Mac, I have never heard you before try to argue that truth is decided on the basis of the number of people in one’s “association”! Simply, stunning! Maybe all of those logic courses were wasted on you, after all. Also, your intimation that Darryl emailed you at my behest is laughable as well. You obviously do not know Darryl Broking as well as you may think.

As to your remarks, “And I would advise you...to consider a new group of friends,” and “Please, please consider what I say carefully. I still seek your good,” I suppose such “friends” as Al Maxey, John Mark Hicks, Rubel Shelly, and such like, are your idea of good company to keep,

just like Todd. I believe I can do much better, and, in fact, am doing so than YOUR advice makes possible.

Brethren, it would have been profitable for this subject to be debated with Mac Deaver; however, as brother Denham noted, it is almost impossible to negotiate anything with Mac Deaver. Unless he gets his way with every detail and is able to impose his will upon you, then he throws his little tantrum and destroys the negotiation process. It would have been easy for Mac to place some phone calls and obtain a suitable location for the debate; however, he decided not to do so. The blame for the cancellation of the debate resides solely with Mac Deaver.

MH

Continued from Page 1

most definitely opposed to the Deaver direct-operation error at that time.

The other board members agreed, and they asked me to prepare a special issue of *TGJ* as soon as possible. Accordingly, we published that special edition (“Examining a Deadly Holy Spirit Doctrine”) in February 2004. By this time, Deaver had also embraced the idea that, when one is baptized in water for remission of sins, he is also baptized in the Holy Spirit. I infer that Hicks also strongly disagreed with this new Deaver wrinkle. Mac Deaver reacted to our “special” by resurrecting his discontinued *Biblical Notes Quarterly* and issuing his own “special edition.” (Note: The Pearl Street elders allowed Deaver to mail his paper on the church’s non-profit postal permit. They also enclosed a letter with the Deaver paper, suggesting that his views they formerly labeled as “error” [and denied they held] may, after all, be correct. They completed their support for Deaver full-circle by hiring him as the Pearl Street preacher

in August 2005. These elders need to repent of many things, but high on the list should be their original denials that they agreed with Deaver and their pretense that they held it to be error. As the expression goes, they were “lying through their teeth” in each denial.)

Thus far, it is clear that brother Tommy Hicks was strongly opposed to Deaver’s Holy Spirit errors as late as February 2004 (that is, unless he was following the lead of the Pearl Street elders and lying about his opposition). But there is more. The eighth Annual Lubbock Lectureship, October 9–13, 2005, was on the theme, “The Holy Spirit of God.” Much of it consisted of salvos fired directly at Mac Deaver’s Holy Spirit errors. Of the twenty-eight speeches, seven of them concentrated specifically on the Deaver doctrines. Typical of these topics were “Deaver’s Doctrine Opens the Devil’s Door,” “Deaver’s Direct Operation Doctrine Is Fatal Error,” “Deaver’s Doctrine Vs. the Word’s All-Sufficiency,” and “Deaver’s Doctrine Regarding Holy Spirit Bap-

tism.” This lectureship further (and fully) demonstrates Hicks’ open (and correct) opposition to the Holy Spirit theories emanating from Mac Deaver. Therefore, during the years embraced by the foregoing events (2001–05), none who knew Hicks could ever have imagined his inviting any known comrade-in-arms with Mac Deaver to speak on the Annual Lubbock Lectures—or to have any other fellowship relationship with such brethren.

Hicks’ Stated Opposition to Dave Miller’s Errors

Then came the catastrophic events of May-June-July 2005, triggered by the Apologetics Press (AP) scandal, and changing the brotherhood landscape drastically. These events sundered fellowship between formerly mutually esteemed brethren who had worked closely together (in some cases for decades), principally because an impenitent false teacher named Dave Miller was elevated to the directorship of AP.

One of the earliest effects of the AP situation was my “encouraged resigna-

tion” as editor of *TGJ* (along with that of my associate editor, Dave Watson) on July 20, 2005, by TGJ’s board. A brief report of the background of this development is necessary at this point. Brother Curtis A. Cates, then director of the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP), was also president of TGJ, Inc. He was an ardent supporter of AP. In spite of having earlier opposed the errors of Miller, now, in order to support AP, he had to begin supporting and defending Miller and his errors. I had publicly opposed and exposed the Miller error of elder reaffirmation on more than one occasion. These included:

1. Writing a letter denying authorization for this procedure when the Brown Trail church, Bedford, Texas, first practiced it with the encouragement of Dave Miller and Johnny Ramsey.

2. Exposing this error in my lecture (and in my chapter in the lectureship book) during the 1997 Bellview Lectures.

3. Publishing an article in the October 2002 *TGJ* by Marvin Weir that exposed Brown Trail’s second implementation of the practice (which had Miller’s approval). (None of TGJ board, including Cates, hinted at any objection to this article.)

Also, some brethren who did not like my summation relating to the AP/Miller situation (circulated inadvertently by others) threatened Cates with loss of financial support for MSOP if he did not “do something” about *TGJ*’s editor. Cates’ yielding to these factors placed him on a collision course with me, resulting in his leading the board to force me out. Upon learning of the **motives** behind my expulsion, many brethren became incensed and alarmed at these compromises on the part of Cates and the remainder of TGJ board.

Tommy Hicks was part of TGJ’s board at the time of my “resignation,”

and he, with the rest of the board, bowed to the pressure from Cates (to his credit, brother Michael Hatcher, secretary of the board at the time, resigned a few days afterward and publicly apologized for his part in the July 20 board decision). On July 26, 2005 (6 days after my departure from *TGJ*), brother Kent Bailey questioned Hicks about his attitude toward the Miller errors. Hicks responded, declaring his opposition to them with great clarity:

Specifically, regarding the false doctrines in which Dave Miller involved himself (i.e., elders “re-evaluation” doctrine and the marriage/divorce “intent” doctrine *a la* Everett Chambers), **we stand with you and every other sound brother—in opposition to them** (emph. DM).

Because of Hicks’ part in the upheavals related to *TGJ*, approximately one-third of the speakers scheduled for the October 2005 Lubbock Lectures withdrew from the lectureship, lest their participation be perceived as endorsement of TGJ board’s behavior. Hicks’ determined support of the Cates change of direction produced the same compromises in Hicks, who in turn, persuaded the elders of the Southside church to fall in behind him. Consequently, as if to say, “We will teach all of you rascals who last year withdrew from our lectureship a lesson,” Hicks loaded the 2006 lectureship with men to whom Hicks earlier would scarcely have spoken, much less even considered as speakers. These included eleven of the sixty men who had signed a “Statement of Support” for AP in June 2005, plus four others who had various doctrinal and/or fellowship question marks by their names. A number of us were so concerned about the radically new direction of the Southside church this list of speakers signaled that twenty-six brethren signed “A Sincere Expression of Concern” and sent it to brethren Dale Stone and Malcolm Young, South-

side elders in October 2006. Most of those who signed the expression had spoken on the Lubbock Lectureship at various times, some of us annually. The Southside elders never even acknowledged receipt of our sincere appeal.

These events made clear the fact that Hicks and the Southside church had made the decision to redraw their fellowship “circle.” It would now **exclude** those whom they had once esteemed and **include** only those with whom they agreed relative to support of AP, Dave Miller, TGJ, Inc., Gospel Broadcasting Network, et al., adding some for whom they had formerly had little or no esteem. Subsequent Lubbock Lectureships have confirmed this practice as their new course, as each year they have continued to develop an ever-broader roster of speakers. We should not be surprised, for once a person, congregation, or school makes the first compromise, it then becomes almost impossible to resist or avoid making others.

Does He or Does He Not Oppose Deaver’s Errors?

Notwithstanding the foregoing evidence of his opposition to the errors of Mac Deaver, just how far the AP/Miller/TGJ compromise has led Hicks and his elders is glaringly evident in the most recent Lubbock Lectureship (10/11–15/09). Among the speakers was brother Dick Sztanyo, who has no fellowship problems with Mac Deaver, in spite of his errors. In an August 20, 2009, e-mail message to brother Doug Post, Sztanyo wrote:

Mac and I have been friends for years. We don’t always agree on things, **but until I am convinced that he is no longer in fellowship with God, I am in fellowship with him.**

Sztanyo went on in this note to state his belief in at least some direct work of the Holy Spirit in addition to His Word. But far more indicative of Sztanyo’s amiable attitude toward

Deaver and his doctrinal deviations is the following: The Northern New England Lectures took place in Tilton, New Hampshire, October 9–11. The entire lectureship was a study of the Holy Spirit **from the Deaver and company perspective**. Topics included: “What It Means To Be Born of Water and Spirit,” “How the Holy Spirit Helps the Saint from Within,” “The Relationship of Providence and Prayer to the Controversy Over Direct Help from the Spirit Within,” and “Holy Spirit Help and the Catholic Claim for Continuing Revelation.” The complete list of speakers was Mac Deaver, Weylan Deaver, Kerry Duke, Malcolm Hill, Glenn Jobe, and **Dick Sztanyo**. Please notice that Sztanyo spoke on the New Hampshire Lectures **immediately** before traveling to the Lubbock Lectureship because they were back-to-back (actually overlapping on October 11).

Granted, even those who make every effort to stay abreast of who is teaching what find that none of us is omniscient. I will cut Hicks some slack regarding his awareness of Sztanyo’s participation in the New Hampshire Lectures (although one would think that Hicks might think it a bit strange that Sztanyo’s plane ticket from Alabama to Lubbock would include a stop-over in New Hampshire, assuming he did not fly New Hampshire-Alabama-Lubbock). However, Hicks should have known **on his own** of the Sztanyo-Deaver connection from the fact that for approximately five years, **Sztanyo has been a staff writer for *Biblical Notes Quarterly*, of which Mac Deaver is both publisher and editor**. Moreover, even if Hicks were not aware of this fact on his own, Doug Post, in an August 24, 2009, letter (sent by USPS) to the Southside elders, pointed out this fact to them. This letter included a copy of the August 20 e-mail from Sztanyo to Post acknowledging his Deaver fellowship. Hicks and his

elders, therefore, had approximately seven weeks to decide what to do about the Sztanyo-Deaver fellowship issue as it related to their lectureship, assuming they were totally unaware of it when they invited Sztanyo. **They decided to allow Sztanyo to speak**, thus ignoring the enormous contradiction it created between their profession and their practice relative to the Deaver errors. But we should not be surprised. Their compromise on the Miller errors naturally paved the way for their compromise on those of Deaver.

So we now have Hicks’ **actions** shouting so loudly in two cases that his **words** fade into pathetic silence. **First**, he claimed to “stand in opposition” to Miller’s errors and then a few months thereafter he loaded the Lubbock Lectureship with Miller supporters and defenders—and continues to do so. **Second**, he denounced Deaver’s direct-operation doctrine as “error,” “just plain wrong,” and “a false doctrine,” whose implications can be “cataclysmic,” and he did so over a span of several years. Now he has apparently repented of that opposition, using a brother on the Lubbock Lectureship who is a close associate of and is in self-proclaimed fellowship with Mac Deaver.

Hicks’ “Revised Version”

It is obvious that the following passage has become meaningless to brother Hicks (and his elders):

Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into *your* house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works (2 John 9-11).

I suppose their “revised version” of this grave warning must read as follows: Whosoever goeth onward and **abideth not** in the teaching of Christ, hath God anyhow: also, however, he that **abideth**

in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. Either way, abiding or not abiding in the teaching of Christ, one hath the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, never mind. Go ahead and welcome him with open arms, and greet him approvingly: for he that so giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works, but so what?

Since brother Hicks, his elders, and their fellow travelers have gone this far down the path of compromise, inconsistency, and fellowship with error, it is frightening to contemplate how far they may go. They have long severely (and rightly) chastised the likes of Rubel Shelly, the ACU crowd, Jeff Walling, and their types for their unauthorized ecumenical forays. Now they are imitating them, their behavior differing not in kind, but only in degree. How long will it be until they have no more fellowship scruples than those heretics?

If any of those ne’er-do-wells are aware of these fellowship compromises, they must be enjoying the spectacle of hypocrisy immensely. I can just imagine the way Mac Deaver must be savoring the Sztanyo appearance at Lubbock as a victory for his cause. I would do so if I were he. He has seen one of his staff writers travel directly from a lectureship promoting his pet errors to mount the platform at Lubbock and have Tommy Hicks praise him to the sky, giving him (and Mac Deaver, by extension) credibility to many naïve brethren. I suggest to Hicks that he follow the road he is traveling to its consistent end. Instead of merely inviting the Miller and Deaver acolytes, as the expression goes, he should “man up” and take the next logical step: **Invite Dave Miller and Mac Deaver** to speak on the 2010 Annual Lubbock Lectureship. He may as well do so he has gone so far already. The situation which Hicks has created for himself is all the more alarming when one considers the fact that many other

once-faithful Gospel preachers, along with elderships and school administrators with their faculties have chosen the same broad way that must eventually lead to destruction (Mat. 7:13).

In a January 2000 article in *Seek the Old Paths*, titled "Respectable Preachers," brother Hicks wrote the following:

Too many preachers lose their respectability by becoming involved in "church politics." They preach for profit or popularity and therefore prostitute the pulpit in which they stand.

I believe he is on to something, and I heartily agree with his observation. He could well have also said that some "prostitute the lectureships they direct and which they host." **I solemnly charge that Hicks and his companions in compromise have become the politician-preachers he accurately described.** They have shunted aside all who have refused to bow the knee to the Baal of brotherhood political pressure in favor of an entirely new fellowship pool. Their new pool embraces men to whom they would hardly have "given the time of day" before 2006.

Just who has moved and thus caused the post-2005 cleavage among once-

amiable brethren? Miller and Deaver have not moved, except to further justify and/or add to their errors over the past several years. Those of us who have opposed the errors of these men from their inception remain unmoved in our steadfast opposition to them. So, I ask again, who has moved—and who must return if the sundering of fellowship is ever to be healed? For readers who may not have figured it out, Hicks and company are the ones who have moved. To paraphrase Titus 1:16: "They profess that they oppose Miller and Deaver; but by their works they deny their profession." I appeal to brother Hicks, his elders, and all of his other cohorts to return to the solid ground they once occupied.

Conclusion

In the heat of the fierce nineteenth-century battle over the American Christian Missionary Society and the use of instruments in worship, Jacob Creath, Jr., wrote the following in an incisive 1875 *Gospel Advocate* article:

When a man leaps the falls of Niagara, can he stop before he touches the bottom over the falls? When a man leaves the Bible alone, there is no rest for him

this side of Rome. The most that can be said for all those persons who ceased to the silence of the Bible is that they are only partly in the reformation (qtd. in West 240-41).

Creath obviously aimed his comments at those who sought to justify their pet innovations by arguing that Scriptural silence gave permission to employ them. He accused those errant brethren of embarking on a course that we today allude to as the "slippery slope." The Creath remarks are altogether applicable to Tommy Hicks and his compromising cohorts. They have "leaped the falls of Niagara" fellowship-wise, and there is no safety net or rope to grab before they bottom out. They have "left the Bible alone" on the practice of fellowship, and there is no logical or consistent resting place between them and Roman popery (i.e., ultimate heresy). Consequently, as long as they continue on this course, "they are only partly in the reformation" (i.e., the "restoration").

Work Cited

West, Earl Irvin. *The Search for the Ancient Order. V. 2.* Indianapolis, IN: Religious Book Service, 1950.

908 Imperial Dr; Denton, TX 76209

Books-On-CD

The 1988-2005, 2007-2009 books, all *Defender* issues of 1970, 1972-2008, and the weekly bulletin *Beacon* 1974-2008, along with numerous other books, tracts, and studies are available on computer disk in Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF) format (making it useful for both Windows and Macintosh computers). The CD is completely indexed allowing searches of all the books at the same time (you can find every occurrence of a word or phrase such as "baptism for the remission of sins" in every book at the same time). The cost of the CD is only \$85 plus postage/handling fee of \$1.75 (total is \$86.75) in which you receive all the lectureship books (\$4 per book) and other material. If you purchased a previous version of our CD, then check with us for an upgrade at a significant reduction in price upon the return of the previous CD. Take advantage of this great offer. Order from Bellview Church of Christ.

D*efender* is published monthly (except December) under the oversight of the elders of the Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Sauflley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526. (850) 455-7595. *Subscription is free to addresses in the United States.* All contributions shall be used for operational expenses.

MICHAEL HATCHER, EDITOR

**Write For Your
Free Bible Correspondence
Course
4850 Sauflley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526**

DEFENDER

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32526-1798

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Pensacola, FL
Permit No. 395

Preaching From The Minor Prophets

2009 Bellview Lectures

Chapters On:

Introduction to the Minor Prophets Gary Summers
God's Love (Hos. 1-3) Gene Hill
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge (Hos. 4:6) Bruce Stulting
Forbidden Fellowship (Hos. 7:11-14) Tim Cozad
Improper Rejoicing (Hos. 9:1) Johnny Oxendine
God's Goodness and Severity (Joel) Dennis (Skip) Francis
Pouring Out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32) David Brown
Two Walking Together (Amos 3:3) Darrell Broking
Prepare to Meet Thy God (Amos 4:12) Paul Vaughn
Woe to Them at Ease in Zion (Amos 6:1-7) Wayne Blake
A Famine in the Land (Amos 8:11) Lynn Parker
Comfort for the Afflicted (Obadiah) Michael Hatcher
Whale of a Tale (Jon. 1:17) Ken Chumbley
Preaching That I Bid Thee (Jon. 3:2) Terry Hightower
Prophecy Ye Not (Mic. 2:6) Dub McClish
Evil Leaders (Mic. 3:1-3) Fred Stancliff
What Doth the Lord Require? (Mic. 6:8) Jimmie Gribble
God's Jealousy (Nah. 1:2) Jess Whitlock
Woe to the Bloody City (Nah. 3:1) David Watson
How Long? (Hab. 1:2) Lester Kamp
The Just Shall Live by Faith (Hab. 2:4) Danny Douglas
The Lord Will Act (Zep. 1:12) John West
No Shame for Sin (Zep. 3:5) Darrell Broking
Consider Your Ways (Hag.) Harrell Davidson
The Priest King (Zec. 6:12-13) Gary Summers

Refusing to Obey (Zec. 7:1-14) Roelf Ruffner
Polluting the Worship (Mal. 1:7-14) Loy Hardesty
The Wife of Thy Youth (Mal. 2:14-17) Daniel Denham
Robbing God (Mal. 3:7-12) Doug Post

Only \$18.00

Plus \$3.00 Postage and Handling Per Book

Preaching From The Major Prophets \$16.00
A Time To Build \$15.00
The Blight Of Liberalism \$12.00
Great New Testament Questions \$12.00
Great Old Testament Questions \$12.00
Beatitudes \$5.00
Encouraging Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Sad Statements Of The Bible \$5.00
Preaching God Demands \$5.00

Each book is hard bound and 300-600 pages. To receive your copy of the lectureship book(s) send your check or money order to:

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526
(850) 455-7595

Bookstores may order at discount (call for details).