

# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths... and walk therein."*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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## The Refutation of the IRREFUTABLE CONSTITUENT ELEMENT ARGUMENT

*Tom L. Bright*

**W**hen there is disagreement among brethren, it is good when they can discuss their differences logically, candidly, and in a spirit of seeking only the Truth as it is revealed upon the pages of inspiration. Such disagreements should not be marked by unkindness, innuendos, snide remarks, or unsavory conduct in any way.

At the present time, there exists disagreement in our great brotherhood over the employment of women translators in a gender-mixed worship assembly. Some consider the use of women translators is a matter of opinion, while others feel it is wrong. Ultimately, this issue must be settled by that age old question: "What does the Bible teach about it?" Let all of us go to the Book of all books, peruse Its contents with an attitude of "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3:10), striving with all of our being to stand upon that which is right and cannot be wrong.

With these thoughts in mind, let me give a brief review of the events leading up to the writing of this article. In the May, 1996 issue of *Seek the Old Paths*, there appeared an article entitled "The Constituent Parts Argument and Female Translators." I wrote this article in response to a previous article<sup>1</sup> that had been written in defense of

women translators in a mixed audience in a public worship hour. In February, 1997, my article was reviewed<sup>2</sup> along with other articles, as well as one sermon that had been preached. I think it is proper for me to respond to the review of my article.

What Does Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 Authorize? In the seven hundred and forty one word, three paragraph section that dealt with the previously mentioned article of mine, our brother made some interesting arguments. The implications of them are far reaching.

One of the main points of difference between us focuses upon that which Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 authorize. Thus, it is essential for us to look closely at the two passages to determine *exactly* what they authorize.

We are authorized to: (1) Speak to one another in song (reciprocal), (2) Teach and admonish one another, (3) In psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, (4) Sing, and, (5) Make melody in our hearts to the Lord (sing with grace in our hearts to the Lord).

That which the two passages authorize is not hard to understand. For generations, faithful brethren have destroyed the arguments used to justify mechanical instruments of

music in worship with a correct exegesis of these passages, pointing out that *only* singing is authorized.

Now, however, we find this is not the case. Much more is (supposedly) authorized than we ever envisioned. Even those great stalwarts of the faith of past generations had the wrong view of Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. They just did not understand everything these two verses authorize.

You see, the problem is they did not understand, nor do we, the "constituent element argument." This argument is: "If there is authority for every part (component or element) of a composite action (total situation), then there is authority for that composite action."<sup>3</sup> Expressed in another way, if the composite (total situation) is scriptural, then so is every component part of that total situation.

But the real question, as we will show in this article, is not whether the *component* parts of a composite action are authorized. The real issue is, are there any *restrictions* to these component parts at all when applied to other situations, as in the woman translator? We will deal with this more fully later on.

(Continued on page 3)  
The Refutation...



This issue of **Seek The Old Paths** continues in the study of using women interpreters in a worship assembly where men are present. Tom Bright has a good article examining arguments made by brother Bob Berard's review (in the February issue of **Contending For The Faith**) of brother Bright's article in the May, 1996, issue of **Seek The Old Paths**. We invite your close examination of this material.

We desire simply to study the issue at hand and not resort to "labeling" and "name calling" as some have done. Why cloud the study and prejudice the minds of some concerning this most important question? Brethren, let's deal with the arguments and give a thorough examination of them.

For the last four months, since the April issue of **Seek The Old Paths**, we have placed a box in the paper which asked for someone to place a scripture in it which authorized women interpreters. There have been two volunteers to do so. We wish to examine them below.

The first attempt offered **Judges 4:4** which reads, "*And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.*" Scriptures concerning Deborah were all that were offered. There was no further explanation as to how these were thought to apply to the subject of women interpreters.

Deborah was certainly a judge as this verse says. However, what has that to do with a woman standing before a worship assembly of the Lord's church today, wherein men are present, to impart spiritual knowledge?

The accounts of Deborah in the book of Judges are Old Testament passages and Colossians 2:14 says the old Law was nailed to the cross. Those who seek to incorporate any part of the law of Moses into the church today are obligated to receive and keep it all (Gal. 5:3; 3:10). What a woman did or did not do under the Law of Moses does not serve as authority for what a woman is or is not authorized to do in the church.

The same argument is used by proponents of instrumental music when they turn to the Old Testament in an effort to provide authority for their use in the church. To turn to the Old Testament to authorize a practice in the church today makes at least two things clear: 1) it is an admission that authority for a practice is necessary and, 2) it is an admission that New Testament authority for such a practice does not exist.

The second attempt offered **Hebrews 13:17**. The note which accompanied this passage simply said, "wait no more." "Heb. 13:17 the same scripture authorizes the editor to publish this publication and to be on the in-ter-net." The passage says, "*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*"

I suppose what is intended here is that elders have the authority to assign a woman to do whatever they desire. Therefore, according to this thinking, they could authorize her to address a worship assembly as an interpreter when men are present. If elders have such power, they also have the authority to have her preach a sermon without the help of a man and could even send her out as a missionary (if such is the case, perhaps we could double our efforts in evangelizing the world)! Elders could have her serve at the Lord's table, read scripture, lead prayer and literally do anything a man is authorized to do. They could assign her to serve as a deacon or even an elder! Were you aware that some congregations are already doing so?!

However, elders do not have the authority to circumvent God's law. They do not have the authority to loose where God has bound. They do not have the authority to release a woman from the restrictions and limitations God has placed upon her. The scriptures still read, "*Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to*

*teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence*" (1 Tim. 2:11-12). "*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church*" (1 Cor. 14:34-35). Pardon me if I still use 1 Cor. 14:34-35. I still haven't figured out yet that "these verses don't count" as some contend! If elders have such broad sweeping authority as to countermand and contradict God's Word, then nothing the Bible says is authoritative.

Elders certainly have authority. This is not denied. However, their authority is limited to optional matters in a local congregation. Their "rule" does not allow them to disregard plain passages of scripture. Their authority is exercised in seeing to it that God's Word is obeyed, not disregarded. When they deny and contradict specific instructions given by the Holy Spirit, they have gone beyond their authority and no longer abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).

## CONTRIBUTORS

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We failed to mention in the July/97 issue that two of the contributions given were in honor of Doyle & Barbara Gough's 50th wedding anniversary. They were Ed & Iris Casteel....\$50 and Jerry & Joy Riggs....\$50. Sorry for this oversight.	

## The Refutation...

(Continued from page 1)

### MY ARTICLE REVIEWED

Our brother says that I "...implied that the constituent element argument...was inadequately developed to prove all the components required for the contested woman translator."<sup>4</sup> This is my point exactly, as we shall show in this article.

Next we are told that my objection shows a failure to rightly apply the constituent element argument. It is asserted I have failed to correctly apply the basic concept "of the parts being equal to the whole and the necessary conclusion that when all the parts are authorized, there is authority for the whole and vice versa."<sup>5</sup>

It is not that I do not understand their basic argument. In a *constituent element argument*, there must be a logical connection between the component parts and the thing one is attempting to prove. An argument can be valid (constructed properly) but not sound. A series of unconnected and disjointed "component parts" prove nothing.

For instance, in my May, 1996 article, I pointed out that by changing two words in their constituent element argument, we could prove a woman was authorized to sing a solo in a mixed worship assembly.<sup>6</sup> It was properly constructed (valid), but it was not sound. The conclusion does not follow. This applies equally to the *constituent element argument* under consideration.

Our brother writes:

Specifically this failure is shown by his not recognizing that the speaking of Ephesians 5:19 is a component part of a larger whole, singing.<sup>7</sup>

I would ask the reader to reread this quotation very carefully. The implications of these words are far reaching.

I did not understand how my brethren could use Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 to justify a woman speaking (non-singing) as a translator before a gender-mixed audience until I read this statement.

Now that I understand their basic argument, I still affirm they have drawn a conclusion that is not warranted by what the passages teach.

Now, how do they get a woman translator out of Ephesians 5:19? The basic argument is as follows: (1) A female is authorized to speak (by reciprocal singing, Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), (2) One of the component parts of *singing* is "speaking," (3) Every component part of the whole (composite action) is authorized, (4) Therefore, a female is authorized to speak (non-singing) as a translator before a gender-mixed audience!

Now, if this reasoning seems somewhat strange, let us consider further. Our brother says:

The reciprocal singing of the passage involves more than speaking, but it does involve speaking. The speaking involved, as our brother ably notes is the speaking which teaches and admonishes (Colossians 3:16). Well, if the teaching and admonishing by reciprocal singing is an authorized composite action (and obviously it is, in that it consists of more than one part), then every component part of that composite action is also authorized. One of those composite parts is speaking.<sup>8</sup>

(In reading this article, I am convinced in the last sentence of this specific quote, the author meant to say, "One of those component parts is speaking.")

I want you to consider carefully the implications of our brother's words. Notice, he refers to "reciprocal singing" and "teaching and admonishing by reciprocal singing." But nowhere does he advocate that the *speaking* herein (supposedly) authorized (as in the case of a woman translator) is to be reciprocal in nature. The essential question we must ask here is: "Since the singing of Ephesians 5:19 is *reciprocal* (admitted by our brother), and since *speaking* is a component part of *singing*, does the reciprocal imperative apply to *speaking* in a woman translator situation?"

The question our brother needs to answer is: (1) If it is the case that

inspiration can and does place certain specifics and limitations on things authorized, and (2) If it is the case that when a composite action is authorized, then every component part of that composite action is thereby authorized, then, (3) Is it the case the specifics and limitations inspiration placed on the composite action are applicable to all of the component parts when used in other situations?

Truly brethren, does the "constituent element argument" allow one to take *speaking in song* in a reciprocal manner and turn it into *speaking* (non-singing talking) in a non-reciprocal manner? In other words, we are told a component part of *singing* is "speaking." Does this mean, *any speaking, all speaking, speaking on any occasion*, with no restrictions or limitations whatsoever?

The "teaching and admonishing" in this passage is limited to *reciprocal singing*. We are told that a component part of this authorized "singing" is *speaking*. Is this authorized "speaking" limited by the reciprocity commanded in this passage? Or does reciprocity apply *ONLY* to the composite (whole)? Would our brother affirm these inspired restrictions and limitations are applicable *ONLY* to the composite action (singing), but the smaller component parts (of which speaking [non-singing] is one) are untouched and unfettered by any restrictions?

My reviewer seems to think the answer to the above is "Yes," because in the next two sentences he writes, "Speaking in what sense or what kind of speaking? Speaking which communicates a spiritual message which teaches, admonishes, and praises God."<sup>9</sup> Here he appeals to the inspired limitations of the two passages, but overlooks the reciprocity that is just as much an imperative as *teaching and admonishing*.

### THIS PRINCIPLE APPLIED TO "MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART"

If *speaking* is a component part of "singing," so is *making melody*. "Making melody" translates the Greek word *psallo*. The word basically means to "pull, pluck, twang, cause to vibrate." If inspiration had

not limited the *psalting* to the human heart, then any stringed mechanical instrument of music could be used in worship. But as the First Christian Church learned so forcefully in the “Hardeman-Boswell Debate,” the inspired limitation of making melody *in your heart* leaves no room for such additions.

Now, applying our brother’s basic *total situation and component part argumentation*, we have an interesting scenario. The “total situation” is *singing*. Two component parts of this *singing* is “speaking” and “making melody.” If the component part *speaking* is not limited (in other situations) by the restrictions of the total situation, then neither is the component part *making melody* (in other situations). This would mean that *making melody* (in other situations) is not restricted by “in your heart,” thus anything would be acceptable as long as there was “pulling, plucking, twanging, causing to vibrate.” Brethren, this would allow the use of stringed mechanical instruments of music!

I know our brother does not believe this. However, if we can remove the limitations and restrictions placed on the total situation when considering one component part (in this case, *speaking*), then what prevents us from removing the inspired limitations and restrictions from the other component part — *making melody in your heart*? Brethren, this question needs to be answered.

We then read:

What is the sense of speaking needed in the woman translator situation? Why, the very same kind of speaking which is authorized in Ephesians 5:19 — speaking which teaches, admonishes, and praises God.<sup>10</sup>

The fact of the matter is, the kind of speaking authorized in Ephesians 5:19 is that which is reciprocal in nature, *as well as*, “speaking which teaches, admonishes, and praises God.” Is this element of reciprocity equally binding in “the woman translator situation?” Is it true or false that the “component parts” are *not limited* by the con-

straints and restrictions imposed upon the *composite* (total situation)?

Then my reviewer makes a very interesting statement that needs to be read and reread. Consider it please:

Is there authority for sung or unsung speaking? The passage specifies the former, but it is a broader category which includes the latter. If you are authorized to speak a message in song (the whole), you are authorized to speak the message (a part within the whole).<sup>11</sup>

Here we see a direct appeal to the *component element argument*. We are told that even though the passage specifies speaking by singing, it is a “broader category which includes the latter,” that is, speaking which is not singing. So, here we have an inspired *specific* which is not limited to the thing specified! If this is the case, then why did Paul SPECIFY anything?

Is it the case that every time inspiration “specifies” an action, there will always be a “broader category” which is comprised of the component elements, which are not limited by the inspired *specifics*? Are we to understand this “specification” applies to the *total situation* of Ephesians 5:19 — but the *component part* of each thing specified has no limitations at all?

It seems evident our brother does not think the inspired limitations and specifications apply to the “component elements,” only the *composite* (total situation). In the last paragraph of the section dealing specifically with my 1996 article, he writes, “The claim that a woman is authorized to teach in an assembly is, of course, limited by every New Testament restriction on her gender or that otherwise relates to such action.”<sup>12</sup> We ask: Is that which the apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 a part of “every New Testament restriction on her gender or that otherwise relates to such action”? The speaking commanded in Ephesians 5:19 is to be reciprocal in nature — does this reciprocity apply to the situation of the woman translator? It either does or it does not.

The next two sentences read:

Has our brother never heard some of the talking that passes for singing by brethren who are sincerely doing the best that they can do? Are they to shut up entirely because of their musical inabilities?<sup>13</sup>

This is given to buttress the argument just made: Though Paul specified speaking by song, there is a broader category including “unsung speaking.” Our brother refers to what he calls “talking that passes for singing by brethren who are sincerely doing the best that they can do.” I ask one question: Does God consider the above scenario as “talking that passes for singing” or “singing and making melody in” their heart to the Lord? After all, He is the One that is to be pleased — not man.

A question is in order: Is the Father as pleased with those who sing horribly (as man would judge it) with an acceptable heart as those who sing beautifully (as man would judge it) with an acceptable heart? Certainly so! And this argument proves nothing. This is a non-argument and should have never found its way to the printed page.

He continues to attempt to sustain his argument. Consider closely what our brother writes:

What about the mute who signs his singing? To him his signing for singing is the same as his signing for non-singing talking? Will our brother tell him to cease singing by signing unless he can add some-thing to his singing to distinguish it from talking by signs?

Incidentally, Thayer says that the word *ado* which is translated as “singing” may also mean chant.<sup>14</sup>

First, let me say I have always believed that God accepts the signing for singing by the mute. He does not demand that which one is incapable of doing because of physical impairment. My brother and I both agree to this, I am sure.

Keep in mind, our brother is affirming that Paul specified 'sung speaking,' but 'unsung speaking' is authorized, being a broader category. Further proof (supposedly) of this comes from our mute brethren as they sign for singing while the rest of the congregation is speaking in song.

The argument is basically this: Since for the mute, "his signing for singing is the same as his signing for non-singing talking" (no difference, you see) and as the woman translator is authorized "to speak a message in song (the whole)," so is she "authorized to speak the message (a part within the whole),"<sup>16</sup> therefore, she is authorized to speak (non-singing [translate]) in a gender-mixed worship assembly. We are told, if she can "sing a message," then she can also "speak" a message (non-singing).

Whether there is no difference in signing for singing and signing for talking by the mute (do the mute make melody in their heart?), is not the question. For those that are blessed with the ability to hear and speak (To utter words or articulate sounds with ordinary speech modulation; talk), *THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPEAKING BY SINGING AND TALKING (NON-SINGING)!* And it is this which Paul addressed in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16.

Now, (1) since our brother has argued for authority for the woman translator to speak a message, both sung and unsung, and (2) in order to bolster this argument, he has used the examples of "some of the talking that passes for singing by brethren who are sincerely doing the best that they can do," and our mute brethren "signing for singing" as "the same as his signing for non-singing talking" then, (3) would this allow *all Christians* to speak (non-singing) during the song service?

The fact is, all recognize the "signing for singing" by the mute as a special situation. It has absolutely no bearing on this situation.

In the next paragraph, we read:

The same objecting brother also indicated that we have proven too much in showing that there is authority for a woman to

teach since Paul says she is not allowed to teach (1 Timothy 2: 12). The problem here is that Paul did not say she is not allowed to teach at all, but that she is not allowed to teach over men or in any other way to exercise dominion over men.<sup>16</sup>

Let us look closely at what I wrote. In the paragraph preceding the one to which our brother refers, I established that "speaking," "teaching," and "admonishing" were authorized (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). I then wrote, "Therefore, we conclude that component part number three is correct - a female is authorized to speak and teach in an assembly containing men."<sup>17</sup>

In the very next sentence, which begins a new paragraph, I wrote:

But there is a problem with this conclusion. Unless the thing authorized is restricted or modified in some way, this deduction places the apostle Paul in a position in which he contradicts himself! In 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul wrote "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Here a woman is forbidden to "teach" (*didasko*) a man. But in Colossians 3:16, he commands a woman to teach (*didasko*) in a specific circumstance in which reciprocity is to exist, which situation implies the presence of men - thus Paul commanded a woman to teach men!<sup>18</sup>

My argumentation is clear. I stated "a female is authorized to speak and teach in an assembly containing men," but *there had to be certain limitations* or *PAUL WOULD BE GUILTY OF CONTRADICTING PAUL!* The apostle Paul *did place certain limitations* on the woman being authorized to speak and teach in an assembly containing men. Thus, *PAUL DID NOT CONTRADICT PAUL!*

His subsequent reference to women asking questions in a Bible class situation is comparing apples

to oranges. A woman asking a question in a Bible class is not equal to a woman standing before a gender-mixed audience and translating the preacher's words.

But for argument's sake, let us assume for a moment the two situations are exactly alike. Let us assume we are comparing apples with apples. Would this prove that my brother's contention is right? Of course not! It would prove I was allowing a thing on one occasion and disallowing something equal to it on another occasion. However, it would NOT prove that a woman can translate in a public worship service.

### FOLLOWING THIS CONSTITUENT ELEMENT ARGUMENT TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

The implications of the argumentation set forth by these brethren have certain implications that need to be considered. Let us notice some of them.

The basic argument is that if a *total situation* (composite) is authorized, then every *component part* of that composite is likewise authorized. But any inspired restrictions or limitations placed on the composite action do not apply to the component parts when they are taken out from under that specific composite and applied to another situation.

In Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, we are confronted with the term *spiritual songs*. Relative to the word translated *song*, Vine says, "in Ephe 5:19 and Colo 3:16 the adjective "spiritual" is added, because the word in itself is generic and might be used of songs anything but spiritual."<sup>19</sup> Vincent adds "a *song* [ode] is the general term for a song of any kind."<sup>20</sup>

Now, what are the component parts of the term *spiritual songs*? Why, a "song" (*ode*) is at least one component part of the composite. Since the restrictions placed on the *total situation* are not applicable to the component parts when used in a different situation (based on our brother's argumentation), and since she has the authority to speak (non-singing) and the authority to use *songs* (very general; the word could be used to describe "obscene" songs), thus the woman translator could speak non-spiritual (even obscene)

songs before a gender-mixed assembly. Who will accept this?

My reviewer would answer, "Other passages would prohibit *obscene* songs." This is true. But by following his *hermeneutic* to its logical conclusion, we would have inspiration contradicting inspiration - specifying one thing in one place and countermanding that specification in another passage.

There is another thought we must consider. A component part of *singing* is air (from the lungs) passing over the vocal cords. Since the component parts are (evidently) unfettered by any restrictions placed on the composite action, then the woman translator could stand before a gender-mixed assembly and *hum*.

Dear brethren, according to the implications of this argument, we are authorized to take the component parts of any imperative, remove them from the specific composite action, thus removing them

from any of the limitations placed on the composite action, and do basically what we want to do. The only constraint would be one's imagination. Are we, as a people, willing to accept this?

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> David Brown, "The Constituent Parts Argument and Female Translators" in *Contending for the Faith*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, February, 1996, pp.2-13.

<sup>2</sup> Bob Berard, "New" Hermeneutic and Other Efforts Fail to Support Man-made Law Against the Female Translator," in *Contending for the Faith*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, February, 1997, pp.12-16.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>6</sup> Tom L. Bright, "The Constituent Parts Argument and Female Translators," in *Seek The Old Paths*, Vol. 7, No. 5, May 1996, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, pp.14-15.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, p.15

<sup>17</sup> Bright, "The Constituent Parts Argument and Female Translators," p.3

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> W. E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Co., n.d.), p.1073.

<sup>20</sup> Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, Vol. III, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerd-

## WE APPLAUD RONNIE CROCKER

I recently had the opportunity to speak from the pulpit of the Donelson church of Christ in Nashville. Donelson is this year's host of Jubilee. This great and terrible event (Jubilee '97) offers a massive (10,000 souls) platform for some of the most influential and infamous false preachers in our brotherhood.

My purpose for visiting the Donelson church was to attend the 24th Annual National Prison/Jail Workshop. They hosted this event on June 25-28. I, being an ex-offender, was given the opportunity to speak to those assembled. This occasion was both video and audio taped. Acts 20:28-31 was the text I used. I marked erring brethren Lucado, Shelly, Cope and other Jubilee speakers as "grievous wolves." I compared them to the very rapists and murderers we reach out to in our prison ministries. I explained how, on a spiritual level, these men are assaulting the bride of Christ, stripping her of her true identity and setting about to clothe her in the error of denominationalism. I pleaded with the Donelson eldership to "watch" and "remember" and protect

the precious church which Jesus "purchased with His own blood."

When I concluded my 13 minutes in Donelson's pulpit, I sat down in anticipation of the response. Ron Goodman, the organizer of the prison workshop and member of this congregation, then took several minutes to refute my remarks.

When the cession ended, I was immediately surrounded by brethren. Some approached me in anger, some in agreement! Because of all the confusion, I am not presently clear on all the things that were said to me. One of the Donelson elders was among the first to meet me. He rebuked me. He then went on to defend Jubilee '97 and Max Lucado. Our discussion ended after several minutes. He then gave me a 12 page paper that the Oak Hills church of Christ uses to explain their position on baptism. Max is the preacher at Oak Hills. I am sure that he gave me this article to defend Lucado. However, I think it reveals how very far he and the Oak Hills church have strayed from God's word and way. Let me know if you would like a copy of this article.

I believe a Baptist would accept its position on baptism.

As I said, there were also those who were extremely pleased with what I did. I will never forget the tear filled eyes and comments of the older couple who hugged me in gratitude! All have not "bowed the knee" to liberalism!

Then, just as things began to calm down, Richard VanDyke, the director of Jubilee '97, introduced himself to me. We then spent the next half hour in "no small dissension and disputation!" He then rebuked me for violating Matthew 18:15-17, in not personally approaching these individuals before marking them publicly. Of course, I disagreed with his applying this passage to those who publicly teach false doctrine. We then discussed some specifics about Lucado, Shelly and Woodruff. The most peculiar thing that I learned is that Richard VanDyke disagrees with the erring doctrinal positions of Lucado and Shelly. VanDyke said he does not believe that there are Christians in the Baptist church. He also, unlike Lucado and other Jubilee speakers,

## THE 24TH ANNUAL NATIONAL PRISON/JAIL WORSHIP HOSTED BY THE DONELSON CHURCH OF CHRIST JUNE 25-28, 1997

Dear brethren,

This year's workshop had several high-points! Many of the presentations were both inspiring and informative. Visiting with "fellowlabourers" was also very enjoyable.

However, the presence of Joe Garman (a member of the Independent Christian Church) as a speaker, shipwrecked this year's workshop!! As most of us know, the Christian Church is a denomination *"that hath not God"* (II John 9). They are not a part of our brotherhood. We can not count them as "fellowlabourers!" Joe Garman and the Christian Church need to repent for their use of instrumental music in their worship services. They also need to stop fellowshiping the Baptists and other denominations.

**The intent of this letter is two-fold:** Its first purpose is to ask for the public repentance of Ron

Goodman. Mr. Garman (a member of the Christian Church denomination) was brother Goodman's choice as a speaker on this year's workshop. Ron publicly defended Garman's presence, in response to my public protest. This session (The Payoff: Forum of Ex-Offenders – 4:05-4:55 pm – Friday June 27th) was both audio and video taped. Please obtain a copy, and listen to Ron's comments. In all of this, Ron Goodman sinned against God, against the brotherhood, and against each of us who attended the workshop. It is my prayer that he will repent (have a change of mind, brought about by godly sorrow, which results in a change of behavior).

Secondly, I want to encourage and even challenge you to please speak out!!! The workshop is being dragged down into liberalism and even denominationalism. I hope your concern will compel you to

aggressively involve yourself in this matter. Your influence can stop it from drifting further into error. A letter to Ron Goodman and company, expressing your objections, would be one positive step (*"...who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* Esther 4:14)!!

Please know that it is my hope and prayer that the workshop will be guided back onto its original course. I look forward to hearing your reply to this letter. Even if you disagree, I would like to hear from you. This matter is worthy of our attention.

In Christian concern,  
*Ronnie Crocker,*  
*Project Rescue Prison Ministry,*  
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believes that people are baptized into Christ as opposed to praying their way into Christ (sinners prayer). However, he did not see the harm of their speaking at Jubilee '97.

Another point I addressed while in Donelson's pulpit involved Joe Garman, a member of the Independent Christian Church denomination. I expressed my opposition to his speaking at the prison/jail workshop. In his talk, Joe included us in a list of denominations. I will discuss this situation in a paper I plan to send to those who attended the workshop.

My reason for writing this article is to make others aware of this event. Whenever the opportunity arises, we must try to reach out to our erring brethren with love...love for souls...and love for truth! Before my God, I believe with all of my heart that this was my motive as I rebuked the Donelson church of Christ from her own pulpit.

In Christian love,  
*Ronnie Crocker*

*From the Internet...*

## JUBILEE COMMENTS ERASED

**T**here are 13 minutes missing on the tape!! The Donelson church of Christ used Gaylor MultiMedia Inc. to audio tape the national prison workshop which they hosted on June 25-28. I was given an opportunity to speak at 4pm on the 28th. I spoke about my conversion. I also made some negative statements about Jubilee '97. However, my comments were erased from the tape.

I spoke to David Gaylor, the owner of this company, and he gave me his reason for erasing what I said. He said, "I erased it because I did not agree with what you said."

We all remember a past national event when a section of audio tape was erased. A president was impeached and several went to jail for obstruction of justice!!! I am not saying that brother Gaylor should begin a prison ministry from the inside. However, I do believe that he is guilty of obstruction of truth!!!

Please forward this message far and wide. Brethren need to know that Gaylor MultiMedia Inc. cannot be trusted to tape the whole truth. Gaylor is based in Nashville, TN.

Disappointed. – *Ronnie Crocker*

# MAILBAG



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

NOTE: Our lectureship theme next year will be **THE HOME**. The dates will be July 26-30, 1998.

"Thanks for sending **Seek The Old Paths**. I appreciate it very much" ...*Hal Hosford, Murray, KY*. "I have heard about your recent issue dated Feb/97 concerning questions that should be asked brethren. I agree that we should ask questions and would like a copy of the bulletin if you have any left" ...*Andy Alexander, Shepherdsville, KY*. "I would like to be added to your mailing list. I have seen a few copies of your paper in the past and am very interested in receiving your paper regularly. Keep up the good work of standing up for the truth and against the wrong!" ...*Drew Chapados, Ft. Gratiot, MI*. "Continue your good work in publishing **Seek The Old Paths** and identifying the error being taught and the teachers of it. The February issue was very informative to me. I would like three or four copies of it" ...*Myron Morris, Elba, AL*. "Enclosed is our check for \$25 to help pay cost of printing and mailing. Your papers are excellent and well written. You choose your writers carefully and that is so important. Every time I get one of your papers I have the urge to write you but of course I don't. I just want you to know that if your congregation did nothing but increase its mailing list every month it would be doing the brotherhood a great service. Garland, I want to encourage you to keep up the good work you are doing. I wish we could be there for your lectureship in July but don't see it this year. Maybe next, Lord willing. Anyway, you are at your best in reaching so many people via the printed word, so let no man discourage you!" ...*Nashville, TN*. "Keep up the good work. A very good publication" ...*Melvin Carlock, Nesbit, MS*. "God bless you always in your service to contend for the faith" ...*James Harold Quitorino, San Francisco, CA*. "It was good to receive the April issue of **Seek The Old Paths** as always, and then to note that one of my articles was included was quite an honor. Continue the great work that you do through the pages of **S.T.O.P.**" ...*Jesse Whillock, Ardmore, OK*. "Thank you for sending **Seek The Old Paths** each month. Kent Bailey's "How Long Halt Thou Between Two Opinions" was very inspiring. Keep up the good work" ...*Gene Dillman, Mitchell, IN*. "Please add my name to your mailing list. It sure doesn't look like "garbage" to me (March 1997 issue). Ector Watson sent me a copy of the paper. If he gets it, it's good for me! Thank you very much" ...*Neal Michael, Springfield, CO*. "We appreciate your work so much" ...*Steven Elliott, Warren, AR*. "Our son gave us some old 1994 **S.T.O.P.** papers we've enjoyed very much. The truth of the Gospel is so clearly explained. The April/94 issue on a "Multitude of Questions Answered" is particularly helpful in helping us talk with our denominational relatives" ...*Howard Stark, Kissimmee, FL*. "I share the concern you evidently have about the extremes to which some have gone" ...*Barney Keith, Pleasant Grove, AL*. "Thanks, we enjoy and appreciate your work for the Lord" ...*Jimmy Young, Jonesboro, AR*. "We enjoy **Seek The Old Paths** very much" ...*Charles Burns, Sparta, TN*. "Please remove my name from your mailing list" ...*Jim Mendenhall, Vallejo, CA*. "Continue to speak God's Word boldly that all might hear the truth" ...*Wayne Meeker, Kenton, OH*. "Thank you very much. Keep up the great work on the paper" ...*John M. Brown, Flatwoods, KY*. "Thank you for recently adding my name to the mailing list for **Seek The Old Paths**. My sister-in-law in Atlanta once sent me a few of them to read, and I enjoyed them so much that I wanted to receive issues regularly. It's good to read the words of brethren who stand up for the truth, proclaim the word of God boldly, and confront issues which truly need confronting in the church today! As a student at ACU, I can appreciate this need! If only more brethren would "ask for the old paths" and pursue so zealously today the truth found in the scriptures. Thanks again for your encouragement and efforts through **Seek The Old Paths**" ...*Chuck Pearson, Abilene, TX*. "Cancel **S.T.O.P.** Divisive drive!" ...*Jean Gutierrez, Tucson, AZ*. "I received the bound 1996 **S.T.O.P.**, what a treat. Yes, I want a copy of 1995. I had never seen a copy of **Seek The Old Paths**. I was just handed your address. Thanks to a friend. I am almost 81 years young. I love the truth. I obeyed the Gospel 58 years ago. Keep up the good work" ...*Helen Robertson, Arkansas City, KS*. (NOTE: the 1995 bound volume is no longer available. However, the '96 bound volume is \$5 postage paid). "We always look forward to getting **Seek The Old Paths**. We must keep the true church pure and contend for the faith or we will be lost, taking many with us. This comes about by older mature preachers that have strayed from the faith and going after the young to promote their false doctrine.

In other words, be popular and go for "popularity" - bringing those in that want to be entertained. This is due to lack of knowledge. We should be warning others of the dangers of falling away. This includes our Christian colleges as well. We appreciate all the information on false doctrine of Larry West and others. Our prayers are with you to keep up the good work" ...*OK*.



"I certainly have enjoyed your web site. Great sermons! ...*Mac Brooks, Vista, CA*. "I enjoy your Web pages; keep up the good work. Also, I enjoy **Seek the Old Paths** which I receive regularly. May the Lord bless! 1 Tim. 4:16" ...*Larry Roberts*. "I have been receiving your wonderful paper for years. You are doing a great job in bringing to light a portion of the errors devastating Christ's bride. I had never noticed the website address before today. I'm so very thankful for it. I have shared some of the sound websites with the adult class here at Kissimmee, FL. I will surely add yours to that list Sunday morning. With the efforts of people like yourself the brotherhood can be informed, if they choose to do so. Keep up the good work" ...*Jim Beltz, Kissimmee, FL*. "I am pleased to read about the East Corinth Church and the way you present your site. I hope more people seek and find your message. I enjoy the one issue of **Seek The Old Paths** I found last year and would like to receive new issues of the magazine. Keep fighting the good fight" ...*Rick Johnson, Edmond, OK*. "I appreciate what you are doing. It is great to see and know brethren and congregations who will stand for what is right. I'm a 23-year old male originally from Hendersonville, TN, now residing outside Gainesboro, TN, where my wife and I attend the Zion Church of Christ. There are still young people like us out there who are more interested in the truth than in seeing how many people we can pack into a building in Nashville. Keep up the good work, and remember that not only many people are on your side, but more importantly that God is" ...*Gainesboro, TN*.

**Seek The Old Paths** is a monthly publication of the East Corinth Church of Christ and is under the oversight of its elders. It is mailed FREE upon request. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

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