

**Michael Hatcher's Resignation from TGJ Board, addressed to Curtis Cates,
Joseph Meador, Tommy Hicks, and Kenneth Ratcliff:**

July 29, 2005

Brethren:

I know we have all been grieved of the events of the last few weeks. It has brought all of us great heartache and sadness. Much of the rhetoric has been high, which was to be expected. I do not plan on detailing many of the things in my mind at this time. However, there are a few points which I cannot allow to pass.

In our board meeting on the first day, we did mention many of the points brother Cates brought up in his email message (getting into the original purpose, not being "issue oriented," not being embroiled in local congregational issues, etc.). However, with the discussion of all these things, not all of them on the whole would have caused us to discuss the dismissal of Dub or David. The sole reason for that discussion was the reaction which some took to Dub's statement which he sent to 23 people. (Yes, I now believe that it would have been in the best interest of and the best wisdom to ask Dub to return as being editor.) Brethren, I do not believe Dub sinned in sending out that statement; however, I do believe Frank Chesser did sin in his ungodly actions (which is being born out by the fact that he did not send out Dub's letter to him, nor his letter asking Bert and Rhonda Thompson to accept his apology). At this point in time, Dub was correct in the impression of the brotherhood that Frank Chesser has "won."

The "spin" that the board has put on this is just that-"spin." The fact is everyone knows that it is also. While we are stating publicly that there had not been a vote taken (there had not) thus no decision had been made (technically there had not), we all knew that basically there would need to be a change made regarding the editor and associate editor. The differing terms used ("fired," "dismissed," "accepted their resignation") all boil down to the same thing, and brethren know that. Dub (and David) were placed in a position in which they were forced to resign (if you don't believe that, ask either one of them). While our spin is fine and technically true, everyone else realizes the situation also. (This is especially true when Brian Brazwell's understanding of what Barry Grider said to him and conveyed to Dub was the end result-that Dub is no longer with the paper.)

When I received brother Meador's response, I was both hurt and outraged. In my email making a motion to reinstate Dub McClish as editor (I did not mention reinstating David, only Dub), I had also mentioned discussing the

situation with my elders and that they were not pleased with the action of the board in accepting Dub's resignation. Brother Meador mentions in his email that we are dealing with "a few who are in a small, but no less toxic, loyalty circle...a small negative faction, who if they gain control, will only rupture fellowship in the church even more than they already have." Since my elders here at Bellview are individuals who disagreed with our decision and expressed that disagreement to me, I have no alternative to understand that brother Meador has placed them in that class of "toxic, loyalty circle...negative faction." Additionally, many of my close friends and ones I trust totally (not just Lynn Parker, and I have not even talked to David Brown) have called expressing their objection and displeasure with the board. These are brethren who regularly speak on the lectures here at Bellview and that I speak with at other locations. They are also placed in that "toxic, loyalty circle" by brother Meador. Additionally, since I believe the board should have asked Dub McClish to return as being editor, I guess brother Meador places me in that "toxic loyalty circle" as well. Brother Meador, I am calling upon you to repent of your attitude toward faithful brethren.

Whether brother Meador repents of such attitudes or not, I will no longer be a part of The Gospel Journal. I am tendering my immediate resignation from the board (including, of course, being the secretary of the board). In addition, the board will need to find someone else to be the temporary editor of the paper (I do not plan on editing the August issue). You can have whoever you choose to contact me concerning the articles and the part of the August issue that has been completed.

Brethren, it is with a sad heart that I do this, but as brother Meador said, "This is a matter of principle as far as I am concerned." I have enjoyed our association together. I still believe a paper such as The Gospel Journal is needed in the brotherhood, but I believe the board has destroyed the paper to such an extent that it will not be revived.

Michael Hatcher