

# JOHN WEST'S FIRST LETTER TO LARRY POWERS

April 17, 2008

Larry,

You and I have known each other for over 20 years. The Larry Powers I see today is not the same one I grew to know and love 20 years ago. You and I have worked campaigns, gospel meetings and lectureships together during that time. We have had a good friendship that I thought would never be tarnished nor marred. You may think I have been hard on you over the past year or more, but it is out of frustration on my part that I have done so because of what I see you doing. I want you to understand that it has not been out of hatred or animosity, but concern for your soul that I have done so. According to the scriptures regarding fellowship, I believe that you are traveling down a slippery-slope to destruction.

This Dave Miller problem has caused a division in the Lord's church from which, I am afraid, it will not recover as a whole. It appears that a lot of rebuilding is going to have to take place as a result of this situation. However, this division did not just happen 2 1/2 years ago. It happened in 1990 when Dave Miller preached and practiced (along with the BT elders) false doctrine. I have made public statements against him for at least 10 years or more (since I became more familiar with what he taught and practiced). Those of us who are opposed to Miller have been accused of only bringing his sinful teaching and actions up a few years ago (beginning with July 20, 2005). It has been documented and refuted since it happened, but more publicly since 1996-97 (i.e. Bellview Lectureship book 1997). Contending for the Faith refuted this error in 2003 (January, March) following Brown Trail's practice of it a second time in 2002. Nothing was done by you, Memphis School Of Preaching (MSOP) or anyone else to refute them for exposing Brown Trail for their practice of the R&R of elders. MSOP even advertised their lectureship in CFTF in the same month the R&R of elders was exposed and refuted. Sister Cates was a regular contributor during that time and the paper was going in a bundle to the MSOP (brother Cates never indicated any disagreement with or opposition to CFTF for exposing said doctrine in the paper). Appearing as speakers on the Spring Lectures that same year was Tom Bright, Cliff Newell, B.J. Clarke, Keith Mosher, Curtis Cates, Bobby Liddell and others. Not one speaker protested the exposure of Miller and Brown Trail. Forest Hill was listed in the "directory of churches" at the same time. Those of us who oppose Miller stand exactly where we have always stood concerning his false doctrine. It has only been since July 20, 2005 that you, other brethren and MSOP mentioned above have changed. You brethren changed concerning Miller, not those who continue to oppose him.

Several things are bothering me about your involvement and handling of this situation. You got on the CFTF list on Tuesday (April 15, 2008) and started this entire discussion again and wanted answers to your questions. However, Larry, you have not provided answers to anyone questioning you. You expect answers, but are not willing to give answers. That is being hypocritical. You also got on the list and made the statement "what part of MARK and AVOID don't you understand" in reference to some who questioned you about your involvement. This is primarily what I want you to answer for me now. Question: What have we (those who oppose fellowshiping Miller) done to cause us to be "marked and avoided"? You make the charge, but will not provide scriptural documentation. If we are wrong, we need to know wherein we have sinned so we can have the chance to repent. You stated to me last year that you have preached against Miller and his doctrine, yet you continue to fellowship those who are directly involved with him. It is not 5th, 6th or even 10th generation removed. Many of these men already listed have spoken with Miller on lectureships and continue to openly support him. How can you fellowship those who knowingly support and defend Miller in his false doctrine while turning a blind eye to it? This is not the Larry Powers I have known for over 20 years.

Please, Larry, answer these questions and show me why you continue to defend and support this damnable doctrine through your fellowship practices. You may not personally teach false doctrine, MSOP may not personally teach false doctrine, but by fellowshipping the one/ones who do, you are, according to 2 John 9-11 no different from Miller. That being the case, you are the one who needs to be “marked and avoided” rather than you marking those who are teaching and practicing the truth on this subject. and who are also calling for scriptural fellowship to be taught and practiced by all members of the church.

Larry, I have nothing but your best interest at heart and have been upset greatly at what this has done to the brotherhood. Even more, look what it has done to close friends as a result of some, such as yourself, supporting ONE false teacher. Is Miller truly worth it? Please take time to read and answer these questions and keep the lines of communications open.

In His Service,

John West

## **LARRY POWER’S REPLY TO JOHN WEST**

April 18, 2008

John,

It took alot to get you to contact me personally.

You state that Dave Miller has been opposed by you and others since the early 90s is that correct? This may be the case but until the Gospel Journal situation this was not considered a fellowship issue but a judgment situation. You stated “Contending for the Faith refuted this error in 2003 (January, March) following Brown Trail’s practice of it a second time in 2002.” If this is the case why was brother McClish still advertising tracts written by Dave Miller in the Schertz Lectureship book in November 2004? A reference to the tract Fallacies and Fruits of Liberalism by Dave Miller was noted as be outstanding items. This same tract was also advertised in the 2003 Schertz Lectureship book.

John what has changed. This was not a fellowship issue until 2005, WHY? Why did it become a fellowship issue following brother McClish’s no longer being editor of the Gospel Journal?

Did Brown Trail use poor judgment it what they did? YES! Did they state later that they used bad judgment and that it would be done again? That is my understanding.

John concerning 4th, 5th and 6th or even 10th generation of fellowship that is exactly what you are attempting to push. You and those who are pushing this issue are causing good brethren to divide over 4th, 5th, etc. generations of fellowship. You are the ones keeping this issue alive and causing division in the brotherhood. I have heard nothing from Dave Miller in the last two years concerning this issue other than the letter he put out explaining the situation.

John you and those with you are the ones that have changed. What I have seen taking place the last two years is that you will not take time to listen to others.

John if you would like to get together and talk I will be willing to meet you and talk.

John if you are sincere concerning the best interest of the church and my best interest you would have contacted me privately long ago. It seems to be that your strings are being pulled by others.

I will be out of the office until Sunday.

My prayer is that you will see the error and division that you and your group is causing.

In the service of the Lord,

Larry Powers

## **JOHN WEST'S REPLY TO LARRY POWER'S APRIL 18, 2008 EMAIL**

April 21, 2008

Larry, It will be easier for me to answer you within your email to me.

Larry Wrote:

John, It took alot to get you to contact me personally.

John's Reply:

Larry, the email goes 2 ways. You could have just as easily contacted me when I asked you questions last year. When you refused to answer my emails last year on one of the lists, it appeared from those events that you broke all contact with me.

Larry Wrote:

You state that Dave Miller has been opposed by you and others since the early 90s is that correct? This may be the case but until the Gospel Journal situation this was not considered a fellowship issue but a judgment situation.

John's Reply:

Larry, you are wrong in this case. This was a fellowship issue long before Dub McClish and July 20, 2005, but you and the Miller supporters want to use that date because you want to make this issue to be over the firing of McClish and Watson. That has been answered several times over the past 2 1/2 years, but you are not willing to accept it. False doctrine has never been a judgment issue. Do you consider the Miller doctrine of elder r/r and marriage intent a judgment issue or false doctrine? Since you stated to me last year that you preached against Miller and his doctrine you must consider it a fellowship issue; otherwise you were being divisive for preaching against a brother practicing a "judgment issue."

Larry Wrote:

You stated "Contending for the Faith refuted this error in 2003 (January, March) following Brown Trail's practice of it a second time in 2002." If this is the case why was brother McClish still advertising tracts written by Dave Miller in the Schertz Lectureship book in November 2004?

John's Reply:

I can't answer for Dub, you will have to take that up with him. You have contacted Miller, have you contacted Dub to get "his side" of the issue? Since brother Cates and brother Mosher's favorite phrase seems to be "have you conacted Dave", why haven't you contacted Dub? However, he did expose Miller back in 1997. Larry, that has nothing to do with Contending for the Faith answering it in 2003. Several others, besides Dub, have exposed this problem long before July 20, 2005. Why does your group always use that date to lump everyone and everything with the firing of Dub.

Larry Wrote:

A reference to the tract Fallacies and Fruits of Liberalism by Dave Miller was noted as be outstanding items. This same tract was also advertised in the 2003 Schertz Lectureship book.

John's Reply:

**See above answer.**

Larry Wrote:

John what has changed. This was not a fellowship issue until 2005, WHY? Why did it become a fellowship issue following brother McClish's no longer being editor of the Gospel Journal?

John's Reply:

Answered above. It WAS an issue prior to 2005. Even before July 2005, Dub refused advertising from GBN and AP based on Miller's doctrine. That was before he was "fired" from the Gospel Journal and no doubt part of the reason he was fired. If you did some research on it, you would know that fact. Larry, even if it was an issue (although it was not), what would it matter if brethren learned more and realized it was a fellowship issue and started taking a stand after July 20, 2005. Are you affirming that because brethren did not understand a matter fully, they must forever remain in ignorance? Thus, they never can change their position on anything? If that is the case, how would there have ever been more on the part of men to restore the Bible, the Gospel and the church according to the Bible? If what you are advocating is true, how would a person ever convert to Christ, or how would a brother ever repent of sin? Those "devout" persons on Pentecost thought they were acceptable to God as they were until they understood the new information found in Peter's sermon in Acts 2. They realized they had to change. I am sorry as a Gospel Preacher you don't understand those fundamental matters. I believe you do understand the previously stated matter when it comes to people changing from error to embrace the truth on any other subject except in the case of Miller. Some over the past 2 1/2 years have realized it is false doctrine and have taken a stand. Does that make them wrong for realizing it after that date? Even after July 20, 2005, what makes a false doctrine a "non-issue"? You and many like you believe it is a false doctrine, yet you continue to fellowship Miller through your associations (unless you do not believe in "guilt by association" anymore).

Larry, before 2005, Miller was not being using widely throughout the brotherhood and thus was unknown to some and not seen as much as a threat to others. Most who knew him had already withdrawn from him. Some were being patient to try to get him to make changes. Since 2005, Miller has been pushed throughout the brotherhood by GBN, MSOP, OABS, and other outlets to endorse and defend his false doctrine. It became more apparent to those who were confused that this man had indeed taught and practiced a damnable doctrine. 2005 did become a turning point in the mind of some, while others had already marked and withdrawn from him prior to that time.

Larry Wrote:

Did Brown Trail use poor judgment it what they did? YES! Did they state later that they used bad judgment and that it would be done again? That is my understanding.

John's Reply:

I guess they used "poor judgment" twice because it was practiced both in 1990 and 2002. But it was not "poor judgment", it was practicing FALSE DOCTRINE that Dave Miller preached, promoted and practiced with them. Again Larry, you admitted one year ago that you preached against the r&r of elders.

Larry Wrote:

John concerning 4th, 5th and 6th or even 10th generation of fellowship that is exactly what you are attempting to push. You and those who are pushing this issue are causing good brethren to divide over 4th, 5th, etc. generations of fellowship. You are the ones keeping this issue alive and causing division in the brotherhood. I have heard nothing from Dave Miller in the last two years concerning this issue other than the letter he put out explaining the situation.

John's Reply:

Larry, you missed the whole point of what I said. You are pushing this, not me. It is very plain in scripture and has been pointed out several times, that those who are in fellowship with a false teacher and those who fellowship them, are 1st generation, not 5th, 6th or 10th as you and the Miller supporters are teaching. At one time it was called "guilt by association" and MSOP taught and practiced it against those who spoke on lectureships with false teachers and those who fellowshipped the ones on the lectureships with false teachers. You know that it is a fact that MSOP has followed this practice. Now, Larry, who has changed?

If Miller never spoke another word about the matter, does that mean that his false doctrine becomes truth? It does not matter if Miller never made another comment about his elder r/r doctrine and marriage "intent" doctrine. The fact is that he has never repented of his false doctrine. Do you believe that it is ok to believe a damnable doctrine as long as you quit preaching it?

Larry Wrote:

John you and those with you are the ones that have changed. What I have seen taking place the last two years is that you will not take time to listen to others.

John's Reply:

Larry, again you are wrong. Those who oppose Miller have done that PRIOR to 2005. You still need to answer some of my questions concerning this change. You and the Miller supporters have changed. Some on your side of this issue (including you) see nothing wrong with fellowshipping a false teacher and are in violation of 2 Jno. 9-11. You know as well as I do that some of the faculty have spoken and are planning to speak on lectureships with Miller and in doing so have praised, supported and even defended him. If you are not willing to rebuke them for that, but rather fellowship them, you are in sin (2 Jno. 9-11). By the way Larry, that doesn't make you 2nd or 3rd generation, but 1st generation in error. It would be no difference if you spoke with Miller since you uphold the hands of those who do. Larry, on the 2008 lectures of the East Main congregation, brethren Curtis Cates, Garland Elkins, Robert Taylor and others are appearing along side of Miller. Tell me, is that or is that not 1st generation fellowship of a false teacher-- Dave Miller?

Larry, on the Sons of Demas list, Post #3508, Tuesday, September 20, 2005, 7:43 p.m. you wrote under the subject heading of "Reevaluation of elders" the following:

"Several years ago (Dec. 1996) while visiting my daughter and her husband stationed with Air Force in Honolulu we visited the Pearl Harbor church of Christ. I was talking with one of the elders on Sunday evening about some of the problems there and he told me that he was only an elder until December 31st because each December 31st the congregation re-evaluated them and determined if they would

stay on as elders. Three of the four elders did not attend the Sunday evening service. This was just one of the many liberal practices taking place at this congregation.”

Larry, this was after July 20, 2005 and you personally stated that the “reevaluation of elders” was just “one of the many liberal practices” taking place at the Pearl Harbour church of Christ. You considered it liberal after July 20, 2005, but in April 2008, you state it is just “poor judgment”. Is it “judgment” or “liberalism”?

Larry, notice another quote from your own hand written to the Sons of Demas list, Post 12611, Saturday, April 21, 2007 8:27 a.m. addressed to me when I confronted you publicly about your involvement with MSOP and Forest Hill who uphold and support Dave Miller AND Mac Lyon. I will quote the entire post so as not to leave the impression of only quoting what benefits me. Under the Heading:

“Re: [Sons-Of-DEMAs] Larry Powers and MSOP” you wrote:

“to John West, I have been on this list for several years. If you considered me a good friend as you state then you would already know where I stand. If you are seeking information concerning me, why have you not already called? Why seek an open forum for such information? When in the last several years have I ever refused to talk with you or discuss any matter or issue with you? Am I to understand by your message that we are no longer in fellowship? You stated, “I sincerely hope this matter and all others can be resolved and fellowship restored to those in the brotherhood have been SO close for many years.”

To answer your questions. I have listened to the CD you mentioned. I have also viewed and reviewed the information that brother Sisman has on his site. **I oppose elder R/R and have preached against it.** (emp. mine, JW). I have not spoken with any of the teachers from MSOP since the lectureship.

John you stated, “I imagine you have been able to feed them material from this list for some time (if you have been on it long).” You have a very good imagination, but that is all it is imagination. It seems that you desire to make charges without any grounds of proof.

I will out of town until next Saturday morning (April 28th).

If this has not answered your questions then brother Sisman will just have to remove me from the list.  
Larry Powers”

John’s Reply:

Larry, why would you preach against and oppose something that is only a “judgment matter?” Again, as stated above, you caused division when you preached against something you now consider at “judgment matter.” Have you repented of that? The truth is, when you preached against it, you believed that elder R/R was a matter of doctrine, but to “tow the line” with MSOP you have to change your belief to it being relegated to a mere matter of judgment. You say that we are the ones who changed. Shame on you Larry.

Larry Wrote:

John if you would like to get together and talk I will be willing to meet you and talk.

John’s Reply:

I would love to meet and talk with you, however, I live in Texas now and it is about 15 hours from you.

Larry Wrote:

John if you are sincere concerning the best interest of the church and my best interest you would have contacted me privately long ago. It seems to be that your strings are being pulled by others.

John's Reply:

Larry, I simply answered you publicly a year ago because you made public comments on a public forum. 1 Corinthians 5:3 as well as other passages show that I do not have to come privately to answer something done publicly. If you do not want it to be dealt with publicly, then why did you introduce it in a public forum? As far as my "strings" being pulled by others, you should know better than that. I am my own man and do not follow the beat of someone else's drum. I came to my own conclusions about Miller, MSOP and the sinful fellowship error of which you are a part, on my own. I do not need anyone to tell me what to believe or teach. Larry, you are the one to talk about strings being pulled. It seems that you are allowing MSOP and others to pull your strings on what you believe concerning Miller.

Larry Wrote:

I will be out of the office until Sunday.

John's Reply:

I will await your response after that date.

Larry Wrote:

My prayer is that you will see the error and division that you and your group is causing.

John's Reply:

Again Larry, it is you and the Miller defenders who are causing error and division in the church, not me and my "group." Larry, please give specific book, chapter and verse for "sinful" error and division that we are causing for opposing a false teacher. You know that all division is not sinful. There is division in the New Testament deemed sinful and division deemed necessary. Division is necessary when a false teacher is upheld (like you and your group are doing). If Dave Miller had not preached and practiced this error along with Brown Trail, would this be an issue now? You have already stated publicly that Miller is a false teacher, but you accuse "us" of division because we will not fellowship him, and you say that we are the ones who changed. Take a long deep look in the mirror at who changed.

Larry, you are in a sad condition to preach against Miller a few years ago, but now believe that for the sake of unity and the good of the church that we forget Miller's false doctrine. I truly hope you will start standing where you once stood and not allow the MSOP to continue to influence you ("pull your strings") on what to believe. You knew at one time this was a false doctrine and I hope you will continue to investigate it, repent and come back to the truth. Your soul is far too important to allow false doctrine to go unanswered and supported.

In His Service,

John West

## **LARRY POWER'S REPLY TO JOHN WEST'S APRIL 21, 2008 EMAIL**

April 23, 2008

John,

Thanks for your reply but I must disagree with you on several points. This was not pushed as a fellowship issue until brother McClish was no longer editor of the Gospel Journal. It seems that this whole issue comes down to pride and someone getting their pride hurt. Why is it that good men can look at the evidence and come to different conclusions? That is what has happened the evidence has been examined and different conclusions have been reached. Should I listen to you and your group because you have reached a different conclusion than I have reached? What you are saying is that your judgment is better than mine and that David Brown and Dub McClish's judgment is better than others. Our standard must be the Bible and not men. But after what I saw and heard at the Weakley County Lectures it is very clear that your group are the ones pushing this issue to the point of dividing congregations.

When will you start being consistent with your doctrine of fellowship? Those with whom you have fellowship do not agree on every issue and doctrine, for example marriage -- divorce and remarriage and what about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit do all of you agree on that doctrine?

John you said, "It is very plain in scripture and has been pointed out several times, that those who are in fellowship with a false teacher and those who fellowship them, are 1st generation, not 5th, 6th or 10th as you and the Miller supporters are teaching." But it is clear by what you practice and teach that you are pushing 5th, 6th and 10th generation fellowship.

John I see no reason to continue this discussion.

I pray that you and those who are causing division in the Lord's church will soon repent of your evil deeds and return to the Lord.

In His Service,

Larry Powers

## **JOHN WEST'S REPLY TO LARRY POWER'S APRIL 23, 2008 EMAIL**

May 6, 2008

Larry,

I apologize for taking a so long to respond to you. My hard drive crashed last week in my computer and it took a week for the computer shop to fix it and get it back to me. I do hope that you will carefully read this email and think seriously about it. I am going to answer you in the same manner as I did in the last email.

Larry Wrote:

John, Thanks for your reply but I must disagree with you on several points. This was not pushed as

a fellowship issue until brother McClish was no longer editor of the Gospel Journal. It seems that this whole issue comes down to pride and someone getting their pride hurt.

John's Reply:

Larry, you state you disagree on several points but do not list them. Point out which statements are wrong and prove your disagreements with facts. I have taken the time to answer everything you have written and you should afford me the same courtesy.

Again Larry, you stated that it was not a "fellowship issue until brother McClish was no longer editor of the Gospel Journal." Prove it. I have already given proof that it was an issue several years before and in 2005 BEFORE Dub was ousted as editor. You make wild statements, but will not back them with proof. I am interested in the proof that it was not preached against, written about and generally discussed prior to July 20, 2005. I will agree that issue comes down to pride, but it is not Dub's pride, but the pride of those supporting MSOP and their false doctrine of fellowship with a known false teacher. Larry, please take time to answer these questions for me.

1. Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you condemned the practice in 1996 in Honolulu?
2. Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you spoke against it on the Sons of Demas list (Post #3508, Tuesday, September 20, 2005) when you condemned it as a liberal practice?
3. Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you wrote the manuscript "Liberalism's Effect on the Organization of the Church" and condemned the practice of elder R & R for the Bellview lectures for the June 2005 lectureship. Keep in mind Larry, you wrote that manuscript in either the fall of 2004 or winter of 2005. Michael Hatcher sends invitation out in September or October and assignments in October or November. The due date is always the middle of January. That was long before Dub was fired. Was it a fellowship issue (according to you) at that time? I want to quote what you wrote about elder R & R for the Bellview Lectureship book:

"Today some liberals are advocating that elders should be re-evaluated each year or so. While visiting the Pearl Harbor church of Christ in Honolulu (December, 1996) one of the elders said, "I will only be serving as one of the elders until December 31st, after that the congregation will be re-evaluating us and I probably will not be serving after that." This elder did not attend the Sunday evening service that evening because he had family visiting. There are other congregations throughout the brotherhood who have adopted this practice of reevaluating or reaffirming elders. Contending for the Faith, January 2003, list some congregations who are using this unscriptural method of dealing with elders. They list:

1. The Richland Hills Congregation, North Richland Hills (Forth Worth), Texas
2. The Houston Park Congregation, Selma, Alabama
3. The Pleasant Ridge Congregation, Arlington, Texas
4. The Airport Freeway Congregation, Euless, Texas
5. The 11th and Willis Streets Congregation, Abilene, Texas
6. The Crestview Congregation, Waco, Texas
7. The Brown Trail Congregation, Bedford, Texas (The only congregation in the list without a reputation for liberalism to a greater or lesser degree

The congregations using this unscriptural reevaluating or reaffirming of elders have several different methods for the process. They have different time tables and different criterion to determine if a man may continue to serve. Some have attempted to give this process a different name to make it sound more pleasing. But no matter what it is called, a skunk by any other name still stinks. Some have set the minimum level of confidence for elders at 70%. Brother Marvin L. Weir stated:

One valid objection disqualifies a man from serving as an elder. However, where is the scripture or wisdom that necessitates that an elder who has been selected by the congregation and who meets the Holy Spirit's qualifications can/must be periodically 'reaffirmed?' (CFTF, January 2003).

Where is the Bible authority for such a practice? The Bible puts forth the authority for the selection and appointment of elders (Acts 14:23; 15:4ff; 16:4; 20:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The Bible does not give the specifics of how this selection is to take place. Therefore the how of the selection is left to human wisdom. But this must be done in accordance and harmony with scriptural principles. No where in the scriptures does it give authority for a reevaluation or reaffirmation of elders."

-- Larry Powers, Bellview Lectureship Book (pp. 276-277).

John's Response: Notice the words YOU used to describe the Elder R & R practice: "liberal" and "unscriptural" You state that there is no Bible authority for this practice yet you uphold it through your fellowship practices. You say that those who oppose Dave Miller are "in error", yet you stated the very thing preached, practiced and upheld by Miller, Brown Trail and their co-horts are "liberal" and "unscriptural." I did not write that for Bellview Larry, you did. You wrote it PRIOR to July 20, 2005. You now condemn us now for what you condemned then (again it shows your hypocrisy).

Larry Wrote:

Why is it that good men can look at the evidence and come to different conclusions? That is what has happened the evidence has been examined and different conclusions have been reached. Should I listen to you and your group because you have reached a different conclusion than I have reached? What you are saying is that your judgment is better than mine and that David Brown and Dub McClish's judgment is better than others. Our standard must be the Bible and not men.

John's Reply:

Larry, the evidence from the mouth and pen of Dave Miller prove he is a false teacher. You stated that you have already listened to and looked at the material on the CD produced by Michael Hatcher, but your conclusion is that we should not split the brotherhood over this matter. Larry, the Christian church preacher has looked at evidence and feels instrumental music in worship is acceptable, but your conclusion is that it would be sinful to use instrumental music. According to your "new" doctrine, you can fellowship the Christian church because you came to a different conclusion than he did over instrumental music. You sound more like a denominational preacher than a gospel preacher. I can not believe that you would use denominational arguments to defend a false doctrine. The false doctrine of elder R & R is NO different than the false doctrine of instrumental music. You even called elder R & R "liberal" and "unscriptural" which proves you know it is fatal error or you would not have condemned it. Since you have changed your view about elder R & R, I wonder when you will change your view about instrumental music. You stated "What you are saying is that your judgment is better than mine and that David Brown and Dub McClish's judgment is better than others. Our standard must be the Bible and not men." Larry, we are NOT dealing with "judgment", but "doctrine" and fatal error. Why do you continue to make this a judgment issue in 2008 when you called it a doctrinal issue in 1996, 2004, 2005, 2007? I will agree with your statement that "our standard must be the Bible and not men". I only wish you TRULY believed it and quit listening to the MSOP, GBN, OABS and other outlets supporting and defending a known false teacher, Dave Miller.

Larry Wrote:

But after what I saw and heard at the Weakley County Lectures it is very clear that your group are the ones pushing this issue to the point of dividing congregations.

John's Reply:

Larry, you must have missed or ignored my last email when I stated to you (and you know this perfectly well) that God approves of certain division (over error) and condemns certain division (over judgment). God also approves certain unity (Biblically based), and condemns certain unity (based on false doctrine). Congregations supporting false doctrine need to be taught and, if not repented, the faithful need to split to start a faithful congregation in the area. I guess you have changed that belief as well Larry. In the past you would not have upheld a congregation, school, organization, etc who promoted, supported or defended a false teacher. I have a few more questions for you to answer.

1. (T/F) It is acceptable in the sight of God for the faithful to tolerate false teaching anywhere.
2. (T/F) It is a sin for the faithful to separate themselves from the unfaithful/false teachers.
3. (T/F) All division in the church is sinful division.
4. (T/F) All unity in the church is acceptable to God.
5. (T/F) When faithful brethren separate themselves from unfaithful brethren (who refuse to repent of their sins) the faithful brethren are in the wrong.
6. (T/F) Dave Miller preached false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
7. (T/F) Dave Miller practiced false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
8. (T/F) Brown Trail practiced false doctrine when Miller was leaving Brown Trail in 2002.
9. (T/F) No one made elder R & R a test of fellowship prior to July 20, 2005.
10. (T/F) Curtis Cates had no problem with Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
11. (T/F) Curtis Cates opposed Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
12. (T/F) The practice of the R & R of elders as taught by Dave Miller is an optional matter.
13. (T/F) God demands that men be of the same mind and judgement on obligatory matters.
14. (T/F) God approves of brethren disagreeing on obligatory matters.
15. (T/F) Someone is in sin when two brethren disagree over obligatory matters.
16. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, Christians must fully agree on the manner or mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a Christian in order to be pleasing to God.

17. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, God is pleased when Christians practice the R & R of elders as was done by the Brown Trail church of Christ.

Larry Wrote:

When will you start being consistent with your doctrine of fellowship? Those with whom you have fellowship do not agree on every issue and doctrine, for example marriage -- divorce and remarriage and what about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit do all of you agree on that doctrine?

John's Reply:

Larry, please point out facts and instances where those whom I fellowship do not agree on marriage, divorce and remarriage. If there are disagreements, it is not in the area of obligation based on Matthew 19: 6, 9. You are good at making accusations, but short on providing proof. I'm sure you remember 1 Thess. 5:21, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." Larry, don't just make the accusation, back it up. You also mention the indwelling of the Holy Spirit "doctrine". Larry, when has the ordinary indwelling of the Holy Spirit EVER caused division in the church among faithful brethren. There is a big difference in the "indwelling" and the "operation" of the Holy Spirit in the Christian. I want to make a request that you go back read and study Roy Deaver's book *Ascertaining Bible Authority* and any other faithful book on how the Bible authorizes. You should know the difference between obligatory matters and optional matters. When I read your statement about the issue of the "indwelling" I could not help but think that it sounded like a first year, first quarter preacher student, not a seasoned preacher like yourself. I would expect a lot more out of you, except the fact that you are continually changing your doctrine to justify a false teacher and uphold those who fellowship him.

Larry wrote:

John you said, "It is very plain in scripture and has been pointed out several times, that those who are in fellowship with a false teacher and those who fellowship them, are 1st generation, not 5th, 6th or 10th as you and the Miller supporters are teaching."

But it is clear by what you practice and teach that you are pushing 5th, 6th and 10th generation fellowship.

John's Reply:

Again, Larry, you have missed everything I have said in the last two emails to you. YOU AND YOUR GROUP are the ones trying to teach and justify 5th, 6th and 10th generation fellowship. I have heard it called "a-z fellowship" in the past. Please take time to read carefully what I wrote. I stated to you that those who fellowship a false teacher and even those who fellowship them become 1ST GENERATION sinners NOT 5th, 6th or even 10th generation. To make it simple Larry, if someone fellowshiped Rubel Shelly, would you fellowship him? If not, why not? That is exactly what you are doing by fellowshiping the faculty at MSOP who appear on lectureships with Dave Miller. Or do you believe Dave Miller's damnable doctrine is better than Rubel Shelly's damnable doctrine? Please read 2 John 9-11 again, "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." By you fellowship MSOP, who have directly fellowshiped, defended and upheld Miller's elder R & R doctrine and his "marriage intent" doctrine, you are partaking in his evil deeds. That is not hard to understand if you want to understand it but I will make it even clearer. When MSOP fellowships Miller, they partake in his evil deeds (1st generation). That then makes them the transgressor of God's law. When you fellowship MSOP who have now transgressed, you partake in their evil deeds which makes you 1st generation. For the life of me Larry, I don't see how you call that 5th, 6th or 10 generation and how you can justify it. You can see it clearly with Rubel, but not with MSOP and Miller.

Larry wrote:

John I see no reason to continue this discussion.

John's Reply:

Larry, this is what you have done on the Sons of Demas and CFTF list at least twice. When questions are put to you, you refuse to answer and you break off all discussion. Why don't you keep the lines of communications open to resolve this matter. There are several of my questions left unanswered.

You have accused me of not looking at the evidence, but I have looked at both sides. When this problem first blew up on July 20, 2005, I studied both sides of the issue and problem and it did not take long to come to the conclusions I have reached (without the help of others as you have implied). I already knew Dave Miller was a false teacher (in the 1990s) and spoke against his false doctrine. I had to find out what Dub and Dave had done that was so bad for them to be forced out as editor/associate editor of the Gospel Journal. When I heard the evidence, I was not happy with the board, including at the time, Michael Hatcher. I am happy that Michael Hatcher, saw his error and publicly repented of it. Larry, when this first happened, you were against Miller and his doctrine, but you have changed over the past 2 years. I will still hope and pray that you will as Michael Hatcher, repent of your error and stand where I know you once stood.

Larry Wrote:

I pray that you and those who are causing division in the Lord's church will soon repent of your evil deeds and return to the Lord.

John's Reply:

Larry, you are not standing for the truth anymore on fellowship. You are the one who needs to repent and return to the Lord. As I stated above, you have wildly thrown accusations around without proof. I have given proof and answers to everything you have written. I am also re-sending several questions I asked you in the first and second emails that you did not answer. Please take time to answer these and all the other questions posted above.

1. What have we (those who oppose fellowshiping Miller) done to cause us to be "marked and avoided"? You make the charge, but will not provide scriptural documentation.
2. How can you fellowship those who knowingly support and defend Miller in his false doctrine while turning a blind eye to it?
3. Why haven't you contacted Dub McClish to get "his side" of the issue? Everyone seems to be on the "contact Dave" bandwagon, but none have contacted Dub to talk to him. That sounds a little one sided doesn't it?
4. If Miller never spoke another word about the matter, does that mean that his false doctrine becomes truth?
5. Do you believe that it is ok to believe a damnable doctrine as long as you quit preaching it?
6. If Dave Miller had not preached and practiced this error, along with Brown Trail, would this be an issue now?

Larry, I sincerely hope that you will look at the evidence and repent. Your soul is too valuable and your talents too great to waste it in support of one false teacher. I still consider you a friend, but one who is

in error. I cannot fellowship you or I will partake in your evil deeds, but I can admonish you to change (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15). Unity for the sake of peace is not true unity. More and more are crying "peace, peace; when there is no peace (Jer. 6:14). Don't fall into the trap of wanting peace when there is none. We are in a sad state in the church that so many people are willing to support schools and works (that otherwise could be good) who knowingly support and defend a known false teacher and yet call themselves sound.

In His Service,

John West

**NOTE: This email may be sent publicly to anyone as long as it is copied in its entirety.**

## **LARRY POWER'S REPLY TO JOHN WEST'S MAY 6, 2008 EMAIL**

May 7, 2008

John,  
I will give you a brief answer to your comments.

John you wrote: Again Larry, you stated that it was not a "fellowship issue until brother McClish was no longer editor of the Gospel Journal." Prove it. I have already given proof that it was an issue several years before and in 2005 BEFORE Dub was ousted as editor. You make wild statements, but will not back them with proof. I am interested in the proof that it was not preached against, written about and generally discussed prior to July 20, 2005.

Does several mean one or two or more? If you look at the Schertz Lectureship book dated Nov. 1-18, 2004 (Dub McClish was the editor) then it does not seem to have been a fellowship issue at time. Look at the last two pages "The Gospel Journal publishes the following OUTSTANDING items" (emp. LDP). Among those "outstanding" items listed is a work by Dave Miller Fallacies and Fruits of Liberalism. Now if this was a fellowship issue several years before 2005 why was this listed in the lectureship book in 2004?

I have used the words liberal and unscriptural in reference to R/R and I still use those words. You asked, "Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you condemned the practice in 1996 in Honolulu?" YES! the way they did the R/R was that each year the congregation voted to see if they wanted to keep the men as elders. The elders had no say in it one way or the other. The congregation in Honolulu had many more problems in addition to the R/R.

You asked, "Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you wrote the manuscript "Liberalism's Effect on the Organization of the Church" and condemned the practice of elder R & R for the Bellview lectures for the June 2005 lectureship. Keep in mind Larry, you wrote that manuscript in either the fall of 2004 or winter of 2005." I condemned the practice of elder R/R then and I continue to condemn today. Was it a fellowship issue at that time -- it does not seem that it was until Dub was no longer editor of the paper.

You stated, "You say that those who oppose Dave Miller are "in error", yet you stated the very thing

preached, practiced and upheld by Miller, Brown Trail and their co-horts are “liberal” and “unscriptural.” I did not write that for Bellview Larry, you did. You wrote it PRIOR to July 20, 2005. You now condemn us now for what you condemned then (again it shows your hypocrisy).” I do not condemn you for opposing elder R/R. I would condemn you for making something an issue of fellowship only after certain men could not get their way. Again I have given you evidence of the fact that Dub McClish did not think this was a fellowship issue in Nov. 2004. Did Brown Trail put forth a letter stating they used poor judgment and that they did not uphold elder R/R? Are they now teaching and pushing this doctrine? You are the ones splitting congregations that have not supported Dave Miller or his teachings. You are the ones who are labeling good men and congregations as being in error merely because they support MSOP or OABS even though they are on record as opposing elder R/R.

You stated, “Larry, please point out facts and instances where those whom I fellowship do not agree on marriage, divorce and remarriage. If there are disagreements, it is not in the area of obligation based on Matthew 19: 6, 9.” Now who is deciding what Bible doctrine is an obligation? Do you teach the same doctrine that David Brown does concerning MDR? Has Daniel Coe changed his position on MDR? It is clear to me that you and those with whom you are fellowshipping are the ones attempting to be the ones setting the standard for everyone else.

John to use your own words, I sincerely hope that you will look at the evidence and repent. Your soul is too valuable and your talents too great to waste it in support of one false teacher. I still consider you a friend, but one who is in error. I cannot fellowship you or I will partake in your evil deeds, but I can admonish you to change (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15).

I continue to pray for you and those of you who are causing such division in Lord’s church.

Larry Powers

## **JOHN WEST’S REPLY TO LARRY POWER’S MAY 7, 2008 EMAIL**

May 14, 2008

Larry,

I will respond as I have to previous emails. I will start with the you quoting me from a previous email and then your response.

John you wrote: Again Larry, you stated that it was not a “fellowship issue until brother McClish was no longer editor of the Gospel Journal.” Prove it. I have already given proof that it was an issue several years before and in 2005 BEFORE Dub was ousted as editor. You make wild statements, but will not back them with proof. I am interested in the proof that it was not preached against, written about and generally discussed prior to July 20, 2005.

Larry wrote:

Does several mean one or two or more? If you look at the Schertz Lectureship book dated Nov. 1-18, 2004 (Dub McClish was the editor) then it does not seem to have been a fellowship issue at time. Look at the last two pages “The Gospel Journal publishes the following OUTSTANDING items” (emp. LDP). Among those “outstanding” items listed is a work by Dave Miller Fallacies and Fruits of Liberalism. Now if this was a fellowship issue several years before 2005 why was this listed in the lectureship book in 2004?

John's Reply:

Larry, several means more than "one or two". Dub condemned Dave Miller and his doctrine in the 1997 Bellview lectureship book. David Brown and Michael Hatcher refused to speak with Miller in the late nineties.

Also, as I pointed out in an earlier email, David Brown, in CFTF published more than one article in 2003 condemning Miller's doctrine and practice AND the fellowship of the same. Other preachers refused to speak on lectureship with him after 2000. Yes, Larry, it is more than "one or two" years before July 20, 2005. I thought you used more logic than you have used in these flimsy arguments. You try to say that because Dub added Miller's book on Liberalism in the 2004 Schertz Lectureship book, is proof of fellowship. Larry, have you ever recommended a book by someone with whom you had no fellowship? Do you fellowship EVERYONE who has written a book that you have in your personal library? Dave Miller's book on liberalism is a good book that I could recommend, but it does not mean I fellowship him. While we were both in MSOP, there were a number of "recommended" books that we bought for our libraries and even used in the classroom that were good, but we could not fellowship the author. I have several of McGarvey's books in my library, but I would not fellowship him if he were still alive. In trying to defend MSOP, OABS and the sacred cow GBN, you are building up a straw man against Dub. I recommended that you read Roy Deaver's "Ascertaining Bible Authority", but it does not mean that I fellowship the Deavers because of their false doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. By the way, have you contacted Dub and asked him about why it was in the book? Since your little group likes to scream "contact Dave", why haven't you contacted Dub? Is this not a little hypocrisy on your part? I did contact Dub, again, and asked him about this matter in the Schertz book. He sent me an article he wrote well over a year ago concerning this matter with Miller. I already had the article, but could not put my hands on it for you. Read the attached article and it will PROVE that Dub did not fellowship Miller in 2004. (See Article at the bottom of this exchange, JW)

Larry wrote:

I have used the words liberal and unscriptural in reference to R/R and I still use those words. You asked, "Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you condemned the practiced in 1996 in Honolulu?" YES! the way they did the R/R was that each year the congregation voted to see if they wanted to keep the men as elders. The elders had no say in it one way or the other. The congregation in Honolulu had many more problems in addition to the R/R.

John's Reply:

I am glad to see that you have used the words "liberal" and "unscriptural" in reference to elder R/R. Why don't you practice what you preach? You have condemned the practice, yet fellowship those who personally teach it. It does not matter how many problems the church in Honolulu had, since elder R/R was practiced. That alone was unscriptural and you admit it.

Larry wrote:

You asked, "Did you consider it a fellowship issue when you wrote the manuscript "Liberalism's Effect on the Organization of the Church" and condemned the practice of elder R & R for the Bellview lectures for the June 2005 lectureship. Keep in mind Larry, you wrote that manuscript in either the fall of 2004 or winter of 2005." I condemned the practice of elder R/R then and I continue to condemn today. Was it a fellowship issue at that time -- it does not seem that it was until Dub was no longer editor of the paper.

John's Reply:

You stated that you "condemned the practice of elder R/R then" and you "continue to condemn (it) today." If you do, then why do you defend those who fellowship Dave Miller. With your new doctrine, you can condemn Rubel Shelly's doctrine yet fellowship him and those who support him. You asked "was it a fellowship issue at that time"? YES it was! It was BEFORE Dub was ousted as editor of The Gospel

Journal. You are so dishonest now, you can't see it (or should I say, you don't want to see it). Larry, as stated earlier, see the attached letter from Dub McClish, which was sent to me concerning this issue.

Larry wrote:

You stated, "You say that those who oppose Dave Miller are "in error", yet you stated the very thing preached, practiced and upheld by Miller, Brown Trail and their co-horts are "liberal" and "unscriptural." I did not write that for Bellview Larry, you did. You wrote it PRIOR to July 20, 2005. You now condemn us now for what you condemned then (again it shows your hypocrisy)." I do not condemn you for opposing elder R/R. I would condemn you for making something an issue of fellowship only after certain men could not get their way.

Again I have given you evidence of the fact that Dub McClish did not think this was a fellowship issue in Nov. 2004. Did Brown Trail put forth a letter stating they used poor judgment and that they did not uphold elder R/R? Are they now teaching and pushing this doctrine? You are the ones splitting congregations that have not supported Dave Miller or his teachings. You are the ones who are labeling good men and congregations as being in error merely because they support MSOP or OABS even though they are on record as opposing elder R/R.

John's Reply:

Larry, you responded to my above quote by writing, "I do not condemn you for opposing elder R/R. I would condemn you for making something an issue of fellowship only after certain men could not get their way." Since you stated that elder R/R is "liberal" and "unscriptural", why do YOU continue to fellowship it. As I stated in my last email, I believe you need another course on how God authorizes. You condemn a practice but do not make that an issue of fellowship. Larry, tell me which damnable false doctrine would fall into the realm of fellowship and which ones do not? Would instrumental music cause a disruption in fellowship or would you condemn me for opposing that practice as well? If something is "unscriptural", it would imply that it is false doctrine and not worthy of fellowship, yet you condemn me for not supporting the very thing you call "unscriptural." "O consistency, thou art a jewel."

Larry wrote:

You stated, "Larry, please point out facts and instances where those whom I fellowship do not agree on marriage, divorce and remarriage. If there are disagreements, it is not in the area of obligation based on Matthew 19: 6, 9." Now who is deciding what Bible doctrine is an obligation? Do you teach the same doctrine that David Brown does concerning MDR? Has Daniel Coe changed his position on MDR? It is clear to me that you and those with whom you are fellowshipping are the ones attempting to be the ones setting the standard for everyone else.

John's reply:

You never answered the question. What facts about those whom is fellowship are in disagreement with God's word. You named David Brown and Daniel Coe. Point out facts about their beliefs which would make them false teachers. I, nor those who are on the side of truth, are attempting to set the standard for everyone else. The only standard we are upholding is the Bible. I cannot say that about you, MSOP, OABS, GBN, ad nauseam. You have already said what Dave Miller did was "liberal" and "unscriptural" yet you continue to condemn me for not supporting him. Again, "O, consistency, thou are a jewel."

Larry wrote:

John to use your own words, I sincerely hope that you will look at the evidence and repent. Your soul is too valuable and your talents too great to waste it in support of one false teacher. I still consider you a friend, but one who is in error. I cannot fellowship you or I will partake in your evil deeds, but I can admonish you to change (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15).

John's Reply:

Larry, you attempted to quote me again to say that I am the one who needs to repent, but you have not given proof, only wild accusations filled with contradictory statements. Please stop your foolishness and repent before it is too late. I pray that you will stop fellowshiping false doctrine and learn to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Again, there is division that is condemned and division that is approved of God. Don't pray for me causing division, humble your heart to God and repent of the division that you and your group is causing to the Lord's body by your fellowship of an unrepentant false teacher.

Larry, I have answered EVERYTHING, paragraph by paragraph that you have sent, yet you have only answered portions of my emails to you. I listed several True/False questions in my last email. Since you did not answer them, I will post them again. Please take time to answer a simple True or False and give explanation if you would like.

1. (T/F) It is acceptable in the sight of God for the faithful to tolerate false teaching anywhere.
2. (T/F) It is a sin for the faithful to separate themselves from the unfaithful/false teachers.
3. (T/F) All division in the church is sinful division.
4. (T/F) All unity in the church is acceptable to God.
5. (T/F) When faithful brethren separate themselves from unfaithful brethren (who refuse to repent of their sins) the faithful brethren are in the wrong.
6. (T/F) Dave Miller preached false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
7. (T/F) Dave Miller practiced false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
8. (T/F) Brown Trail practiced false doctrine when Miller was leaving Brown Trail in 2002.
9. (T/F) No one made elder R & R a test of fellowship prior to July 20, 2005.
10. (T/F) Curtis Cates had no problem with Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
11. (T/F) Curtis Cates opposed Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
12. (T/F) The practice of the R & R of elders as taught by Dave Miller is an optional matter.
13. (T/F) God demands that men be of the same mind and judgement on obligatory matters.
14. (T/F) God approves of brethren disagreeing on obligatory matters.
15. (T/F) Someone is in sin when two brethren disagree over obligatory matters.
16. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, Christians must fully agree on the manner or mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a Christian in order to be pleasing to God.
17. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, God is pleased when Christians practice the R & R of elders as was done by the Brown Trail church of Christ.

Larry, I continue to hope that you will cease your stubbornness, quit bowing the knee to a school, and uphold the doctrine of Christ. You very plainly stand condemned by 2 John 9-11 by bidding God's speed to false teachers and his supporters.

Since you are so firm in your support of a known false teacher, I will challenge you to a four night oral debate. I have listed propositions for you. Since you are bent on defending this in email, you should have no problem defending it in a public date.

RESOLVED: "The New Testament of Christ authorizes the practice of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as Dave Miller and the Brown Trail Church of Christ taught and practiced the same."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "The Scriptures teach that faithful children of God may fellowship Dave Miller even though he (Miller) is guilty of violating a Scriptural obligation when he practiced the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as he (Miller) and the Brown Trail Church of Christ practiced the same."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "Dave Miller's "marriage intent doctrine" is authorized by the New Testament."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "Dave Miller's 'marriage intent doctrine' violates a New Testament obligation."

Affirmative: John West

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLVED: "The Scriptures teach that faithful children of God may fellowship Dave Miller with God's blessings even though he (Miller) is guilty of violating a Scriptural obligation in supporting and defending the 'marriage intent doctrine' as practiced by Everett Chambers."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

## **LARRY POWER'S REPLY TO JOHN WEST'S MAY 14, 2008 EMAIL**

May 15, 2008

John,

You do not seem to be able to get the point of a discussion concerning fellowship. I have stated that I do not believe that elder R/R is scriptural, yet you attempt to challenge me to debate something that I do not believe. YOU have come to a conclusion that is not correct. You have accused me of supporting elder R/R merely because I support MSOP and would recommend the school. Using YOUR logic, or should I say illogic, I could conclude that you are in support of the false doctrine concerning the work and indwelling of the Holy Spirit because you support (bid godspeed), to a false teacher such as Roy Deaver. According to what you are saying it is alright for you to recommend the works of a false teacher but you are not in fellowship with him. Am I to believe that just because you say so? It seems that you do not believe what others tell you.

John you wrote: Please stop your foolishness and repent before it is too late. John as I see it you that is acting foolish and the one who is attempting to twist the Scriptures to your own destruction.

I encourage you to repent of your unscriptural doctrine concerning fellowship and the dividing of congregations (Rom. 16:17,18).

My prayers are for you and those with you who are causing such division in the Lord's church.

Larry Powers

## **JOHN WEST'S REPLY TO LARRY POWER'S MAY 15, 2008 EMAIL**

May 16, 2008

Larry,

I thank you for writing me back, but I want to call your attention to the fact that you did not touch top, side bottom, or edge of the letter I sent you from Dub McClish. This answered your false charges against him, of which you now need to repent. You failed to answer ANY of my questions to you, but attacked me without any proof whatsoever. You seem to be good at making charges and asking questions, but fall far short of answering question put to you. Such action goes a long way in demonstrating one's honesty and the lack of it. I am going to answer you again in the same manner I have in the previous emails.

You wrote, "You do not seem to be able to get the point of a discussion concerning fellowship."

John's Reply:

I do understand the point of discussion concerning fellowship. You are the one who seems to be confused (or dishonest) about it. You have still not answered my simple questions concerning your false and sinful fellowship practices of a known, unrepentant false teacher (i.e. Dave Miller). Since you have ignored them in the previous two emails I am going to post them ONE MORE TIME. Why do you continue to ignore questions given to you? Can you not answer them? Do you need to put more than True

or False? Can you not find a scripture to backup your answer to these questions?

1. (T/F) It is acceptable in the sight of God for faithful children of God to tolerate false teaching anywhere.
2. (T/F) It is a sin for faithful children of God to separate themselves from unfaithful/false teachers.
3. (T/F) All division in the church is sinful division.
4. (T/F) All unity in the church is acceptable to God.
5. (T/F) When faithful brethren separate themselves from unfaithful brethren (who refuse to repent of their sins) the faithful brethren are in the wrong.
6. (T/F) Dave Miller preached false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
7. (T/F) Dave Miller practiced false doctrine in 1990 while a member of the Brown Trail church of Christ.
8. (T/F) Brown Trail practiced false doctrine when Miller was leaving Brown Trail in 2002.
9. (T/F) No one made elder R & R a test of fellowship prior to July 20, 2005.
10. (T/F) Curtis Cates had no problem with Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
11. (T/F) Curtis Cates opposed Dub McClish's opposition to Dave Miller's error before July 20, 2005.
12. (T/F) The practice of the R & R of elders as taught by Dave Miller is an optional matter.
13. (T/F) God demands that men be of the same mind and judgement on obligatory matters.
14. (T/F) God approves of brethren disagreeing on obligatory matters.
15. (T/F) Someone is in sin when two brethren disagree over obligatory matters.
16. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, Christians must fully agree on the manner or mode of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a Christian in order to be pleasing to God.
17. (T/F) With all other things being scripturally equal, God is pleased when Christians practice the R & R of elders as was done by the Brown Trail church of Christ.

Larry wrote:

I have stated that I do not believe that elder R/R is scriptural, yet you attempt to challenge me to debate something that I do not believe.

John's Reply:

Larry, please show me wherein I challenged you to debate something that you do not believe? Why did you ignore the propositions? If you notice them in detail, they are written about your sinful fellowship practices, not what you personally believe on this specific issue. To refresh your memory I will

again post the debate propositions. Larry, these propositions stand and I will debate you on any or all of them.

RESOLVED: "The New Testament of Christ authorizes the practice of the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as Dave Miller and the Brown Trail Church of Christ taught and practiced the same."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "The Scriptures teach that faithful children of God may fellowship Dave Miller even though he (Miller) is guilty of violating a Scriptural obligation when he practiced the re-evaluation and reaffirmation of elders as he (Miller) and the Brown Trail Church of Christ practiced the same."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "Dave Miller's "marriage intent doctrine" is authorized by the New Testament."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

RESOLVED: "Dave Miller's 'marriage intent doctrine' violates a New Testament obligation."

Affirmative: John West

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLVED: "The Scriptures teach that faithful children of God may fellowship Dave Miller with God's blessings even though he (Miller) is guilty of violating a Scriptural obligation in supporting and defending the 'marriage intent doctrine' as practiced by Everett Chambers."

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: John West

Larry Wrote:

You have accused me of supporting elder R/R merely because I support MSOP and would recommend the school.

John's Reply:

Larry, are you saying that you do not support MSOP who directly supports Dave Miller. Remember, Dave Miller has never repented of preaching or practicing the elder R/R doctrine at Brown Trail in 1990. Am I accusing you of supporting elder R/R or is it a fact that you ARE supporting it by your evil associations?

Let me ask you a few more questions.

1. Do you support MSOP?
2. Does the faculty at MSOP support Dave Miller?
3. Has the faculty at MSOP spoken with Dave Miller on any lectureship, thus lending support to the elder R/R doctrine?
4. Has the faculty at MSOP spoken against (condemned) Dave Miller for teaching his elder R/R doctrine?
5. Has the faculty at MSOP spoken against (condemned) Dave Miller for practicing his elder R/R doctrine?
6. Has the faculty at MSOP spoken against (condemned) Dave Miller for his "marriage intent" doctrine?

Let me remind you that a number of men you support (Robert Taylor, Curtis Cates, Garland Elkins, Bobby Liddell, Gary McDade, to name a few) are speaking WITH Dave Miller on the Truth in Love Lectures THIS WEEK (May 14-18, 2008).

Larry wrote:

According to what you are saying it is alright for you to recommend the works of a false teacher but you are not in fellowship with him.

John's Reply:

Larry, AGAIN, I will ask you a few questions, that were unanswered in my last email to you.

1. Have you ever recommended a book written by someone with whom you had no fellowship?
2. Do you fellowship EVERYONE who has written a book that you have in your personal library?
3. Would you recommend J. W. McGarvey's commentary on Acts? If so, would you fellowship J. W. McGarvey if he were alive today and believed the same thing he did in 1890?

According to you, Larry, you must agree with EVERY author of every book you have in your library on obligatory matters in order for you to recommend such books to a brother. Or, is it the case that you do not agree with everything every author of every book in your library, but you have recommended one or more of them to others and are, thus, hypocritical in your statement to me?

Larry wrote:

John as I see it you that is acting foolish and the one who is attempting to twist the Scriptures to your own destruction.

John's Reply:

Larry, can you please give proof that I am acting foolishly and am twisting scriptures? What am I twisting in regards to fellowshiping a false teacher? What I am twisting regarding supporting the sinful practice of elder R/R? You are the one who says the R/R doctrine is error, that Dave Miller is in error for teaching and practicing it, as well as believing and practicing other errors, but, then, you teach by precept and example that the scriptures authorize Christians to oppose the false teaching, but fellowship the unrepent false teacher, i. e. Dave Miller. You cannot find a direct statement, example or implication in the New Testament authorizing you to believe and practice such a thing, though you know that we

must have Bible authority for everything we believe and practice in order to be faithful, remain faithful and die faithful, but you are going to believe and do that for which you have no Bible authority (Col. 3:17).

Larry, my prayer is that you will give up your stubbornness, and quit dividing the Lord's body by your unauthorized, sinful fellowship practices (Col. 3:17, 2 John 9-11).

John West

## **JOHN WEST'S FINAL EMAIL TO LARRY POWERS**

May 30, 2008

Larry,

It has been two weeks since I last wrote you and as of this date (May 30, 2008), I have received no reply. Did you get my last email to you? I have tried my best to answer every question you sent, but you have not answered many of my questions. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 states: "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." You have not proven your accusations made against me and my "group" (those who do not support Miller). You need to prove what you have written. I have proven to you concerning your false accusations against Dub McClish, which seemed to be your main argument in the beginning. You have not even acknowledged the letter of proof I sent from Dub, but have ignored it. I also sent you several questions twice which have gone unanswered, as well as a debate proposition, which still stands. Larry, why don't you answer the questions put to you? If you continue your stubbornness and refuse to repent, then why not engage me in a four night oral debate. Remember, those propositions concern your practice, not personal belief in the Dave Miller doctrine. Since you are bold enough to uphold the hands of those who personally fellowship Miller, you should be bold enough to defend it (1 Pet. 3:15).

I sincerely hope that you will see your inconsistency and error. Larry, your soul is too valuable to lose it in defense of a school and a man who is bent on splitting the church over his error. If you refuse to continue this discussion, I will continue to pray that you will repent before you go to your reward.

In Christ,

John West

Note: All correspondence may be sent to others as long as it is copied in its entirety.

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**\*\*Larry Powers never responded to the final two emails.\*\***

# RESPONSE TO DAVE MILLER'S ASSERTIONS TO PAUL MIDDLEBROOKS CONCERNING DUB MCCLISH

By Dub McClish

In a phone conversation Paul Middlebrooks had with Dave Miller June 20, 2006, brother Middlebrooks reported that Dave Miller made the following assertions concerning Dub McClish

Dave said that Dub McClish, David Brown, and Michael Hatcher have never contacted him.

Dave said at the Denton lectures Dub McClish had investigated him and fellowshiped him.

Concerning the first assertion above, Dave Miller is correct in saying I did not directly contact him concerning his elder r/r errors. Nor have I contacted the Roman Catholic pope or Max Lucado before exposing their errors. When men, whether brethren or not, publicly teach and/or practice error, they invite public exposure and refutation. Dave Miller knows this, for he consistently exposes and refutes atheistic and evolutionary dogmatists whom he has never met. It is most unlikely that he "never contacted" even a small percentage of the false teachers he opposed and exposed in his book, *Piloting the Strait*. Clearly, he understands that there is no Scriptural obligation to **personally** contact those who **publicly** teach/practice error before publicly exposing them. The same is true of Dave Miller's errors. He is utterly disingenuous to imply otherwise, for he surely does not follow his own dictum in this regard. He publicly taught his errors and still defends having done so. As indicated below, I (with many others) have publicly exposed and refuted his error, with every Scriptural right to do so **without going to him privately**.

The second assertion above is worded ambiguously, at best. I never "investigated" brother Miller in regard to the Annual Denton Lectures. Perhaps what this statement is attempting to say is that we used him on the Annual Denton Lectures (which I directed) in November 1990, after he had led the Brown Trail church in Bedford, Texas, to engage in the elder r/r program earlier that year. As I will indicate below, I registered my opposition to that practice (as did several other brethren) in May of that year, upon hearing that it had occurred. Why then did we go ahead and use Dave Miller on our lectureship that year? We had invited him in February or March 1990 to speak on the lectureship that fall. The elder r/r program occurred in April. The elders and I decided to exercise some patience relative to the Brown Trail/Dave Miller situation, giving them an opportunity to make a public statement of repentance for their practice.

The Pearl Street congregation in Denton, Texas (home of the Annual Denton Lectures) and the Brown Trail congregation had enjoyed a long and harmonious relationship, which we wanted to preserve, if at all possible. We feared that if we immediately rescinded Dave Miller's invitation to speak, this decision might damage that relationship irreparably. We therefore decided to give the situation some additional time by allowing Dave Miller to fulfill his assignment on our lectureship. Hindsight proves that neither the Brown Trail elders nor Dave Miller had any intention of repenting of their unscriptural procedure, and we may as well have uninvited him to speak on the lectureship. However, had we taken such action, some would doubtless have accused us of acting in haste. Because we decided to exercise some patience (which went unrewarded), Dave Miller now apparently accuses us of not having a problem with his elder r/r error, which he knows is not the case.

Brother Curtis Cates (with others) is apparently employing (as a "talking point") the assertion that I had not opposed, exposed, marked, or withdrawn from Dave Miller as a false teacher until **after** I was ousted from *TGJ*. Brother B.J. Clark (on the 2006 Farmington, MO, Lectures Open Forum) has used the date, "August 2005," as the time at which I became so concerned with Dave Miller's errors. He doubtless based this date on my conversation with him at Power Lectures in early August 2005, begging him to cancel his appearance on the "Polishing the Pulpit" program, because Dave Miller was scheduled to speak on it, which occurred the following month. His father, brother Ted Clark, told me later that he had done the same, and neither of us knew the other had done so until after the fact. As many know, B.J. rejected the pleas of both of us. While B.J. may have been ignorant of my objections to Dave Miller before I thus approached him (although I find this hard to believe), my appeal to him was far

from my first expression of concern relating to Miller nor was it the first time I had marked him and his

error. Whether brother Clark made his statement in ignorance or not, his assertion is patently false, as the list below amply indicates. It is beyond doubt that Curtis (and at least some others who are making this silly assertion) **knows** it is false:

1. I (along with five or six others) first expressed my concerns in response to a letter from Goebel Music on May 23, 1990, a **full sixteen years** before I was ousted by TGJ Board. Goebel had witnessed the reaffirmation/reconfirmation procedure at Brown Trail (he was attending worship there at the time) and was so concerned about it that he wrote to several of us for our reaction to it. (These letters and lengthy quotes from them are documented in my chapter in the 1997 Bellview Lectureship book, *Leadership*.)
2. I then exposed the elder r/r program as practiced by Brown Trail (and marked Dave Miller for his principal part in promoting it) in my lecture at the Bellview Lectures in June 1997, a **full eight years** before August 2005.
3. As Editor of *TGJ*, I fully approved the article by Marvin Weir in the October 2002 issue of *TGJ*, in which he named Dave Miller as one who approved Brown Trail's 2002 repeat of the elder reaffirmation procedure. Not one of TGJ board members expressed the least displeasure with this article. This public marking occurred **almost three years** before TGJ Board replaced me.
4. I rejected an order for a full-page ad in *TGJ* from the Gospel Broadcasting Network in an e-mail message on February 26, 2005. In response, Barry Gilreath, Sr., Executive Director of GBN, inquired concerning my specific reasons for the rejection (03/07/05). I wrote a detailed response to brother Gilreath on March 17, 2005, explaining the rejections, one of which was Dave Miller and his errors. Not only did Curtis not criticize my rejection of the ad, he applauded it by e-mail (3/2/05). I sent all of the correspondence in this exchange to each of TGJ Board members. Not one of them had any word of criticism of either the rejection or of my bases of rejecting the ad, including the long, detailed letter in which I pointedly referred to Dave Miller's errors. Note that this exchange took place **almost five months** before I was replaced as Editor of *TGJ*—and brother Curtis Cates knows this well. (Incidentally, Barry Gilreath, Sr., has still not responded to my March 17, 2005.)
5. In an e-mail exchange with Curtis (6/10–11/05), a **full five weeks** before I had any inkling I would be ousted as *TGJ*'s Editor, I contacted Curtis with my concerns about his implicit support of Dave Miller, only to see Curtis defend Miller in his reply.
6. Consistent with my marking and exposure of Dave Miller **before** I left *TGJ*, I have continued to oppose and expose Dave Miller's errors **since** departing *TGJ*.

Curtis is the one who has changed in his attitude toward Dave Miller.

Here are the facts of the matter: Until the AP scandal broke (upon which Dave Miller was elevated to Executive Director as Bert Thompson's replacement), Curtis apparently realized that Dave Miller had involved himself in erroneous doctrine and practice, of which he had not repented. Curtis therefore rightly agreed with every exposure of Dave Miller's errors of which I am aware. The "tipping point" for Curtis regarding Dave Miller came when Curtis's loyalty to AP (encouraged by some of his ex-MSOP students who are AP employees and by long-time friends, such as Frank Chesser) clouded his concept of Truth, error, and fellowship. In order to support AP he was forced to accept an impenitent false teacher as its director. Since June-July 2005, Curtis has not only accepted Dave Miller, but he has defended him. Had I decided to sweep Miller's errors under the rug and hop on the AP/Miller bandwagon, doubtless I would still be Editor of *TGJ*. I repeat: Curtis is the one who has changed his attitude toward Dave Miller and his errors; I have not.

Besides the opportunities and invitations cited in the foregoing document, brother Miller has refused other opportunities to clarify and/or defend his elder r/r and marriage intent doctrines (against claimed "misrepresentations") in public forums. He was invited to such a forum by the elders of the Spring, Texas, congregation as part of its February 2006 lectureship, and he did not even dignify two certified mail invitations with a response of any sort. The elders of the Lovers Lane congregation, Steubenville, OH, invited him to participate in a similar Open Forum as part of its September 2006 lectureship. He likewise made no response to that invitation.

On the other hand, brother Miller has been willing to travel many miles if necessary to meet with some brethren, as he did with the elders of the Piedmont Road congregation, Marietta, GA, on April 30, 2007.

Why has he been willing to meet with some brethren and not with others? The invitations he turned down were all public forums, would have brethren present who were ready and willing to question his doctrines (and knew what questions to ask), and would be recorded—of which factors he was well aware in advance. On the other hand, he knew the Piedmont Road meeting (and others like it he has accepted) would be with only a few brethren, would have brethren present (the PR elders in this case) whom he knew would defend him (in case of any questions or opposition), and the meeting would not be recorded. In other words, he knew this sort of meeting was a “safe” meeting. His behavior in deciding upon those with whom he will meet implies that his doctrine will not stand up under scrutiny, and that he knows it will not. The planners of such meetings as the one hosted by the PR elders are not seeking the truth about the doctrines and practices of Dave Miller, but they are seeking to justify continued support of him, regardless of what he has taught and practiced and still defends. The outcome of such meetings is predictable before they ever occur. Brother Miller will come out smelling like a rose and the elders defending him will be able to say, “See there, those charges against him were unfounded and are based on brotherhood politics.” Brother Miller will doubtless continue to accept invitations to such meetings where he can project an image of being sound in the faith and be protected by misguided sympathetic men who are more concerned with self-justification than with seeking and upholding the Truth.

—Updated May 14, 2008