

8-26-05

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear brother Michael:

I never anticipated that you would lie about a letter I mentioned in a personal, private conversation I had with you (board member to board member) and use these lies to destroy my character.

One, this letter was to Dub, with a copy to me.

Two, he is not a preacher, as you have charged. I told you his grandson is a preacher.

Three, he did not threaten me with dropping his support if Dub stayed on as Editor of T.G.S., as you viciously charged.

Four, I simply told you that in a private conversation to show you that the MSOP was becoming mentioned.

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Five, I had wondered who got it started that I was being notified by money, and it seems now I know.

Six, I pray daily for you, brother Michael.

Seven, the letter that you are building your whole false case around follows.

Eight, if you have not noticed, this is for your eyes and ears only, unless you show it to your elders--but, it is to be seen or heard by no one else.

Curtis A. Cato

CONFIDENTIAL

P.S. This brother under consideration had told me 2½ years ago that he would not any more be able to help the school as he had before.

[REDACTED]
July 7, 2005

Dear Bro. McClish,

Because of your position as Editor of the Gospel Journal, God has given an opportunity to influence a lot of people. I am very concerned about how you are using this influence in such a negative way.

Because I have been made aware of some information you sent out recently to numerous brethren about Bert Thompson, I felt compelled to write you. What authority do you have from the New Testament to do such a thing as this? You admit that you knew Bert had made a public confession of his sins, yet you went ahead after knowing this, and sent out your e-mail.

What right do you have to "broadcast" anything about someone that has repented? When a person repents, God forgives him and remembers it against him no more. Can you say that you have followed God's example of forgiveness? I think not. You have sinned against Bro. Thompson and need to repent. You have greatly hurt the church. As encompassing as your e-mail was, your repentance needs to be as encompassing.

As Editor of the Gospel Journal you have done great harm to that magazine. Also, since Curtis Cates is both President of the board of the Gospel Journal as well as director of the Memphis School of Preaching, you have harmed the Memphis School of Preaching. But most of all you have done great harm to the church and the Thompson family, especially Bert. It is like you have shaken apart a feather pillow and perhaps it will be impossible to pick up all the feathers, but you MUST try -- by repenting and contacting ALL those you have contacted with this email. Please repent!

In Christian love,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
cc: [REDACTED]



Brother Cates:

In your first paragraph you make some false charges against me. You falsely claim that I lied about a letter you mentioned to me. Brother, that charge is false as false can be. It is a charge which you cannot prove and does not meet with the facts of the case. The second false claim you make is that I am using “these lies to destroy my character.” Brother, if anyone has destroyed your character, it is you and not anything which I have done or said. I am not trying to destroy the character of anyone. All I am trying to do is to find out the truth and do what is right. Now let me deal with each of your points.

In your first point you state that the letter was to Dub with a copy to you. The first I heard of this was a few days ago by another brother. The letter you mentioned while we were in Paducah was one you received. It matters not whether it was addressed to Dub or to you—you received it.

In your second point, you stated that he is not a preacher but his grandson is a preacher. In our discussions you stated that the letter you received was from an “older, well-respected preacher” and that this preacher was from Alabama. As you know, when I am away from home, I speak daily (often several times a day) to my wife. I told her about our conversations relating to her some of the details. To make sure of my memory, I asked her what I told her at the time. She confirmed that each of those things are correct: older, and well-respected, and preacher, and from Alabama. (By the way, his being a preacher would not preclude his grandson from being a preacher.) There would be no motivation for me to change these things either at the time or now (and my dear wife certainly would not have any motivation for changing the details either), and surely you would not accuse my sweet wife of lying!

The third thing which you mention is that of dropping support for MSOP if Dub stayed on as editor. Why even bring up the aspect of the money the individual has given within the context of hurting the school, if not at least a veiled threat of money being cut off if you remained on the board with Dub as editor? You were saying that what Dub did was hurting the school. Hurting the school how? Simply because you have turned down money in the past that had strings attached to it, does not mean that you were not influenced on this occasion. The one does not necessarily follow the other.

The fourth thing you mentioned is that you claimed that you said this in a private conversation to show that MSOP was becoming mentioned. How was MSOP becoming mentioned, brother? Whether it was “a private conversation” or a public one makes no difference in what you said. The fact of the matter is that you brought up this letter which you had received (whether addressed to you or someone else, you received it) to show that MSOP was going to be hurt by what Dub had done in sending out his summation. Brother, how was MSOP going to be hurt?

The fifth thing you brought up was to charge me with the aspect of starting that you were being motivated by money. In an email sent to the entire board on July 26 (which was prior to my resigning from the board), I mentioned how that one person called me on the phone “detailed how that Curtis had received word by some people who give a lot of money to MSOP that if he did not get rid of Dub, that they would pull their support from MSOP. Thus, Curtis led the charge to get Dub dismissed.” What I did not add to that email was that another person had told him that he had seen the letter which had been sent to you Curtis. What was stated in the phone conversation paralleled

to such an extent what you had told me in Paducah, that I could not even come to your defense (as much as I might have wanted to at the time). However, I did not confirm to this person anything which had been stated in Paducah or that he was correct about this letter. I simply said nothing about it. (Brother Cates, if I was trying to destroy your character, I would have given confirmation about the letter. I did not!) This discussion took place prior to my ever saying anything, and shows that I did not begin anything relating to Curtis Cates and money—it was already out there.

In regard to this about getting started that you were “being motivated by money,” possibly another little reminder is in order, brother. On July 8, 2005, you sent an email asking me to add to the agenda for the board meeting on July 19-20, a “discussion of the Journal’s purpose and reputation.” Upon receiving that, brother McClish immediately called you. In that conversation you told Dub of “a brother in his 70s who had been ‘very generous’ to MSOP, and who had warned him (Curtis) that my remaining Editor of TGJ would hurt the school (but, you see, none of this is about money!). Curtis also told me in that conversation that he knew of several who were going to cancel their subscriptions to TGJ if I remained Editor” (This is a quote from an email Dub McClish sent). (Remember Curtis, the Sunny Slope lectures were July 16-17, over a week after you told Dub this. Also, the letter from Charles Miller was postmarked on July 8, 2005. Surely you don’t expect me to believe that you received this letter from Charles Miller the same day he mailed it from Jacksonville, FL, although the postmark was from Augusta, GA.) Thus, it seems that instead of me starting the idea that you were “being motivated by money,” **you** are the one who started it. (This also helps answer the seventh point you made about my building my whole “false case” upon the letter you faxed to me.)

The sixth thing you mentioned is that you pray daily for me. Brother, I do appreciate all the prayers which go up to the Father on my behalf. I know that I am in need of prayer, as we all are. Likewise, I do pray for you on a daily basis also, as I do all those on the board of *TGJ* and those at MSOP.

The seventh point is that you sent the letter that you state I am building my “whole false case around.” However, there does seem to be some discrepancies between what you told me in Paducah and the letter you faxed to me. In Paducah you told me it was a letter from an older well-respected preacher. Brother Charles Miller, whose letter you sent me, is not even a preacher (to my knowledge and from what you have stated in point 2). In Paducah you told me about a letter which came from an older, well-respected preacher who was from Alabama. The letter you faxed to me is from brother Charles Miller who lives in Jacksonville, Florida, not Alabama. Are you sure you sent me the correct letter?

The eighth point you make is to try to impose upon me confidentiality. Brother, I am not bound by rules you arbitrarily impose upon me. If I agree prior to the fact that such will be held confidential, then it would be (unless conditions change to warrant releasing such information). However, you cannot simply order me what to do without any agreement upon my part (even as I cannot order you to show my response to all you have shown that letter to and spoken to about this subject, and to whom you falsely accused me of lying). Additionally, brother, if I am lying about this letter and using “these lies to destroy my character,” why would you not want this shown to anyone and everyone? Also, have you been showing this letter to others and telling them that I am lying about these matters? By doing so, you have already made this public and not “confidential.” I know you also had your secretary fax this to me, thus she has seen it also. How many other people on the staff

of MSOP has seen either this letter or the information contained therein? Brother Cates, MSOP is not known for being a bastion of confidentiality. Then, the letter by Charles Miller was sent to Dub McClish, thus he can do what he wishes with the letter. (A copy of the original letter is included without anything blacked out.)

I would like to know why all the secrecy on your part and the part of the board of *TGJ*? I don't mind everything being open and above board. Why not let the brotherhood make an honest evaluation based upon all the facts? During the debacle with Pearl Street, you begged those elders to be open and above board with all the facts. I remember how you pleaded with them, and particularly Harry Ledbetter, to release the tapes of that one elder's meeting. Yet, now, you are doing the exact same thing as those Pearl Street elders in trying to hide the facts. Years ago I was taught that those who try to hide behind a veil of secrecy are generally doing things which they ought not.

Brother Cates, why have you not responded with the names of individual who contacted you leading you to believe that Dub McClish's reputation was destroyed and that *TGJ* would not be able to continue if he remained as editor of the paper? I began asking that question back in July, yet you have not been able to respond and give the specific names. Why, brother? What are you afraid of? Are you afraid to let the brotherhood know who all called you to tell you the paper would die if Dub remained as editor? Or was this simply your way of getting Dub out of the way for your support of Apologetics Press and Dave Miller? Brother Cates, why not let everyone see all the information and make an informed decision as to what all happened? Why not really come clean on all that has happened with all the information?

Brother, I will continue to pray for you and pray that you will do the right thing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hatcher". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Michael Hatcher

P. S. Now that you have had your board meeting on August 30-31, 2005, can you and the board answer the questions I have been asking you, Tommy, and Joseph?

500 Chaffee Road, S
Jacksonville, Florida
July 7, 2005

Dear Bro. McClish,

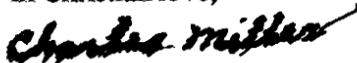
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In Christian love,



Charles Miller

cc: Frank Chesser
Dave Miller
Curtis Cates

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