

# **TOXIC CHRISTIANITY**

## **THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST/BOSTON MOVEMENT CULT**

**BY MR. X (A FORMER MEMBER AND LEADER)  
EDITED BY: CHRIS LEE for REVEAL.org**

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## Introduction

# TOXIC CHRISTIANITY: THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Introduction to the 1994 Edition by Mr. X.

“God has laid upon man the duty of being free, of safeguarding freedom of spirit, no matter how difficult that may be, or how much sacrifice and suffering it may require.” —*Freedom and Slavery*, Nikolai A. Berdyaev

Our world is becoming more aware of the dangers posed by its toxins. Often unnoticed until calamity or damage ensue, the damage caused by toxic pollution is insidious, threatening generations to come as well as our own. Pollution in our environment today is being addressed due to the heightened awareness of a public who has only of late come to learn the extent of environmental degradation.

In the religious world, the presence of any toxic substance must be initially viewed as somewhat of a contradiction. Since our expectations in religious endeavor generally are for the best of intent and practice, we should expect no harmful “fallout,” no toxic “run-off” to damage the lives of adherents or their families. Particularly in the case of Christianity, whose founder was known for his pacifism, love, and acceptance, there should be no need for concern with regard to any toxic “environmental impact.”

The International Churches of Christ/Boston Movement presents us with a completely different picture. Amid internal claims of glowing success and wonderful changes brought to the lives of its members, a small but ever-growing band of voices are offering a different story. Voices recounting pain, horror, mental and emotional anguish, and savage brutality—all done in the name of Jesus—are starting to speak out, and are starting to be heard. It is to those voices that I wish to add these following words.

The International Churches of Christ is one of the most difficult organizations to adequately describe.

Having been a member from 1976 to 1991, it should be a rather simple matter to detail, define, and describe the significant aspects of this group. Labels are unwieldy and easily misunderstood; the field of cultic studies has already suffered too much from a lack of uniform terminology regarding cults, their behaviors and ideologies. Added to this scholarly ambiguity is the rather sensationalist and dehumanized portrayal by the media of cults like the People's Temple/Jonestown or the Branch Davidian/David Koresh organizations. There are other so-called “experts” in the field who regard any or all religious affiliation with suspicion. Is it brainwashing, or hogwash? When attempting to assess the nature and the impact of the ICC in this particular culture, the lack of clarity and ambiguity is altogether evident and daunting.

It is into this matrix I offer this work, a product of the research of many individuals over a twenty-year period, interpreted through the experiences of one of the more senior leaders to have ever left the ICC. It has been three years since I left the ICC, and since that time I have been fortunate to study the ICC at length, to help hundreds of individuals leave the organization, and to ponder what lies ahead in both its future and my own. I have come to understand in even-greater detail the dangers posed by this organization, and offer this work as an attempt to help others see those dangers as well. Whether a member of the ICC, a parent or loved one of an ICC member, a fellow scholar or counselor, or an interested layperson, it is my hope that these words assist, inform, persuade, and clearly delineate the salient aspects of the ICC.

This work is arranged chronologically, with reports covering the origins of the ICC comprising the first chapter. Although the articles were written decades ago, they provide a framework for understanding the seeds from which the present toxic fruit of the ICC sprang. Some of the articles are analytical, others are first-person in nature; this mix is a deliberate attempt to depict both the objective and subjective impact of the organization. I believe that the present-day leaders of the ICC have not dispassionately assessed even their most recent history, and so are caught in a cyclical and destructive pattern of repetition. Having been victims themselves of spiritual abuse and coercion during their earlier days, they in turn have become the victimizers of others in the present-day ICC.

The second chapter contains articles addressing the organization from its reincarnation in Boston, Massachusetts in 1979 until the present. The third chapter contains my own analysis of the organization, where I attempt to clarify, in a format that is intentionally conversational and informal, the significant problems of the ICC. Following this chapter are further articles and charts, a helpful study guide, and a set of verbatim transcripts of key ICC speeches, giving the reader a clear picture of some of the “inner doctrines” known only to ICC members.

As the ICC is continually changing and evolving (or devolving), it has necessitated the format of this book to be a spiral-bound notebook. Material can be easily added and updated as significant events occur or as other analysis is published, both within and without the ICC’s borders. As such, each chapter’s title page contains a current listing of its contents, and each chapter is internally paginated for ease of use. Having struggled with various formats (books, video and audio tapes, etc.), it is my belief that this format will allow the most current and accurate information to be assembled in as “user-friendly” a manner as possible. This format also allows a significant cost savings as well.

I wish at the outset to thank so many who assisted in the preparation of this material: the writers of the cited articles in the first two chapters, for graciously allowing their works to be assembled in this psychological/sociological does one arrive at a more complete picture of the ICC. With these three lenses at the ready, let us proceed.

collection; the ex-members, whose insights and experiences have also contributed to my own understanding in ways that words cannot adequately convey. I also wish to thank Jan Towell for editing portions of the text of this work, though I alone am responsible for its final form and any errors. Finally, I wish to thank, commend, and dedicate this work to Dr. Jerry Jones, former ICC elder and evangelist, whom I count it a singular honor to be my friend. Jerry was instrumental in helping me as I considered leaving the ICC, and provided timely advice and counsel in helping keep my family intact when the ICC threatened to separate me from my wife, who at that point in time was still a member of the ICC. As one who has labored long and hard and often unaccompanied in his struggle to preserve religious freedom and biblical integrity, Jerry Jones is to be recognized for his unique contributions to the further understanding of the ICC. I would add that the measure of a man is often seen in his enemies’ criticisms; for his trenchant analysis and unflinching dedication to truth he has earned both the lasting admiration of many, and the angry ridicule of others.

What, then, shall we make of this organization called The International Churches of Christ? Is it best described as a religious movement? A fundamentalist right-wing phenomenon? A destructive religious group? A profoundly misunderstood and persecuted church? A coercive, mind-bending cult? Viewing the ICC through only one of these perspectives creates a distorted picture of the organization. The reason for this work is that I see sociologists and cult experts often glossing over the religious aspects of this group; in turn, I see religious scholars showing little awareness of the profound behavioral and psychological impact that ICC membership can have on both an individual and his/her family.

Only when one comes to view the ICC through three key interpretive lenses—the biblical/doctrinal, the behavioral/ethical, and the psychological/sociological does one arrive at a more complete picture of the ICC. With these three lenses at the ready, let us proceed.

First edition: June, 1994.

## Introduction to the 2006 Edition

“Mr. X” was a long-time Crossroads and Boston Movement/International Churches of Christ member and leader. Mr. X had exposure to the leadership and their methods, as well as was privy to information that was only available to the upper echelon of the leadership of the International Churches of Christ. Since his involvement and departure, a number of personal incidents have necessitated that I remove his proper name and ministries from association of these documents. (Until further notice, please do not inquire as to the identity of this person, or if you do know, please refer to this person as “Mr. X”.) However, his research and work are one of the most comprehensive to date on the International Churches of Christ, following upon the research of Dr. Jerry Jones (*What Does the Boston Movement Teach?* Vols. I-III). *Toxic Christianity* is one of the biggest compilations of several years’ worth of research of financial, psychological, and theological issues, as well as articles written on the ICC. While Mr. X wrote *Toxic Christianity* in 1994 and revised portions of it in 1996, this is one of the greatest pieces of research on the International Churches of Christ done to date.

REVEAL.org has secured rights to reproduce, to photocopy, and to publish this work and I have taken on the liberty of minor edits. I have the pleasure of now making this available for public disclosure.

May 2006

Editor, Chris Lee

Current REVEAL Executive Director (2006)

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# Chapter I

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## Gainesville, Florida 1967-1986: The Crossroads Years

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Gainesville,  
Florida 1967-1986



# THE CROSSROADS YEARS

I was a part of the Crossroads ministry and the Crossroads Movement, from April of 1976 through my leaving the Boston Movement in the fall of 1991. I served on the ministry staff of the Crossroads Church of Christ, and taught in the Crossroads School of ministry located in Gainesville, which trained hundreds of men and women for leadership in Crossroads Movement affiliates throughout the United States. I was also personally mentored (“discipled”) by Chuck Lucas while living in Gainesville, and also served as a campus minister and student leader of the University of Florida student association Campus Advance (a position also held by Kip McKean during his own student days at Crossroads). My evaluation of the Gainesville and Boston ministries is based on the first-hand experiences of observing closely the inner workings of the top echelon leaders of each organization. I also had the opportunity to be personally recruited and trained by Kip McKean while in Boston, so my assessments are, again, not based on second- or third-hand speculation.

In most of the International Churches of Christ (hereinafter referred to by “ICC”) published literature, the origins of the organization are usually traced to Lexington, Massachusetts (indeed, founder Kip McKean often drew the analogy between the founding of the ICC and the American Revolution’s “shot heard ’round the world”). In 1979 Kip McKean moved from Charleston, Illinois to Lexington Massachusetts. He had been recently terminated from the church supporting his work in Illinois, mainly for advocating the practices of “discipleship” and other doctrinal differences with the leaders supporting the Heritage Chapel Church of Christ. By all published reports, the ICC reckons its origins from the Boston area.

Those who have a greater awareness or longer familiarity with this organization, however, date its beginnings far earlier. A small college town in central Florida is regarded by many who have investigated the ICC to be the true location of origin. Beginning in 1967 in Gainesville, Florida, the Crossroads Church of Christ served as the launching pad for what became, initially, “the Crossroads Movement,” and later “the Boston Movement,” the present ICC. Focusing its recruiting of college students at the University of Florida, the Crossroads Movement spread throughout mainstream Churches of Christ (usually churches located near a university or college campus) in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Montana, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, and Virginia from the mid 1970’s through

1986. Many of the present ICC-affiliated local chapters are merely Crossroads-affiliated groups that were taken over or merged with the Boston Movement during the rise of ICC hegemony in the late 1980’s.

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Under the leadership of charismatic evangelist Charles H. (“Chuck”) Lucas, this organization grew increasingly stronger during the 1970’s and 1980’s, until Lucas left the Gainesville ministry. In one sense, the Crossroads and Boston Movements do not represent divergent organizations as much as they are simply a change of leadership from Chuck Lucas in Gainesville to Kip McKean, the ICC’s present “apostle” and undisputed leader, first based in Boston and currently directing the organization from Los Angeles. McKean replaced Lucas as the charismatic leader of the organization, and in many ways was able to implement unchecked the policies and practices that the Lucas’ organization’s internal controls would not allow. In other words, “a better mousetrap” was built in Boston, but the original design could be found in Florida.

The similarities in recruiting tactics, leadership structure and style, as well as the resultant psychological and emotional fallout from the Crossroads Movement, has a frighteningly similar “look and feel” to the present critiques leveled at the ICC. Since Kip McKean was baptized in 1972 at Crossroads, there should be no surprise in the similarity both of methodology and its resultant effects.

What is surprising to this author is the severity of denial with which the present ICC leadership is maintaining about a possible Gainesville-Boston relationship. A recent letter by ICC leader Roger Lamb asserted “Chuck Lucas is not and has not been a part of a congregation directly affiliated with the

Boston movement.” Lamb’s “directly affiliated” is a clever attempt to deny what to others is obvious—Chuck Lucas was the founder, patron saint, and hero to Kip McKean and many present-day leaders of the ICC. Perhaps McKean’s own words best describe the extent of this “affiliation” (see inset below).

Given the fact that many of the first- and second-tier leadership of the present ICC were initially recruited and trained in their Crossroads Movement days, this current and widespread denial by the ICC of any Gainesville-Boston relationship is even more puzzling. I refer the reader to my letter of resignation from the editorship of *Discipleship Magazine* (now entitled *Upside Down*, and initially published in Gainesville at the Crossroads Ministry), the major media vehicle for the present ICC. That letter is included in Chapter 3 of this work. I resigned from *Discipleship Magazine* for, among other reasons, this pattern of deception and dishonesty in not clearly owning up to the “Crossroads Connection.”

March 28, 1986

To the Elders, Evangelists, Deacons and all the members of the Crossroads Church of Christ:

. . . the Lord put it on my heart to write this letter of appreciation to all of you. In a very real way, I owe you my ministry, my marriage, and my very soul. I thank God for you by name every day because of your influence . . . I want you to realize that you have had a profound effect on numerous churches—not only by the sending out of trained evangelists, but through the many members who have moved to help in several of the ministries you have influenced. In Boston, we have so many former members of Crossroads, and we treasure each of these individuals, because they have been so well equipped for the ministry! . . . Your efforts in Gainesville continue to live on in Atlanta, Columbia, San Diego, Berkeley, Boston and many other places."

Your Brother and Son in the Faith,[signed]  
Kip McKean

It appears that the present ICC leadership is embarrassed to admit its Gainesville origins, and for those who are intimately aware of the goings-on in Gainesville, their reluctance is easily understood. In 1986 Chuck Lucas was abruptly terminated from the Crossroads Church of Christ for “recurring sins in his life.” I was serving on the ministry staff that assisted

in covering up the real reason for his termination—sexual perversion and homosexual activity with younger men in his ministry. Irrefutable evidence was presented to the elders of the Crossroads Church clearly depicting a pattern of sexual liberties taken by Lucas over an extended period of time. Although it is painful to recall, I also remembered one particular evening in Arizona when Lucas approached me personally and initiated a sexual encounter, an overture which I refused. I initially chalked up my fear, timidity, and rejection of his overtures to my “not being able to handle the intensity of his emotional bond,” but in retrospect I was glad I did not succumb to his sexual advances.

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**From 1987 until my departure in 1991, I saw, led, and otherwise participated in an organization whose practices, doctrines, and tactics were essentially the same as the Gainesville-led Crossroads Movement.**

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It was difficult to understand why the sordid details of Lucas’ termination were not made public to the Crossroads congregation, but it was decided (by a group of individuals who did not consult with me) that the details would be covered up “for the good of the Movement.” To this day there are many in the former Crossroads Church or in ICC organizations who do not know the full scope of the lewdness and corruption that existed in the Crossroads organization. Ironically, the original elders of the Crossroads Church were themselves criticized for making the decision to terminate Lucas! As most Crossroads members did not know the real reasons why he was fired, they could not imagine Lucas committing so heinous a series of acts that would justify his termination.

Of even greater damage was the “spin control” Lucas himself engaged in when he described his termination. In one personal conversation he described his being fired as a “sabbatical” and would not go into any specifics about his wrongdoing. Although a vaguely-worded statement came out about a year later from Lucas to the effect that “if I’ve hurt anyone, I’m sorry,” he has yet to apologize to the hundreds and thousands of Crossroads members he lied to and deceived. And as if this sad story were not pathetic enough, Lucas himself is now plying his talents and experience in “marriage and

family counseling” on the payroll of the State of Georgia mental health system.

Also difficult to account for is the swiftness in which Lucas, upon his termination from Crossroads, was financially recompensed by, of all places, the Boston Church of Christ, headed at that time by Kip McKean. In a later section of this work I detail my attempts to communicate the details of Lucas’ firing to Lucas’ grown daughter (who had up to that time been kept uninformed by her family and McKean), and how that attempt was personally quashed by Kip McKean. I have no first-hand evidence of a Lucas-McKean tryst, but the resultant cover-up and denials by the present ICC organization about their origins raises more questions with each new probe into this rather sordid history.

Whatever the motivation, Lucas’ children were either hired or continued on the Boston movement’s payroll, his wife continued to speak at the Boston organization’s annual seminars, and the details of Lucas’ life were effectively covered up throughout the Boston Movement organization. It is my firm belief that if the true nature of the corruption that existed at Crossroads were ever truly known by the members of both the former Crossroads Movement and the then-current Boston Movement membership, the necessary checks-and-balances on leadership corruption and abuse of power may have been put into place in the ICC, checks and balances which would have made it impossible for Kip McKean to amass an organization that is accountable to only him and no other outside regulatory body.

I cannot begin to describe my shock and ever-growing revulsion upon moving to Boston, Massachusetts, and serving on the ministry staff of the Boston Church of Christ led by Kip McKean. From 1987 until my departure in 1991, I saw, led, and otherwise participated in an organization whose practices, doctrines, and tactics were essentially the same as the Gainesville-led Crossroads Movement. I had hoped that the Boston organization, of all groups, would have learned the brutal lessons of authoritarian, cult-like behavior and exclusivity, and that the hypocrisy that dominated the lives of the upper-echelon leaders of the Crossroads Movement would have been studiously avoided. Quite the contrary—it seems that the old adage that “those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them” rings true in the case of the Boston Movement and the present ICC.

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The ICC represents nothing more, to my mind and to many who are familiar with both organizations, than the natural development and evolution, on a scale far greater and with a more ruthless efficiency, of the practices and methodologies of the Crossroads Movement. For that reason, it is important to study the precursor to the ICC to learn the sources of its present problems.

The following articles are culled from the hundreds of magazine, newspaper and other media coverage of the Gainesville ministry. Several articles are from student newspapers, both secular and in one case a Church-of-Christ sponsored university, and reflect in various fashions the impact of the “Crossroaders” on the college campuses of their day. It is an impact that is frighteningly similar to that of the present-day child of Crossroads, the International Churches of Christ.



Florida Alligator [Gainesville, Florida], Friday, January 12, 1979

## **Crossroads Church ‘Rapes the Human Mind’**

Stacy Cole 4LS

Editor: It makes me feel frustrated to see all the letters, lashing out at the Crossroads church, because criticism only makes the church stronger. They believe that criticism of their church is the work of the devil and they thrive on it. I know. I was there. I look back on my two-month membership in Crossroads five years ago, as a foolish, stubborn time, but saw plenty of what goes on there and I feel I must speak up.

Everyone knows that Crossroads is a church that preys on lonely, confused people. Their doctrine is equally confused and circular and what they can’t answer with their Phillips Bible quotes, they answer by leaning heavily on faith. It is difficult to refute their arguments because of this merry-go-round doctrine.

Crossroads restricts its members by taking up all of their time and not letting them be exposed to the sinful real world. Time bonds the members together, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday night and Sunday morning are services. Not to mention numerous soul talks, Bible classes, prayer meetings and other non-coed activities. A member has no time to doubt. Crossroads is run by the “Christian things to do.” This is actually totalitarian law. There are stringent dress codes, rules regarding dating, only double dating, so no one is tempted, and even rules about the kind of car to drive. And on and on.

Recent letters to the editor have been concerned with soul talks. Every member is expected to bring someone to these sessions. The members of the church who recruit the most sinners to the church are considered to be the strongest brothers and sisters. Before the soul talks, the members meet privately to discuss the visitors and how far along they are on the path to be baptized. The members plan their seduction, deciding who will visit the potential member, who will call and invite her to church and all this is even written down. They want your money, too. Every Sunday I watched members shell out half their paychecks to the church after a tear-jerking, bleeding-heart Chuck Lucas sermon. And Crossroads is sexist. Women have no position or leadership, except over other women. They believe that the men are completely, innately superior.

Crossroads completely rapes the human mind, and as one of their victims, I am speaking out in hope that other ex-members will come forward with their opinions. Believe me, I am not proud at all to have fallen into their clutches—it makes me sick just to remember.



Gainesville Sun [Gainesville, Florida], Saturday, February 17, 1979

## Crossroads: Its Dramatic Growth Is Accompanied by Reputation of Aggressiveness, Mind Control

by Bob Arndorfer, Sun Staff Writer

In an age of stable or at best undramatic gains in church membership and attendance, Crossroads Church of Christ has accumulated an enviable record. In 1975, two years after the present facilities were built near the University of Florida law school, the church reached its capacity and was forced to expand. Today, less than four years since that expansion which doubled its capacity, the church is again too small and a search is on for a new site which will eventually accommodate 10 times its current 1,000-

member congregation. But along with that growth a reputation has developed.

Born largely of the evangelistic fervor and uncommon religious zeal of its members, that reputation has gained for Crossroads a certain degree of notoriety in Gainesville. From the dormitories on the UF campus to the suburban developments which line the city, the word has spread of a “spiritual concentration camp” which fosters hate and disrespect of other religions, encourages alienation of families, discourages independent thought, has an unhealthy control over the lives of its members and uses excessive pressure in recruiting new members. And the reputation has included references to “cultism,” admittedly more often since Guyana than before.

Crossroads leaders and members dismiss the charges out of hand. “I just can’t believe the distorted point of view that you’ve gotten. It just amazes me,” said Chuck Lucas, the 40-year-old minister of Crossroads. (An interview with Lucas appears below.)

“Do you think I would be involved in anything like that if that were true?” asked Richard Whitehead, a Crossroads elder and charter member of the 14th Street Church of Christ, the predecessor of Crossroads which was established in 1950.

Whitehead, former dean of admissions and registrar at the UF, where he retired after 42 years, said he even retired five years early to devote more time to the work of the church.

“I received more pressurings on becoming a fraternity pledge at the University of Nebraska than I’ve ever received at this church,” said church member Doug Johnson, 31, a first-year UF dental student. The criticism comes from students and others who say they have felt pressured into attending a service or a “soul talk,” a weekly informal session held at the church, in dorms and elsewhere. It comes from ministers and counselors who say they have seen the psychological damage caused to some individuals from an unpleasant experience at Crossroads. And it comes from former members. Lydia Collins, 23, and her boyfriend had been dating for three years back in 1974 and had even talked of marriage. He became involved in Crossroads and their relationship cooled. After his baptism, she said, they never dated again. “I learned from one of his friends at Crossroads that he was told not to go out with me any more,” she said. Fearing losing him, Collins, a Catholic, also got involved in the church and after a couple of weeks, was baptized by her boyfriend. Almost immediately, though, she had misgivings and the next day left the church—for the first time. “I felt an overabundance of guilt because of my religious background,” she said.

Two days later, she said, a member called her on the phone and asked why she hadn't been to services. When told that she didn't plan to go back, Collins said, "He said, 'You spit in Christ's face. You recrucified my Lord and you've got a one way ticket to hell.'"

She spent the next year discussing her feelings with priests at her church in Williston and in Gainesville, with nuns, her parents and others. She felt drawn to Church of Christ doctrine, she said, and decided, a year later, to again become involved with Crossroads, having recently been baptized in the Church of Christ in Williston. "When I came back (to Crossroads) the second time, I gave it my all," she said.

During her four-or five-week membership that second time, she said, she "got the feeling everybody's individuality was gone. I was independent and could see that that was being taken away from the others. I was determined it wasn't going to happen to me. It was very, very frightening. Something has taken over their minds," Collins said. "They function as a body; no one ever does anything alone, never."

She said new converts, who she said are referred to at Crossroads as "baby Christians," are discouraged from associating with each other. She alleges that the alienation of families does exist and is based on Luke 14:26, which says, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

"They encourage you to have a schedule for every hour of the day, seven days a week," she said. "The feeling I had was that anything you wanted to do alone was frowned upon. They felt time alone—going to a movie or just being alone to think—was unproductive."

Collins left Crossroads finally. "I never felt as if I could trust one person in that church," she said. "I left feeling very, very fearful and alone." She eventually got reinolved with her own church and says now that "I realized I was just questioning, and that's all." Currently a nursing student at Santa Fe Community College, Collins plans to enter the convent in September and become a nun.

"One of the good things about Crossroads," she said, "is that the community does stand in support of each other, and that's what the early Christians did. I wish there was more of this in other churches. The wrong thing is that it begins and ends with Crossroads. It should be extended to all people," she said.

"They preach a very wrathful God who's out to get you. But the God I know is a very peaceful and loving God who's working with us, not against us," she said. "And Crossroads confines Christ to the walls of that church. But I found Christ in so many

other places. I found after going through all this that Christ was with me through it all and that I could take Christ with me wherever I went. I know that Christ and I are an overwhelming majority."

Johnson said he didn't think Crossroads confines Christ within its walls. "You don't have to go to Crossroads to have a relationship with God. If you take your relationship with God seriously I think it's important to seek out a church that is striving to live by what the Bible preaches and that can encourage and strengthen you and help bring you up in your relationship to God," he said. After arriving in Gainesville in January 1977, Johnson, who had left his mother's Lutheran Church at age 16 and spurned matters of religion, decided to reinvestigate Christianity and "examine its record." He was soon contacted by a Crossroads member who invited him to an informal Bible study. "I said, sure, that's just what I'm looking for." Then he began studying the Bible on his own and started attending services. "My interest was cultivated by what I found there—the (congregation's) size, the singing, the fellowship after the service. The preaching was straightforward; it confronted the issues of Christianity. It got down to the meat of the subject; it wasn't flowery. That really appealed to me," he said.

"I was very much affected by the people's individuality, their warmth," he said. He was involved with the church for about six weeks before deciding to be baptized. Up to that point, he said, he hadn't heard of the church's reputation. But before his baptism, the person who performed the ceremony told him he felt he should know about it before being baptized.

About the relationship of children with their parents, he said, "I don't think that conflict happens very often. My parents are more happy with me now; they wouldn't like to see me change." Johnson said his relationship with his father, whom he described as an agnostic, "has never been better." When he visits his parents in Clearwater, he said, "I try to influence them to read the Bible, to think about spiritual things. But it's not all I do on visits. But as a Christian I hope to help them seek out the things I've found for myself."

On the alleged pressure to keep members from leaving, he said, "It's a painful thing to see anyone fall away from their faith. If one of my roommates (he lives with four other Crossroads members) decided to leave, my interest in him is finding what's wrong with his life. I think it would be a disservice to him to back off and say I don't want to become involved." When told of incidents where several members allegedly banded together to confront someone who had left, he cited Matthew 18:15-17. In the passage, Jesus tells his disciples that if your

brother trespasses against you, go and tell him his fault alone. But if he won't listen to you, then you're to take one or two or more witnesses to speak with him.

Johnson said members follow that advice but added, "There are no cornerings of individuals to try to break them down." He is also involved in evangelism, "because of my own experience. I'm interested in bringing others to Christ. I try to encourage as much as I can, but there's a point where you know the person isn't interested." At that point, he said, he ends his efforts. He said the time he spends with the church hasn't hurt his studies. "It gives me enough time to do the things I need in school."

He said Crossroads "meets my needs in a tremendous way. I have a great deal of respect for the church and the individuals here."

Other members agree. Said Lois Schmitt, a 32-year-old mother and lawyer, "I didn't want to tell anyone at first that I was going to Crossroads because I thought they'd be turned off. But later I realized this was a church that had genuine zeal, true love and was striving to live the life of Christians." John L.

Dampier, a long-time Gainesville pharmacist, said that while his commitment is to Jesus Christ and not Crossroads, he has found there a "dynamic church that is moving" and people who really love one another. "And it's not a fakey kind of thing," he said. One of the most pervasive complaints against Crossroads is the method in which its members evangelize. The methods they use in "sharing their faith" have been variously described as harassing, antagonistic and overly aggressive. Lucas said members are "very committed, very enthusiastic" and with "the desire to share that faith with other people are going to be very persistent." He denied, though, that they harass or use excessive pressure.

University officials, familiar with some of the complaints made by students, minimize their number. "Because of their reputation of aggressiveness, they might have irritated some people," said Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Carl A. Sandeen. "In the residence halls, where there are 6,000 single students, more people might get upset. There are occasional complaints by dorm residents of church members being overly aggressive. But I've seen little evidence that Crossroaders are harassing people. In the minds of some students, I suppose, it is," Sandeen said.

"The problem isn't just Crossroads," said Dr. Thomas Goodale, UF dean of Student Affairs. "We've had experiences with a number of students who've had religious experiences that didn't work for them. We do get some students who have decided to end their relationship with Crossroads and have trouble."

Goodale's office is involved in a "sorting out process," advising students who have questions about their feelings and referring "these few who go overboard" to campus agencies such as the Student Mental Health Unit or the University Counseling Center. One university official involved in student health, who asked not to be identified, said over the years "we have seen several people a quarter" who were upset or otherwise suffered psychologically or emotionally because of their relationship with Crossroads. "The majority of problems are handled with a few counseling sessions," he said.

Said another official, "I don't think we're the first place that runs into the problem. I think it would show up more first with student services, housing or the chaplains of the various student centers."

Members of the Campus Ministry Cooperative, a union of campus religious organizations, declined to discuss publicly their experiences with Crossroads. One member said they want to work with Crossroads and to speak out now would only hinder their efforts. The spokesman said Lucas, who is not a member of the cooperative, has an open invitation to join. The Rev. John Talbird, Episcopal chaplain to the UF, said he, too, would normally not want to comment. "But the reason I'm willing to speak out now is because of Guyana. As bad as some of the personal experiences I've heard about are, I think it's wrong to label Crossroads a cult," he said. "I feel that does them a great disservice. The only thing I fault them for is the peer pressure, the guilt to keep one in the institution and parroting their own theology and philosophy," Talbird said. "One is given the impression that Christ can only be found at Crossroads. Christ is too multidimensional to be confined in one church. They seem to put God in a box and say 'we've got a corner on Christ.' If that is the claim, I think that is the worst sort of Christian heresy. What Crossroads represents is very much a part of church history. It's a very old brand of something that's been going for 2,000 years. But it's a denial of the world and its realities and tends to be an easy, ego-less pietism," Talbird said. Another person, affiliated with the university and who works in a private counseling capacity apart from UF counseling, maintains the link to cultism, and specifically with what happened in Guyana, is real in the case of Crossroads. Because of the confidential nature of his counseling work, he asked that his name not be used. He cited a story in the *New York Times Book Review* about Jim Jones which said, "People came to Jim Jones because he promised to help them fulfill needs and aspirations which we denied in our society, because he offered them ordered intimacy, an end to doubt and thought, a perfect unalloyed way of thinking and being." "I think that says it all regarding Crossroads," he said.

“Generally, Crossroads preaches not love and respect but hate of other people’s religions and their religious beliefs and they divide children from their parents,” he said. “The most insidious thing, probably, is that they teach young people to have no respect for other human beings, often to the point of hate.” He added that one of the most frightening things is how they “chase and harass people who try to exercise their human right to leave that ‘spiritual concentration camp.’” Also frightening, he said, is their opposition to education, putting church activities above all other things, including studies.

Other Church of Christ ministers in Gainesville agreed with a statement issued by the elders and minister of the 39th Avenue Church of Christ which expressed concern about the “negative influence that the Crossroads Church has for the cause of Christ in this community.” And James Yopp of the Northeast Church of Christ echoed the other ministers when he said, “We do not approve of the harassment and pressures they use. The apostles and early disciples simply preached the gospel—they didn’t harass people to accept it . . . If you have to berate somebody to accept the gospel, to overcome them psychologically, then they really haven’t accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Meanwhile Crossroads continues to grow. Whitehead explains its growth (from 244 members in 1970 to 1,019 at the end of 1978) by citing Ephesians 4:12, which calls on the elders and leaders in the church “to prepare God’s people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up. When you implement that verse,” he said, “you really have all the members of the church working in trying to encourage others to hear the message of Christ,” instead of assigning that task to the minister alone. The church also has bought some 140 acres near Fanning Springs for the future development of a retreat center.



Gainesville Sun [Gainesville, Florida], Saturday, February 17, 1979

## Commitment Exists, Pressure Does Not, says Lucas

Chuck Lucas, interviewed by Bob Arndorfer, Sun Staff Writer

Charles H. Lucas, known simply as “Chuck” by his congregation, was born 40 years ago in Mobile, Ala., the son of an itinerant Church of Christ minister. He grew up in Alabama, Florida and Mississippi and graduated in 1961 with a bachelor’s degree in Bible and Religion from Harding College, a school affiliated with the Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark. He worked toward his masters degree in history at Mississippi College, Jackson, while working as youth and educational minister of a church there. After

receiving the degree he went to Miami where he worked as youth minister at the Central Church of Christ. He came to Gainesville in October 1967 to serve as campus minister of the 14th Street Church of Christ, Three years later he became minister of the church, which after moving into new facilities in 1973 was renamed Crossroads. He and his wife, Ann, have two girls, aged 14 and 12, and a 6-year-old son. In an interview with Sun Staff Writer Bob Arndorfer, Lucas responded to criticisms which have been directed at Crossroads and discussed his church’s ministry.

*Q. Yours has been called an antagonistic, overly aggressive approach to recruiting new members, the Crossroads approach. How do you respond to that?*

A. Well, our members are very committed, very enthusiastic and actively involve themselves in sharing their faith. But I certainly don’t believe our members are unkind or pushy or anything of that nature. We stress in our teaching here, in our classes, in the preaching that our members not use any tactics that would be pressuring people or hassling people in any way. But they are eager to share their faith and are actively involved in that.

*Q. A lot of people think, though, that they do use more pressure than they think is necessary.*

A. I think our members, with the kind of commitment they have and the belief, the desire to share that faith with other people, are going to be very persistent, very active in this. But if a person says to us, ‘thank you, I appreciate your interest, but I don’t want to discuss it or I’m not interested in pursuing this’, then that’s all they have to do. And they would be left alone.

*Q. Some people I’ve talked to said, though, that that doesn’t work, that they have tried that and they continue to be approached even after they have expressed no interest.*

A. Well, I really don’t believe that’s true. And I know that it’s not what we advocate and what we communicate with our members.

*Q. So if a person after the first contact says ‘thank you, but no,’ he’ll never hear from a member again, that member again?*

A. Obviously, I can’t answer what anybody would or wouldn’t do. We don’t try to program the lives of all of our members and tell them what to do what not to do and when to do it and when not to do it, and give them detailed instructions about that. We do urge our members to share their faith and when they are told that someone is not interested, then we of course tell them to respect that.

*Q. People also have said Crossroads tends to prey on the young, the lonely, the confused, people without power—those who are vulnerable to the emotional support that members offer potential new converts. Is*

*your missionary effort directed toward these types of people?*

A. No. Our emphasis is not toward any one type of person. We have all kinds of people in this congregation. Every age group, every background. That is easily documented. We're in the business of trying to help people and we don't turn down people that have problems. And we don't reject people just because they have problems or just because they at a very crucial time in their life.

*Q. Have your missionaries found that it might be easier to recruit someone who is less mature than say, someone who isn't in their first quarter on campus?*

A. No. I think that the records show that our converts—and let me make a correction here. We aren't recruiting members; we're sharing our faith. And there's a difference. We're sharing our faith, and hoping through that to win converts to Christ, but we're not trying to recruit members. But our records show we reach seniors, graduate students, freshmen, doctors, law school people—all across the board. So it's a mistaken impression that we only reach one type of person. Now we've reached out to and we've been able to help tremendously a lot of people who have had real problems. Sometimes we aren't able to solve their problems. Sometimes the people who come to us aren't willing to do what it takes to get their problems solved. Just like if they go to the Mental Health Center or anywhere else, obviously there's got to be cooperation on the part of that person or they won't be able to help them.

*Q. Some people have labeled the friendliness that comes across as phony and deceiving and that Crossroads missionaries exhibit a false display of love which ends abruptly if the potential convert says no, or doesn't show any interest.*

A. You see, you have outlined the problem there. If you continue to be friendly and to reach out to that person, then as you have described it, the person considers you to still be pressuring them or hassling them. If you respect their 'no', and the fact that they are no longer interested in talking with you about religion, about their faith, then it can be interpreted as no longer being interested in them. So it really puts you in a bad situation. The people here are genuinely friendly, genuinely loving people, as a whole. And whether they agree or disagree with what we believe, I think the honest, objective person who stayed around long enough to find out would know that the people here are sincere, honest, loving people in what we believe and in what we practice. There's no deceit or fake-ness.

*Q. Could they just be friends on a personal basis and not ever mention the church again? It appears that they reject the person totally.*

A. I don't think that's true. There may be isolated instances where something like that has happened, but I have friends who are not members of the church here. The members of the church at large have friends and social acquaintances that they are close to that are not members of the church. So that's not an accurate presentation, as far as I'm concerned, of what really happens.

*Q. If they do have a friend they've made a contact with and the friend doesn't show any interest after a while, and they do give up on him in terms of trying to get him to come to the church, is that kind of dangerous rejecting this person as a friend considering some of the types of people your members run into—some people who may have only that one friend on campus or in Gainesville?*

A. Well, we never reject the individual. And we don't believe in that, we don't teach that. Our members as a whole, I'm convinced, do not go about things in that way. Now if that person says, 'Look, I'm not interested. I don't want to discuss it any more', then we will respect that. We won't pursue that any further if a person rejects it. But we will not reject that person as an individual.

*Q. Some ministers, including some Church of Christ ministers, have told me that your methods of evangelism are not biblically based. That if someone isn't interested, the Bible says to wipe your feet at their door and move on. Do you think what some people have said, the repeated phone calls, the uninvited visits—what they see as continued pressure to accept your beliefs, do you think that has biblical justification?*

A. I've already covered that. We've gone over this same territory in all these questions. I've already told you that . . .

*Q. You don't think it exists?*

A. Right, and if it does, it's an isolated thing. Now, we will continue to pursue, we will continue to share our faith, we'll continue to reach out, we'll continue to invite, we'll continue to make the contacts until the person rejects it. But, see, many times people will not be really forthright and honest with you. They'll just say, 'Well, no thank you.' But they haven't turned you down. They've just turned down an invitation. So they may get many invitations.

*Q. And until they say, 'no, I'm not interested in the church, period', that's when . . .*

A. Right. If they tell us, 'I'm not interested, I don't want to discuss the Bible, I don't want to discuss religion', then we will not pursue it any further. But as long as they show some interest, or as long as they don't make that kind of response, then we will continue to try to reach out to them.

*Q. You preach that Christ is the answer. Do you also believe that Crossroads Church of Christ is the*

*answer? I ask that that because one Church of Christ minister told me that if a member of another Church of Christ comes here he is re-indoctrinated in the doctrine of the Church of Christ and re-baptised here. If Church of Christ doctrine is Church of Christ doctrine, why would a member who comes from another church have to go through that?*

A. Well, that's absolutely not true. There are plenty of members of this church who are baptized elsewhere and have simply placed their membership with this congregation. And, please, quote me on that. The only thing we require for membership in this congregation, is that a person has been baptized, scripturally baptized, into Christ. It doesn't matter who baptized them, where they were baptized; as long as they were scripturally baptized into Christ, then they are welcome into the membership of this congregation. And that's just an absolutely false statement. Now, if a person has not been scripturally baptized, then of course they must be in order to be considered a member of this congregation. They have to make the decision as to whether or not they have been scripturally baptized.

*Q. If a person accepts the fact that Christ is the answer, but finds he is more comfortable with his Christianity in the Baptist or Catholic or Episcopal or whatever other Christian church, do you believe he'll be saved?*

A. It's not our job to decide who's going to go to heaven and who's not, who's going to be saved and who's not going to be saved. My responsibility is to preach the gospel as I see it and as I believe it. What we're trying to do is simply preach what we believe is right. I don't believe there is a church in this community that is any closer to being simply the New Testament Church than this congregation is. And that's all we're trying to do, get back to the scriptures and to simply be New Testament Christians. I'm going to preach what I believe is the truth; I'm going to preach the Bible and without any malice or ill-will toward other groups who feel differently.

*Q. Do you respect all other beliefs?*

A. What do you mean by respect? I respect their right to exist. I don't agree with all the other beliefs.

*Q. But do you respect them in the sense that they sincerely believe what their doctrines say just as you sincerely believe in your doctrine?*

A. Oh, I believe that many of the religious groups are very sincere. Maybe some aren't, I don't know. But, sincerity is not a basis for truth—you can be sincerely right or you can be sincerely wrong.

*Q. Isn't it true that you can take certain passages from the Bible and prove almost any point you want. Some ministers have told me that to get the true meaning the Bible has on a certain subject, you have*

*to read every word on that subject from Genesis to Revelation and not just choose certain passages which, standing by themselves, would seem to be the last word on it.*

A. Well, I agree. You need to consider everything that's written on any given subject—baptism, or anything else. You need to read all that's written on the subject to get a true understanding. You can take a verse out of context just like you can take one sentence out of an interview out of context. You need to look at everything the Bible says on the subject.

*Q. From the Old and New Testament?*

A. Well, of course, we are not under the old law, we are not under the law of Moses any more. The New Testament is our standard for the church. The church was not established in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is true and accurate, but it is a history leading us to Christ. Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Now the principles, the nature of God is not changed; God is not changed between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The basic principles of the Ten Commandments still exist, but the specifics as far as the church and how the church is to function is given in the New Testament and not in the Old Testament. So when we talk about New Testament Christianity, we're talking about the Christianity that is revealed in the New Testament.

*Q. One of the criticisms of Crossroads is that it encourages alienation of families . . . if parents criticize their kids' involvement in the church. . . are members discouraged from maintaining family contacts if their family isn't totally supportive?*

A. Not at all. We, in fact, encourage just the opposite. We encourage strong family relationships and strong family ties. There have been occasions when parents have virtually disowned their children because of their decision to become a part of the church. And in that case, of course that young person would have to make a decision either to remain with the church and to accept the rejection of their parents or leave the church and maintain their relationship with their family. That doesn't happen very often.

*Q. What about the parents who remain sort of neutral?*

A. If the parents remain neutral, then it really doesn't pose any problem. They can maintain a good relationship with their children . . . Again, you can hear rumors, you can hear isolated instances that have been distorted. But come spring break or Christmas holidays, and I guarantee you where practically every student in this church will be. We have about 450 college students, I guess, and they'll all be at home with their families eating turkey and exchanging gifts and interrelating with the rest of their family just like everybody else.

*Q. No matter what their family's beliefs are?*

A. Right. Unless, as I say, in a few cases, very few, but in a few cases parents have disowned their children.

*Q. One mother I know of has a daughter who is a member and (the mother) lost her husband recently and the daughter told her mother that her father had gone to hell because his beliefs were different from hers as a member of Crossroads. Do you think something like that is the Christian thing to say to a mother?*

A. Well, in the first place, was it really said? Or is that what the mother interpreted it as being? Did the girl say, 'He is going to hell?'

*Q. No, she said that he 'is' in hell, because he had already died.*

A. I would find that very hard to believe that any member of this congregation would say that about anybody. Again, it is not our job to decide who's going to heaven and who's going to hell. That's God's job. It's our job to preach the word and to be faithful to it and not to compromise it.

*Q. You said in a recent Sunday service that no one in the church that day had on a ball and chain, implying that they were there of their own free will. Some people I've talked with would challenge that, saying that Crossroads members are actually the victims of mind control and that you are the person in control. They think the fact that the church can be filled every Sunday isn't necessarily the fact that these people are there of their free will but they're there because they've sort of been programmed into being there.*

A. Well, you could ask them why they're there. They are other places much more than they are here. They are in classes, on the job, out in the community. They are involved in other activities and in other places much more than they are here.

*Q. Is that true? I'm told they've got a rigid schedule they're expected to keep.*

A. Well, this is a very committed congregation. And the members do involve themselves in the activities of the church on a regular basis. But still, the most committed member here in a whole week would not spend any more time in church activities than a football player would during football season.

*Q. So you're saying the members here have plenty of time for themselves?*

A. Of course they do.

*Q. I was told they actually don't.*

A. Why don't you ask some of these people?

*Q. Are your members free to associate with whomever they please?*

A. Of course they are.

*Q. There are no restrictions on people they may date or may not date or be friends with?*

A. No, not at all. That's an individual decision.

*Q. Are chaperones provided for a dating couple?*

(Laughter)

A. If I didn't know you were serious, I would wonder about that. Obviously not.

*Q. I was told they can't go out on their own until they've announced their engagement, that they can't date without another couple, that they can't single date.*

A. There are no rules and regulations as to dating. Period.

*Q. But implied regulations?*

A. No. The couples here have commitments; they've made commitments as far as their moral standards and beliefs. They conduct themselves in their dating relationships in a way that would help and not hinder the commitments they've made in that area. But, there are no dating rules and regulations.

*Q. Do most of the people who date here single date or double date?*

A. Double dating is very commonly practiced here, but not exclusively. But our couples find that it's fun, that it's enjoyable, that it's a very wholesome way to date.

*Q. There appears on the surface to be a uniformity that would suggest that (Crossroads members) are all following a certain standard. Is that true or is that just an illusion?*

A. Well, we think alike on a great many things. We think differently on other things. When it comes to the scripture, we should think alike. There are many other things that don't matter one way or the other whether we think alike or don't think alike. It's a very close-knit fellowship and we do think alike on a great many things, which is not bad.

*Q. Are members encouraged not to live alone? Are they encouraged to have a roommate or live in a certain area that other members live in? Or do you mind where people live?*

A. It doesn't matter to us where people live. Most Christian students, for example, are singles who would prefer to have a Christian roommate who has the same ideals that they have. So most of the young people who are not married prefer to have a roommate who has at least some of the same views that they have. But it's certainly not a requirement.

*Q. The reason I ask was because I was told that people who live alone are encouraged to move in with somebody else, not to live alone.*

A. Well, if they're having problems or difficulties because of living alone—loneliness, or whatever else it might be—someone might encourage them, just as a friend, to find a roommate. But nobody's ever been forced to move in with anybody else or anything of that nature . . . I just can't believe the distorted point of view that you've gotten. It just amazes me . . .

*Q. That's a feeling a lot of people in Gainesville have. Whether it's rumor or however it's spread*

*through the community, a lot of people have heard these things and have this view of the church. Can (your members) be trusted to run their own lives? Can a person who just comes to Sunday services, who is committed to the church, can he just come to a Sunday service . . . without members calling him up and saying, 'Didn't see you at the soul talk or at some of the other activities?'*

A. I believe the Bible teaches that commitment to Christ is a total commitment that involves one's whole life, everything he does, every day of the week. So that involves a lot of different things.

*Q. Can he be committed without attending all the services?*

A. A part of the commitment is being involved in the body of Christ, which is the church. A part of the commitment is being involved with the fellowship with the members of the body of Christ. That's part of one's commitment with the body of Christ. And so that involvement would need to be there for that person to be committed.

*Q. So if they said they are committed, they would be expected to participate in the different activities the church offers?*

A. Right. All the activities that it's possible for them to participate in, yes.

*Q. Why have you refused to join the Campus Ministry Cooperative? I understand you've been invited but have refused.*

A. I've not refused to join. I used to attend the meetings, in fact, for several years when I first came here.

*Q. Even after you were minister?*

A. Right. I can't tell you exactly when I stopped attending. I didn't feel they were productive.

*Q. Is it possible that you could see in the future sometime becoming a member of that group?*

A. Well it's possible, yes . . . I think that, obviously we have some quite different points of view about the scriptures and about what needs to be done and what doesn't need to be done and so forth. And it might make for a very awkward situation.

*Q. You could say, though, that Hillel has quite different views than the Catholic Student Center, yet they're both in the cooperative and conducting joint activities and getting along.*

A. If I thought that it would be productive, I'd be more than happy to. But to this point, I'm not convinced that it is.

*Q. Do you think people are out trying to persecute members of this church?*

A. Oh, I think some people are and some people aren't. We have certainly received persecution, there's no question about it. And yet, we don't operate under a persecution complex. We're going to go ahead and do our job and . . . preach and believe

and practice what we do believe is right, and let the fruit of the ministry speak for itself.

*Q. What is the job of Crossroads Church of Christ?*

A. We're trying to reproduce in this city, in this century, the church that we read about in the New Testament . . . The church that believes God's word, is committed to Jesus Christ, is committed in love to the body of Christ, is concerned about the world and the people around us. We're here to meet people's needs, whatever their needs might be . . . And we do believe that Christ is the answer.



The Optimist [Abilene, Texas], April 13, 1979

## Campus Advance Defectors Speak of Experiences

by Ron Hadfield, Optimist Editor

Campus evangelism groups have come under strong attack recently from prominent figures in Churches of Christ across the nation for alleged tactics that are said to demean people of their religious freedoms.

Two groups in Abilene allegedly were referred to in one of the criticisms (though not by name), including one that has had ties in the past with the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida.

The ACU [Abilene Christian University] campus itself was served for a period of time by a group called Campus Advance, a cluster of students whose leaders were allegedly influenced by and some who were actually trained in the program at Gainesville. The Crossroads congregation has been one of those praised but criticized by brotherhood leaders for particular aspects of its campus evangelism program at the University of Florida.

*The Optimist* recently talked with five ACU students who were involved at some time in their college careers with Campus Advance but left the group as a result of dissatisfaction with its teachings and practices. They asked to remain anonymous, so only fictitious first names have been used. Here are the accounts of their interviews:

DANNY, Age 22—Danny spent one full semester in Campus Advance during his sophomore year.

"I was first attracted to the group because I knew of their meetings in the dorm. Their soul talks were once a week and were pretty well attended. I could see a real interest in what they were doing, and I couldn't see that in any of the other groups on campus," Danny said. "They were always soliciting guys in the dorms to attend a soul talk, so I went."

Danny said the soul talks he attended met on Tuesday night, took place in the room of a member of CA and lasted about an hour each. Approximately 20-25 men met each time. He attended CA's weekly meetings on Friday nights, but it was at the soul talks that Danny

said he first began to feel uncomfortable. "I began to sense some things that were wrong at the soul talks," he said. "I had trouble with the tone of the meetings being so evangelistic. The general theme seemed to be 'straighten up your life,' a sort of put-down thing to everybody who came. They were not about how to improve your life, but how to start it, as if we didn't know anything about how to be Christians even though we were Christians. It was creating a lot of guilt and making people question their commitments. I didn't think it was appropriate for the audience." Danny was assigned a prayer partner, an ACU senior who Danny was required to meet with once a week. "We were supposed to tell each other how our week had gone, and then pray about various things in our lives. One of us was to bring a Bible scripture to discuss. It was a big brother-little brother set-up, which was fine. But all the communication was all one-way. There was a constant critique of my lifestyle, but not his. It was designed to be a learning experience for me, but not for him."

When Danny began to be concerned about what was going on in the group and about some of its teachings, his prayer partner "found it difficult to be honest" with some of Danny's questions. "I finally talked with another guy about it who was in my position. We agreed that we admired the commitment of some of the people, about how they met regularly and about some of the good things they were doing. But we also agreed that some things disturbed us," said Danny.

Danny outlined eight areas of CA teaching that he said he bitterly opposed and questioned: its concept of discipline; motivation by guilt; one's "pride problem"; the group's organization; a "spiritually elite core" of leaders; its concept of the Christian body; attitudes toward the role of women; and a "paranoia about dating." According to Danny, the group taught that "an orderly, daily schedule meant that you were disciplined in the Lord. They encouraged us to draw out a weekly schedule planning every hour of the day. I believe in not wasting time and being responsible for my daily life, but I don't think that what they were telling us was biblically true. They made you feel extremely guilty if you didn't have a schedule to go by." Danny said the group was constantly trying to motivate its members to action by guilt. Encouragement was almost never used to help the men overcome obstacles.

"If you questioned anything that was going on, they would say, 'Brother, you have a pride problem,'" Danny said. "If you said you didn't have a pride problem, they would counter with, 'See, you don't even want to admit it.' The only alternative was to lie to yourself and say, 'Maybe I do have a pride

problem.' It was a vicious cycle." Danny said that he didn't believe that CA's organizational structure was biblical. "They didn't work underneath any elders and you would never hear any encouragement to seek out the help of an elder in certain matters," he said. Danny identified three distinct "cores" of leadership. One man seemed to be the head of the group, Danny said, with a core of people around him who had spent some time in Gainesville and then came to ACU. Another core outside them consisted of students who had been in CA for a period of time. Danny spoke of a "spiritually elite" core of students who did all the confronting and taught all the soul talks and devotionals. There was a sort of camaraderie that some of the 'lower mortals' couldn't crack. It seemed you had to spend three years of submissive participation to be accepted by everyone. I never felt entirely comfortable. The "inner core" of CA's body was arrived at by a "system of spiritual advancement where you had to earn your way into a position of acceptance by other people," said Danny. "It was not a free atmosphere where I could express my dissatisfactions.

Danny was most upset by the group's attitude toward the role of women in their lives. He detailed a private meeting with the group's leader, the first time Danny had really talked informally with the man. "The topic somehow came up that I had spent an evening talking with a close friend, a girl that I had known for about four years. I told him about how close we had been and how we had both helped each other with problems in our lives. He proceeded to warn me about becoming too close with a girl, telling her some of my problems. He said that was what the 'brothers' were for—to share problems and deep, dark secrets with. The role of women, he told me, was for them to be just people to have fun with, date with and be light-hearted friends with. That was the first time I had heard anything bizarre from anybody in the group."

Danny said the men in the group were warned not to "force relationships" with girls, but were never given an explanation of that term until they, in the group's opinion, had violated it. Danny claimed a sort of "paranoia about dating" arose out of the group's spoken and unspoken rules. He told of a situation concerning a friend who had taken his girlfriend home for the weekend to meet his parents. Some CA members in town that weekend found out and "about half a dozen" called Danny's friend at home and tried to encourage his friend to go back to school with them before the weekend was up. "The CA guys called right after each other, and one finally said, 'We don't think it's a good idea to have that girl at your house. You're forcing a relationship. We've counted on you to issue some leadership in the group and now

you're disappointing us.' My friend very directly told them what he thought of their calls. His parents were very upset about the incident."

Danny expressed frustration with being unable to voice any complaints or uncertainties about things that were happening. "The answer would always be, 'Well, that's the way we did it at Gainesville and it worked there.' Anything less than that, to them, was being legalistic and less than the best," he said. The last time Danny met with his prayer partner, he questioned one of the group's actions. "He launched into a sermon about the leaders were servants for the Lord and any complaints were only the devil putting things in the way of the Lord's servants," he said. Lust was a frequent topic of group discussions, particularly soul talks. "They took us on the whole guilt trip—masturbation, how a guy was guilty of lust if he acknowledged a girl was good-looking, you name it. If you were attracted to a girl, you were lusting and if you dated more than twice, you were forcing a relationship. If you can't date a girl more than twice, how do you expect to marry someone?" Danny said, "Do you get a vision in the night?" Danny said his experience with CA was helpful to his growth as a Christian. "Looking on it now, I think I grew as a result of it. I know I've grown closer to the people who have had similar problems with it. It's sad that I had to learn it that way, though," he said. "It's sad to go through it to learn what being a Christian is all about and not all about. I'm glad I got to see it first-hand even though it was very lonely and frustrating."

SARA, Age 22—Sara transferred to ACU for her sophomore year and spent one semester in CA. She went to very few soul talks in her dorm but attended Friday night devotionals regularly. "They were always real nice to me and never withdrew fellowship from me like some others when I stopped coming to meetings," Sara said. "We kind of got off to a bad start, though. Me and some friends went to a soul talk for the first time one night, but were late. When we walked into the room, the leader stopped her talk and said, 'If you can't come on time, don't come at all.' I was a little taken back by that." Sara said she decided to leave the group after seeing the treatment given to some of her friends. "I just remember the torment some of the girls went through," she said. Sara told of the rejection of some of her close friends over what she considered a meaningless incident. "Three of my friends decided to go to a concert one Friday night instead of going to the meeting, and didn't tell their prayer partners like they were expected to. They were confronted by some of the girls and were told they weren't being open with their lives because of what they did. They were asked, 'If you're trying to cover this up, what

else are you covering up?' One of the girls was scared to be alone after that happened. She was scared they would harass her some more."

All three of the girls were "disfellowshipped" from the group, even though one had been rebaptized by them at an earlier date. Sara said the one girl was ignored, and she recalled a soul talk when the group had a chain prayer with joined hands. The group refused to hold the hands of Sara's friend. The girl had earlier been subjected to an "open confession" by one of the girls and another "witness" before the rebaptism. Sara's friend was asked numerous personal questions about her life. "One of the questions was, 'Have you ever had premarital sex?' and the others were about related things. I thought some of the questions were perverse." The commitment of Sara's friend was scrutinized to the point that the girl decided to be rebaptized. Sara said the soul talks she attended were directed by the wife of one of the group's male leaders. "They were very depressing because we were told we were always sinning. You were convinced you never quite measured up to what was expected of you," Sara said. One of the topics concerned the evils of popularity, a subject that Sara said was difficult for many to deal with. "All of us wanted to be accepted, and even though most girls agreed with the leader, there was a lot of guilt evident."

A daily "quiet time" was encouraged of the girls, as were good grades and clean rooms. "Our lives were to be so disciplined that everything possible was in order. But I didn't agree that good grades equal a good Christian or that a clean room meant you were a good Christian. We were told that if we were good Christians, our grades would always be good and our rooms clean," Sara said. Sara said the girls might question some things in their minds, but usually they had enough confidence in what was being said to tell themselves, "It doesn't sound right, but I'm probably wrong. That's just Satan tempting me."

"We were always fighting a war with Satan," Sara said. "Which is fine; it's true. They picked on points that need to be emphasized, but not to the degree that they did sometimes. That's what was frightening. They had a good point but were distorting it." Sara said members of the group were urged at some of the Friday night meetings to confront other students that were doing wrong. "They told us, 'If you have a roommate down the hall or a friend who is coming in drunk at night, go to them and tell them that because of their drinking they were in danger of going to Hell.' I thought that was rather pointed," she said. "The whole point in the way the scripture talks about approaching a person tells us to do it in love. The whole thing about their confronting people was to make people feel guilty and worthless. I couldn't

handle that or the open confessions. Who am I to force a person to tell me his innermost secrets?"

Sara never had a prayer partner like some of the other girls. "I was never asked about it. They never confronted me, either, I guess because I was a transfer. I wondered about their system of leadership but I never did find out about it," she said.

RALPH, Age 22—Ralph became involved in CA early in his four-year career at ACU and said he was quite close to the leaders of the group before leaving. "I don't have any bitterness. I want to make that clear," he said. "The Lord has been kind to me in all this. He led me in and now he's led me out. I learned many valuable things." Ralph said he was attracted to the group partly because of their enthusiasm for the Lord. "They have a zeal for Christ. I know that I, personally, wasn't out to manipulate people or use them. I just wanted people to experience the joy in the Lord that I felt," he said. Ralph said he refused the counsel of his parents and family while in CA. He said it caused them tremendous personal grief. "I was always wanting to 'go with the Lord' and not listen to their advice. That was always my decision, not the group's. I know my heart was right with God, though. But I don't regret any of it. God led me in and led me out. There was a great deal of pain in my family but I think it made my family and I closer because of it," he said. Looking back on the experience, Ralph mainly disagrees with the dependence on others for decisions. "I cherished wisdom from those who are older than I, and still do, but not to the point of letting that advice alone be my guide. No one ever pressured me to do just what they wanted, for the decisions I made were of my own choosing. I just became so eager to listen to another's advice that I became hard-headed to the advice of my parents and others," he said.

"As far as the prayer partners, I believe it is a good concept. I love to pray with other people. I just have trouble with something that is set up where one partner must be older in the Lord than the other," he said. "The stress on service was good, but as one got older he was expected to be served more than serve. Jesus always said the greatest will be the least in the kingdom of Heaven. I always had a problem with that when I was in the group," he said.

SHIRLEY, Age 22—Shirley first started attending Friday night devotionals in the fall of her freshman year at the encouragement of her roommate, and continued to do so the rest of that semester. She stopped attending for a year, but began going to soul talks in the spring of her sophomore year.

"My roommate that first year asked me all the time to go with her on Friday nights. I always thought they did a few things a little strange, but I was always brought up to not question people who did things

different than I did," she said. "It started getting on my nerves after awhile because I wasn't allowed not to go. I got a lot of hassles from my roommate and I usually ended up going anyway. My main problem at that time was that I couldn't go to anything else on Friday nights except the meetings. And they would last for hours and hours." Shirley decided to start attending soul talks her sophomore year because one of her good friends had started frequenting the meetings. "But I didn't like them that much. The leader (a wife of one of the male CA leaders) would take a scripture, read it, say what it meant and how it could be applied to our lives. But she would often interpret the scripture so narrowly that you couldn't agree with her. What she said, went," she said. The girls at the soul talks would be encouraged, according to Shirley, to tell what they had done wrong in the past week. The leaders would then discuss the sin. "If you couldn't think of anything big, you'd think of something small that you had to confess. Little things that you never considered as sins suddenly became major things. The leaders' attitude was 'you've sinned, we know you have.' Girls would come out of soul talks just crying their eyes out," she said. "They would come to your rooms before soul talks and make sure you were going. If you had a test to study for and told them you'd have to miss this time, they'd say something like, 'you always have time for the Lord.' What do you say to that? Every time you didn't go, there was a confrontation about it," said Shirley.

Shirley accounted an incident that greatly upset her. A CA member that lived down the hall began telling Shirley's friends that Shirley and her roommate had "serious spiritual problems in their lives." When Shirley and her roommate heard of the accusations, they invited the CA member to come talk with them about it. "Her words were to the effect that I and my roommate were in league with the Devil and that through our roles as persons that others confided in, we were leading other people to hell," she said. "She kept saying that she was not judging us, only telling us what she saw in our lives. We just came unglued. It was probably the worst scene I have ever gone through in my entire life. She told me that I did not convey my Christian beliefs to others and she said that when she looked at my life, she couldn't see God. It was unbelievable all the things she said. I was furious. What right did they have to come and tell me those things that I didn't believe were true?" she said. "But in the back of my mind it was different. When someone tells you you're going to hell and there's no good in your life, you begin to wonder whether it's true or not. I was messed up spiritually for about three months; the entire summer. I would actually get sick at my stomach when I thought about it." Shirley

said the confrontation took place about three weeks before the spring semester ended. Shirley also said the girl down the hall expressed disappointment in Shirley for not having shared her personal feelings with her. “She said she resented the fact that I had never shared my innermost thoughts and soul with her. She said I should have been anxious to do that.” “I regret the whole situation but I think that working through it has made me a much stronger Christian. I’m a little more wise in some areas. I could see where some real positive things could have come out of CA, but I think the negative outweighed the positive. I think what I went through could be devastating to someone who didn’t have the strong home background I had. It could have turned someone else against God if they had had the same experience. Look how much trouble I had breaking away and I wasn’t even considered a part of the whole thing. I can’t imagine what kind of guilt trip you’d have to have gone on to get out of that group,” she said. “The guilt thing is unbelievable and I don’t know how to express it but there was just something to feel guilty about all the time.”

KEN, Age 22—Ken was active in CA during the second semester of his sophomore year after trying to find some way “to be involved working for the Lord.” Ken said he was attracted by the group’s closeness. “I was not attracted at first, though. I felt ill at ease because they had their own little group and I was an outsider. I had to work at it, though. I had to put forth an effort to be friendly and show that I was sincere about being part of their group. I felt like I was kind of one of the inner ones before I left,” he said. Ken said he faithfully attended soul talks and weekly devotionals except for “two or three times” when his off-campus job wouldn’t allow him. “They didn’t understand that. They told me I wasn’t committing myself to the Lord by not coming to soul talks. They wanted me to switch my job schedule,” he said. Ken was told on one occasion to be careful not to let his job “become his god.”

“I never was told outright that I was supposed to inform my prayer partner where I’d be, but it was always easier to tell the leader or my prayer partner that I wouldn’t be there. Otherwise, they’d knock on your door that very night wanting to know where you were. I ended up spending all week justifying my not being there rather than explaining it,” he said. The soul talks frequently were concentrated on the topic of lust, according to Ken. “It surfaced in just about every topic we discussed and it got to the point that it seemed to take preference over the message.”

Ken said the students were encouraged to date “just a brother or sister.” It was limited to members of the group. When you said ‘brother’ or ‘sister,’ it was understood you were talking about someone in the

group. I was looked down upon because I didn’t want to date someone in Campus Advance, I took other girls out and they didn’t like it. One rule was that you should double date because it would insure the date would be a totally social thing and there would be no lustful thoughts. I had a hard time accepting that,” he said. Ken detailed an incident involving his prayer partner that he said “almost ruined him.” After a church service that saw the baptism of a young teenager, Ken’s prayer partner confronted him. “In the auditorium, all of a sudden, he turned to me and asked me about my own baptism—the circumstances, my age, all that. He asked me if, at the time of my baptism, I understood the passage in Matthew that concerned ‘counting the cost’ of salvation. I said no and he told me that I wasn’t really a Christian because of it and needed to be baptized again. “I talked to my parents on the phone soon after that and they could tell something was very wrong with me. It upset me so much that I can remember not taking the Lord’s Supper at church because I wasn’t sure of my Christianity. That’s how bad it was. I talked to some of the professors here at school and then went back to the guy and told him that I didn’t have to know all about the Christian life when I was baptized. I repented and it was a growing process from then on. The only reason I think I didn’t go crazy and lose my mind after what he first told me is that I knew my Bible and knew that what I was being told wasn’t right with scripture. But I really struggled.” Ken said CA leaders didn’t approve of him pursuing his major field. “They were never satisfied that I didn’t want to be a preacher. They thought that there was only one way to serve the Lord and that was to be a campus minister. All the leaders appeared, in some way or another, to be associated with Florida, either in Gainesville or Tallahassee. They either attended a Florida university and transferred here, grew up in Florida or had contact with a program somewhere else. Some went to summer school at one of the Florida universities that had a Campus Advance or something similar to it,” he said.

Ken’s departure from CA has allowed him to become more involved with his congregation, something that he said the group discouraged him from doing when he was a member. “I don’t have any problems with their basic ideas of evangelism and having Bible studies in dorms and the idea of building close relationships through the group. The quiet times and prayer partners are great if they’re handled right. My only experience and problem is with the way it was handled on this campus. It was proof that something was peculiar,” Ken said. “I learned from my experience, but I wish I hadn’t had to go through it. It scares me that I might not have gotten out. I still have

some close friends in it that I worry about and pray for. There were so many spoken and unspoken rules that you had to comply with and follow that are not written in scripture.”



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## Fundamentalist Church Gathers Campus Converts . . . and Critics

by Jeanne Pugh, St. Petersburg Times Religion Writer

Controversy is swirling around a fundamentalist Church of Christ in Gainesville that has converted perhaps thousands of college students to its version of Christianity. Many critics are accusing the church of “cult-like” practices. Some national spokesmen for the Church of Christ fear the Gainesville church’s activities may reflect adversely on the entire denomination. Some critics say the church’s philosophy is taking on the characteristics of a new denomination.

Since 1967, when Chuck Lucas became its campus minister, the Crossroads Church of Christ of Gainesville has mushroomed. More than 2,000 persons, most of them students at the University of Florida there, have been baptized. Membership has swelled from 186 to more than 1,000. The church’s annual budget has grown from \$31,481 to more than \$900,000. The major growth has occurred since 1971 when Lucas, then 33, became the church’s senior minister. During that time, the church trained about 50 of its converts as ministers. Some 30 of them have been hired by Church of Christ congregations as campus ministers to nearby college campuses, according to the church. At least seven others are serving congregations—from California to Massachusetts—as youth ministers or senior ministers. Last year, according to a church report, these young ministers accounted for more than 1,200 baptisms.

The apparent effectiveness of the Crossroads-style of ministry has attracted so much attention nationwide that the church now sponsors “evangelism seminars” to share its expertise. Last summer, such a seminar attracted 2,700 participants to Orlando. This summer, as many as 5,000 persons are expected to attend a similar event Aug. 21-24 at St. Petersburg’s Bayfront Center—“from all over the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii,” Lucas says.

In spite of such successes, the Crossroads church and its methods are coming under scrutiny and criticism. Chuck Lucas calls the criticism “garbage.”

The allegations by critics include these:

- That the Crossroads ministry has become so elitist that it has come to view itself as the only road to Christian salvation.
- That Crossroads-trained ministers and converts are exerting undue evangelistic pressures upon vulnerable students.
- That the church has suggested that members, including students, “consider borrowing” on such assets as life insurance policies or taking out bank loans in order to help finance a \$1.5-million church bond issue.
- That the church’s policies caused some young adults to forsake family and friends and to neglect study and job responsibilities in order to meet the requirements of church doctrine and attend Bible study sessions, called “soul talks.”
- That some impressionable recruits have become “religious zombies” who recite Bible verses endlessly.
- That some students who have dropped out of its programs have been subjected to harassment and/or “shunning” by former friends in the church, sometimes leading to psychological problems.
- That converts are assigned “prayer partners,” usually an older student or more experienced church member, to who they are exhorted to confess their “sins”; and that such confessions become “common knowledge” in the church and are used to maintain “control” of the members.
- That the movement’s doctrine instills excessive fear, guilt, and anxiety in some converts.
- That the movement’s ministers have been “rebaptizing” converts or “withholding” baptism on the basis of “man-made” judgments about their acceptability, a concept alien to the Church of Christ denomination.

Spokesmen for the Crossroads church defend it against such condemnation. They see its mission as the creation of better, more satisfying lives for its converts. Those who support the “Crossroads philosophy,” as it has come to be known, deny any attempt to intimidate converts or destroy family relationships. They point to the perhaps thousands of young adults whose lives, they say, have been vastly improved by their conversions.

But a groundswell of opposition to the movement’s practices began to emerge last fall after the University of Florida’s student newspaper, *The Alligator*, published letters from students protesting the recruitment techniques employed by the campus ministry. The student critics accused the Crossroads

church of “playing God” with its recruits, of “love bombing” potential converts and of preying upon lonely and insecure young people who, as college newcomers, were seeking new friends in a strange environment.

More opposition surfaced early this year in the Orlando area shortly after a Crossroads-trained minister, Adrian Carr, established a campus ministry at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Some parents complained that their children were being “stolen” by the group Carr founded, the Christian Student Association (CSA). The parents’ complaints drew the attention of *The Outlook*, a weekly, secular newspaper published in an Orlando suburb near the UCF campus. After what *Outlook* editor Randy Noles calls “a three-month investigation,” he wrote a series of articles establishing CSA’s ties to the Crossroads church.

Although Chuck Lucas of Crossroads denied any direct connection with CSA, according to Noles, a copy of the church’s 1979 budget shows an allocation of \$15,000 to the University Boulevard Church of Christ in Orlando, an institution listed with the university as the sponsor of CSA. The University Boulevard church has no building facility in Orlando—“We are meeting on the campus,” a church member said. As a result of such publicity, a group of about 30 parents formed the Campus Outreach Caucus and now hold regular meetings in the Orlando area to discuss what one of them describes as family problems caused by the association of their children with CSA. In the meantime, two articles appeared in the Church of Christ’s national monthly magazine, *Gospel Advocate*. An article in the February issue, written by T. Pierce Brown, minister of South Seminole Church of Christ in Winter Park, was about a group of young people who suddenly became regular attendants at his services but remained “exclusive” from the rest of the congregation and failed to support the church either “financially or spiritually.” He accused the group of exerting “a thought-control system” on its members and of replacing devotion to Christ with “devotion to a program of activity designed by some human.” In March, the magazine printed an article by Harvey Floyd, professor of Bible and biblical languages at the church-supported David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tenn. In it, he wrote about a similar group in Nashville and called it a manifestation of the “total-commitment evangelistic movement.” The movement, Floyd wrote, “presents a number of cultic aspects,” particularly in its “manipulation of people.” Similar methods, he noted, are used by members of the Unification Church founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon, the Korean evangelist. He criticized the “total-commitment evangelistic movement” for “its

alienation of young people from their parents.” He accused the group of a “fearful misrepresentation,” of the teaching of Christ as recorded in Luke 14:26: “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his whole life also; he cannot be my disciple.”

Neither author referred specifically to the “Crossroads philosophy.” Nevertheless, *Gospel Advocate*’s May issue was devoted almost entirely to reactions to these articles, and many of the letters said the two articles described the “Crossroads Philosophy.” Forty-three letters from 16 states, including Florida, were used in the issue. In the same issue, Chuck Lucas wrote what he called a response “to the charges and the allegations” and defended the “Crossroads philosophy.”

The letter writers told of Church of Christ congregations torn by dissension, of sons and daughters “misguided,” of young people “driven from the church,” and of young converts requiring psychological counseling. One parent wrote, “It is absolutely too painful to describe the agony of knowing that our son’s very soul has been entrapped and that man has dominion over his soul.” All but a few congratulated the magazine for its airing of the problem. Editor Ira North, in an introduction to the issue, observed that “some of the letters were defensive, hostile and almost sounded as if they had been all directed from the same source.” In his rebuttal, Lucas acknowledges that the Crossroads philosophy does believe in “total commitment,” but denies it makes unreasonable demands on its members.

He says that the assignment of “prayer partners” is “optional” and that “no one has ever suggested that ‘all sins’ must be confessed.” But he adds that his church practices “one another” Christianity and that it is “not optional” (his emphasis). He wrote: “There are many ‘one another’ commands in God’s word. Christians are instructed to bear one another’s burdens; confess their sins to one another; encourage one another; edify one another; teach and counsel one another; restore one another; rebuke one another; love one another, etc.”

Regarding accusations that Crossroads engenders fear and guilt, Lucas replies, “Christians who are willfully and deliberately practicing sin or neglecting to do God’s will in their lives *should feel guilty*” (his emphasis). He explains that “re-baptisms,” which he says are small in number, occur because the individuals involved “were convinced that their initial response was not a valid one.”

Primarily, however, Lucas deplores the implication that the Crossroad ministries are “cultic.” “It is a tragic commentary,” he writes, “that many in the

church today have come to equate commitment with cultism. Jonestown has caused many to react with fear rather than fact . . . Our students on a state university campus are subjected every day to a secularistic, atheistic point of view. Their faith is challenged constantly . . . it takes real faith and commitment to survive.” Lucas also acknowledges that “some parents have reacted negatively” to the commitment of their children. In such instances, he said, “we try to bring about reconciliation.” But he conceded that, in some cases, “the scriptures dealing with ‘hating father and mother’ (Luke 14:26) and ‘loving father and mother more than me’ (Matthew 10:37) are certainly applicable and relevant.” Lucas, contacted by *The St. Petersburg Times* by telephone, seemed happy to comment about the upcoming seminar in St. Petersburg. But he declined to discuss charges that have been made against the Crossroads ministry, calling them “garbage” and saying they were “not true, false, exaggerated, rumors, lies.” When asked about specific instances reported to *The Times* by parents concerned about the involvement of their children, Lucas said, “I’m not going to try to go through all of those allegations . . . nobody has been manipulated, nobody is controlled.” He then mentioned the names of several families involved in fighting the movement and said, “I could give you a file on them.” Asked if he normally keeps files on opponents, he declined to comment. A different response from a Crossroad advocate came from bookstore owner Charles Haslam of St. Petersburg, an elder at Northside Church of Christ, 6329 Ninth St. N. He said his church recently has engaged a Crossroads-trained minister, Joe Garman, 30, as its preacher and has begun the “soul talk” method of Bible study. Northwest Church of Christ, 6355 38th Ave. N, also, uses the Crossroads methods in its ministry to young people, according to the church’s minister. He also said the church sponsors a campus ministry group at St. Petersburg Junior College. “You can rest assured,” Haslam said, “that there is nothing really bad going on from the top.” He acknowledged, however, that there may be “isolated cases” where “the zeal of young people” has caused problems for some recruits and their families. Haslam, 66, said that his own parents were “upset” when he left the Baptist church at the age of 23 to join the Church of Christ, a more fundamentalist denomination. He said he became a preacher in the church, but now plays a more administrative role as an elder. He teaches a “soul talk” Bible study class that has members of all ages, he said. Church of Christ congregations are routinely headed by committees of elders and are independent from each other, Haslam said. Ministers are not formally ordained. They are selected by individual

congregations on the basis of their knowledge of the Bible, which is the church’s only guidebook and is interpreted literally.

Haslam attributes much of the controversy about the Crossroads movement to “the tremendous amount of jealousy among preachers.” Some preachers, he said, resent the success of others.

[inset box]

Gainesville church has far-reaching ministry. Ministers trained at the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville are serving in about 35 cities and towns across the United States, according to church reports. They include:

- Florida—University of Florida, Gainesville; University of Central Florida, Orlando; Florida State University and Call Street Church, Tallahassee; University of South Florida and Sunrise Church of Christ, Tampa; St. Petersburg Junior College, Northside Church of Christ and Northwest Church of Christ, St. Petersburg; Cocoa Beach Church of Christ.
- Alabama—Spanish Fort Church of Christ, Mobile.
- California—Poway Church of Christ, Poway.
- Colorado—University of Denver and University Church of Christ, Denver; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of Southern Colorado, Pueblo; University of Northern Colorado, Greeley; Colorado State University and Meadowlark Church of Christ, Fort Collins.
- Georgia—University of Georgia, Athens; Cornerstone Church of Christ, Thomasville; Decatur Church of Christ, Atlanta.
- Illinois—Eastern Illinois University and Heritage Chapel, Charleston.
- Indiana—Indiana Central University and Village Church of Christ, Indianapolis; Indiana University, Bloomington; Purdue University, West Lafayette; Ball State University, Muncie.
- Kansas—Kansas State University, Manhattan.
- Maryland—University of Maryland, College Park.
- Massachusetts—New ministry being started on campuses in the Boston area by former minister of Charleston, Ill., church.
- Mississippi—University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg.
- Montana—Montana State University, Bozeman.
- North Carolina—North Carolina State University and Brooks Avenue Church of Christ, Raleigh.
- Ohio—Ohio State University, Columbus; University of Cincinnati and Clifton Avenue Church of Christ, Cincinnati.
- Oregon—Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- South Carolina—Clemson University, Clemson; University of South Carolina, Columbia.
- Virginia—University of Virginia, Charlottesville.
- Outside U.S.—San Jose, Costa Rica.
- “Crossroads-like” ministries also have been reported by church members in Texas and Tennessee.

“The ministry of Crossroads has been a terrific thing,” he observed. “They have found a way to reach college students . . . they use sound psychological principles and are very evangelical—and it works.” But Jackie Stearsman, minister of Central Church of Christ, Clearwater, calls the Crossroads philosophy of total commitment “a perversion” and said it does not take into consideration the “balance of life” that the Bible recommends. He said that young Crossroads-trained ministers have “taken over” congregations in many parts of the country. “They say, ‘Do it our way or else,’ and they become divisive,” he said. “They are pressing their methods and techniques on the church and causing lots of conflict.”



St. Petersburg [Florida] Times, August 25, 1979

## Methods of Crossroads Church Defended at Seminar

by Jeanne Pugh

Chuck Lucas brought his “Crossroads philosophy” to St. Petersburg this week, sharing his belief in “total commitment Christianity” with more than 3,000 enthusiastic followers in four days of meetings at the St. Petersburg Bayfront Center. The Crossroads-sponsored Florida Evangelism Seminar attracted participants from 38 states and six foreign countries, registration personnel said. Most of those attending the sessions appeared to be college age. Spokesmen said 139 college and universities were represented at the sessions that began Tuesday and concluded Friday evening. The controversial minister, whose Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville has attracted some criticism for its brand of evangelism, devoted two hours at the general session Wednesday to refuting critics.

Some have accused Crossroads-trained evangelists of exerting undue pressure on recruits at college campuses. Lucas told *The St. Petersburg Times* Thursday night that most of the criticism is “basically due to the high degree of commitment” that Crossroads methods inspire. “(Such commitment) can be challenging and disturbing to some people who see others so excited and involved,” he said. “A lot of it is real misunderstanding because people don’t know what’s going on. We don’t expect everyone to agree with our doctrine, but we have a right to express our point of view,” he said. “We do believe it is what the scriptures teach and, thank God, we live in a free country where we can teach what we believe.”

Lucas said that most of what has been written about the Crossroads Church and its philosophy is untrue. He said parents who have become estranged from

their college age children involved in the movement are those who cannot cope with the intense commitments their children have made. He denied that undue pressure has been exerted on young people to support church’s \$1.5-million bond issue by borrowing money. He said the church is a cosigner of loans made to students for the purchase of the bonds. “If the students default, the church must pick it up,” he said. About one-third of the bond issue has been sold, he added, and additional bonds were expected to be sold at the seminar.

He also denied that the Crossroads movement requires converts to account for every moment. But he said that new members, many of whom are young people whose lives are disorganized, are encouraged to “develop a good schedule” of living. “We encourage them to establish good habits and good patterns,” he said. Lucas also refuted claims of some members of other Church of Christ congregations that his movement is “outside the mainstream.” He said several of the principal speakers at the seminar are among the highly respected spokesmen for the church.

He pointed out that disagreements are bound to occur in a church where each congregation is autonomous, as is the case in the Church of Christ. Guest speakers also came to Lucas’ defense. Marvin Phillips, pastor of a large Church of Christ congregation in Tulsa, Okla., told his audience Thursday evening, “I don’t know if Chuck Lucas needs criticism or not, but we’ve got to get over the complex of assassinating our champions.” He added, in a reference to dissension within the denomination, “Suppose you disagree with Chuck Lucas about ‘soul talks’ — you tolerate and love within the family.”

“Soul Talks,” the intensive weeknight Bible study sessions central to the Crossroads method of conversion, were among the topics discussed at 27 workshops offered at the seminar. Other topics included cults, campus ministry, prayer partners, denominationalism, church growth, parenting, Christian family, total commitment, the biblical role of women, and “Everything you ever wanted to know about Crossroads.” In one soul talk session, Kip McKean, a Crossroads-trained campus minister whose recruiting methods on the campus of Eastern Illinois University, who reportedly evoked criticism from church members in Charleston, Ill., urged his listeners to seek converts in every phase of their daily lives. “Be bold . . . press for commitments . . . and make them your best friends,” he said.

Lucas’ defense was seconded by Richard Whitehead, an elder of the Gainesville church who retired recently from the staff of the University of Florida after 42 years of service. Long-time registrar and dean of records and admissions at UF, Whitehead

said there is no truth to charges that the Crossroads Church has caused students to neglect their studies. “I know for a fact,” Whitehead said, “that when students get involved in church activities their grades improve. They also get away from all-night parties and that sort of thing. “The problem is,” he said, “that the balance of (adverse criticism) about the church is unfairly weighted because you are not hearing from the hundreds—the thousands—of people who are happy in the church.”



St. Petersburg [Florida] Times, August 9, 1980

## Criticism of Crossroads Church of Christ Grows

by Jeanne Pugh, St. Petersburg Times Staff Writer

Gainesville’s Crossroads Church of Christ brings its version of “total commitment Christianity” back to St. Petersburg next week amid a crescendo of criticism from some Church of Christ ministers and elders. They fear, they say, that the Crossroads-inspired evangelistic movement may be “cloning” followers and giving their denomination a “bad name.”

About 3,000 Crossroads converts from throughout the United States—nearly half of them college-age young adults and high school students—are expected to attend the church-sponsored, four-day Florida Evangelistic Seminar/Convention scheduled to begin Wednesday at the St. Petersburg Bayfront Center. A meeting held here a year ago provoked similar criticism about the church’s minister, Chuck Lucas, and his methods of gaining converts, methods that have been spread nationwide by cadres of youth ministers trained at the church.

The rapid growth of “the Crossroads philosophy” is a cause for concern among other Churches of Christ because its advocates have predicted that within 10 years all Churches of Christ will be following the same evangelistic methods used by Lucas. Parents of young-adult converts have accused Lucas and his youth ministers, who work mostly on college and university campuses in about 35 U.S. cities, of using “love bombing” and “mind control” to bring recruits into the fold. Both terms refer to techniques that isolate the potential converts and make them dependent on the church evangelists. Church leaders say that Lucas is distorting the theology of the church by demanding total commitment to the church at the expense of such other interests as family life.

That concern came to a head on July 18 when an unprecedented meeting of about 50 Church of Christ ministers and elders from throughout Florida was held in Tampa. Bud Bayless, minister of the

Manhattan Avenue Church of Christ, confirmed last week that the meeting was held at his church.

The session was to “share information” on the Crossroads movement and to examine possible responses to its growing influence, he said. The group heard “testimony” from both church members and nonmember parents of converts, Bayless reported. They listened to reports that the “total commitment” theology of the Crossroads church has caused young adults to forsake family, friends, employment and college studies.

A former church elder from Huntsville, Ala., told the group that his congregation was torn apart by an invasion of Crossroads advocates whose practices drove long-time members out of the church. “Our main concern,” Bayless said, “is that churches are being divided by the movement. It is splitting congregations with a dangerous brand of spiritual snobbery.”

He acknowledged that Churches of Christ traditionally “tend to be exclusivistic, because we believe that God’s standards are more rigid than many other churches teach.” But, he added, “It doesn’t mean the same thing that the Crossroads’ (version of commitment) does. We want our members to be good citizens and good employees, as well as good church members.” He explained that Church of Christ theology is strongly fundamentalist. Church structure and practices are based solely on those of the “primitive church,” as described in the Bible. Each church is autonomous, and the denomination—which prefers not even to be called a denomination—has no national organization. Church of Christ ministers are not formally ordained, do not use the title “reverend” and are selected by each independent group of church elders on the basis of their biblical knowledge and personal commitment to fundamentalist principles. They have no clergy association, do not join other ministerial groups and take no part in ecumenical religious activities.

“Normally,” Bayless said, “we pay very little attention to what our other churches and ministers are doing, but Crossroads is giving us a bad name and we don’t need it.” Bayless recalled that the conflict between Lucas and other Church of Christ ministers is a long-standing one, dating back to the early 1970s. At that time, Lucas was invited to meet with a group of the ministers to explain his theology and justify his methods. “He was doing a lot of things we could not approve of,” Bayless said. “Supposedly, everything was resolved at that meeting, but we heard later that Chuck went back to his church and said nothing had changed.”

Among the practices used by Lucas that were opposed by the other ministers was the use of a proselytizing system outlined in the book, *Master*

*Plan of Evangelism*, by Robert E. Coleman, Bayless said. The book, “which describes the exact methods Lucas uses,” advocates that converts be placed under the guidance of a “master” who shapes the individual into a duplicate of himself. “If the ‘head master’ is in Gainesville, then everybody who follows the system becomes like Chuck Lucas, and every church is patterned after Crossroads,” Bayless said. “If everybody follows the plan, they will become clones. If Crossroads’ satellite churches are not guilty of abuse, it is because they have not followed the plan. (Other Churches of Christ) believe in bringing in people from other churches and converting them to our way of thinking, but we want them to make individual decisions,” Bayless said. “But when questionable methods are used, we get upset about it.”

He said the outcome of the Tampa meeting is a plan to reproduce published criticism of the Crossroads movement, plus personal accounts from families and former members “who have had problems” with the movement. In addition, tape cassettes are being made of the Alabama elder’s remarks. The materials will be made available to all Churches of Christ and other interested parties and will be sent, whether solicited or not, to all churches located near college campuses. Bayless said some of the Tampa Bay area ministers suggested co-sponsorship of newspaper advertisements disclaiming any association of their churches with the St. Petersburg convention, but no action was taken on the proposal.

Meanwhile, back in Gainesville, officials of the Crossroads Church contend that criticism of the church’s practices are unwarranted. In the absence of Chuck Lucas, who was reported to be “out of town” for the week, Richard Whitehead, church elder and former dean of records and administration at the University of Florida, was interviewed by telephone. He said that he had not heard about the meeting in Tampa and did not “care to hear” what was said at the meeting.

“We have a very honorable program here in Gainesville, and some of the city’s most prominent people are members of our church,” he said. He added that he is “totally involved” in all of the church’s programs and is certain that nothing unethical is taking place. Whitehead said the program at the St. Petersburg convention this year will include a new “youth forum” for high school students, along with workshops at which the Crossroads methods of evangelism will be explained.



Florida Alligator [Gainesville, Florida], September 3, 1981

## Crossroads: Church Denies Brainwashing Amid Critics’ Warning of Cult

by Robert Bartolotta, Alligator Staff Writer

The lights dimmed in the church, leaving only a soft yellow glow to illuminate the baptismal font. Some 1,300 people—members of the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville—sat in hushed sobriety under the spiraling steeple during Sunday evening’s service. They watched as a black-robed deacon waded into the small pool of water with a white-robed convert at his side. After declaring his sins to the congregation, the initiate—a UF student—fell back in the deacon’s arms and was immersed in the water for a moment. In Crossroads, adult baptism is like opening a door of fresh commitment to an ancient way of life. It is a door that often appears locked to some outsiders, who claim that Crossroads has the elements of a potentially dangerous cult. Such accusations have pitted Crossroads against other congregations of the 2.5-million member Church of Christ and scores of irate parents who protest that their offspring were brainwashed through mind control techniques. Objectivity is a rare commodity on both sides. Crossroads is a young sect with predominantly young members, many of whom are students at UF or Santa Fe Community College. Crossroaders, as members are commonly called, are not baptized into the faith as infants. Usually they are befriended by an experienced Crossroader and receive instruction and persuasive encouragement from the congregation about the rules governing the sect. For most, belonging to Crossroads is uniquely fulfilling. “I enjoy myself here and I have good clean fun,” said 14-year-old Charlene Raulerson, a member who often referred to Bible passages to support her points. She attends Lincoln Middle School. “I believe in Crossroads 100 percent, and I also believe in the New Testament baptism. If people aren’t baptized, then they’re sinners. The people who left Crossroads dropped away from God if they don’t go to another New Testament-based church. Crossroads is not a cult—Christ runs our church, not Chuck Lucas.”

Chuck Lucas is the minister of the Gainesville-based Crossroads Church, and the principal organizer of its evangelistic methods. As the son of a minister in the Church of Christ, Lucas can trace his preacher’s roots back at least four generations. Crossroads started out as the 14th Street Church of Christ in 1950. After trying different programs to reach the community—and especially college students—church elders decided in 1967 to invite Lucas, who was then a minister in Arkansas, to work as a youth minister for

the UF campus. He did, for about three years, until another minister left and Lucas started to preach full time to the general congregation.

Since 1967, Crossroads Church leaders have trained more than 60 full-time ministers locally. The preachers have been hired by at least 38 Churches of Christ throughout the United States, mostly in the South but ranging as far as California and Oregon. Since each congregation is autonomous, Crossroads-trained ministers are hired only at the request of the elders in those churches.

“These ministers are not under me,” said Lucas. “We have an organization that’s set up in the Bible, with elders and deacons and evangelists. No congregation can tell any other congregation what to do. There’s no hierarchy in the Churches of Christ as there is, for example, in the Roman Catholic Church. We have no ecclesiastical superstructure like that. Each congregation cares for its own.”

The 42-year-old mustachioed minister defends Crossroads with finely tuned preacher’s rhetoric, maintaining there’s nothing cult-like about his congregation. “First of all, it’s misinformation,” Lucas said. “Because of all the cults around, I’m sure that many of them believe that this is what their children are involved in. And if I believed that, I would be upset. But their failure is that they will not investigate it firsthand.”

“I’m an evangelist. I’m a preacher. I have no special powers. I do not want anybody following me. I’m trying to lead people to follow Jesus Christ,” he said. Basically, there’s not much theological difference between Crossroads and most mainstream Churches of Christ. Both profess literal acceptance of the Bible based on the way first century Christians worshipped. Both adhere to strict moral codes that govern everything from social events to sexual mores. The principle rift occurs in recruitment methods. Unlike most sects, Crossroaders believe in actively, aggressively seeking converts—a fact many dorm dwellers can attest to. Crossroaders base this brand of proselytizing on a book called *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman, an evangelism minister at the Asbury Theological Seminary. In its 126 pages, the book examines ways to win converts to Christianity. The premise is that Jesus intentionally conveyed the secrets of his teachings to only a few of his closest disciples. These disciples, in turn, are expected to draw others to God and make them evangelists as well. This persuasive approach has raised the ire of certain elders, ministers and members of the Church of Christ nationwide. It has provoked parents to protest that their Bible-thumping son or daughter has been brainwashed. And it has provoked some outside observers to claim Crossroads

poses a definite emotional threat to malleable young people.

“The error in the Crossroads’ approach is that there are human masters in the *Master Plan of Evangelism*, and it is very authoritarian by nature,” said Jackie Stearsman, minister of the Central Church of Christ in Clearwater, and publisher of a newsletter often critical of the Gainesville church. “The problem comes when another human being assumes the role of master, not Jesus,” Stearsman said.

Crossroads has been using the book as a text for its Bible classes since Lucas first read it on a trip to Idaho in 1975. The master plan prompted Lucas to write an editorial in 1976 saying: “his (Coleman’s) book certainly has much that is worth careful study and thoughtful consideration.” Crossroads, however, has some major theological disagreements with the work, he added. “We believe that the Bible contains God’s master plan of evangelism. It is the only book and the only plan that we can recommend without reservation,” Lucas wrote in the editorial. In other words, nobody can be forced to be a Christian, and nobody should be forced, he said recently. “There’s a difference between that (forcing a person) and sharing with others what you do believe. We believe what we believe very strongly,” Lucas said.

Sam Hill dusted the chalk from his hands as he outlined the history of Crossroads on a classroom blackboard. A UF religion professor, he has a special interest in the evolution of the Crossroads Church. Although the controversial church has “cult-like” characteristics, Hill says Crossroads should not be lumped into the class of recognized cults.

“Crossroads does provide friendship and community in a lonely world,” Hill said. “But there are cult-like qualities in Crossroads—a strong sense of authority, groupness, absolute loyalty, limits on friends and an overwhelming sense of obligation. A true cult, however, would be built around a single messianic figure, some self-declared leader who is very convincing,” Hill said.

Cult or cult-like characteristics, according to Hill, also include:

- Unanswered questions about the implications of membership;
- Protection from dissenting views about the group;
- Mental and physical stress through coercion;
- Repression of gut feelings about the group;
- Highly admired or adored leaders;
- Absolute obedience to the group.

There are Bibles in every hand. Some, softly weathered and dog-eared with age, bear treasured family histories. Other editions of the ancient text,

fresh off the press and for sale at the gate, crack open in stiff new leather bindings. The congregation enters the huge arena, mingling in small groups before sitting at one of 42 long tables. Their fervor increases as the numbers grow and, for a few days, the O'Connell Center becomes a gospel revival tent for the 1981 Florida Evangelism Seminar. Dressed in three-piece suits, Sunday dresses and beige nametags imprinted with the motto "Love Never Fails," some 4,000 people willingly hand over \$20 apiece to attend the four-day gathering. Members attending the Aug. 12-15 event represented 40 states, 25 foreign countries, more than 250 colleges and about 300 congregations.

Camaraderie infused the place. Embraces were just as common as handshakes. "The world does not understand what love is," said the preacher on the elevated stage flanked by U.S. and Florida flags. For participants, the event was a time for religious contemplation and active recruiting. For a handful of protesters, the event posed a low-key cover for mind-bending by a dangerous cult.

Shirley Willis, a resident of Poway, Calif., was one of those demonstrators. Standing under a tree near University Avenue and North-South Drive, Willis shooed gnats with one hand and held a sign in the other saying "Crossroads Rapes the Mind." While on her way to Orlando, Willis stopped in Gainesville to protest against the Crossroaders who she claims "robbed" her 18-year-old daughter's willpower.

"Crossroads is destructive to the mind," Willis said. "As long as you don't question what the Crossroads are doing, they'll be all right. But if you do, then they begin to intimidate the kids. It's a horrible, horrible guilt trip they put on you."

Raising her sign higher, Willis met with icy stares from seminar participants entering the O'Connell Center and with cheers from passing motorists. "Why don't you get out of Crossroads, before it's too late?" Willis said to one participant who accused her of being a devil. Another protester, Tampa resident Joan Cappellini, agreed that Crossroads suppresses free will. "Some people are meant to be led, some can't cope on their own. But most cult members are miserable inside. All their doubts are suppressed. It's a psychological prison," she said.

But the celebrants inside were unperturbed by the protesters. "We have nothing to hide," Lucas said. "We can stand an honest investigation. If we can't then we shouldn't be in business. But that's what we want—an HONEST investigation. We want people to come to Crossroads for themselves," he said.

Richard Whitehead—Crossroads elder and former Records and Admission dean—also minces no words in defending his church. "My reaction to our critics is that their claims are distorted. They have no idea at

what we're trying to do," Whitehead said. "It's totally and absolutely ridiculous to characterize Crossroads as a cult."



Florida Alligator [Gainesville, Florida], September 22, 1982

## Crossroads' Campus Ministry Grows Despite Increasing Criticism of Sect

by Robert Bartolotta, Alligator Staff Writer

Despite accusations that the group preys on the lonely and the insecure, Crossroads' influence on the UF campus is growing as members try to reach students who might otherwise never hear about the church. As Crossroads minister Chuck Lucas said in a sermon the day before fall semester started—"This is a great time for our Crossroads students to meet other students and to just be friends." UF students who have had an encounter with a Crossroad member, however, frequently say the Crossroader was interested in more than simple friendship.

The "friendly" encounters can leave UF students complaining they felt pressured into joining the church. And description of the techniques Crossroaders use to proselytize new members sound remarkably similar. Lucas said he has heard the criticism of the church's methods, especially the charge that Crossroaders prey on freshmen. He said he thinks students are smarter than most people give them credit for. "I think college freshmen can make a very good, solid decision," he said.

Along with their campus recruitment, Crossroaders also hold regular "soul talks" in UF dormitories. The Bible and personal problems of old members and converts often are discussed, said a former Crossroader who protested against the church's evangelism methods. "Outside I was carrying the Bible, acting happy and saying that my life was great. But deep down I thought, 'My gosh, what am I doing?'" said Mary Burkett, who left Crossroads a year ago. She entered Crossroads when she was a freshman at Florida State University in 1977.

Burkett said her parents were opposed to her decision to join the Call Street Church in Tallahassee, which also employed Crossroads-trained ministers. "When I first got to school they (church members) helped me unpack and showed me around Tallahassee. They were the first people I met, but they wouldn't accept 'no' for an answer when they asked me to join. And they kept quoting Bible verses that emphasized guilt," she said. The Call Street Church did not allow her to associate with anyone who was not in the church and also censored the books she read, Burkett said. "It really scared me. I felt I was being coerced

when they told me not to visit my grandparents because they weren't Christians," she said. The 22-year-old Gainesville resident now thinks UF officials should "warn" freshmen about groups like Crossroads that may influence unsuspecting students. Erin O'Brien, 4JM, doesn't need to be warned about the church—she saw what happened when a friend joined, she said. "I grew up with a girl from Jacksonville that I went to school with from the first to the fifth grade. We both went our separate ways, but when I came to UF I met with her again and we went out. After a while she said 'why don't you come to church with me,'" said O'Brien. "I said 'No, thanks anyway.'" O'Brien said she was happy with her own church. Since then her friend has refused to talk with her. "She acts like I don't exist," O'Brien said. "She called me a sinner and told me I had to repent, and that it wasn't the same thing in my church." O'Brien said her friend changed after she joined Crossroads. And when O'Brien continued to refuse her friend's request to attend soul talks, she found herself being "hounded" by church members. "Crossroads members don't lay all their cards on the table," O'Brien said. "To this day I still love her, but it's a real scary to see a person change like that." It also can be scary to be a member, said one Crossroader. Bob, a former UF student and school teacher, is leaving Gainesville to get away from the church. Although he quit Crossroads several months ago, he said he still is afraid church members may harass him. Bob, who asked that his full name not be used in this story because he fears "harassment" from the church such as unwanted phone calls, said no one would join the church if they realized what being a member is like. "If people only knew what goes on there at Crossroads, they wouldn't fall into its trap," he said. After spending a few months trying to decide whether join, Bob finally was baptized into the church in what he described as a "very beautiful ceremony." But the initial joy he had after joining the church gave way to frustrations as he started attending frequent talks and devoted more time to the Crossroads' schedule. "I never thought one hour at a soul talk could devastate me that much. They were persistent—very persistent—that I admit my guilt." Bob said he soured on organized religion because of his experiences with Crossroads. "If my story helps just one person not go to Crossroads, I would be happy. If it helps to keep just one person away and check out other religions, then people will discover that Crossroads isn't the only way." Bob said the church does not realize the damage it does to some members. "I know Crossroads doesn't see what they do to people like me," he said.

Several counseling services in Gainesville and around Florida, however, have worked with ex-members of Crossroads. One counselor is the Rev. John Rutland-Willis, a psychotherapist with the Pastoral Counseling Service in Gainesville. The service consists of a group of local ministers who sometimes work with former church members and families who have been torn apart after a family joined Crossroads.

"I see the casualties," the United Methodist pastor said. "The people who are happy in Crossroads I don't see, just young adults attracted to Crossroads by the intense experience, especially when they're lonely and then leave church, are very confused." Rutland-Willis said he has counseled more than 18 families in the past three years. "Crossroads plays very definitely on people and it can be destructive to a person's searching and vulnerability," he said. Sam Laing, UF campus minister for Crossroads, said he is well aware of charges that the church plays on the vulnerability of students, especially freshmen. "The question, I think, is are we ethical or unethical," Laing said after a recent Sunday service. "You have to be up front with people. Crossroads doesn't single out are emotionally unstable in order to convert them. We do want to be sensitive to a person and what they have to say, regardless of their problem," Laing said. Laing was joined by Chuck Williams, a local marriage and family therapist who has been in Crossroads for several years. Williams agreed that UF students often picture Crossroaders as being too aggressive with evangelizing their but blames the church's bad general image on a few overly persistent members.

"I think that needs to be stopped," Williams said. We have our young, inexperienced people who will be over zealous, but they have to learn a balance of what is healthy and unhealthy."

"We want constructive criticism, but we don't want to be crucified," Williams said.



Rocky Mountain News [Denver, Colorado], October 26, 1980

## On the Straight and Narrow at CU—Zealots take Hell Seriously

by Beth Gaeddert, News Staff

Being a new student at the University of Colorado at Boulder has come to mean more than being introduced to people, hard work, parties and liberal ideas. For many it includes a dose of old-fashioned religion, served up by a group of evangelical students who belong to the Church of Christ.

The missionaries, most of whom have only recently found religion themselves, approach other students with a friendly invitation to the straight and narrow

path. Life in the Church of Christ usually excludes smoking, drinking, cursing, and it bans homosexuality and becoming intimate with a member of the opposite sex before marriage. Arousing sensuality in others is banned.

In dormitory “soul talks” and one-on-one sessions, new students are urged to forsake “the straitjacket of traditional religion” and, if necessary, put their families and studies second to participate in almost daily church activities and make a disciple of everyone they meet.

They are told that hell is certain without baptism in a manner the Church of Christ, 3198 Broadway, considers scripturally correct. Hardly a student escapes some contact with the aggressive evangelists. And while their techniques have made converts, they have also caused concern among campus ministers, CU housing officials and some parents.

“It’s the kind of thing where every student who lives on campus knows about it and has very strong feeling about it,” said Methodist campus minister Doug McKee. Some students keep their doors closed, and others make sure they sit with friends at meals so they won’t be approached by the missionaries, he said. The university housing office has issued a memo reminding students they have a right to privacy in their rooms.

Last spring a committee of students and administrators adopted a rule banning door-to-door solicitations in dormitories—a rule administrators may have difficulty enforcing because of a court ruling. A few resident advisers who are members of the church have been warned not to let their religious convictions interfere with their jobs, CU housing director Gerald Ferguson said. Some students have complained that the Church of Christ members have given Christianity a bad name. Others say the church’s strict interpretation of some parts of the Bible has challenged them to learn more about their own religions.

None disputes the fact that the missionaries in their midst are sincere and successful. Four years ago, when Tom Brown, 29, came to Boulder to start a campus ministry, the church had only four student members. Today it has about 300. Other campus ministers attribute the success of the fundamentalist church, in part, to a national trend.

“A great deal of pressure is put on the more vulnerable people, those who aren’t quite so secure,” McKee said. Some ministers also criticized the church for what they view as its narrow approach to Christianity. Johnson said he believes the Church of Christ’s literal reading of the Scriptures is a “misuse of Scripture.” He also charged that the church refuses to respect “freedom of individual thoughts. They’re right, and everybody else is wrong,” he said.

Lutheran minister Bob Stuenkel said the church offers pat answers to students who ought to be questioning and exploring. “It’s more important to arm people with the values to answer” the hard questions in life, Johnson said. “Searching is so much a part of the process. God won’t rub us out for making mistakes. Growth is messy.”

As she attempted to get gracefully disengaged, Celano, then a freshman, found herself in “two-, three-, four-hour-long conversations about why I didn’t want to go. I’d end up saying, ‘All right, I’ll go.’” But Celano didn’t like the Bible studies, or the church members’ condemnation of others, or the assumption that all women should marry and rear families. “Why do you want to do that?” she said the members would ask when she said she wanted to be a psychologist. “After you get married you won’t want to do that.” Eventually she became part of a Catholic student group, thinking she had been cheated out of part of being a college freshman. “It kind of stunted my social growth,” she said.

Another sophomore, a 19-year-old whose parents live in Aurora, was approached by church members. She said she wasn’t interested. It hasn’t worked. “I’ve made up my mind,” she said. “I’ve already been polite. I just don’t have time for it. I personally don’t appreciate being hassled when I’ve said no. I’ve seen so many people hassled by them. The next time I’m going to call the police, and that’s it.”

Religion provides a “safe, secure sanctuary” from the problems of the world, said the Rev. Patrick Johnson, campus minister of St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish. “When things don’t work, people turn toward religion.”

He also pointed to a swing toward things students rejected in the 1960s and 1970s: professional schools, materialism—and their religious heritage. The Church of Christ’s tactics, not its evangelicalism, is causing the worry. “They’re very friendly, so their first starting point is to befriend new people,”

Johnson said. But he and several students confirmed that in many cases the friendships last only as long as the courtship to salvation. A student who rejects the church—even after months of involvement—is likely to lose the friendships associated with it. “So it’s a conditional friendship. It’s certainly not biblically based,” Johnson said.

The campus ministers met with Brown in the spring to express their concerns, but as one said they reached only a cordial impasse.” And nine campus religious groups issued a pamphlet that urges students to “learn to be a questioner.” It tells students to “beware of groups that recruit you through guilt” and says one principle of brainwashing is: “If you can get a person to behave the way you want, you can get that person to believe the way you want.”

Students said the smiling missionaries are nothing if not persistent in their invitations to persuade students to come to Bible studies. A 19-year-old sophomore from Denver said that for some who get deeply involved, leaving can be difficult. Mary Ann Obermeier, 22, was working in a Boulder bookstore when she was invited to go to church with a fellow worker. She eventually was baptized and was encouraged to enroll in CU so she could convert others.

Now a Baptist planning to attend a seminary, Obermeier said, "They're giving Christianity a bad name." She left after she decided she didn't agree with their belief that only those baptized by the Church of Christ would find salvation.

"It was pretty hard to leave," she said, "They felt that by leaving I was converting back to evil ways. I got a lot of phone calls. People wanted to come out and visit me." While in the fold she was encouraged to put church before family, another point which bothered her. She was hurt when the church members she'd grown close to no longer considered her a friend. "They'll only talk to me about why I left," Obermeier said. Campus ministers often hear from the parents of students who are shocked that their children have become involved.

The mother of one convert became painfully aware of the church tactics when her daughter came home for Christmas four years ago. "They called two to three times a day while she was home," said the mother. Later, when her daughter became active in the church, she made such calls herself. "My daughter called up a person she was putting the pressure on," the woman said. "She kept this poor person on he phone for over an hour haranguing her. She convinced this poor, innocent creature she'd be struck by Satan if she hung up."

She said her daughter went to CU on a prestigious scholarship, barely made adequate grades and has given up all her ambitious, deciding instead to work as a counselor for the church.

She and the parents of another student who became involved have "spent hours consoling each other. And we've lost our children completely," the mother said. She's convinced the only reason her daughter has any contact with her is that the Bible calls for honoring one's parents.

In an interview at the Broadway church, Brown said many parents are more concerned about their children's involvement in a religious group than they would be about drugs. Some church members contended their involvement has drawn them closer to their parents. But in a recent Sunday night service, attended as usual by more than 400 students, Brown warned that some "well meaning" teachers, ministers and even parents "may be a straitjacket to you,"

hampering attempts to join a church that follows the Bible.

Every church seat was filled, and more people sat in the basement, watching the service on closed-circuit television. In the sanctuary the church members sang. They smiled across the aisles at others and would put their arms around one another's shoulders.

The central theme of that sermon and many of the campus Bible studies is that the Church of Christ and few others practice the kind of baptism outlined in the Bible. Brown said that type of baptism is immersion in water. "If you haven't been baptized according to the Bible, then you haven't had your sins forgiven," he said. Brown said he wouldn't tell anyone he is headed for Hell and doesn't approve of students telling others that.

Brown said the church doesn't train students to harass other students. But he said, "We encourage people to be aggressive in talking about their faith and reading the Bible." If they're turned down, they're expected to ask the student why he isn't interested and "have a discussion" about it.

His student followers are a "very committed, aggressive group," not "weirdo's who do strange things with people's minds," Brown said. He acknowledged that in their excitement over their new lives, some are "over-zealous." One church member said he may have been too aggressive at first and that after two years he is still concerned about his approach. "I pray about it myself, because I want to be sincere about it," said Brian Plymell, 20.

The church's doctrine is "conservative," Brown said. But he doesn't believe it's too narrow for young, exploring minds. "I don't think it's the cardinal sin to finally come to a conclusion about some things," he said.

Brown acknowledged that some prospective members may feel that their church friends have abandoned them after they decide not to join. The church members, he said, are too busy with others to keep inviting the old prospects to as many functions. To a charge of male supremacy, Brown said he believes it's clear the Bible sanctions male leadership of the church. He thinks children need their mothers, and he isn't sure whether women should pursue careers. "I'm still working on that," he said.



Gainesville Sun [Gainesville, Florida], August 14, 1981

## Parents Picket Over Daughter 'Lost' to Church

by Bob Arndorfer, Sun Staff Writer

The parents of an 18-year-old girl, whom they say they lost to "the Crossroads cult," traveled from California to Gainesville this week to picket a four-day

evangelism seminar being held on the University of Florida campus by Crossroads Church of Christ.

Douglas and Shirley Willis of Poway, Calif, joined by three pickets from Orlando and Tampa, walked with banners and signs near the O'Connell Center Thursday, where Campus Advance, a UF student organization sponsored by the Gainesville church, was holding the 15th Annual Florida Evangelism Seminar. About 4,000 people from throughout the nation and 25 foreign countries are attending the seminar, which ends Saturday.

The Willises, who are also posting "warning" notices around town, say they are protesting the church's "destructive, mind-altering and controlling techniques" in recruiting and keeping members.

"We're trying to bring more exposure to the Crossroads cult," said Mrs. Willis. "We're trying to make those people who are coming here realize what the Crossroads movement is all about and make them aware of the bad reputation it's getting in cities all over the nation." The "Crossroads movement," she said, has spread to more than 50 campus towns nationwide in churches whose ministers are trained at the Gainesville church. In nearly every community that has a church affiliated with Crossroads, the California couple said, there have been families who have lost children to the "aggressive pursuit" and "total commitment" philosophy of the church.

Chuck Lucas, minister of Crossroads, acknowledged Thursday that the church has trained more than 60 ministers who are now "happily employed by congregations across the country." But he denied that there is a "Crossroads movement." Each Church of Christ, he said, is an independent congregation whose members decide who their elders and deacons will be. "The congregation decides if they want a minister who was trained here," said Lucas.

"We train our ministers to use the methods of evangelism that are biblical and that have proven effective in the Gainesville ministry," he said. "These congregations use many of the same techniques. But it's up to the congregation to decide if they want to use these programs and methods."

Participants in the seminar, which features classes on biblical teachings, campus and adult evangelism, church growth, marriage and the family and personal spiritual development, include students from over 250 colleges and universities and representatives from more than 300 congregations of Churches of Christ, according to Lucas. "The gripe I've got with (the press), is there are 4,000 positive people here who won't get to first base in your article," Lucas said, "while four or five picketers are the story. It is those people who cause the problems, not Crossroads."

In their community, a town of 20,000 near San Diego, the Willises have been trying for a year to get their daughter, Alison, away from the Poway Church of Christ, which she joined when she was 16. The church, according to one of several Southern California newspaper stories published earlier this year, has become "the battleground of a seething religious war." The Willises and several other members of Save Our Children, an organization opposed to the Poway church and its conversion practices, have picketed every Sunday service at the church since February.

"We are trying to put as much pressure on them as we can while they have our daughter," said Willis, an electrical engineer who manages a radiation facility in San Diego. He took vacation time to make the trip to Gainesville. Before their daughter joined the Poway church, the couple said, she was "very bright and witty, an excellent student and a fine musician." Today, they said, she is a "changed person" who has run away from home several times to stay with church members and who no longer cares for her family. Alison, who now lives with the family of a deacon of the Poway church, even tried to "black-mail" her parents, they said.

"She said she wouldn't come home or call us again until we quit all our anti-church activities," Mrs. Willis said. In a telephone interview from San Diego, Alison Willis said she is happy with her involvement in the church. "I really like what they teach and the way they teach it," she said. "Whenever I had any questions, they would show me several different Scripture references—not just one—that answered my questions.

"Another thing I like is the whole attitude there. It's nice to go to a church where everybody really likes to be there," she said. She said she would like to talk with her parents, but hesitates to visit them now "because every time I go over there, they spend all the time yelling at me about the church and about my friends there."

Asked why she thought her parents opposed her involvement in the church, she said, "The main reason, I think, is they just don't believe in the Bible. My mom especially doesn't believe in the Bible, that it isn't the word of God, She dislikes my following a standard other than the one she raised me on," Alison said.

"We are not opposing Christianity at all," said Mrs. Willis in response to her daughter's comment. "As a matter of fact, we encouraged her when she began to go to the church, until after about a year, when she became fanatical about it and was willing to give up everything for it—for the church, not for Christianity. "We offered to go to any other church in the whole county with her," said Mrs. Willis, a former

Methodist who describes herself now as an agnostic who is “unsure of what comes after death.”

“We begged our daughter to try another church. We even offered to drive clear across the county to go to another Church of Christ.” Lucas said the Willises, whom he has never met but whose case he is familiar with, could easily “be reconciled with their daughter if they just grant her the right to her beliefs. But they will not grant her that.”

“We will never agree to cultic beliefs,” said Mrs. Willis, “not when they are destroying her. Our daughter is naive and doesn’t see how the church manipulates the meaning of Bible passages and their members with guilt.” The Willises said they plan to picket until the seminar is over. “If we can get to some kids who are not totally committed yet, we’d just like to sow some seeds of doubt in their minds,” said, Willis, whose background is Episcopalian. And when the seminar is over, they plan to return to California to continue to fight for their daughter. “Our only hope,” Mrs. Willis said, “is that we’ll cause them enough problems to force them to give her back to us, because as long as they’ve got her, they’ve got us.”



Christianity Today, November 20, 1981

## A Church of Christ Renewal Movement Perplexes Many

Lloyd Billingsley

When pastor Andy Lindo came to the Church of Christ in Poway, California, a town near San Diego, the church membership soared, especially among young people. Something else soared at the Poway Church of Christ: controversy. As Lindo’s ministry took hold, some parents of young members began picketing. Lindo is a practitioner of a much-debated renewal movement spreading throughout local congregations of the Church of Christ across the country. For want of a better term, outsiders call it “The Crossroads Movement,” because it started with Chuck Lucas, pastor of the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, in 1971. Lucas conducts seminars for other Church of Christ ministers.

The practices include discipleship, aggressive evangelism, prayer partnerships in which older Christians are matched with newer ones, and something known as “one-another Christianity,” a term that summarizes the emphasis on personal growth in the faith. There have been some excesses that caused much consternation among Church of Christ members who are not part of the movement. At Lindo’s church in Poway, it was once a practice to

discuss the personal problems of members openly in a “soul talk.” This is no longer done.

Ronald Brumley, an elder in the Poway church, said, “We have been overly strong in giving out advice” about how participants should live their lives, and people who wanted to leave the movement have been unduly ostracized. He and Lindo say they regret the division and controversy surrounding the movement, but they also feel the blame does not lie only with them, and say they are making efforts at reconciliation. Some accusers attack the books used by Crossroads workers. Jay Adams’s *Competent to Counsel* is labeled “a Calvinistic book with incorrect relation to the Holy Spirit.” Stephen Olford’s *Manna in the Morning* is criticized as “an extra-biblical catechism.” (Olford and Adams are widely known authors in the larger evangelical sphere). The New International Version of the Bible has been called “a transdenominational version that cannot convert anyone.”

The Church of Christ has no denominational hierarchy or official spokesmen, but affiliated schools and publications are divided over the Crossroads movement. Jerry Jones of the Harding University Bible Department, James Lovell of *Action Magazine*, and Reuel Lemmons, editor of the publication *Firm Foundation*, all support Lucas and Crossroads. All three reject the charges of cultism leveled at Crossroads, and say that news media sensationalism has blown things out of proportion. There have been numerous articles appearing in local newspapers in dries to which Crossroads has spread. The Gainesville, Florida, paper has written extensively on it, and with hostility. Ira Rice, editor of a Birmingham, Alabama, Church of Christ publication, *Contending for the Faith*, is critical, and has reprinted an investigative article on Crossroads from the *Los Angeles Times*. Rice believes the movement’s philosophy of total commitment amounts to a kind of salvation by works.

John Banks, a San Diego-area Church of Christ minister, regards Rice as a muckraker, but he said Rice has handled the Crossroads issue correctly: “Someone has to blow the whistle sometime,” he said. In conjunction with other San Diego ministers, Banks purchased an extensive, theologically detailed, newspaper ad that echoed many of the charges against Crossroads, and which dissociated the ministers’ churches from it. Much of the furor has been on university campuses, pitting long-standing campus outreaches and Crossroads workers. William J. Teague, president of Abilene Christian University, states that his university does not permit Chuck Lucas or his direct associates to speak on campus. Otto Spangler of the Baptist Campus Ministry on the Gainesville campus of the University of Florida feels

that after many efforts to cooperate, “there is no room for dialogue” with the exclusivist Crossroads workers. Said Spangler “I could not begin to tell of the damage done to students whom I have counseled because of the practices of this Church. I would warn anyone against involvement with this mindset.” Brumley, of the Poway Church of Christ, was asked if the large numbers attending his church means that the Crossroads movement is valid. He said the numbers at least show that “something is happening.” It seems, though, that within and without the Church of Christ, there is little agreement on what this is.



Circulated Among Church Leaders, 1982-1983

## “Why I Left the Crossroads Movement”

by Tom Vail

Tom Vail is currently serving as the campus minister of the Call Street Church of Christ in Tallahassee, Florida. A 1978 graduate of Florida State University, Tom was involved in the Campus Ministry Training Program at F.S.U. This program was conducted by a Crossroads trained minister. A former teacher and football coach, Tom has decided to dedicate his time to full time work in the ministry. Toward this end, he enters the Harding Graduate School in Memphis, Tenn. next summer. Tom is married and he and his wife, Patricia, are expecting their first child next spring. In this interview Tom recounts some of his experiences within the Crossroads movement. He explains why he became discouraged with some of the methods used in the campus ministry at F.S.U. and finally left the group.

*Question: Tom, my first question is, how did you become involved with this movement?*

I became involved with a campus ministry at Florida State University. A Crossroads trained campus minister was working there in the fall of 1974.

*Question: Were you baptized at the church in Tallahassee?*

Answer: Yes and no. I was first baptized in Panama City, Florida on July 1973 at the age of 17. Yet at Florida State I was rebaptized because of recurring problems I was experiencing in February of 1976.

*Question: Why did you feel your first baptism was invalid?*

For several reasons. I was convinced I had a continual problem with pride and lust, and I thought I did not know enough about the commitment to Christ I would need in order to become a Christian. I never thought I had died to myself and let Christ live in me, so I felt a lot of pressure to somehow overcome the guilt that was continually weighing down my mind.

Two Christians who were close to me suggested my baptism may be my problem.

*Question: In retrospect, which baptism do you feel is valid?*

Answer: My first.

*Question: Can you explain why?*

Because I now realize my life was truly committed to Jesus at my first baptism and I knew what I was doing in 1973, because I loved God and had faith in Him. My basic problem in February 1976 was misunderstanding the grace of God. I had somehow gotten God’s unmerited favor towards me twisted to the point I felt like I had to merit my salvation or, in other words, work for my salvation.

*Question: Did your misunderstanding result from any teaching received at F.S.U.?*

Answer: Yes, the movement does misunderstand and misrepresent the grace of God.

*Question: Can you explain the movement’s view of grace?*

Answer: People involved in the movement believe that you must merit your salvation by changing certain attitudes, feelings, patterns of living in order to become a Christian. This is taken from Luke 3:8 where John the Baptist tells the Pharisees to bear fruit of repentance. The spirit of the individual must be broken or humbled before those who are sharing with this person. This is very subjective in the manner in which it is administered. The person must confess sins he or she has committed to the Christian who is sharing with them. This reinforces the idea of submission and demonstrates evidence of a broken spirit. God’s grace is dependent on your continual correct response to the rules and unwritten regulations that are enforced within the group. Because of these things, God’s love becomes conditional on how well you conform to the group’s thinking. They believe that God only loves you if you have your Quiet Time every day or God only loves you if you go to every soul talk that meets in your dorm. God only loves you when you obey your prayer partner, soul talk leader campus minister, etc.

*Question: Were you very deeply involved in the movement? How long were you a committed member?*

Answer: I was very committed to the movement. I was in Campus Minister's Training Program at F.S.U. for 4 years. I participated in every retreat, soul talk, devotional I possibly could. I prayed with the campus minister my first year at F.S.U. And even progressed to the point of having 5 prayer partners. I was a soul talk co-leader and eventually a soul talk leader. I was elected to treasurer of the campus ministry and nominated to be president my senior year. Also, I traveled out to Abilene in 1976 to take a class in campus ministry at the world Evangelism Seminar

that was taught by Chuck Lucas. Therefore, I guess you might say I was fairly committed to the movement. In answer to the second part of your question, I stayed active in the movement until about December of 1978.

*Question: Why then did you leave this movement after being involved for around 5 years?*

Answer: Well, that's a rather involved question. A complex sequence of events lead to my leaving the movement. Basically, the problem began in my senior year (1977-78) and were related to my work as a soul talk leader, dating relationship and my relationship with the campus minister.

Fall quarter 1977 I became a co-leader of a soul talk. That winter (1978) I was made a soul talk leader. The soul talk I led was quite successful, having an average of fifteen visitors per week and several baptisms. Even though, the campus minister was always displeased with my work. He not only expressed this to me, but others as well.

During this time, I was offered a position as youth minister with a congregation in Georgia. Evidently, my reputation outside of Call Street was better than the campus minister's opinion of me was. The campus minister talked me out of taking this job, because he said I was not ready for the job. I knew I was. He also told me that as long as his name was not on my resume, I could not get a job. He taught this in the Campus Minister's Training Program (CMTP). Another area of conflict was my desire to date the sister who is now my wife. The campus minister did not consider us "spiritual enough" to date. Because having his permission was so important, I held off from dating her on a regular basis until October 1978. When we did date, it was without permission, which caused problems.

At the end of the winter quarter (March 1978) I went to Panama City to do my internship in Physical Education. I was told that I could only write my girlfriend once and call her once. From what I knew, I felt certain that someone would keep tabs on how often we wrote or talked to each other. Most student's personal lives were monitored in this way. He also questioned the spiritual qualities of my girlfriend. Any good qualities I mentioned weren't good enough for him. He asked my why I didn't date any of the girls that were soul talk leaders. I had no interest in them, and by this time I knew you could not afford to be honest with them.

My girlfriend had problems too. In discussing our relationship with a roommate, she told her something that was to remain confidential. This information was passed from the roommate to the women's counselor, to the campus minister, to my prayer partner, and then to me. I then went to my girlfriend and had a discussion about I said to her, "You've got to learn

how to play the game. Once you've learned the rules and conformed to them you'll be all right." This caused matters to be worse, because she could already see through the system that was used at Call Street. What we had experienced was not uncommon. All of this led to more and more conflict with the campus minister who I once considered a very good friend. He was in control of the situation, so there wasn't much I could do. I spoke with the minister about the breakdown of my relationship with the campus minister. At first he agreed with me about the campus minister's lack of friendliness, but he almost immediately accused me of resentment. This was the standard accusation used whenever someone questioned anything, or the character of a "leader." I spent that spring quarter in Panama City. On returning to Tallahassee, I had lost all of my original responsibilities and as word got out the cold shoulder (withdrawal of love) treatment I had been taught in CMTP was applied to me. When I took a teaching job I lost all hope of involvement in the campus group, although I stayed at Call Street. Actually, rather than me leaving them, they pushed me away.

*Question: Are there any other things you would like to share?*

Answer: Yes, there are a lot more of these things I could tell you about. For example, when I asked my wife to marry me, people actually tried to talk others out of being in our wedding because we were considered to be unspiritual.

*Question: What eventually happened in your church? Have the problems been resolved?*

Answer: In a way, they have been. In January 1980, without any previous discussion or warning, the campus minister, 2 deacons, the women's counselor, and our secretary resigned and started their own group. They did this without permission of the elders or even giving the elders an opportunity to speak to all the young Christians they had led away with them. You see, either this movement's philosophy rules or ruins both churches and people.

*Question: Tom, what are you doing now?*

Answer: I am now the campus minister at Call Street Church of Christ. I am planning to go to graduate school at Harding in Memphis next summer.



Gainesville Sun [Gainesville, Florida, August 24, 1986

## Crossroads Fires Chuck Lucas, Citing 'Recurring Sins'

by Bob Arndorfer, Sun staff writer

Chuck Lucas, the charismatic minister who led Crossroads Church of Christ along a turbulent path of dramatic growth coupled with controversy, has been fired as the church's evangelist. In a unanimous

decision by the church's four ruling elders, the 46-year-old Lucas was terminated Aug. 21 "because of recurring sins in his life." In a statement published in last Sunday's Crossroads church bulletin, the elders explained his dismissal to the 1,000-member congregation by saying: "Our hearts are heavy and hurting as we share with you the unanimous decision of the elders to terminate Chuck Lucas as evangelist of the Crossroads Church of Christ. This decision was made necessary because of recurring sins in his life, which he has acknowledged. We are pleased that he has repented. His present relationship to God is not at issue. Our conclusion is that he should no longer serve on the staff of this congregation. The other evangelists agree and support the elders' decision. We have not lost sight of his tremendous contribution to the cause of Christ which has had its effect all over this nation and into other parts of the world. We are grateful for that. We love him and his family and wish them well as they leave this ministry."

Refusing to comment on his termination, Lucas told *The Sun*, "The elders and I agreed that no further statements will be made beyond the statements we have already made." In his own separate statement, also published in Sunday's bulletin, Lucas said "I completely agree that it is best for me at this time to terminate my responsibilities as evangelist for the Crossroads Church. This decision has been reached after much time, thought, prayer and counsel. In recent years I have become increasingly and painfully aware of sins and weaknesses in my own life and character which have made it difficult for me to serve in the exemplary and effective manner which the Lord and this church deserve. I want to get out of the spotlight and the pressures and demands of the full-time ministry for a period of time, in order to concentrate on and deal decisively with those things which will enable me to serve the Lord in the future in another ministry in a greater way than ever before." In his statement, Lucas said he believed "this decision is best for all concerned. Even though you may not understand it, please accept it."

He also thanked the congregation and its leadership and staff "who have stood by me in times of great stress. I am truly sorry and penitent for every sin, failure and mistake, and praise God for every victory and success. Asked about the nature of the "recurring sins," Lucas steadfastly refused to elaborate. "I'm sorry, but I just will not say anything beyond the statement. I think the statement says everything I want to say," he said. Lucas did say he and his family currently remain as members of the congregation, and that his wife, Ann, is still on staff as women's counselor. About their future, and whether they plan to remain in Gainesville, Lucas said, "We haven't made any decisions at this time."

Richard Whitehead, one of the ruling elders, also refused to discuss the matter. "Our decision was that the statements must stand on their own merit," Whitehead said. "The statements are what we want to share and believe they will be in the best interest of the church, (Lucas) and the community." Martin Wooten, who has headed the church's active ministry to single adults, has been named to assume Lucas's preaching duties as evangelist. One member of the congregation, who asked that his name not be used, said he thought "everybody was surprised" at the announcement. "But everyone is willing to accept it," he said. "I sort of looked at it like a change in the presidency. It was a smooth transition from one leader to another."

Another member, who also didn't want her name used, said she also was surprised, "and shocked," but the reaction of other members, she said, "now seems to be acceptance." Asked about the hierarchy in the church whose most visible leader was Lucas, Whitehead referred to a passage in Scripture and said, "the elders shall control the church."

Whitehead said that although Lucas now "has no relationship" with the church staff, he will remain a member of the church "as long as he stays and resides in this community and attends this congregation. We don't practice exclusion in the body of Christ."



# Chapter II

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## Boston, Massachusetts & Los Angeles, California 1979-Present



# THE BOSTON/LA ERA

Boston Globe Magazine, June 8, 1986

## Oh Come, All Ye Faithful

**In 1979 the Boston Church of Christ had 30 members. Today it holds services in the Boston Garden. Why is it so popular—and so controversial ?**

By Daniel Terris

The parquet floor is gleaming. The Celtics and Bruins banners hang solemnly from the rafters. The illuminated signs advertise light beer and soft drinks. But the scoreboard is dark. No basketballs are clanging off the rims. No cameras flash on the sidelines. Indeed, there is no one on the court at all. Instead, there is a lectern facing away from the court, and congregated in one end of the arena, 2,200 people are raising their voices in a resonant hymn. It is Sunday morning in the Boston Garden, and this is a weekly service of the Boston Church of Christ. A year ago the church was conducting services in the Boston Opera House. From 1980 to 1983, services were held in the Baptist church in Arlington. And as recently as 1979 it was a struggling church in Lexington with just 30 members.

Under the leadership of a 32-year-old evangelist named Kip McKean, the Boston Church of Christ has embarked on a mission of aggressive recruiting that began on college campuses and has spread into the high-tech marketplace, attracting young professionals in the metropolitan area. Five years ago the Boston Church of Christ was 80 percent college students; today the largest single group is unmarried young professionals.

Claiming that they are “laying aside the traditions of men” and “restoring New Testament Christianity,” the leaders of the Boston Church of Christ have urged upon members an ambitious program of “discipleship.” As one church bulletin puts it, “Whether we are a teen, college student, single adult, single parent, married adult, or senior adult, we must realize that we can effect *great numbers* for the cause of Christ.”

The church has achieved its large membership at a price. Many young people who have turned to it in search of structure and community have left the

church emotionally spent. The Boston church, they claim, demands total commitment and obedience and fosters an abject dependence on the group. “What they say is that if you're not converting people, there must be sin in your life,” says Robert Ludlum of Boston, who was a member for four years before leaving the church in 1984. “It got to the in point my life that I felt guilty for everything that I did.” Robert Thornburg, the university chaplain at Marsh Chapel at Boston University, calls the Boston Church of Christ a “destructive religious group,” claiming that “the church seems to have concern only for reduplication of its own kind.”

At the Boston Garden, shortly after the hymn, neatly dressed young men walk up and down the aisles, passing gold-colored collection plates. Bills and checks pile up on the platters (Later in the week, a church bulletin will reveal that the amount surpassed \$35,000). After the platters are whisked away, McKean steps to the lectern. A mesmerizing speaker, he alternates between casual Southern humor and old-fashioned New England hellfire. He speaks this morning on the “fires of revival,” recalling with admiration the evangelizing fervor of the apostles. “We like to think our congregation is big,” McKean proclaims. “We had 3,000 people here on Bring-a-Neighbor Day, and we thought that was great. But 3,000 was the *smallest* that the Jerusalem church ever was. Peter and the apostles converted 3,000 people in *one day*.”

Many of the congregants jot down McKean's phrases in well-worn notebooks. The diversity of the group is striking: There are few large public gatherings in Boston at which one can find so many people of so many races gathered in a common purpose. “Three thousand people,” McKean reiterates. “Wouldn't it have been great to be in Jerusalem on that day?”

Each Church of Christ is completely autonomous. An indigenous American church that evolved during the 19th century, the Church of Christ has no denominational hierarchy. The 1.2 million people in Church of Christ congregations across the country are concentrated mostly in the South, and their theological bent tends to be conservative, though there has been widening diversity in the last four decades. Besides the Boston congregation, there are

several Churches of Christ in the Boston area, each entirely independent and none with more than 200 members. (The Church of Christ should not be confused with the United Church of Christ, an inheritor of the New England Congregational tradition.)

Kip McKean was a student at the University of Florida in Gainesville in the early 1970's where he was recruited for the ministry by a charismatic preacher named Chuck Lucas. The Crossroads Church of Christ, where Lucas was the minister, was already known for its rapid growth and for a controversy that arose at the nearby University of Florida. Lucas taught strict adherence to the Bible, but his special emphasis was on the concept of "discipleship," or one-on-one conversion. Many churches, including Churches of Christ, embrace this idea, but Lucas developed a particularly intense version. He drew on such texts as Robert Coleman's *Master Plan of Evangelism*, which teaches that Jesus controlled the lives of the apostles, that Jesus taught the apostles to "disciple" by controlling the lives of others, and that Christians should imitate this process when bringing people to Christ.

More than 30 of Lucas' young recruits fanned out across the country in the mid-1970s, attaching themselves to existing Church of Christ congregations, usually near college campuses. In places as far apart as California, Colorado, and Florida, the adherents of the Crossroads Movement, as it came to be called, were involved in controversy in the church and in the communities where Lucas recruits worked. A publication from a mainstream Church of Christ organization in Alabama attacked the Crossroads techniques for going beyond commonly accepted discipleship practices. Organizations that monitor what they call "destructive religious groups" began to keep files on the spreading movement. In 1976 McKean became the campus minister for the Heritage Chapel Church of Christ, near Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois. Within three years, student membership at the church jumped from 20 to 180. A series of articles in the local newspaper in April 1979 explored charges that "tactics of manipulation and control were being used in the church program." Church leaders responded by saying they did not "apologize for wanting to share Christ with people." In June of the same year, McKean came east to Lexington, Massachusetts.

The young preacher found the many colleges in the Boston area fertile ground for converts—the "fruit" that the Crossroads philosophy sought to produce. In the three years before McKean arrived, there were two baptisms at the Lexington Church of Christ. In his first three years at the church, there were 750. By

1983, the Lexington Church of Christ (as Boston church was called before it moved into the Opera House later that year) had grown from 30 members to more than 1,000. In 1986 the Boston Church of Christ boasts more than 1,800 members. Members meet on Wednesday nights in local "house churches," and the church sponsors nearly 300 Bible talks weekly within Route 495. Sixty full-time employees collect paychecks from church headquarters, still located in Lexington.

The Boston Church of Christ calls for a return to "first-century Christianity," and its members look to the New Testament as the divine revelation of God and the ultimate reference text in any moral question. While liberal church groups have recently begun to look back to the first century for the roots of Christian pacifism, equality between the sexes, the philosophy of the Boston Church of Christ looks primarily to the dramatic conversion experiences described in the book of Acts. The theological underpinnings of the Boston church are similar to those of other Churches of Christ; it is in its methods, particularly its emphasis on discipleship, that it parts ways with mainstream Church of Christ congregations. These methods have made the Boston church by far the fastest-growing Church of Christ in the country.

Although "first-century Christianity" suggests a return to a simple church structure, the Boston church depends on an intricate pattern of leadership. Older Christians serve as one-on-one instructors to younger members; more experienced members aspire to serve as Bible-talk leaders and leaders of "house church" sessions, held in neighborhood homes. Women and men rise along separate tracks, though only men may serve as the deacons, evangelists, and elders, who set the tone for the church as a whole. The church requires no formal ordination for its ministers. McKean has encountered much the same controversy in Boston that other Crossroads-trained ministers have experienced around the country. Longtime members of the original Lexington church claimed they were pushed out by the new regime. *Nutshell*, a national magazine for college students, published an article in 1983 linking the Lexington church with other "hard-sell religions." In 1985 the television news magazine *Chronicle* broadcast a story on allegations that the Boston church was using high-pressure recruiting tactics at Boston University. The Boston church has recently tried to put some distance between itself and the Crossroads Movement, especially since the abrupt resignation of Chuck Lucas from the Crossroads Church of Christ last summer. Perhaps as part of this distancing, the Boston church has billed itself as the "Boston School for World Missions," and it is actively forming similarly

oriented churches around the country and the world. It has sponsored the establishment of congregations in New York, Chicago, Toronto, and London, with “plantings” planned for this year in Johannesburg, Stockholm, Paris, and Bombay. The Boston Church of Christ appears to be becoming the unofficial headquarters of a worldwide sect.

Gerry Fernandez was working as a proctor at a dormitory at Northeastern University in 1980 when he was approached by a fellow student who introduced himself as Jerry Chan. Fernandez says that Chan was pleased to discover they had the same name. Big deal, Fernandez remembers thinking. There must be around a million Jerrys and Gerrys in the world. He tried to look busy with his books. But Chan persisted and found out that Fernandez, like Chan, was an engineering student at Northeastern. Chan asked Fernandez whether he had ever read the Bible. Fernandez had to admit he was not terribly familiar with the Scriptures. He had grown up in a liberal Catholic family in Venezuela, and in the year and a half that he had been studying in Boston he had not really had any formal ties with religion. Fernandez remembers that Chan convinced him to have an open mind, to take a closer look at the Word, as Chan put it. When Fernandez hesitated, Chan agreed to work with him one-on-one.

“Why do you think they started their work on college campuses?” Fernandez asks today. “People are away from their families, and the younger generation is the most susceptible. We have that trend toward finding the truth, so we’re the most susceptible to mind control and behavior modification.”

Fernandez recalls that the first time he attended the services of the Lexington Church of Christ, he was “smothered in love.” He began to attend more services and more Bible studies, and developed “a nice social life” in the church. Fernandez felt comfortable with this group of people, but he recalls that after a few weeks he began to get the feeling that he was slightly left out. He remembers learning Bible studies, led by Jim Lloyd, a Boston Church of Christ minister working on the Northeastern campus, that people could not be saved without having a conscious baptism in a community of true Christians. Fernandez remembers Lloyd’s saying that an earlier baptism in a church that did not follow the Bible did not count. Fernandez was hesitant. Lloyd applied no direct pressure, but the message was unmistakable, Fernandez says. “One day Jim came over and gave me a big hug and made a big show of calling me ‘brother’ in front of all these other people. Then he stopped short, as though he’d made a big mistake. and said, ‘I’m sorry, Gerry. I forgot you’re not a brother. You’ve been around for so long that I forget that you have not been baptized yet.’”

“Eventually,” Fernandez says. “I had no choice. I felt like I had to join. They were so nice all the time and never seemed to have any problems. After a while you feel like if you’re not involved in this kind of thing, you’re no good.” One conversation in the days leading up to his baptism shook Fernandez deeply. He remembers that Lloyd sat him down and took him through the Bible, passage by passage, telling him that the structures and rituals of the Catholic church contradict God’s will as expressed in the New Testament. “At the end of two paragraphs,” Fernandez remembers, “I was so sad and depressed I started to cry. I didn’t have my mother to talk to. I didn’t have my father to talk to. And religion—you want to talk about that kind of thing with your family.”

Six months after he became involved, Fernandez was, as he puts it, “eating, sleeping, and living” with other members of the Boston Church of Christ. Called a “baby Christian” in the period immediately after his baptism, Fernandez was encouraged to move in with other church members, and he continued to spend all his time with his new church friends. Within a few weeks of his baptism, Fernandez’s Bible-study friends and the campus minister began to drop hints that Fernandez should go out and spread the Word. He was taught how to strike up conversations, how to use different approaches with different people. Bearing fruit for the church, Fernandez was told again and again, is the only way to continue to serve Jesus, the only way to be a Christian.

Before he had been baptized, Fernandez had gotten to know a church member named Nancy, and he asked her out. After their first date, church protocol required that he speak with Nancy’s Bible talk leader, since a second date was considered an indication of some involvement, and the teachings of the church are quite strict and precise regarding appropriate behavior between men and women. (“Imagine a 20-year-old man asking a 24-year-old woman for permission to take out a 21-year-old woman,” Fernandez says today.) The Bible-talk leader was not very enthusiastic. “Nancy’s been doing ‘C’ work lately,” she told Fernandez, meaning that Nancy had been lax about the requirements and evangelizing. Fernandez himself was considered an “A” worker. Fernandez managed to get permission to date Nancy anyway, but it turned out that the counselor was right: Nancy left the church before she and Fernandez could go out on a second date. “Once she left, I wasn’t even supposed to talk to her, much less go out with her,” Fernandez recalls. He used the excuse of trying to win her back to the church to visit her, but when his efforts did not pay off, the leaders put pressure on him to drop her and spend his time with more active prospects.

Fernandez remained a member of the Boston Church of Christ on and off for 2 1/2 years. His gregarious nature and his success at bringing people to the church made him an excellent prospect for rising in the unofficial hierarchy. He believed passionately in the Bible, and he cheerfully devoted himself to doing God's work. For a time he was an assistant Bible leader, though he felt himself unworthy of the post. But he discovered that when he did things that church members did not encourage—such as visiting his family in South America—his church friends subtly withdrew. Although he left his address and phone number, he heard from none of his church friends while he was away. And at a time when the church had become nearly his whole world, such a withdrawal was devastating.

The world of the church became increasingly confining, and Fernandez found himself exploring other options. He attended the Burlington Church of Christ for a time and found its less intense approach more to his liking. But he continued to spend time around the Boston church, for there were still many people he liked and cared about there. It was not until he stopped attending altogether that he began to resent the strictures that church membership had placed upon him. "They talk about love and care," he says now. "When I was away they didn't have the decency to call me or drop a line. Not one of them were really my friends. They'll say it's my own selfish reaction, but all they care about is the number of baptisms and what the contribution is every week." Since he left the Boston Church of Christ in 1983, Gerry Fernandez has become an outspoken critic of the church, and he has been active in keeping potential converts from joining the group. "Now I use the same techniques to get people out of the church that I used to get them in. I try to win their friendship first." But the difference, he says, is that he is using these techniques to enhance freedom of thought, not restrict it.

To Steve Hassan, the testimonies of people such as Gerry Fernandez indicate that the Boston Church of Christ uses a form of mind control to keep its members in line. As a young man Hassan spent two years in Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, and he has spent most of the decade since he left the Unification Church developing a noncoercive approach to helping people readjust after they leave "destructive religious groups." Hassan, who has never been a member of the Boston Church of Christ but who has talked with many former members, claims that every part of the Boston Church of Christ program is designed to restrict freedom of thought and encourage so much dependence on the group that the individual feels there is no life outside the church itself. The warm reception given to Fernandez, says

Hassan, is 'love-bombing,' a technique used by many groups, including the Unification Church. The frenetic pace of church activity and the insistence upon socializing within the group make independence almost impossible and render reluctant members extremely vulnerable to isolation and depression if they do choose to leave, he says. The Boston Church of Christ is part of a nationwide "shepherding movement," Hassan says, and he claims that this phenomenon, which also includes Maranatha Campus Ministries and The Way, is the fastest-growing type of destructive group in the country.

Other former members of the Boston Church of Christ echo Fernandez's complaints about the rigidity of the church. Susan Grundy, who left the church in 1984, recalls the all-consuming nature of church activities. "I don't remember having a good nourishing meal," she says. "We weren't supposed to be spending enough time in the apartment to fix a full dinner." Grundy's church work kept her busy until well after midnight, and she found herself falling asleep at her daytime secretarial job. "They watched us very closely," she says of church members. "When they didn't know where I was, they'd ask other people to check up on me." Grundy eventually began to act the part of a conscientious member, turning in fictitious lists of potential converts and slipping away to go out for dinner when church members thought she was evangelizing. When she finally left the church, Grundy had nightmares. "I remember waking up in a cold sweat and thinking I have to go back." It took her nearly a year to work up the courage to speak with an Episcopal priest about her fears. Kecia Henderson, who rose quickly in the ranks of the Boston Church of Christ while an undergraduate at Northeastern, claims that the pressures the church puts on its members are seldom direct. Once she was heavily involved in the church, Henderson let her studies go, dropping courses after several weeks and using the tuition refunds to help support church activities. While she says that no church leader would have specifically condoned this practice, she says the leaders encouraged such an intense relationship to the church that she felt that this was the right thing to do. When she herself became a Bible-talk leader, she exercised such a powerful sway over the "sisters" in her study group that they would call her to report on one another's "sinful activities." Henderson did not suggest this practice, but she played on the reliance of her students on her approval. Her own questioning of the rigidity of the doctrine eventually led her away from the church, she says, and members were shocked that a leader so devoted and committed would leave the group.

Robert Ludlum says he began slipping away from the church after he was discovered kissing another man, a particularly grievous sin in a church that explicitly condemns homosexuality. But Ludlum found it nearly impossible to break away, even after Kip McKean ordered him to stay away from his lover, Ludlum says. When Ludlum finally worked up the courage to leave, he says, “I had to start my life all over again. My whole life revolved around the church. There was a big void.”

“I try to interest myself in all aspects of the student,” says Bob Tranchell, the Boston Church of Christ minister at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. “A lot of religions are out of touch with real life.” For Tranchell, the church’s all-encompassing approach is one of its strengths. When he was first attracted to the group as a college student, he was intrigued because “for the first time, I saw people who tried to live out their faith—not just on Sunday mornings, but through the whole week.” Tranchell and his wife, Laurie, lead half a dozen weekly Bible talks for UMass-Boston students. (The church is recognized simply as a student activity on campus.) Bob leads the coeducational groups. Laurie leads two separate women’s groups. In the Boston Church of Christ, men generally disciple and counsel men, and women disciple women. Only men, however, can preach or speak out in church, and only men can aspire to leadership positions within the church as a whole.

At a recent Wednesday afternoon Bible talk, a dozen UMass students meet with Bob and Laurie Tranchell in a windowless classroom at the Harbor campus. Bob sports a red-white-and-blue T-shirt, jeans, and black sneakers. He speaks with the hint of a casual Southern accent, clipping the “g’s” off the end of his gerunds. He was raised in Buffalo; like other longtime church members raised in the North, he seems to have absorbed traces of Kip McKean’s manner of speaking. A specific church vocabulary informs the discussion. Bob and Laurie talk a lot about having “a relationship with God,” and students speak of themselves as “convicted” by the Word. “Name the one thing you would most like to have in your dream house,” Bob asks the group at the beginning of his talk. Students talk about stereos and fireplaces and windows. Bob himself suggests that he wouldn’t mind a full sports arena. But calling their attention to Matthew 7, he points out that all of them have eschewed the practical in favor of luxuries. “What good is it to have an Olympic-size swimming pool,” he asks, “if the first good rain is going to wash it down the hill?”

Drawing on several texts, Bob stresses the importance of building on a “good foundation. That foundation is the Bible itself.” Students contribute

their thoughts about the various “storms” in their lives—financial crises, family problems, career decisions—and Bob consistently guides the conversation back to the Bible. “You don’t cram different concepts and philosophies into Christianity,” he tells students, when speaking of academic studies. “You don’t take a little Freud and a little Jung and try to mix it in. The only foundation is Jesus Christ. That way, when you’re tested, the foundation will remain.” The content of Boston Church of Christ Bible talks is relatively uniform. Each discussion, rigidly orchestrated, drives toward an uncomplicated concluding question. At the Wednesday session, it was “Will you lay a foundation on the rock, or on the sand that shifts?” These talks do not include disagreements on interpretations of the Scriptures, nor do they attempt to explore the intricacies of the Gospel. Church members say there is a consensus on interpretation of the Word. “We read it as it’s written,” says Laurie Tranchell. “If I find a gray area, a lot of times it’s just my own ignorance. It just takes more study or talk with people who know the Scriptures a lot better than I do.”

Bob and Laurie Tranchell’s students are eager to share what they have found in the Boston Church of Christ, though they are skeptical about talking to the press. But their leaders have prepared them for criticism from the outside world. By calling themselves “first-century Christians,” members of the Boston Church of Christ can point to contemporary criticism as an analogue to the persecution of the apostles. “Not everybody is going to appreciate your Christianity,” Kip McKean told them in the Sunday sermon. “You can’t count on positive feedback from people; you have to count on that feedback from God.”

Kevin Vance credits the Boston Church of Christ with helping him put behind him a life of drinking, drugs, and partying. Raised in the Baptist church, Vance had become disillusioned with religion by the time he was a college student. “All I knew was: If it’s Baptist, it’s okay. But it was superficial. There was no warmth, no love, no anything.” He started attending Bible studies with members of his college track team, and he was soon baptized in the Boston Church of Christ. “Once I became a Christian,” he says, “I saw that I had a purpose in life.” He is impressed by the “sincerity of the people” in the Boston church, and he says that this spirit rubs off on him. “I struggle to read my Bible. I struggle to pray. I want to do what’s right, and I do it because I want to do it.” Vance acknowledges that sometimes evangelism is “not fun. It’s not easy talking to people with bad attitudes. But in the long run, if I can just

reach one more person, it's one more person going to heaven."

The UMass students generally attend four formal church activities each week: Sunday services, Wednesday-night house churches, a Friday-night college student "devotional," and at least one Bible talk. Most live with other church members and juggle academic work, jobs, and church functions. For Martine Bissainthe, who lives with her family in Dorchester, the fullness of her commitment to the church has created a strain with relatives who find her "too holy" and too seldom at home, but she says that ultimately they respect her zeal.

Donna Martell, who is studying education at UMass-Boston, calls the role of women in the Boston church "really good" and says she looks forward to leading Bible studies for women and to a "Christian marriage, where the husband is the leader." She denies that there are formal dating arrangements in the church, but she says, "I would never consider dating anyone outside the church. What would be the point?" The Bible, she says, is clear on women leaders: "I have no problems having women lead classes, but I've seen women preachers in other churches, and it just seems unnatural to me."

These students acknowledge that there are tremendous challenges in their faith, but they say the pressures they feel to work at their Christianity and share it with others come from the Bible, not from the Boston Church of Christ hierarchy. On this point, there is a virtual impasse between the church and its critics. Gerry Fernandez and Steve Hassan think that the human controls on members' environments are so strong that the members can no longer separate internal pressures from those of the group. Fernandez claims that the relatively innocuous tone of the public Bible talks and services merely prepares "young Christians" to accept the rigidity of the law when laid down in one-on-one sessions with Bible-talk leaders and other "older Christians."

It is, in any case, church doctrine that being a Christian is tough work. "In the movie *Rocky*" reads a recent church bulletin, "the hero was always being punched in the head. The manager in *Rocky* coined a phrase: 'No pain.' As a Christian, you must have this mental attitude. God allows Satan to cause you pain because he is testing your faith and dependence on him. Adversity often makes you want to quit. You must resist this discouragement by having the attitude that there is no pain you will not endure for spiritual victory. No pain!"

In some ways, the criticisms of former members and the appreciations of current members sound similar. Church members vigorously deny charges of mind control, yet they are eager to explain that a Christian life demands sacrifice and structure, and they freely

acknowledge their "aggressive" approach to evangelism. The conflict lies in differing conceptions of freedom and morality.

The Boston Church of Christ's teachings are clearly conservative for the Boston of the 1980s. Rev. Frank Fairbairn of St. Ann's University Parish in the Fenway, a Catholic parish that serves several Boston-area colleges and universities, considers himself a conservative on moral issues. Still, he is concerned that the quick conversions make young people vulnerable to the damaging effects of a rigidly imposed morality. Fairbairn has answered frantic calls from roommates and parents of students who are going through a radical change and distancing themselves from those around them. The beauty of mainstream churches, Fairbairn says, "is that they hold things in tension—sin and righteousness. The Boston Church of Christ's system is intolerant." Fairbairn distinguishes between the Boston Church of Christ and other fundamentalist groups, which he says have the "virtue of tolerance" that allows them to coexist with mainline groups.

Many campus ministers believe that the Boston Church of Christ's practices violate American and academic principles of freedom of thought. "Their campus procedures follow almost identically the techniques of other destructive religious groups," says Robert Thornburg, the dean of Marsh Chapel at Boston University, comparing their recruiting practices with those of Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Although convinced that the Boston Church of Christ is "potentially destructive to all and actually destructive to many," Thornburg recommended four years ago that the group be recognized as an official organization on campus. Thornburg points out that "the university is the last place where we can afford to suppress ideas," and he believes that campus recognition enables the administration to keep closer tabs on the church's activities.

The Boston Church of Christ has become experienced in responding to its religious and secular critics. "Cultlike groups tend to be deceptive and manipulative, whereas we're up front with people," says Al Baird, one of the elders of the Boston church and its principal spokesman. Eager to maintain a positive public image, the church has tended to act quickly on specific complaints. When Thornburg expressed concern that the burden of church activities was having a detrimental effect on the grades of BU students, Baird asked his ministers to have students report their grades to the church. The next Sunday, Kip McKean preached on the importance of academic achievement, and a tape of the sermon was sent to the dean.

In responding to those who suggest the Boston church has cultlike aspects, church leaders acknowledge mistakes and pin them on “overzealous members.” “Some idealistic youth try to ram ideas down people’s throats,” says Baird. “We try to encourage youth to be gentle.”

It is hard to imagine, however, that any church member could be more zealous in expounding church philosophy than McKean himself. In his “fires of revival” sermon, McKean accused his congregants of lacking intensity because in the first two months of this year the Boston church was baptizing new members at the same rate for the year (703) as it was in 1985. Since there are more Christians now, McKean said, the rate should be higher. “As we get older, we should, like Paul, be getting more and more and more intense.”

Former members such as Susan Grundy charge that the pressure to evangelize came as a surprise in the weeks after baptism, but Baird says that if baptized members did not understand that they were expected to evangelize, they either willfully misunderstood or were taught poorly before their baptisms. It is a clear expectation of the church that those who join will disciple. “We try to get away from a clergy-laity thing,” he explains.

The expectation that every member will disciple has led one mainstream Church of Christ scholar to question the emphasis on conformity in the Boston church. Flavil Yeakley is director of the Church Growth Institute at Abilene Christian University, a church-affiliated school in Abilene, Texas, and as such is sympathetic to the process of rapid church expansion. In the spring of 1985 Yeakley conducted a series of psychological tests on recent converts to the Boston church, and from those tests he concluded that there was an alarming movement among these members toward a similar personality type—with an emphasis on extroversion, judgment, and sensory rather than intuitive perception. This type mirrored in many respects the profiles of the church leaders, to whom Yeakley also administered the tests. Those results, he told church leaders, indicated a dangerous emphasis on conformity which could potentially lead to severe psychological damage.

The church leaders’ first response was to dismiss the substance of some of Yeakley’s findings and claim that the church leaders were making improvements. They told Yeakley they believed that the personality profile he was finding was a byproduct of the conversion experience (Yeakley claims he has not found this to be true in other churches). The leaders explained that they expected 100 percent of their members to be involved in evangelism, and these traits suited the evangelical profile. But after further discussion, they moderated their statements and

agreed to implement some changes. As they did with Thornburg, church leaders sent Yeakley a tape of a sermon, this one extolling the virtues of a church member who was not primarily a successful evangelist. Yeakley believes that the Boston Church of Christ has made significant improvements in its methods in the last year, but he has not yet returned to Boston to do follow-up studies to document these changes.

Jim Woodroof, the minister of the Burlington Church of Christ and the author of a book on the Crossroads Movement, believes, as does Yeakley, that while the Boston church is still “machinery-heavy,” it has come “a step away from the rigidity of Gainesville.” Woodroof concedes, “Some people say it’s cultish, but any time someone believes something strongly, they’ll almost run over you.” Woodroof points to the lack of growth of his own Burlington church and says that his church and the Boston church have much to learn from each other. “None of us are balanced,” he says. “We’re all lopsided. We can put up with imperfection, if they’re committed to maturing.”

But Shaun Casey, the minister of the Brookline Church of Christ, is not convinced by reports of moderation. Casey says he has been hearing reports about improvement in Crossroads churches for 10 years, but he still has to devote “a tremendous amount of time and energy” as a pastor in dealing with the problems of those who have left the Boston church. “I have seen the human wreckage,” he says. “The pressure that is brought to bear is true.” He questions whether a group that discourages free-flowing discussion and diversity can achieve real change. The Brookline minister’s deepest concern is that the church is ultimately turning off huge numbers of people to faith altogether. “I worry about the tremendous number of refugees who seemingly reject religion out of hand, people who are walking the streets saying, ‘If that is the church, if that is Christ, if that is God, then I don’t want any part of it.’”

The Boston church’s limited contact with the outside world seems to argue against the possibility of moderation. It has next to no relationship with other churches, and at colleges in the Boston area its ministers maintain the bare minimum of contact with other campus ministers. The church takes no positions on questions of politics, and its institutional involvement in community service is limited to its own membership and to evangelism. Church members do not apologize for their apolitical stance. “You can’t apply God’s standards to people who don’t live by them,” says Bob Tranchell. He cites the church’s new mission in South Africa, where he hopes that “the power and example of a church where

blacks and whites get along” will help society. The South African government, eager to attract white professionals, offered to pay 80 percent of the plane fare for the white church members who were relocating in Johannesburg, but refused to pay anything for the black members of the mission team. The Boston church had no qualms about accepting this support.

“The only way ultimately to help people is to help them become Christians,” says church member Donna Martell. To church members, the act of giving is meaningless without passing on God’s word. “What good will it do to patch people up but not help them spiritually?” asks Kevin Vance. “What good does it do to give food to a starving man and not say anything, thinking, ‘I know I’m going to heaven, but this guy over here will use up the food and money I give him and still be lost?’”

The Boston church thrives on numbers. It counts and publishes how many people attend its weekly services, how many attend house churches, how many are baptized, how many churches it can establish. Former members Gerry Fernandez and Susan Grundy claim this counting pervades every part of daily life: How many church functions do you attend? How many hours do you spend in Bible study? How many people have you brought to Christ? How much have you given to the church this week? When the numbers are not increasing quickly enough, Kip McKean preaches on “the fires of revival.”

By the church’s own estimates, one-fifth of its baptized members fall away from the congregation, but leaders expect that not everyone will be able to live up to the church’s strict standards. Although proud of attracting diversity (“from surgeons to streetcleaners,” as Baird, the elder, puts it), church leaders place great emphasis on the Ivy League background of many of its ministers, and on the appeal of its teachings to doctors, physicists, and workers in the computer industry.

“It’s the American dream of equating success and growth,” says Shaun Casey, the minister of the Brookline Church of Christ. Calling its leaders “pragmatists first, Biblicists second,” Casey says that the Boston church represents “the secularization of evangelical churches.” Its technique is “a thinly veiled form of a business motif. The best corporation is a fastly growing corporation. With some of the flesh stripped away, the ideology of the Boston Church of Christ would pass for Amway or Mary Kay.”

The Boston Church of Christ is flourishing in the America of the 1980s, perhaps because it offers a return to simple, clear-cut approaches to complex problems. It believes in structure, discipline,

unwavering morality. And it looks forward to continued “exponential growth.” The Boston Church of Christ speaks to the current national mood, and it is becoming, in the words of Kip McKean, “more and more and more intense.”

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## Some Charge ‘True Religion’ a Cult

**Pastors, former members question tactics of Boston Church of Christ.**

by E. Golden McGarrahan, News Staff Writer

The Boston Church of Christ promises members that they are on the road to heaven. It left ex-member Susan Grundy with “dreams about going to hell.” The Boston church, unlike mainstream congregations of the Church of Christ, calls itself the only true “Christian” religion. People familiar with it have another name for the group. They call the Boston Church of Christ a cult.

“The Boston (church’s) type of leadership tends to produce prima donnas in the leadership and clones in the pew,” said an editorial in the February edition of *The Christian Chronicle*, a newspaper produced from members of the Churches of Christ. “Adult men and women are told by their leaders whom they should date, how many people are to be in the automobile during the date, how long a kiss can last between two people in love, and what specific daily religious duties a person must perform. Leaders must be obeyed, not questioned,” the *Chronicle* editorial said about the Boston Church.

Although small compared to more established religious denominations, the Boston Church of Christ—founded in 1979—is one of the largest and fastest-growing evangelical religious movements in the Boston area, according to people both in and outside the church. The church has more than 200 members in MetroWest, according to church elder Albert W. Baird, and more than 2,800 across the greater metropolitan area. Other Church of Christ congregations around Boston count about 900 members, according to Jeff Pierpont of the Natick Church of Christ. The Churches of Christ are traditionally autonomous; there is no hierarchy as there is, for instance, in the Roman Catholic Church. However, mainstream members of the Churches of Christ are wary of the tactics employed in the Boston congregation.

The February *Chronicle* editorial said the Boston church was “built on authority, power and intimidation.” The way in which Boston differs from the other Churches of Christ, the *Chronicle* said, is

that its leaders “believe that they have the right to go beyond the Scriptures and create commandments that members must follow.”

Buddy Martin, a minister at the Cape Cod Church of Christ who has been monitoring the Boston Church of Christ and its predecessor, the Crossroads Church of Christ in Florida, for more than 10 years, also describes the Boston church as a cult. Struck by a rapid rise in membership and donations to the Crossroads church and later the Boston church, Martin and other Church of Christ members in Florida and Georgia started keeping an eye on the congregations. Eventually, they say, they grew suspicious of the methods used by the Crossroads and Boston groups.

“It’s truly a cult religion,” said Max Miller, a Church of Christ minister in Pensacola, Fla. (The Church of Christ should not be confused with the United Church of Christ. The UCC was formed 30 years ago out of the merger of the Congregational Christian Church and Evangelist and Reform Church, according to Dr. Margaret Crockett of Edwards Church, the United Church of Christ, in Framingham).

Martin said that people who become deeply involved in the Boston Church of Christ relinquish control over their lives and allow the church to dictate to them where to live, whom to date and marry, how much time they should spend with their families and friends, and how much money to give to the group.

“They get caught up and turn control over to someone else,” Martin said. But church elder Dr. Albert W. Baird said, “All we’re really trying to do is to pattern our lifestyle after Jesus. That’s the goal we’re striving towards. Before someone becomes a member they understand the involvement,” Baird said. “We don’t try to trick people; what we’re about is a heavily involved thing.” Susan Grundy said in a recent interview that her four years in the Boston Church of Christ are proof of how much control the church gains over its members.

When Grundy was 21, her best friend died. One month later, Grundy ran into an acquaintance from high school in a store in Boston. The friend seemed happy, Grundy said, which impressed her. She was invited to go to a Boston Church of Christ meeting by the friend. After being repeatedly telephoned at home, Grundy went. At the meeting, which was a prayer service held on a weekend night, “I was treated like I was the most important person in the world.” Everyone there, she said, was “super-nice.” Grundy had never been overly religious, she said. She was not attracted to the friendly group at the prayer meeting because of any overwhelming desire to learn the Bible. Rather, she was looking to fill the void left by the death of her best friend, and she says

now that the Boston church is “for anyone looking for friends.”

“I was eager to join,” she said, “but they do get people who drag their feet. They always use the same tactics—they talk about hell, they talk about guilt. They pick up things you’ve told them about your family life and say that if you don’t do this your family is going to hell.”

After Grundy was baptized in the church, she was told to move into an apartment with other church members near the Northeastern University campus where she was going to school. Soon, she said, she began proselytizing—“waving Bibles in strangers’ faces and telling them they were going to hell.” She found herself in a world where everyone she knew, everyone she talked to, everyone she lived with was a member of the Boston Church of Christ. Every week she filed a written report with the leader of the Bible study group she attended, listing how much time she had spent praying, how much time she had spent with people not in the church, how much time she had spent reading the Bible, sleeping, preaching to strangers. The report effectively told the Bible talk leader exactly what Grundy was doing at every moment. “They want you to document what you are doing, when, who you’ve met, whether you’ve met non-members, the amount of time you’ve spent reading the Bible, praying, evangelizing,” she said. Baird, however, said there are no such written reports required.

“Who in the world would read them?” he asked. However, Martin sent the *Middlesex News* a copy of a Boston Church of Christ report form, which is titled “Weekly House Church Report.” Martin said the form is used by house church Grundy said she was assigned to a group apartment and that she and her roommates moved frequently to new apartments with different people, always people who belonged to the church. And, she was encouraged to tell her innermost secrets to her church “prayer partner.” Everyone in the church tells their secrets, Buddy Martin said, and sometimes “those secrets are used against them if they balk at doing what the church elders want. It is like confession,” Martin said, “except that everyone knows what you’ve confessed. The information needs to go somewhere,” Martin said, “and the only place it can go is up.” Prayer partners are people in the church who have belonged for a longer time than the person they’re discipling, church elder Baird said. He described the prayer partner—also called the discipleship partner—as a “best friend” type of relationship.

“We encourage people to ask advice on everything from their prayer partners,” Baird said. “We teach people that they don’t have to be independent, that they can get advice on things. If I feel like what you

want to do is not right,” Baird explained, “that what you want to do is not what God wants you to do, if I feel like you’re about to make a bad mistake, then I’ll tell you that if you really want to be pleasing to God, you’re not doing the right thing.” According to Martin, members are expected to ask their prayer partners who to date and to tell them what happened on each date, as well as to detail other personal matters, such as masturbation, bad dreams, experiences with drugs and alcohol and eating habits. “All a discipleship partner is is a best friend,” Baird said. “If you weren’t in the church, your discipleship partner would be a person who you normally seek advice from. The person closest to you. It’s the natural way,” he said. It is in part the intimacy of the prayer partner relationship combined with its lack of confidentiality and the fact that members are encouraged to live together that gives the Boston Church of Christ leverage over the thoughts and lives of its members, Martin said. But, he added, there is another factor. The Churches of Christ are evangelical but non-hierarchical, Martin said. There are no pastors, no confessors, no cardinals or popes. Everyone has a direct line to God, and it is God who is the leader. The Bible teaches Christians to obey their leaders, Martin said, but in the Boston Church of Christ, he thinks, there are so many leaders that members are responsible not only to God but also their prayer partners, Bible talk leaders, house church leaders, elders and, finally, the man at the top, Kip McKean, who is in charge of the Boston Church of Christ.

Kip McKean is the “pope” of the Boston Church of Christ, according to Max Miller, the Pensacola, Fla., minister. Miller, like many other Church of Christ preachers around the South, are keeping tabs on McKean, a man who got his start in Gainesville, Florida, and who is so powerful a preacher, Martin said, that he can turn a roomful of disbelievers into jelly in under 10 minutes.

McKean was a student in a college in Gainesville in the early 1970’s when he was recruited into the Crossroads Church of Christ by Chuck Lucas, a preacher with some novel and very effective ideas about how to win over new members to his congregation, Martin said. Judy Safransky, a Florida woman whose son spent a year in the Crossroads church, said the group is “a cult in the fullest sense of the word. It’s destructive and it leaves scars.” She said the day her son was baptized in the Crossroads church he “walked straight past me and, said, ‘Mom you’re going to hell, in a voice I’d never heard before.’”

Under Lucas, Martin said, McKean learned about recruiting members through Bible talks and prayer partners and came to Boston via Pennsylvania, where

attempts to set up a wide-ranging Crossroads Church of Christ were unsuccessful. Now, Miller said, Boston has replaced Gainesville as the center of the Crossroads Church of Christ movement. McKean currently lives in Lexington. When the Crossroads Church of Christ first came to the Boston area, it was headquartered at the Lexington Church of Christ. While weeknight meetings now take place in various “house churches” across the area—including in Framingham, Holliston, Southboro, Stow and Waltham—the church still maintains its office in Lexington.

One reason that McKean has had phenomenal success in Boston, Martin said, is the city’s large number of college students, who tend to be idealistic, impressionable and willing to work hard for a cause they think is right. The cause of the Boston church, Baird said, is teaching people to live like Jesus. But Martin said that the church interprets the Bible too literally, taking passages that encourage Christians to spend all their time for God and using them to push members into literally giving over their lives to the church.

Their lives, and their money, according to Grundy. Grundy said she eventually left the group because she was “giving half my paycheck” to them each week. When the group meets in Boston Garden on Sunday, the leaders take in about \$45,000 from members, one-third of whom are college students.

There is no evidence that the funds are being misused, Martin said, and Baird said that the money goes to “support the church.” The tax status of the church is confidential, according to the Internal Revenue Service, but the group is tax-exempt. Church elders live in modest homes in and around Boston, Martin said, but tend to travel first class when going overseas to set up church outposts in such places as Johannesburg, Toronto, the Caribbean, the Far East and Paris. The church’s newsletter reaches 7,500 people across the United States and abroad.

“We are certainly a rapidly-growing group,” Baird said. In the Boston Church of Christ bulletin, new forays to different parts of the world are listed on a weekly basis. The money that the church takes in each week goes “to support people,” Baird said, particularly people “in training and people already out” on missions.

Some of the elders have other church members baby-sit their children and work for free in their homes, Martin said. But, Martin believes, getting or saving money is not the reason that the elders and top evangelists of the Boston Church of Christ seek to gain control over their followers. It’s the power, plain and simple—that keeps the top part of the structure happy, Martin said.

Elder Al Baird, who speaks on the telephone with a thick but soft southern accent, vehemently disagreed. If teaching people to follow Jesus is coercive, he said, then sure, the Boston Church of Christ is coercive. But every person, he said, “has the choice” about whether or not to follow God’s will for his or her life. That way of thinking—that you can choose the way of the church or choose the wrong way—is so ingrained in members that, Grundy said, even when she was broke and tired of threatening strangers on the street with damnation and giving all her time to church activities—she still didn’t know whether to leave. And after she left, she was shunned by church members she had lived with, prayed with, and confided in for four years, she said. Grundy said she tried unsuccessfully to leave the Boston Church of Christ for about one year before she was finally able to break away. When her fellow members discerned that she and a small group of other people were seriously thinking about leaving, Grundy said, immense pressure was put on her and her friends to stay.

“When people know you’re getting ready to go,” Grundy said, “The clamp comes down. They use every tactic to keep you in, and it’s very emotional, telling you how wrong you are, how bad you are, that you’re going to hell.” Grundy has kept up with only one person she met in the Boston Church of Christ a woman who left about the same time she did and who lives near her now.

Martin said he has seen many people who have spent time worshipping at the Boston Garden on Sunday mornings with the Boston Church of Christ, and they are his reason to speak out about the group. “It irritates me to no end what Boston is doing to these people,” he said. “I’ve seen so many people hurting. I finally felt like something had to be done because of the damage they’re doing to people psychologically,” Martin said in explanation of his decision to go public about his views of the Boston Church of Christ.

“I was taught that if I were not a member of this place I would go to hell,” Grundy said. After she left she said, her dreams started.



Christianity Today, February 19, 1988

## Boston Church of Christ Grows Amid Controversy

by Carlene B. Hill

The Boston Church of Christ, home base for more than 3,000 worshipers, and New England’s fastest-growing congregation, is the focus of a controversy that reaches across the country.

Last year, the *Christian Chronicle*, a Churches of Christ newspaper published in Oklahoma, labeled the Boston congregation divisive, authoritarian, and “dangerous.” Detractors cite excessive demands on members’ time; isolation of church members from family and most outside friends; heavy pressure to succeed in evangelism; and a one-on-one discipleship program that one Churches of Christ periodical called “a glorified snitch system.”

Supporters point to the Boston congregation’s ethnic integration (77 nationalities are represented); to marriages saved and psychological crises ended; and above all, to the congregation’s commitment to evangelism. Commented church-growth specialist Donald McGavran of Fuller Theological Seminary: “All the branches of the universal church in America could look at this [congregation] and see what they can use.”

The rapid growth of the Boston Church of Christ began in 1979 when evangelist Kip McKean was hired by a suburban congregation with fewer than 100 members. By December 1980, Sunday attendance exceeded 250. Today, more than 3,300 people worship weekly at the Boston Garden, home to the Boston Bruins and Celtics. In addition, more than 1,300 were baptized in 1986 at churches planted by the Boston congregation on five continents since 1982.

The heart of the church’s outreach program is evangelistic Bible studies, more than 300 of which are hosted weekly within a 40-mile radius of Boston. McGavran cites those, as well as the use of house churches and rented worship space instead of a mortgaged building, as keys to the church’s growth.

### Points of Disagreement

The Boston Church of Christ is part of the nondenominational Churches of Christ, one of the groups produced by a nineteenth-century attempt to restore New Testament Christianity to the American church. The Boston church differs from most Churches of Christ congregations, however, in that it is part of a movement known as Multiplying Ministries, developed by Chuck Lucas at the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida. Many of the more than 13,000 Churches of Christ outside that movement say the Boston church’s methods diverge from Churches of Christ traditions of freedom of conscience and congregational autonomy.

Other controversies focus on theology and methodology. Key among the theological objections is the Boston church’s claim to be virtually the only channel of salvation. While leaders acknowledge that some outside their congregation are saved, they believe baptism is necessary for salvation and teach a

narrow definition of what constitutes valid baptism. As a result, the church rebaptizes even people who were baptized in other Churches of Christ. The primary objection to methodology centers on the authority the congregation holds over its members and the guilt resulting from its heavy demands. Each member is assigned to a discipling partner with whom he or she is expected to have daily contact. Discipling partners provide advice on every aspect of a member's life, from daily schedules to the duration of kisses on a date. College students are discouraged from going home for the summer unless there is a strong Churches of Christ congregation in that community. And former members report they were urged not to take even four-day trips away from Boston.

Living in "total commitment [to Christ means] you're always baby-sitting for the [children of church] leaders, serving the brothers and sisters . . . pushing for people to go to church or to Bible talks or church functions," said former member Karen Gray, a senior at Wellesley College. "And then you're sinning because you didn't get enough sleep. You're always guilty."

### World Evangelization

The Boston church's ambitious world evangelization plan involves planting churches in key foreign cities, with daughter churches expected to plant other congregations. The influence of the Boston Church of Christ already extends to six continents. Some have questioned whether the Boston church can maintain its momentum. The congregation's dropout rate has risen dramatically as the number of baptisms has grown. The church claimed a 90 percent retention rate in 1980. But a review of its records from May 1980 to December 1986 shows that 32.5 percent of the members who have not moved away from the area have quit. "When you get white hot, I don't know where you go after that," commented Robert Randolph, a member of the tiny Church of Christ in nearby Brookline, Massachusetts. "After a while, even the faithful begin to notice it's hype."

Responds evangelist McKean of the Boston church: "If places are not growing, I'm 100 percent sure God is not with them . . . This is the condemnation some churches feel. This church is growing; they're not." In interviews, former members of the Boston Church of Christ gave a variety of reasons for leaving. "Most of the people who leave do so because they can't take the pressure any more . . . and they're so burned out they don't want to have anything to do with any other group either," said Philip Owen, an Indianapolis engineer who was recruited while a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

To join the Boston Church of Christ is to find "instant family, instant friends," said Kecia Henderson, a member of the church for four years. But because church members are strongly encouraged to socialize only with other members and with evangelistic prospects, she said. Leaving the church means facing the prospect of leaving your friends behind. Moreover, because the church teaches that few, if any, outside its number are saved, people who leave the church often believe they have turned their backs on God, said former member Gary Idleburg. "A lot of people end up wallowing in debauchery because they never made the separation in their mind between the church and God."

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Boston Globe, March 20, 1988

## Allegations of Cult Tactics Don't Halt Church's Rise

By Richard Kindelberger, Globe Staff

Six months after she was "deprogrammed," Wellesley College senior Karen Gray says she feels lucky she escaped the Boston Church of Christ with her emotions intact.

John Gath, a Billerica firefighter, tells of a radically different experience. His marriage was in trouble when he and his wife joined the church three years ago, Gath said. Since then the church has "changed our lives. We really love it."

The Boston Church of Christ evokes a wide range of feelings in the people who know it. The converted say it is the first church they have found that has made Jesus Christ central to their lives, but some former members and other critics denounce it as a cult that uses mind-control to win and keep converts. The church is said to be the fastest-growing religious group in this area. In 10 years, it has grown from a few dozen members meeting in Lexington to 3,600 worshippers gathering at Boston Garden for Sunday services.

Steven Hassan, who spent 2 ½ years with Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church before becoming a student of cults and an "exit counselor," said the church is "probably the group I've worked the most with in the past couple of years."

The church has endured intense criticism in recent years, but it continues to double in size every two or three years, its leaders say. It has spun off new churches or "plantings" as far away as Buenos Aires and Johannesburg and hopes someday to spread its version of Christianity around the world. Yet, criticism continues from religious and educational leaders who say the movement manipulates the emotions and undermines the mental health of its members.

Boston University barred the Boston Church of Christ from recruiting in university residences last summer, and Northeastern took similar action in December. At Harvard University, Rev. Larry Hill is concerned about reports of harassment by the church. For example, he said, “a student comes into your office and complains that she doesn’t feel comfortable about going back to her dorm room because she’s being continually bothered by members of the Boston Church of Christ to come to a Bible study and she doesn’t want to.”

### “Love-Bombing”

The critics accuse the church of winning converts—particularly the lonely and the vulnerable—by wooing them with flattery and attention, or “love-bombing.” After the prospect is won over and baptized by immersion, the critics say, higher-ranking members enforce conformity and submission and undermine the new members’ self-image by making them feel guilty.

Members are pushed to live with other members and to limit contacts with family and friends outside the church. The demands of almost daily church meetings and other obligations leave little time for outside pursuits, critics say. Members are pressed to give generously to the church and to seek out new members.

Although the church denies it, some critics say quotas are sometimes set for the number of converts members are supposed to produce. Critics say the church enforces doctrinal and behavioral conformity by having each member paired with a longer-tenured “discipleship partner” who monitors the member’s thoughts and actions.

### “A Radical Lifestyle”

“They are told that if they have a negative thought it’s Satan controlling their mind,” Hassan said. He said the beliefs of the church and other groups he has studied are different but that the basic mind control techniques are the same.

Al Baird, church elder and spokesman, denies that the church tries to brainwash people. “There is no attempt to manipulate or control people’s minds,” he said. “The whole object is to get people just to follow Jesus.” Interviewed in his modest home in Burlington, Baird acknowledged the commitment required of church members is intense. “We do call for a radical lifestyle, the same lifestyle that Jesus called on people to live.” Baird, who has a doctorate in physics, said he gave up a higher paying research job five years ago to work full-time for the church. In addition to Sunday services, members attend weekly Bible study and prayer sessions. They are expected to set aside “quiet time” for reflection and

to meet regularly with their discipleship partner. As a fundamentalist group, the church takes its beliefs and rules of living from a literal reading of the Bible. “If you had to say what we’re about concisely,” said Baird, “It’s trying to live out the lifestyle that Jesus modeled.” Members are taught that Jesus is their savior and they should pattern their lives and morality after him. As part of their faith, members are expected to bring new disciples to the church.

### No Link to Congregationalists

The church is not to be confused with the mainline Church of Christ, which Baird said has become “secularized,” nor with the United Church of Christ, also known as the Congregational Church. The roots of the Boston Church trace back to Gainesville, Florida, where an offshoot of the mainline Church of Christ began using the “discipling method” in the early 1970s. Kip McKean, one of several evangelists in the Boston Church of Christ hierarchy, was converted there as a student. After stints as a religious leader in Pennsylvania and Texas, McKean in 1979 joined the Lexington Church of Christ, which later became the Boston Church of Christ. He is now considered the church leader.

F.H. (Buddy) Martin, like Baird a transplanted Texan, has been observing the evolution of the church for several years from his post as preacher of the Cape Cod Church of Christ. Although he has only 70 members compared to the 2,600 claimed by the Boston Church of Christ, Martin says it is not jealousy that prompts his concern.

“If they were not damaging people spiritually, psychologically, and emotionally, I would be 100 percent behind what they are doing,” he said recently in his church office. But Martin said he gets 30 to 35 calls some weeks from “people who are really hurting” from their involvement in the church. Regarded outside the Boston church as an authority on the subject, Martin said he spends 75 percent of his time on matters related to the Boston Church of Christ. He is part of a network that counsels people leaving the church and travels abroad where “plantings” are taking root to speak against the Boston church.

### College Students

Baird objects to the attention paid to the church’s recruitment of college students, who he says make up fewer than 20 percent of the church’s members. It is on college campuses that most of the allegations of recruiting abuses have cropped up, with church members accused of deception in their approaches to students and of pursuing reluctant prospects to the point of harassment.

Paul Chan, a Harvard student who briefly considered joining the church two years ago, said church members at Harvard have offered to help freshmen move into their dormitories without fully explaining their intentions. He called it “a very manipulative way to try to form relationships with freshmen” who are new to college and feeling lonely.

Baird denied that the church targets the vulnerable. But, he acknowledged, “occasionally an ambitious young person will get rambunctious” and run afoul of prohibitions against door-to-door solicitation or other college rules. Some former members who are bitter about their experience may have been handled immaturely, he said.

Critics and former members acknowledge the strong attraction of proselytizing church members. with their friendliness and apparent sincerity. Even those who insist the church is practicing mind control and hurting people do not contend the members believe that or doubt the value of what they are doing. The critics also acknowledge there is no evidence church leaders are getting rich or living extravagantly off their positions.

### Putting Bible into Practice

Gath, the Billerica firefighter, said his wife was approached at work by a church member who saw her reading the Bible. An invitation to a Thursday-night Bible group followed, and the Gaths began reading the Bible more and were “encouraged instead of just reading it to put it into practice.” In the church, he said, he and his wife and their three children made closer friends than they ever had before. One value of such friends, he said, is that “I know if I do something displeasing to God, they will let me know about it. It takes a real friend to do that.” Gray, the Wellesley student, recounts a very different experience. As a transfer student from a small women’s college in Georgia, she said, she was a prime target for recruitment last year. A fellow student asked her to a meeting. After joining the church, she cherished the attention and sense of community it gave her, she said, and would not have left had her mother not lured her to a deprogrammer. Only then, she said, did she come to learn just how much of herself she had given up. Gray said her discipleship partner told her how much time she should spend on school work, Bible study and evangelizing and how much money she should give. With so much to do, Gray said, she only slept four hours a night, and there was constant pressure to do more for the church. Members had so little privacy, she said, that church leaders had to approve if a member dated the same person more than once a month. “You have no privacy of thought or deed,” she said recently. “Everything’s public and can be

manipulated. People have been really hurt and mistreated because so much authority is going to people who probably shouldn’t have it.” By the time she left she had lost the ability to make decisions for herself, she said, and “I didn’t know what I believed anymore. I had to reevaluate everything.”

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The Daily Illini [U. of Illinois Newspaper], October 19, 1989

## Consumed By Faith

**Ex-members say church crossed limit of devotion, demanding total control**

by Michelle Latimer

The last thing Todd Hohman’s mother told him before he came to the University last fall was to find a church. Although he was not very active in the Baptist church his family attended back home in Western Springs, Hohman decided he would at least visit a few churches in the area to see what they were like. During the second or third week of school, he heard one of his residence-hall neighbors talking about going to “church.” He asked about the church, and the neighbor invited him to come to the next meeting.

That evening, the church leadership spoke with Hohman, and in the days that followed, members of the church whirled about him. Parishioners met with him at least once a day—preaching their philosophy, asking him questions and challenging him to make a commitment to the church. Nine days later, Hohman was baptized into the Champaign-Urbana Church of Christ.

What his new family didn’t tell him was that he also had pledged his faith to a larger organization, the Boston Church of Christ. He was now part of the worldwide Boston church’s community—a radical, strictly regimented and unsanctioned offshoot of the traditional, age-old Churches of Christ organization. “When I was in high school, I was a very social person,” Hohman said. “And even the first week or two here, my roommate and I used to go to fraternity parties and the bars all the time. But after I joined the C-U Church of Christ, all that stopped overnight. I was devoting all my time to the church—period,” he said of his next 10 months at the University. Hohman said he thought nothing of his dissociation with his natural family and friends until almost a year later, on July 4, 1989, when he broke free from the C-U group. His new-found independence came when his family educated themselves on the local and national group and became concerned for his well-being. They intervened with exit counselors—social workers who make a career of working with families and helping members of groups they describe as exclusive, mind-controlling or both.

At the end of the summer, Hohman returned to campus for his sophomore year and now characterizes the C-U Church of Christ as a group of religious addicts. “In the C-U Church of Christ, every single person in the church will live the life of a religious addict, or else he or she will be ‘in sin’ and ‘struggling’ in the eyes of the church.”

Hohman also contends, along with two other former members of the C-U Church, that the church employs mind-control and manipulation tactics in its teachings. Ken Long, the church’s lead evangelist, says neither are happening in his church. If church methods were unethical, he added, church membership would be dropping, not gaining.

“We sold our church on Lincoln (Avenue) because we outgrew it” with a combined campus and community membership of more than 200, he said. “We believe in positive pressure, not negative,” said Long. C-U Church is renting space at different area churches every week right now until the church can find a permanent home.

Fellow member and Champaign resident Kathleen McCartney, 27, said that after dropping out of school in St. Louis, she “came here willingly, to work for the church and to share my faith.”

“Sin is destructive,” Long says. “It destroys . . . and we want to help people out of it, not necessarily control them.” Phil Kunz, senior in engineering, was a member of the C-U Church of Christ from March 1986 until July 1988. The campus branch of the C-U Church, formerly known as CROSS, has 50 to 60 members, according to member Kathleen McCartney. “If you would ask any of the members, they’ll refute using mind control because they don’t perceive it as mind control,” Kunz said. “They just don’t see it. If you really believe you’re on a mission from God, and if you go to their five or more meetings every week, and if you really believe you’re saving souls, then everything else pales by comparison.”

Kunz and Hohman, along with another former member who requested anonymity, all said they believed the group consistently attempted to alter members’ academic and social lives.

McCartney acknowledges that church members influenced her decision to drop out of school. “In college, I wanted to go into painting, but it required so much studio time that I had to make a choice between that and the church,” she said. Hohman said he had signed up and paid for a trip with the Illini Ski Club just before he joined the C-U Church. After he was converted, however, he was told unequivocally not to go. “I was convinced by many that if I went on the trip, I would somehow fall into some deep sin and fall away from the church. That was \$600.00 down the drain,” he said.

Hohman said that he was at one time seriously considering studying in Germany for a year.

According to Hohman, the campus minister for the C-U Church forbade him to go, saying, “We have no (Boston) Church there.” “They really do persuade people to give up their dreams,” Hohman said.

But Long said he does not recall the same details of the situation that Kunz does. “It was his free choice to make.” Despite Long’s rebuttals of these students’ claims, University administrators say they have heard stories about the C-U Church of Christ—formerly known as Cornerstone—similar to those of Hohman and Kunz.

Frank Nasca, an associate dean of students who often deals with religious organizations, said, “This is apparently a very controlling organization, and we are greatly concerned about its effects on our students. I had even once heard that a students finances were being handled completely by the C-U Church.”

Steve Shoemaker, director of Presbyterian campus ministry, McKinley Foundation, says that while working with the Dean of Students Office, he was receiving “at least one complaint every two weeks about the C-U group—as recently as this summer.” Nasca and Shoemaker are working together to produce an informational flier on the group they plan to distribute through the Office of Student Affairs within a month. “It will just be one page, so people will read it,” Nasca said. “We want to get it out to the dorms, where most of the recruitment takes place . . . as soon as possible.”

The University would not be the first campus to take action against the group. “Of course, I’m very familiar with the group,” said Robert Watts Thornburg, university chaplain and dean of Boston University’s Marsh Chapel. “Marquette University, Vanderbilt, the University of Lowell, Mass., Boston University, Rensselaer and Harvard have all moved to ban the Boston Church of Christ and its peers from their campuses in the past few years. The Boston Church of Christ seems to have just recently discovered the Midwest as fair game, because this is probably the 20th call I’ve received from someone wanting to do a student news piece on them,” he added. Universities that have taken prohibitive measures against the Boston Church of Christ have been able to do so because of their status as private institutions. But public institutions generally cannot restrict religious groups because of the possibility of free-speech violations.

Eastern Illinois University was able, however, to restrict the on-campus proselytizing of the members of Heritage Chapel, the Boston Church of Christ branch once strong in Charleston. The church has

since disbanded and the building that once housed the Heritage Chapel is now for sale.

Members of the Heritage Chapel's campus ministry, Campus Advance, regularly went door to door in residence halls to meet "potential converts," according to Glen Williams, Eastern's vice president of student affairs. "We had kids coming up to us and saying, 'I can't study or get anything done when these people are around bugging me to come to their church all the time.'" Williams said. "They said, 'We're being harassed; this is getting out of hand.' We realized something had to be done because, after all, these kids' rooms are their homes," Williams continued. "What it came down to was not a question of religious freedom, but student privacy. So we took complaints students had against Heritage Chapel, and rather than ban them completely, told them to stay away on a case-by-case basis."

Jamie Johnson, a former Eastern student and a Heritage Chapel member, filed a defamation-of-character lawsuit against the Heritage church in May 1980. The suit was later dismissed after a Coles County judge ruled that the church was not an entity that could be sued under common civil law, according to C. John Muller, a Charleston attorney who represented Johnson. Johnson's lawsuit alleged that Heritage members defamed her by revealing to the congregation that she was pregnant, Muller said. "We had a pretty good case against the group," he said. "Jamie had just left the church, but was still in contact with a few of its members. She had just become pregnant, and when she related this to the church leadership, the elders told her she would have to appear before the church board.

"Her boyfriend was not a member of the church. When Jamie met with the board, she was told she would have to come back to the church and give her baby up for adoption, specifically to . . . a fellow Heritage Chapel member serving as an informal legal counsel at the time," he said. When Johnson refused to comply, severing all ties with the group, the church's leadership sent a memo to all members, informing them of Johnson's pregnancy, Mailer claims.

The Boston church has also come under fire from mainstream Churches of Christ for its teachings. The Memorial Church of Christ in Houston published a report in early 1987 documenting alleged beliefs and practices of the church. Updated in September 1988, the report also contains allegations made by former members of the group and those who counseled them after they left the church. Charges made by former members against the C-U Church of Christ are almost identical to the ones listed by the Memorial Church in its report on the Boston sect.

The report was researched for the Houston church by Buddy Martin, the evangelist at Cape Cod Church of Christ, which he says does not adhere to the Boston Church's doctrine. Martin has presented a lecture series throughout the United States based on his findings, which he says are substantiated in one of three ways.

"All the incidents in my reporting are documented by one or more of three different sources: my own first-hand experiences, interviews from two or more witnesses or from actual writings of those in the movement." Among other accusations, the "Multiplying Ministries Movement" report charges that the Boston Church of Christ and its affiliates:

- Promote information control and phobia indoctrination—that is, they instill an unreasonable fear of leaving the church in their followers;
- Attempt to reshape members' personalities in the image of the church leaders from those who conduct Bible studies to the lead evangelist of the Boston Church;
- Persuade members to abandon their studies or jobs to recruit full-time for the church, control members' relationships with others and demand unconditional obedience to church superiors.

Along with a host of other church leaders, the report also charges that the group uses "loaded language." In author Robert Lifton's definition, because this language is used, "group members' thoughts and emotions are, over time, compartmentalized and confined within easily expressed, high reductive 'thought-stopping' clichés."

Lifton writes in his book, *Thought Reform and The Psychology of Totalism*, that "members' constant use of these phrases on themselves and each other steers them away from any logical or intuitive thinking that conflicts with group dogma."

More specifically, the Houston church reports that the Boston Church and its adherents manipulate new members into embracing the church by using a fixed Bible study. A discipleship partner—usually the member bringing in a potential convert—finds out something private about the inductee's life or faith and secretly tells it to the leader of the Bible study. The Houston report alleges that the topic is then casually introduced into the session, and the potential convert is encouraged to draw a higher meaning from the personal reference or "revelation" brought forth by the leader. The leader is then seen as a prophet of sorts, and followers are urged to surrender all belief and free will to them, as well as their discipleship partners.

The former member who requested anonymity said the C-U Church's Bible studies match this description. "They're rigged and deceitful. The Bible study leader finds out as much as possible about the visitors for a given week," the former member said. "He or she then writes out a Bible study, not emphasizing what (the study leader) feels is most important in the Bible, but rather what passages they feel would best describe the situation of the visitor. Once the lesson is given, the potential convert is usually asked how he felt about the message. Since he had no knowledge of the informal investigation the leaders performed, oftentimes he will think that it was fate that brought him to the meeting," according to the former member. "This newcomer eventually decides to attend a one-on-one Bible study. The one-on-one Bible study is where the indoctrination begins," said the former member. The potential convert is shown verses in the Bible, and since the Bible they use—the New International Version—translates the scriptures very loosely, some of the verses the newcomer is shown tend to refute the traditional religious background most students come from.

Former member Kunz says, "Since the members of the C-U Church of Christ spend so much time studying the Bible, they know it backwards and forwards. It is very easy for (the members of the church) to construct these verses to sound like something totally new."

"At the same time," Kunz continued, "the potential convert—who usually doesn't know the Bible as well as the member—will say to themselves, 'That sounds reasonable.' This is where the transformation of the newcomer to the Boston Church of Christ's ways of thinking begins." In essence, this person becomes a blank slate on which the image of the church and its current leader, Kip McKean, are etched.

McKean is "perhaps the most famous convert of the Discipling Movement," which the Boston Church of Christ sometimes calls itself, according to the Houston church report. The Discipling or Crossroads Movement was not built by members of the mainstream Churches of Christ. Instead, McKean and earlier leaders used the mainstream churches as a vehicle to recruit membership for the new church, the report alleges. McKean infiltrated congregations of the Church of Christ and used them as an arena in which to promote his doctrines, the report says. As a result, splits occurred in more than half of these churches—that is, half of the church members would then leave the main-stream or traditional church and join McKean in the formation of a new church.

This influx of new members is what the Boston Church of Christ means by "multiplying." Since the new members were gleaned from another church's

membership, they are seen as a kind of "instant congregation." The Boston Church of Christ is the largest of these "instant," or offshoot, churches. Many observers of the Discipling Movement stress that college students, being fairly open to new ideas, are targeted heavily for recruitment outside of the "church infiltration" method.

After a newcomer has come to meetings and has started to take part in the one-on-one Bible studies, he or she is taken through a short but rigorous series of studies that lead up to the newcomer's eventual baptism in the C-U Church, sources say.

"The first study is the Sin Study," said former member Kunz. "They just try to make you feel so bad, so guilty about all your sins. Then they want you to immediately spend loads of time praying about it and staying awake thinking about it."

But C-U lead evangelist Long said, "This is definitely not true. The sin study is not used to try to make you feel vulnerable—but to take time to develop your own conceptions of your sins. It's to help people realize how desensitized we are to sin." Kunz says the "Cross Study" is "the one that makes you feel horrible. They take all these sins you've told them about and they say 'This is what it did to Jesus.' The teach you that each time you sin, you are physically putting Jesus on the cross. This leads to a lot of guilt. They read through a set of passages, and everyone gets so emotional about it, you (the newcomer) literally start to break down and cry," Kunz added. Long also refuted these statements. "The idea of the study is something like that, but I believe that's a misrepresentation of it." Former member Hohman said, "The big idea (of the Discipleship Study) here is that you are to obey your discipleship partner without question," Hohman said.

In the part of the Discipleship Study called "Counting the Costs," C-U church members "teach you that there is nothing outside the church worth going to," Hohman said. "They list all the things important to you that could stand in the way of your commitment to the Church, and then you are required to say that, if necessary, you'll give all of them up for the church. "If it comes down to it, you say you'll deny your parents and move in with some of the brothers or sisters in the Church. If it comes down to it, you'll never speak to your parents again." Long said, in response, "Oh, sure. I can see someone in the church saying that to another member right now, but that doesn't mean I agree with it. I can't be everywhere." The baptism is the culmination of the studies. "There is a passage in the baptismal ceremony that says, 'Unless you hate your father, mother, sister and brother, you cannot be my disciple,'" Kunz said. Long agreed that may have been said by one of the

leaders that was here before. Long took over a year ago and added, “No one would say that now.” According to the Houston report and ex-members of the local group, if a church member’s mind-set is not considered “correct” by church leadership, he or she is “reconstructed” and then rebaptized. Kunz was baptized twice by the C-U Church of Christ, he says. Long said he has performed multiple baptisms, although he added, “I don’t agree with the rationale behind it.” When a member leaves the church, Hohman said, remaining members are told that “So-and-so doesn’t believe in God anymore. They went to a cold, bad place where bright lights were shined in their faces and they were just told that church is evil over and over until they believed it.” Hohman said he is convinced that this is another C-U Church tactic to make members afraid to leave the group. Steve Hassan, a former member of the Unification Church, otherwise known as the Moonies, is now a professional exit-counselor and the author of *Combating Cult Mind Control*. He has also counseled former members of the Boston Church of Christ. In a letter to the Boston Church, he invited members to an open forum where questions could be asked of the group by a panel of noted psychologists and leaders of other churches. The Boston Church declined the offer without explanation. Explaining why no Boston Church representative responded, Long said, “I have been a part of this type of forum before, and they have always gone nowhere.” Former members’ damning statements about the Boston and C-U churches are usually the result of brainwashing, Long said. “Most of the former members go through some kind of deprogramming where they teach that ‘This is how you should feel about your experience in the church.’ They are told that over and over until they believe it,” he added. Yet former member Kunz did not receive exit-counseling or ask advice of other ex-members, and he still corroborates their stories. Long said, “I have no explanation for that.” It’s almost not worth it for C-U Church members to defend themselves against such charges, Long said, because “everything we say gets taken out of context. Why should you explain parts of your practice truthfully to people when they aren’t going to believe your answers anyway?”



The Atlanta Journal & Constitution, November 19, 1989

## Atlanta Church Keeps Tight Rein on Its Flock

By Gayle White, Staff Writer

A new fundamentalist congregation—one so strict that even some conservative Protestant denominations consider it authoritarian—has sprung up in downtown Atlanta. The Atlanta Church of Christ, which meets Sundays in the Peachtree Plaza Hotel, insists on being involved in members’ lives, whether it’s a matter of money or sex.

Before Jimmy Thomas asked Alli Burel to be his steady, he sought permission from his church-appointed adviser. Mr. Thomas, a 27-year-old college graduate with a responsible job, then pushed the issue and asked if he could kiss her. After Tim and Nancy Mansfield found a bargain on two tennis rackets, church advisers chastised the couple for spending \$100 without checking first with them. A church adviser also questioned Mrs. Mansfield weekly on whether she complied with a church requirement to have sex at least three times a week with her husband, to distract him from the sins of lust and adultery.

Both couples are former members of the Atlanta Church of Christ, which draws about 1,100 people to its weekly services, usually held in the Peachtree Plaza Hotel. Established in 1987, it is part of the vision of a Boston pastor to evangelize the world by founding “pillar churches” in major cities.

The most controversial aspect of Pastor Kip McKean’s theology, which sprang out of his Boston Church of Christ, is the practice of permanently assigning spiritual guides to new members, who in turn act as mentors to others, building a kind of religious pyramid. Mrs. Mansfield found herself asking the same intimate questions about the sex life of a fledgling church member assigned to her. Although she now cringes, she accepted it unquestioningly as a part of her duty to the church.

All members are required to consult their “disciplers” daily, on every issue of life from where they live to what hours they work. Obedience is not officially required, but former members say the pressure of being proclaimed as “in sin” or “having a bad heart” usually compelled them to follow their mentors’ recommendations.

Atlanta Church of Christ leaders say the spiritual mentor system is structured on the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. “Discipling is basically teaching people about Jesus, teaching them what God wants and requires, and how he wants them to live,” said Steve Sapp, the church’s lead evangelist. Mr. Sapp said the Atlanta church represents a return to New Testament Christianity in its purest form.

Members cite no creed but the Bible and claim as their major goal taking the message of Jesus Christ to the unsaved—a doctrine similar to many groups, including Southern Baptists, the country’s largest Protestant denomination. “We’re trying our best to be like Jesus and answer to him,” Mr. Sapp said. “All we’re trying to do here in Atlanta is be a Bible-based Christian church and teach people to live spiritual, God-filled lives.”

But others warn against the creation of “super-Christians.” Watchman Fellowship, a conservative Protestant cult-watch group, likens the church to “a destructive cult.” The editor of *The Christian Chronicle*, a 100,000-circulation conservative Christian newspaper, calls it “a dangerous movement within the body of Christ.” And an official of the Southern Baptist Convention, who keeps an eye on new religious movements, expressed concern about “strong control over the lifestyle of their people.”

Many of the mainline Churches of Christ, a conservative federation of congregations, have likewise condemned the movement, even though it grew out of their association. There is no “ministry to the weak,” said Flavil R. Yeakley, Jr. of Abilene Christian University, a conservative institution supported by churches of Christ. “People either become super-Christians at once or they drop out.”

Criticism is the price members pay for commitment, church officials said. “If you’re not being rejected, you’re not following Jesus,” evangelist Bill Burke of Philadelphia, a University of Georgia graduate, told the Atlanta congregation in a sermon urging them not to be like the rest of the South. “We are the kingdom of God. We’ve got to be different.”

The rousing sermon, with shouting and pulpit-pounding, came during a 2 1/2-hour Sunday service charged with the energy and enthusiasm of a pep rally. Worshipers cheered baptisms like touchdowns and sang out hymns like fight songs—without instrumental music, a feature of the congregation’s primitive-church roots played out in one of downtown’s glitziest hotels.

Members are largely young and clean-cut. Unlike most churches in Atlanta, the services attract blacks, whites, Hispanics and Asians. Many on that particular Sunday were couples with small children. Some people say they come because of strong personal relationships and an emphasis on the Bible. Eric Hyche, 24, a graduate student at Georgia Tech, has attended the church since shortly after it began and finds the intense structuring inspiring. “They’re not just surface relationships where you see someone at church and say hello to them, but the relationships

like you find in the Bible,” Mr. Hyche said. “I want to grow as a Christian and need other people in my life to challenge me.”

But others have found the all-consuming nature of the church stifling. Jimmy Thomas and Alli Burrel liked the enthusiasm and friendliness when they visited the church last year. Soon they were spending every night in group Bible study, private meetings with their mentors or scouting out prospects for the church. The schedule squeezed out family and friends outside the church. Spurred by leaders, urging to go beyond the biblically set tithe of 10 percent, Mr. Thomas gave 12 percent of his gross salary to the church, plus \$1,200 to a special offering for a missionary effort.

By this summer, he was ready to enter full-time ministry. When he told his family his plans, “It really hit the fan,” he said. His mother, Judy Ware of Charleston, S.C., was disturbed before her son’s decision to change vocations. “I never liked it. My son was so smart and he wasn’t thinking for himself.”

Mr. Thomas’s relatives arranged a confrontation between Mr. Thomas and other family members, with a minister present to answer theological questions. A few weeks later, he and Ms. Burel, also 27, left the church. They intend to marry this weekend. Failing to coax them back, people from the church hardly speak to them, Mr. Thomas said. “The people I would have died for have disowned me.” He is now helping to organize a support group for former members.

“All your friends and all your relationships, that’s what you leave,” said Tim Mansfield, a co-founder of the support group. A counselor from the mainline Church of Christ, Craig Elam, is assisting them. The group is committed to “sharing experiences, sharing information, and fellowship,” he said. Despite abandonment by some members, the congregation of Atlanta Church of Christ is growing at a rapid rate, more than doubling in size over its two-year existence.

The most conservative of the movements was churches of Christ, which usually use a lower “c” to emphasize their independence from denominational structure, and now have more than 2 million members. In 1979, Mr. McKean took over a small church of Christ in Lexington, Mass., renaming it the Boston Church of Christ. He introduced aggressive proselytizing and a system of spiritual mentors. Although some people left in disapproval, new members poured in, filling building after building, until the congregation finally settled in the Boston Garden, sports home of the Celtics and Bruins. Some

5,000 people attend services weekly, giving an offering of \$100,000, according to church reports.

In the early 1980's, Mr. McKean decided to spread the ministry worldwide. As part of the plan, Boston officials came to Atlanta, planning to take over operation of the Atlanta Highlands Church of Christ. Instead, opposition from some church leaders forced them to begin a new congregation, using many members of the Highlands church as a base. Al Baird, lead evangelist and elder of the Boston Church of Christ, said the growth of the Boston and Atlanta congregations is a direct result of the failure of more prominent denominations. "We call it like we see it. The mainline church is dying," he said.

While mainline denominations do criticize the movement, they are also envious of the attraction it holds for young adults—and the dedication it provokes. "It reveals a capacity within people to really commit themselves," said Chuck Jones of Macland Church of Christ in Marietta. "I think we underestimate our people and the level of commitment they would be willing to offer God.



The Indianapolis Sagamore [Student Newspaper of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, Indiana], December 11, 1989

## Recruitment Tactics of Religious Group Questioned

By Scott P. Abel

Opinions differ. Steve Staten describes the Indianapolis Church of Christ as a campus ministry group that promotes Christian values and whose members reach out to spread the word of God to others. Staten is the head of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, also recognized by the Office of Student Activities as Operation Saturation.

But if you ask Dorian Kordas, a freshman religious studies major, he will give you quite a different description of the religious group that he said regularly canvases the IUPUI campus searching for new recruits.

"They're a cult that utilizes mind-control techniques to manipulate people into joining their group," said Kordas, who claims his first-hand experience with the group is not unique. "Just ask around, and you'll be very surprised at what you'll find, he said.

### How It Starts

Kordas was first approached by a member of the Indianapolis Church of Christ while studying for a religious studies test in the University Library with fellow classmates last spring. The group had been discussing the differing viewpoints of various

religious sects. After the study session ended, Kordas said he was approached by Mark Danielson, a member of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, Danielson, Kordas said, must have overheard the group talking about religion and decided to approach him.

Danielson introduced himself as someone who would like to sit down and discuss the word of God with him, Kordas said. Danielson, however, did not identify himself as being affiliated with any religious group and asked Kordas if he would like to get together. Kordas, who said he had always had spiritual interests, agreed and gave Danielson his home phone number. The two shook hands and went their separate ways. Kordas said he didn't think twice about giving his phone number to Danielson. "I was simply trying to get involved in something I was interested in," said Kordas, who added that there weren't many social opportunities to meet people on this campus. "I was extremely excited when Danielson called me," said Kordas, who described Danielson as friendly and relaxed.

"I never thought I would find a real Christian, one who was really into religion and wanted to have discussions about it." Danielson had called to invite Kordas to a one-on-one Bible study at the University Place Hotel food court. To Kordas' surprise, Danielson showed up with a friend. The one-on-one Bible study that Kordas anticipated turned into a two-on-one guided bible tour.

### Butler Student Agrees

One former member of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, Cindy Dormans, who claims she left the group because of their manipulative and unethical practices, said that each Bible study session is guided and has a specific purpose. The one-on-one study sessions, Dormans said, are known within the group as "faith sharings" and are designed to prompt the prospective member to be open and extremely candid with their new-found spiritual partners who are known as "disciples."

"One of them read the Bible to me with the other one took notes on what I said," Kordas recalled. "It was really strange. It was like they were keeping tabs on me. They never let me ask questions about the portions of the Bible I wanted to deal with." Kordas said although he found it strange that the three of them weren't debating or discussing the Bible, he didn't become upset or discouraged, only more curious. Against a close friend's advice, Kordas returned again and again to meet with his personal Bible study partner, who was usually accompanied by at least one other person. "A day never went by that I didn't meet with or talk with him. He was very insistent that we met as often as possible," Kordas

said. Danielson continued reading Bible verses to Kordas, occasionally asking him to examine himself and how the biblical messages might apply to him. "It was almost like they were purposely guiding me away from what I wanted to know," Kordas said.

### **Situation Causes Administrators Concern**

IUPUI administrators said they are extremely concerned about recent complaints of harassment and mind control techniques allegedly conducted by shepherding/discipling groups like the Indianapolis Church of Christ. In reaction to these types of complaints and other safety concerns, the Student Activities office is planning to release a student safety handbook next fall. The book will include information designed to aid students in recognizing aggressive, coercive organizations and cults. Other students agree with Kordas that the group has a hidden agenda and they limit their Bible studies to certain portions of the scripture.

"I was in the group and can definitely say that there is one overriding purpose of these guided Bible study sessions—to eventually get the person to become baptized," Dormans said. "But, if you ask them about it, they won't be able to see anything wrong with what they're doing."

The group's local leader said they do concentrate on some portions of the Bible. "It's true we will guide them (prospective members) to the scriptures that seem most appropriate to where they are at (spiritually)," Staten said. "But people do not need us to understand the Bible." Staten added that the group also "lays out definitions of some of the scriptures" in order to help people understand what it means to be a Christian.

The Indianapolis Church of Christ is an off-shoot of the Boston Church of Christ, a controversial shepherding/discipling ministry that has gained media notoriety on the East Coast. Neither the Indianapolis nor its progenitor the Chicago Church of Christ are affiliated with the mainstream Church of Christ.

Dormans, a senior at Butler University who spent nearly six months with the group, said that after the initial contact and the subsequent group meeting, new members are strongly encouraged to study the Bible one-on-one with a group member.

### **Members Keep 'Sin List'**

These faith-sharing sessions, Dormans said, are meetings which allow members to get potential recruits to open up and share intimate secrets. She said one approach was to have them write a list of sins committed in the past. These sins are placed on a "sin list" and are resurrected to confront the prospective member during later meetings, she said.

That meeting, both Kordas and Dormans said, focused on sorrow and repentance and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. During that meeting, a graphic description (written by Christian medical doctors) is presented to the group describing what great pain Jesus Christ must have felt during the crucifixion. After the presentation, both Dormans and Kordas said they were asked to step into Christ's shoes and imagine what the crucifixion felt like. Both students shared the same type of experience. Each of them were reacquainted with their sin lists, they said, and were told by group leaders that they must be baptized within the church's specific guidelines.

Dormans was baptized in an apartment complex swimming pool immediately following the meeting. Prior to the baptism, questions such as "Are you ready to become a member of this group?" and "Are you aware that some people consider this group to be a cult?" were asked, Dormans said.

Kordas, who was not baptized by the group, says he still remembers group members pressuring him emotionally. "I can still remember them getting out my sin list, holding it up and saying, 'Dorian, you were responsible for Christ's suffering. You killed Jesus Christ,'" Kordas said.

But it was the lack of emotional response to these presentations that differentiated Kordas' experience from Dormans'. "They had already tried to make me feel guilty," Kordas said. "They confronted me with the cross thing and that I killed Jesus Christ, but I wasn't carried off on a tidal wave of feeling. I think they were disappointed that I didn't fit perfectly into their plans for me. I just didn't want to be a full-time, totally committed member," he said. "I just wanted to study the Bible with someone." Kordas said he believed his lack of emotion disappointed group leaders. He soon began to realize that if his did not conform to their beliefs, the support of his new-found friends would be cut off. At times, Kordas said, he wondered if perhaps the group was right and he was wrong. He faced what he call "a spiritual dilemma," to conform or not to conform.

### **Group Seeks Students**

In the past, students have reported (to various university officials) being accosted by members who were carrying clipboards and claimed to be conducting a survey. Persons who encountered surveyors said they were surprised at the questions they were asked. One questionnaire asked respondents questions about religious beliefs and was accompanied by an invitation to attend one of the organization's Bible study meetings.

Staten said the group sends disciples to campus because "it's the only thing we see in the Bible. we do what we see in the scriptures. We're not into any

of that televangelism stuff. We just want to help each other to be like Christ.”

After leaving the group, Kordas began researching groups that he believed might use mind control techniques. “What I found is that this group (the Indianapolis Church of Christ) is a cult,” Kordas said. “No two ways about it. They use the same premeditated mind control techniques to elicit emotions and responses just as other cults do. They just hide under their church group mask.”

The Indianapolis group leader disagrees. “That’s (charges of mind control) humorous,” (said Staten). “Since I’ve been here people are free to come and go. We do not use peer pressure or group pressure, although the Bible study that we do with people is definitely going to have an impact on their mind.” Staten said that he has worked with the Indianapolis group for a year and five months.

Problems with peer and group pressures have been recognized by the group in the past, Staten said. Those problems were identified and dealt with before his involvement with the group, he added. “If we have somebody being overly zealous or abusing their power, disciplinary action would be taken. But I think I would have been notified by now if this were truly happening,” Staten said, adding that the group has open communication channels to members of the hierarchy.

Both Kordas and Dormans aren’t the only students who claim their experiences with the Indianapolis church of Christ were questionable. “This is the strangest group I have ever seen in my whole life,” said an IUPUI student who requested anonymity out of fear of reprisals.

### **Students Feel Self-Doubt**

“They can get you so turned-in on yourself that you are constantly questioning yourself. I kept thinking that something was wrong with me,” Kordas said. But Kordas only doubted himself for a short time. Comments from the Indianapolis Church of Christ campus group leader, Keith Nauert, caused him to question the group’s motives.

“They made sweeping generalizations as well as direct comments about other religions, organizations, and people,” Kordas said. “In other words, if you don’t believe the way they did you were going to hell . . . your parents, family, and friends included.” The church’s local leader acknowledged the practice and offered a justification for it. “We are not afraid to say that some religions are far-off from Christianity, or only a fragment of their teaching is Christian,” Staten said. “We’ll spell it out.”

### **Recruits Break Free**

After managing to get away from his disciple for a period of about four days, Kordas said he spent many hours thinking about his faith and his relationship with the Indianapolis Church of Christ. “I started thinking about what had happened to me, and I realized that they had manipulated me. They had lied to me. They had used techniques to cause me to think about certain things, to question myself instead of their motives,” Kordas said. So Kordas went back to the group and announced his decision to stop his association with them.

After breaking ties with the group, Kordas received phone calls from his disciple, Danielson, for several weeks. Danielson also visited Kordas’ home and asked him to go out and talk for a while. Kordas continued to express his disinterest in the group, and eventually the calls and attention stopped.

“I was approached on campus by someone who invited me to a Bible study meeting, and that’s how it all began,” the student said. “It’s unlike anything else you can imagine. Their approach is so phenomenal and powerful,” said the student, who added that members of the Indianapolis Church of Christ actively tried recruiting techniques on him for about four months.

“They can actually get you turned against everything you believed in the past if you let them,” the student said. Manipulative Bible study sessions, unnecessary peer pressure and constant phone harassment were several reasons the student didn’t want to be associated with the church. According to a church official, there is no specific policy on calling prospective members. “We don’t encourage or discourage phone communication,” said Staten. “I hope it is not a regular practice to do that. If it is, I want to know so I can correct that. Doggone it, if we’re doing things like that, I want to correct anything that cause people uncomfortable feelings,” The student was eventually approached by Kordas, who asked him if he had any strange feelings about the group. I guess that’s when I realized that they were nothing more than a cult.”

### **Student Questions Idealism**

The student also claimed to have a problem dealing with some of the ideas presented by Keith Nauert, the group’s campus leader.

Nauert, the student said, “is extremely arrogant, judgmental of other religions, oftentimes condemning them, and talked about how seductive the girls at IUPUI dressed.” Nauert refused to comment on the specific allegations and launched his own interview of the reporter. “What has brought the sudden interest on, or rather who?” Nauert asked. “How many

student have said anything negative, and are they IUPUI students? “If you want an interview with me, I’ll be more than happy to give it to you, but it’s going to be a two-way conversation. So what I’m saying right now is, who are the other campuses?” When *The Sagamore* declined to disclose that information, Nauert refused to be interviewed. Staten, who was contacted one day after Nauert’s refusal, said Nauert may have been defensive because he had recently had a negative experience with reporters from another local college newspaper. Staten said that he had no problem with being interviewed and apologized for Nauert’s actions. “We (Indianapolis Church of Christ) believe that it is not right to pass judgment on religious organizations. it would be wrong for us to make assumptions about groups we do not know about,” said Staten.

### Expert Identifies Group

Buddy Martin, an exit-counselor and 17-year veteran preacher in the mainline Church of Christ in Massachusetts, said, “You are looking at a very dangerous religious group (Indianapolis Church of Christ) that uses a one-over one methodology to recruit and retain cult members. Your group there in Indianapolis is a direct planting of the Chicago Church of Christ, which answers to the Boston Church of Christ,” he said.

The Boston Church of Christ was founded by Kip McKean, a former campus minister in Charleston, Illinois. Before founding the Boston Church, McKean was fired by his sponsoring church as the result of a 1977 decision by church elders. The elders, in a letter dated April 4, 1977, claimed (among other things) that McKean practiced “unsound doctrines.” McKean’s termination coincided with local media reports of cultic practices and emotional manipulation by the group.

Since that time, the Boston Church of Christ, according to its monthly newsletter, has planted churches overseas in Kingston, Jamaica; Paris, France; Stockholm, Sweden, and in Chicago, New York, Cincinnati, Providence and Toronto as well as numerous other cities both in the U.S. and abroad. Members of the Boston Church of Christ and their affiliates will hold an international seminar, World Missions Jubilee, in the Hoosier Dome in 1991. The event, according to church literature, is expected to draw over 25,000 attendees.

“It’s like Amway in that they employ a pyramid selling scheme to spread their brand of gospel,” Martin said, noting that each member answers to another member further up the hierarchy. “Each church is planted by another above them.”

The Chicago Church of Christ, according to The Boston Church of Christ Bulletin (August 27, 1989)

announced that the Indianapolis Church of Christ was planted in June 1988. According to articles printed in the Northeastern news and the Harvard Crimson, the Boston Church of Christ has been booted off a number of private college campuses in Massachusetts for, among other reasons, deception in their recruiting approaches and for constantly pursuing prospects to the point of harassment. The group was also banned from the University of Lowell, a public university. Normally public universities like IUPUI cannot ban groups from becoming student organizations, according to Student Activities Director Mike Wagoner. At the University of Lowell, the student senate, the official voice of the student body, took action against the group by refusing to allow the group to be represented on the campus.

The Indianapolis Church of Christ, however, has been recognized on the IUPUI campus for several years as a student organization. They have gone under several names, including the Landmark Church of Christ, Campus Advance and Operation Saturation, according to files in the Student Activities office.

### Names May Cause Confusion; Groups Not Affiliated

Neither the Boston Church of Christ nor the Indianapolis Church of Christ is affiliated with the mainstream United Church of Christ.

In fact, the mainline Church of Christ, in an effort to avoid becoming confused with the Church of Christ, spent \$20,000 on an advertising campaign and conference last April. The conference was designed to show the differences between the two groups and to raise awareness of manipulative religious groups on the East Coast. The Church of Christ has more than 2 million members in the United States.

It is estimated that the Boston Church of Christ had 3,500 to 5,000 members. Biweekly service is held at the Boston Garden, home of the Boston Celtics basketball team.

The Indianapolis Church of Christ has approximately 35 members in their campus organization. Campus leaders are paid for their services by the organization. Weekly services are held at the Murat Temple. The group also reserves space on campus for additional meetings, a situation Wagoner said he is monitoring. “Students who want to know about any organization on this campus can come and ask me,” Wagoner said, “and I’ll be happy to sit down and discuss what we know about them. I am genuinely concerned that some students may not know what they may be getting into,” said Wagoner, who claimed he understand how manipulative groups work.

Wagoner said his sister and brother-in-law were once involved with a similar cult-like group known as The Way. “They had to get out of it, because she

(Wagoner's sister) and her husband started to get so mixed up in it. She started giving everything (money) to the church."

Wagoner's office does not have the power to ban groups from proselytizing on campus but said his office would investigate any student complaints. Other Indianapolis college campuses are apparently facing similar problems with the Indianapolis Church of Christ. A recent letter to the editor which appeared in *The Butler Collegian* (November 8) described the group as "distorted" and accused the group of employing "cult-like techniques that often border on harassment."

The letter also complained that "when students have tried to stop going to meetings, people from the church have sought to manipulate them through guilt and threats about how leaving the church means one is rejecting God." The letter was signed by nine campus ministers representing various mainstream churches.

### Butler Bans Group

Staten said the contents of the letter that appeared in *The Butler Collegian* were not true and he doesn't think Butler's complaints about his group were handled in a very "Christian manner." "Even from a scriptural standpoint, they (other Christians) have an obligation to confront me biblically, before they could talk to somebody else," Staten said. Staten said he assumes the Indianapolis Church of Christ may have made some mistakes but that Butler University religious figures also erred by "going around spreading slanderous things." The Indianapolis Church of Christ has removed their campus Bible study group from Butler at the request of university officials.

Staten said he is greatly concerned about the agenda of the persons attacking his Indianapolis campus ministry. "The truth of it is, if somebody feels definitely, really hurt, or if they have unresolved feelings, bitterness, whatever, I would want to sit down with them," Staten said, "and fix any problem that may have been caused by our group. I don't want anybody to be hurt by the impact of our church." Kordas has dealt with his pain without the help of Staten's church. "I wish I would have known then what I know now," Kordas said. "I would have been more prepared to deal with them."

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The Indianapolis Sagamore [Student Newspaper of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, Indiana], December 11, 1989

## Experts Say: Psychological Health Can Be Protected

By Scott P. Abel

College campuses across the country have reported an increase in the number of complaints against Bible-based groups that utilize cult-like techniques, according to *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 15). This increase has caused some college administrators to wonder how college students become involved with such groups. Some cult experts believe college students may be prime targets of cult-like groups because they are often struggling to balance both a job and an education. Some psychologists, according to IUPUI's Stuart Hart, say many students become involved with charismatic, value-oriented groups because they lack a sense of belonging as well.

Hart is the director of the Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of the Child, part of the IU School of Education. "It's important to realize that all people want to have some purpose in their lives," he said. "They want to have some sense of belonging. And they want to feel like they are making some sort of contribution to something bigger than themselves. Cults, or any legitimate value-oriented group," Hart said, "are oftentimes designed around the needs of the people they are trying to attract. But you have to realize how strongly these cult-like groups work at making their particular organizations seem attractive to people who lack a sense of belonging," Hart said. "People are particularly vulnerable when they are suffering emotionally."

Cynthia Kissler, executive director of the Cult Awareness Network, a non-profit organization that collects and disseminates information on cults, said she agrees. "College campuses have continued to be a good environment for cults to tap into," said Kissler. According to network statistics, college campuses are supporting nearly 2,500 different cults which attract nearly three million students annually.

Hart said he believes that students who become involved in religious cults may have very strong needs that may have been unfulfilled during the earlier part of their lives. New graduates are also targeted by religious cults, Kissler said, because they are often in a transitional period and may be unsure of themselves or lonely. Kissler said she believes that colleges have a responsibility to protect students by educating them on how to spot unethical recruiting techniques and where to draw the line between legitimate demands on time and excessive group pressure.

Regardless where the burden of educating students falls, both experts and cult-like groups and campus administrators agree that the best defense college students can take against coercive religious groups is education. Students who are, or know someone who is, seeking a way out of a coercive cult-like group are encouraged to contact either the IUPUI Counseling

Center at 274-2548 or a representative of any mainstream religious organization on campus. Students who may have questions about any particular group on the IUPUI campus may contact the Student Activities office, located in the basement of the University Library, 274-3931. Some national organizations that offer information concerning cult-like or manipulative religious groups are:

- The Cult Awareness Network, 2421 W. Pratt Blvd., Suite 1173, Chicago, Illinois, 60645;
- Spiritual Counterfeits Project Information and Referral Service, Berkeley, California (415) 540-5767;
- The American Family Foundation, Weston Massachusetts (617) 893-0930;
- Citizens Freedom Foundation, Information Services Department, Hanacroix, New York (518) 756-8014.



The Scotsman [Edinburgh, Scotland], January 22, 1990

## Sincerity that Masks Cult Trap

### A Destructive New 'Christian' Cult Which Recruits Mainly on College Campuses is Moving Rapidly North

by Tom Bradby

A few months ago, John's parents decided to take a drastic course of action of which few in this country would approve. Using a group of American specialists, they kidnapped, forcibly held and de-programmed their son. John had, for five years, been a member of a new and expanding radical evangelical cult, the Central London Church of Christ. "I lost five years of my life and made no friends. There is a tremendous sense of betrayal. I gave five years of my life to something I believed in, only to find out that it was being misused."

The cult originally based itself in London but, targeting campuses, (in its training manual, the chapter on the student ministry is entitled "The Goose that laid the Golden Egg"), it is slowly working its way north. Recruiting mostly through seemingly-innocent Bible study groups, it should appear on Scottish campuses within the next year or two. John warns: "The worrying thing is that as a cult, it is very new in this country but has very ambitious plans. In the next ten years, it hopes to target every major city in the UK—especially those with large student populations."

The warning is echoed by Graeme Baldwin, the chaplain at King's College in London and an expert on cults. "If parents come to get help in the first few

months the success rate is almost 100 per cent. The trouble is that people are not aware that there is a problem." In fact, most students probably do have some rudimentary knowledge of what cults are and many will have been told at some time that "everyone is vulnerable." Nevertheless, a cult such as this can appear very attractive. John explains: "On the surface, they were a very sincere and committed group. Socially, there was no way one could distinguish them from normal people. They were a great bunch to be with and it was really great fun—people were very friendly. There was lots of hugging and hand-shaking, which created a sense of family I liked. At the time, I was very happy. I am a bit of an idealist and I saw a lot of the deficiencies in the churches I was in. It was a close group and it gave me a sense of purpose. They believed they could do great things and I enjoyed the sense of elitism."

But what is dividing line between an ostensibly Christian cult and the established Church? Baldwin says: "I tend to use the term destructive cult. There are certain criteria: they are totalitarian in structure. They are the only people who are right and salvation is only available through this group. There is an element of coercion—and also deceit. You don't always tell people what they are getting into. They are destructive and don't allow people to grow."

The Central London Church of Christ is a totalitarian organization run on similar lines to the Stalinist regimes that used to dominate Eastern Europe. Its aim is to erode the free will and sense of individuality of its members. Personal desires must be subordinated to the achievement of group ends. The result for John, an intelligent individual and a graduate, was five years without a job or permanent career. "The major legacy is that I will have to explain to any prospective employer what I have been doing for the last five years of my life. It's like having been in prison."

He now realizes that he has been in prison, albeit a mental rather than physical one. He explains: "It is like *Alice in the Looking Glass*; you are in a mental trap that you can't see from the inside." He looks back on the recruitment methods and the distortions of the cult with some bitterness. He points to the way it told him, at a carefully-judged point in his Bible studies class, that he was not really a Christian and would need to be "baptized."

Eventually he found himself cut off from his parents. They were unimpressed by the cult, and he was put under pressure to make a stand. The group gradually became his life. It was a life run by his personal disciple (someone who was more "mature" than him "in the Lord") who stressed the need for obedience.

John explains: “You are taught that obedience is what God wants. You have to trust God that he is not going to allow you to be abused.” This obedience also applied to his personal life. As well as being pressured to cut off all previous ties, he was encouraged to date a different girl each week. Hand-holding and kissing were forbidden and looking on a woman with lust in the heart was a mortal sin that had to be confessed. As he was not engaged, he was only allowed to see any girl he might date once a week.

Baldwin believes this abuse of power by the cult inevitably leads to corruption, and points to the time when Jim Jones of the People’s Temple ordered 930 members to kill themselves—which, sadly, they duly did. He believes these groups should be banned from campuses. “University people believe in freedom of choice. These groups take away people’s freedom.” In the meantime, the group, when it arrives, can probably be found recruiting through “Bible studies” or “historical literature groups” (as at the London School of Economics).

Members may be particularly active at the beginning of a new year when they are instructed to introduce themselves to between ten and 20 new people a day.



The Birmingham News [Birmingham, Alabama], May 27, 1988

## City Congregation: It’s Either a Cult of a Work of God

by Greg Garrison, News Religion Writer

How leaders in the Birmingham City Congregation have persuaded some 30 church members to transfer from schools or jobs and join another “discipleship church” in Atlanta has been explained basically two ways: It’s either a cult or it’s the work of God.

The 100-members Birmingham church is a branch of the “Crossroads movement,” now led by the Boston Church of Christ. Critics described the church as a sort of human pyramid scheme for church growth that appeals to people at the “crossroads” of life, especially college students and young professionals just starting their careers. Each new convert is assigned a discipleship partner, who oversees every aspect of the convert’s life to ensure that enough time is devoted to evangelism and other church work. Members are expected to be submissive to their discipleship partners and take advice from them on living as Christians, said Dale Mahfood, lead evangelist for the church. Mahfood, who is moving to Atlanta on June 1 to serve as an intern at the Atlanta Church of Christ and bring along as many of the

Birmingham members as he can, said the ministry follows the example of Jesus and his disciples. “I don’t think we’re asking any more than Jesus asked of his disciples,” said Mahfood, 28, a native of Jamaica. “If modern-day people want to be Christians, they have to live up to the standards that Jesus had for his disciples.”

But some former members say the church has wrought psychological havoc on its converts. They say one woman has checked into University hospital for a 10-day psychiatric evaluation after a nervous breakdown at a church meeting in Atlanta. Former members say the woman interrupted the service by demanding that Atlanta Church of Christ minister Andy Lindo rebaptize her. She became delirious when he told her to wait until after the service. She since has rejoined the church. University Hospital spokesman Hank Black said the woman mentioned by the church members was a patient at the hospital from May 1-11, but he would not confirm the reason. Another woman who left the church about two weeks ago checked into Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center in Albany, Ohio, for a week of “deprogramming,” said Craig Branch, director of the Alabama chapter of the Watchman Fellowship, an evangelical ministry which recommended the counseling center.

Suggestions from leaders in the Crossroads church are taken as commands, said Branch, whose Watchman Fellowship countercult ministry offers counseling to church members. “They say that to follow Christ is to follow this group,” Branch said. “That’s where the danger comes in. The logic is simple but effective: This is the true church. If you don’t go with the true church that you’re not a Christian. If you’re not a Christian, you’re going to hell.” F.H. Martin, evangelist for the Cape Cod Church of Christ in Massachusetts, said churches in the Crossroads movement have the same doctrine as the Churches of Christ, but “it’s a very warped version.” The evangelism methods employed are recognized by psychologists as mind control techniques, said Martin, who is considered an expert on the movement by outsiders. Leaders use friendliness and flattery to become close to those they are “discipling,” then get them to share their thoughts so church leaders can explain what’s wrong with those thoughts according to the group. If members refuse to submit, they are told that they are sinning, that their baptism may not have been valid, that they may not be Christians, Martin said.

Many other groups have used the “discipling method”—including the Assemblies of God in the mid-1970s—but abandoned it, Martin said. Since

Churches of Christ are all independent, there is no central authority to tell them to stop the practice, he said.

The Birmingham City Congregation essentially had gone unnoticed by outsiders during its approximately three-year existence, renting space for its worship services in the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge, the Wedding Chapel in Hoover and the Marshall Conference Center on the University of Alabama at Birmingham campus. But, largely because of Mahfood's suggestion that members move to Atlanta and join the larger congregation there in June, some members and parents of young people caught up in the movement became alarmed. Mahfood said he told members to move to Atlanta because "it would be best for them. It was hard for all of us. I thought about it for a few weeks and prayed about it." Members said the move to Atlanta constantly was reiterated. "After the announcement was made to go to Atlanta, every sermon has been on such things as not stopping short of the finish line," said Buddy Jones, 28, who recently dropped out of the church, as did his former fiancée. "Nobody came out and said, 'If you don't go to Atlanta you're going to hell', it was all subtle." Former member David Evans said he told one woman in the church, "You know, you won't go to hell if you don't move to Atlanta." He said she reacted with "pleasant" shock. Before Jones dropped out of the Birmingham City congregation, he decided to tell the leaders that he had mounting doubts about the authoritarianism of the church, he said. "Immediately I was told I was being judgmental, that I was being unsubmitive to the leaders, that I had a bad attitude," he said. "But they never once led me to believe my thoughts and beliefs were valid. It was immediately turned against me."

The church's authority seemingly extended to determining whether romantic relationships were appropriate or not. Jones said that after he and his fiancée joined the church, they were pressured to stop dating. Gina Lovvorn, 20, said the main reason she left was that the church tried to keep her away from her boyfriend, Eric Spano, 19, a UAB tennis player who had been a member of the church and influenced her to join. Church members seemed to think she was drifting away from the church and influencing Spano to do the same. "They didn't think it was right that I influenced him like that," Miss Lovvorn said.

Mahfood said church leaders to take an initiative to discuss the personal lives of their followers with them. "Most churches will preach it at the pulpit and leave it at that, but we will go up to the person and help them, give them the personal help they need."

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Los Angeles Times, Saturday, August 4, 1990

## Boston Church Keeps Revival Movement Low-Key in Southland

**Controversy: Beliefs of Boston Church of Christ have come under fire in some parts of the country. College campuses have been a major focus of the church.**

by John Dart, Times Religion Editor

The Boston Church of Christ has often been criticized for using authoritarian methods on its converts. But congregations started in Los Angeles and Orange counties a year ago have apparently been free of controversy.

"We've sort of laid low here," said Marty Fuqua, who oversees about 20 congregations the church has started in the western United States. Fuqua acknowledged that the church has been subject to criticism elsewhere and that it has been banned or restricted on college and university campuses such as Boston University, Northeastern, Vanderbilt and Marquette. "As with any revival movement, there is a sense of unrest by those who don't want to be revived," Fuqua said.

After 10 years of existence, church officials say membership has reached 25,000 worldwide. The beliefs of the Boston Church of Christ resemble those of conventional evangelical Protestant denominations, but its practices emphasize intense teacher-disciple relations that limit members' personal freedoms.

College campuses have been a major focus of the church. "The movement seems to treat the university as its fishing pond," but then converts tend to abandon their studies and become alienated from their families, said the Rev. Giles Asbury, the Episcopal chaplain at UCLA. Campus ministers at a regional meeting last spring discussed the movement's alleged "cultic methods" and "subterfuge." However, Lutheran chaplain Will Barnett at USC said the church has "not been active at USC in any way that is obvious or open." Asbury said UCLA has had few calls from worried parents. Roger Lamb, a church spokesman in Boston, attributed the problems at some U.S. colleges to the "closed community" nature of campuses and to chaplains who feel threatened. The church seeks converts on campuses, Lamb said, because "young people generally are a little more idealistic and looking for something to give their lives to." The Los Angeles Church of Christ began officially 12 months ago, bringing its Bible study groups together for Sunday services at the Wiltern Theater. The Los Angeles church has grown to 575 members. The movement first came to California with pioneer

congregations in San Diego and San Francisco. San Diego leaders launched an Orange County congregation last September, with 622 members at the first service and a large start-up collection of \$74,600 in contributions.

On Thursday night, the organization's first West Coast Discipleship Conference opened at the Anaheim Convention Center, with an expected turnout of 3,500 members. Scheduled to address the meeting tonight is Kip McKean, the evangelist who in 1979 transformed a 100-member Church of Christ in the Boston area into a booming congregation worshipping on Sundays in Boston Garden, home of basketball's Celtics.

McKean, still preeminent as the movement's leader, moved to Los Angeles early this year to help the long-planned congregation get started. He was unavailable for an interview. Lamb, editor of the movement's quarterly *Discipleship Magazine*, said McKean took charge of the Los Angeles church after problems developed in the marriage of the couple that had been running operations here. Also, Lamb said, the West Coast is a "good base for getting to Asia."

Recent issues of *Discipleship Magazine* reflect the strong spiritual authority held by McKean and the thinking behind "discipling" policies that have disturbed some outsiders. Quoting unnamed critics' charges that the church is "blindly following Kip McKean," evangelist Steve Johnson wrote that he is following the founder with eyes wide open. "I guess I'm just not as strong as some folks and I need help in following Jesus," Johnson continued.

Another article by Johnson claimed that the Bible points to the "mentor-protégé relationships" used in the church, but he added that groups of disciples should always aim to be "a family functioning together" in which the leaders must settle "for nothing less than totally united hearts and minds." Group sessions may become rough, Johnson said, because "personal sins will be exposed, confessed and dealt with." Some will be "on the hot seat, under the gun, so to speak," he said. After allowing no feelings to be hidden, the sessions should end on positive notes, Johnson advised. Critics claim that members are forced to be totally dependent on the group's approval.

The Chicago-based Cult Awareness Network said that it receives about as many troubled telephone inquiries each month regarding the Boston Church of Christ affiliates as they do about Scientology and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Last May, 32 out of 365 calls on specific religious groups were about the Boston-based movement—tops among all groups for that month, according to Cynthia S. Kisser, executive director.

Steve Cannon of Phoenix, a member of Personal Freedom Outreach, a nationwide research group on what it regards as cult-like religious movements, charged that confessions drawn from members are "passed up along the line, and often used to keep wayward people in line."

The mainstream Churches of Christ, a loose national fellowship of 13,000 theologically conservative congregations, has usually sought to distance itself from the McKean-led movement. A Churches of Christ magazine in 1987 called the Boston church divisive, authoritarian and "dangerous." Tom Olbricht, who chairs Pepperdine University's religion department, said the Malibu school is affiliated with the mainline Churches of Christ. "We make it clear that Pepperdine is not associated with or supportive of the Boston Church of Christ."

"In some ways, they have some fine things going, but they are very domineering," Olbricht said. Fuqua, speaking for the movement, said, "Obviously, there has been controversy. But there have been scores of families united, couples brought together who were on the brink of divorce."



The Christian Chronicle, November 1991

## Boston: Chief Leaves

Glover Shipp, Editor

Washington, D.C. — In October Mr. X, one of the leaders in the Discipling (Boston) Movement announced his departure from that group. He had been one of the editors of the movement's publication, *Discipleship Magazine*, and had written a best-seller, *The Anatomy of Calvary: An In-Depth Study of the Cross*. As a doctoral candidate in Biblical Studies at The Catholic University, Washington, D.C., Mr. X was a theologian dedicated to increasing scholarship and formal preparation for ministry and teaching in the movement.

Mr. X is one of a growing number of key figures in the Discipling Movement to leave it. He joins such people as Daniel Eng, former evangelist in Singapore and Malaysia; Jim Condon, leader in the Boston church planting in Nashville; Andy Lindo, an evangelist for the Atlanta church; Tom Turnbull, co-leader in the Paris church; Doug Lightning, co-leader in the Johannesburg, S. Africa, planting; Rex Boykin, evangelist in the Dallas-Fort Worth church; Jim Krause, elder in Chicago and evangelist in St. Louis; Ben Holt, elder in Chicago; Randy Green, zone leader in San Diego; Jerome Williams, Bible Talk leader in New York; and Jerry Jones, elder in Boston. According to both Mr. X and Jones, this exodus of leaders is symptomatic of the membership drain occurring, especially at Boston, the "flagship" church

of the movement. Mr. X says, “Having lost 880 members last year, the congregation has been rocked by discord and discouragement.” He sees this pattern continuing and accelerating throughout the world, believing that there are some basic but important reasons for it. Yet, as reported in *Discipleship Magazine*, the movement continues to expand worldwide, planting in July its 100th, church, this one in Moscow.

Mr. X’s reasons for his own departure from the Discipling Movement are itemized in his letter in the Forum section of this issue. It is reprinted without editorial comment.



The Christian Chronicle, November 1991

## Boston: Movement Suffers Loss of Talented Leaders

Glover Shipp, Editor

It started as a phenomenon that promised to turn the world upside down in evangelism and church planting. Many church leaders were attracted to it in the beginning, because it appeared to bring new life to a stagnating movement and furnish a truly dynamic-model for church growth. However, what began so well has become something far less than the perfect solution. I am talking about the Discipling or Boston Movement, which the *Chronicle* has monitored since its inception and that of its parent movement, Crossroads. In this issue, as a part of our ongoing effort to share news and trends with our fellow readers we announce the departure of Mr. X, yet another leader in the Boston Movement, and include a letter he sent to the *Chronicle* about his decision.

This story came out of a conversation with Jerry Jones, another former Boston leader. He mentioned changes taking place there and the resignation of Mr. X. We asked if Mr. X would be willing to share his story with us. Mr. X expressed his willingness to share his heart with us. The result is his letter. I am confident that all of us feel a sense of sadness over the matters brought up by Mr. X in his letter. We are amazed at Boston’s rate of growth worldwide. We applaud its emphasis on urban evangelism in so many countries. But we are dismayed at some attitudes expressed by its leaders. We are alarmed by some theological positions it holds. And we are appalled by the high dropout rate, even of those at a top leadership level. Something is wrong and we should and be praying about it.



The Christian Chronicle, November 1991

## Ex-Boston Leader Bares Movement’s Basic Failing

Mr. X

I have been a Christian since 1976, baptized and trained at the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida. After serving in several Crossroads-oriented congregations for nearly 10 years, my family and I relocated from the Denver church of Christ (a congregation planted by Crossroads) to Boston, to serve on the ministry staff of the Boston church. While at both Gainesville and Boston, I had the opportunity to observe and be personally trained by both Chuck Lucas and Kip McKean. I moved to Boston to continue serving on the staff of *Discipleship Magazine* (which I had helped begin in 1986 and also served as review editor until last month). While in Boston I published *The Anatomy of Calvary: An In-Depth Study of the Cross*, which remains the best-selling book in the history of the Boston Movement. I moved to Boston also to further my education. (I have two masters degrees and received a third, in Old Testament Theology, from Harvard Divinity School; I am completing requirements for a doctorate in Biblical Studies from Catholic University in Washington, DC). My wife and I moved to Boston because we believed that the Boston Movement was moderating both the doctrinal and moral excesses found at Crossroads, while still maintaining an emphasis on evangelistic growth and world missions. I felt that Boston sensed a growing recognition of the contribution that an in-depth scholarship and formal preparation could make in the ministry-training process, and wanted to contribute toward building a greater depth in the preaching and teaching there. After three years in Boston, I found just the opposite to be true.

In recent months I have heard and read that the Boston Movement has changed, that its harsh practices and one-over-one discipling structures have been dramatically altered, in effect producing a “kinder and gentler” version of the Boston Movement. Such claims are simply not accurate. Based on my observations and participation at the highest levels of this organization, I am convinced that these recent claims that the Boston Movement has changed are at best erroneous and at worst deceptive. Having lost 880 members last year, the congregation has been rocked by discord and discouragement. Despite its evangelistic zeal, as many members leave the church as become members—a religious turnstile, assembly-line model of ministry that I could no longer support. Claims of renewal and revival are in stark contrast to statistics that are released only to higher-echelon leaders,

which show not only a continual decline in the past years, but a noted drain among longer-term members. At present there are thousands more ex-members of the Boston church than those currently members of the congregation. The pattern that I have observed indicates that the more a new convert learns about both the Bible and the Boston church, the greater the probability that he will leave the congregation. The Boston Movement has always justified its actions and teachings by saying, “Look at our fruit.” Having done so for more than three years now, it speaks no longer of a congregation’s effectiveness, but of serious problems in both its message and its methodology. In terms of doctrine, claims of a moderating influence are also deceptive. The church still teaches an exclusive, works-oriented view regarding salvation, further distancing itself from the New Testament teaching and examples of baptism. Early Crossroads-trained leaders like Kip McKean and Sam Laing now have conversion stories that differ markedly from the current Boston teaching on the subject, and by their standards presumably would be candidates for a Boston-rebaptism.

The pyramid-like structure of absolute control, with individual congregations reporting to regional hierarchical leaders, who in turn report personally to Kip McKean, has in fact become more institutionalized, with financial control, employment/termination decisions and doctrinal promulgations all directly attributable to McKean. He is the undisputed leader of the Boston Movement and now describes himself as “functioning in the role of the Apostle Paul” (and the only so-called apostle) of the entire organization. The doctrinal abuses noted and detailed in Jerry Jones’ *What Does the Boston Movement Teach?* (Vols. I and II) have been neither repudiated nor changed to any noticeable detail; in fact, they have, in my observation, worsened. Though not church-wide practices at this time, I have recently observed women preaching in the public assembly on Sunday and have seen the Lord’s Supper celebrated as many as four times in one week alone. My personal attempts to challenge Boston elder Al Baird on this particular practice were rebuffed and dismissed as “not being a doctrinal problem.” In general, I have observed that any attempts to challenge doctrinal errors or to contest abusive practices usually result in a personal attack on the individual’s character. If the critics persists, he or she is marked as being “divisive,” thus effectively silencing their observations from the rest of the Boston Movement’s membership. Letters such as this one are generally rebutted by a Boston leader, with members never being permitted the freedom of examining both sides of the issues.

Members are systematically deceived regarding the reasons why leaders are leaving the movement, with even upper-level leaders being uninformed regarding the reasons why their colleagues have resigned or have been fired. Church leaders have been threatened with financial blackmail (their support being immediately terminated, if they utter one word regarding their reasons for wanting to leave the Boston Movement). Any material that challenges the Boston Movement’s doctrines or practices is labeled “spiritual pornography” by McKean and thus is effectively kept from members. Any descriptions of the Boston Movement as “kinder and gentler” have not had the terrifying experience of personally witnessing a McKean tirade, an 8-on-1 “breaking session,” or the unceasing, unending pressure brought to bear upon every church leader to “crank the baptisms.”

Four former elders in the Boston Movement have now left it, along with seven former evangelists, scores of house church leaders, zone leaders, women’s counselors and Bible Talk leaders, as well as thousands of other non-leadership members. Such severe losses would prompt other leaders to examine their policies and practices. To the contrary, the Boston Movement leaders have become even more insulated from outside dialogue, discussion and debate. The current leaders of the Boston Movement, including McKean, have been recently challenged to meet with me and several leading Christian preachers and scholars for a discussion of their doctrinal abuses, but as yet they have been unresponsive. As much as I would like to commend the good works and good intentions of the Boston church and the congregation and its organization, I cannot, and furthermore I would warn anyone tempted to think that it was changing for the better to think again. I write these things with a great sense of loss, for the hope and promise of the Boston Movement—that Christians everywhere could unite under the restoration plea to be simple New Testament disciples of Jesus and spread his Gospel throughout the world—remains as yet an unfulfilled dream. Those disdaining the errors of Boston need to provide a better alternative than is presently available. It is my prayer that the brothers leading the Boston Movement, particularly McKean, change their ways, repent of their heretical teachings and practices, and again enter into dialogue and fellowship with Christians throughout the world. May we find ourselves watching in prayer, like the father of Luke 15, ready to receive them with forgiveness, acceptance and love—and not like the older brother of the prodigal, whose very caustic legalism we so often are wont to imitate.

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The Boston Herald, November 11, 1992

## Ostracized Church Members Plan Weekend Support Meeting

By Andrea Estes

Former members of the Boston Church of Christ, who say they were recently kicked out, will meet this weekend to get support and share information about the controversial group. Members say about a third of the church's 2,000 local adult members were purged in the past few months because they didn't meet its strict standards. They were rated 1, 2 or 3, members say.

Those members who "ask questions, who are weak, struggling or put emotional or time demands" on the church were wiped out, according to Mr. X, a former church leader who will head Saturday's workshop at the downtown Boston Holiday Inn. "They went through the ranks and eliminated all but the heartiest of the faithful. They want only the young and virile and sharp," he said. The group, which has an estimated 32,000 members world-wide, has been accused by many former members of using cult-like techniques to gain converts. Members charge they were tricked into joining and into turning over a lot of cash.

"They believe the ends justify the means," said one former member. "They want to evangelize the world in one generation and they're running out of time. They believe if you're not with us, you're against us. You must publicly confess your sins. They engage in emotional blackmail." Said Mr. X, "They won't listen to criticism. They won't sit down and talk. They're convinced their way is of God. Anything else is of the devil."

Part of the purpose for the workshop, which could draw thousands, Mr. X said, is to help ex-members understand they aren't doomed because they're no longer church members. "They tell you if you leave you're going to hell," said Mr. X. "We want to help people understand what it is they've been through. It's one thing to walk away from the group realizing it has bad theology and bad ethics and pretty bad psychological practices. It's another thing to be kicked out. Some are still trying to get back in. Others are adrift emotionally, spiritually. Some are suicidal. I get calls from people just about every night who are trying to make sense of it. They think they're going out of their minds." Mr. X said ministers of other local churches, including Grace Chapel in Lexington, have opened their doors to former Boston Church members.

Leaders of the Woburn-based church didn't return phone calls yesterday. In the past, church elders have admitted making mistakes, but have insisted only 25

percent of the church's converts drop out. Most members, they have said, are happy.

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London Evening Standard, March 15, 1993

## Church Expels 400

The London, England church (Discipling Movement) has expelled 400 of its 1,200 members, for ostensibly failing to disciple others. Surviving members of the sect welcomed the expulsions. "These people were weak," said Dennis Ntzegeane, an accountant from Thornton Heath.

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Boston Herald, November 15, 1992

## Ex-Members Rap "Cult-like" Hub Church

By Jack Meyers

Several dozen former members of a controversial Boston church met yesterday to share tales of the group's "cult-like" practices and get support after years inside the organization.

At the Holiday Inn yesterday morning, ex-members of the Boston Church of Christ—some who were among the hundreds forced out in a "purge" over the past few months—swapped tales of being cut off from family and friends while being pressured to give away all their money.

"Advice from church leaders was not advice. If you made a decision they didn't think was right, they became disappointed not in your decision but in you," said one church member who left about four months ago.

She said gradually she was drawn away from friends and family outside the church. "To help you spiritually, they would have you move in with people in the church," she said. Another attendee who has adult children in the church said yesterday, "they actually remove you from your friends and family. And they keep on top of you all the time. You're constantly pressured and made to feel so guilty, like you're not godly enough."

Regarding the financial pressure exerted on church members, she said her daughter, for example, "can't afford to buy things for the children but the church says give this and give that. You have to give three, four, five envelopes on Sunday."

Yesterday's session included an hour-long address by a former leader of the church, Mr. X, who left last year after 15 years of involvement. "There are a lot of people hurting, who were beat up by this machine," Mr. X said. Mr. X said that, while many members are giving huge portions of their life savings to the church, top church leaders will be spending

Christmas in Hawaii. The church has around 30,000 members worldwide. The Boston Church of Christ is one of its largest organizations.



Dallas Morning News, December 20, 1992

## Critics Describe Church of Christ Offshoot as Cult

by Terry Box and Cathy Frye

### Boston Movement followers defend motives, techniques

Everyone at the Dallas Church of Christ seemed swept up in the Boston Movement. Many had heard the rumors: people from all over the country were selling their homes, quitting their jobs and moving north to be part of it. And now there was a chance to lure it to Dallas.

Church members also knew that it was not for casual Christians. Created in 1979 as a radical alternative to what it considered stagnant mainstream religions, the movement requires unquestioning devotion to its leaders, its thousands of disciples and the Bible. The movement beckoned like a beacon in 1990 to Tracey Justice and her husband, Rusty. The young Irving couple wanted more religious commitment in their lives and believed the movement could invigorate the Dallas church, a small, slow-growing congregation. At first, the couple saw promise in the movement's goals to convert the world to Jesus Christ. People who had rejected religion years ago were being coaxed back to church by the movement's enthusiastic disciples.

"I led people to Jesus," Mrs. Justice said. "I literally changed people's lives—prostitutes and drug abusers. I learned how to change people's lives using the Gospel." As the takeover of the church progressed, however, they saw more problems than promise. "My main reason for leaving was I didn't think I could bring anyone into the church with a good conscience," said Mrs. Justice, 28, a former Bible study leader with the Dallas Church of Christ. "I wasn't sure what I was subjecting people to." Critics say church members win converts with "love bombing," the practice of showering potential recruits with false affection. Once someone has committed to the church, critics say, he or she is assigned to a more experienced "discipler," or mentor, to guide religious—as well as personal—growth. Some say the movement is more cult than religion—an allegation that national movement leaders vehemently deny.

Nick Young, minister of the Boston Movement's one Dallas-area church, declined to be interviewed for this story. "Frankly, I don't feel a great compulsion to

respond in any way," Mr. Young said in a phone message to a reporter. "When Jesus was on trial before Pontius Pilate . . . he made no reply to anything that they said, to the great amazement of the governor."

### A solid beachhead

Today, the Dallas Church of Christ is gone—the building and land sold, and the \$300,000 in proceeds sent to Boston more than a year ago. It was renamed the Dallas-Fort Worth Church of Christ Jesus and moved to a rented building off Stemmons Freeway in Farmers Branch.

In a city with more mainstream Church of Christ members than any other in the United States, the movement—which also calls itself Church of Christ—appeared to have carved out a solid little beachhead.

Like many mainstream Church of Christ officials across the United States, the Justices say they were left to worry about the rapidly growing movement's tactics and to wonder where it will go from here. Those concerns are being repeated around the area—especially on college campuses, where the movement is seeking converts in student unions and dormitories. Its interest in universities such as Southern Methodist University, the University of Texas at Arlington, the University of North Texas and Texas Christian University has prompted school officials to form a task force to examine the group's recruiting methods—as well as those of other religious groups. Proponents of the movement sing its praises loudly. In 13 years, one church of 30 people in Boston has multiplied into 103 churches worldwide with a total Sunday morning attendance of 50,000—a growth rate that church officials say few, if any, mainstream churches can match. Moreover, church officials say the movement solidifies families. They contend that there has never been a divorce in any of the churches where couples remained faithful to God and the church.

Virtually all the money taken in through tithes and other donations goes for missions, church leaders say—and not for the sort of expensive homes and cars that some television evangelists have accumulated. Those missions include a clinic for children in Mexico City; a leprosy clinic in Delhi, India; a tuberculosis clinic in Madras, India; an AIDS clinic in the African nation of Ivory Coast; and a soup kitchen in Moscow.

"Our goal is to get the good news of Jesus out to the entire world," said Al Baird, a world sector leader in Los Angeles and a spokesman for the movement. "If everyone can lead someone to Jesus every year and the process is repeated each year, you can reach 6 billion people in 32 years." Already, there are about

45 churches in the United States; the movement permits only one church per metropolitan area. Some are in cities less known for their evangelical fervor than Dallas, and yet have attracted sizable congregations.

The church in Los Angeles, for example, has 2,282 members; San Francisco's church has 1,359, and the church in New York—a city described by movement leader Kip McKean as a “metropolis of 18 million lost souls”—4,000 members. “What we’re seeing here is a real conversion,” Mr. Baird said. “It’s not phony, it’s not hype, it’s real.”

### **‘It’s cultish’**

For some, however, the process of converting new members is all too real. Some former members, for example, have complained that their disciplers tried to control whom they dated, whom they lived with, what they did in their spare time, even how often they had sex. Dr. Lynn Anderson, a senior minister at the Preston Road Church of Christ who has counseled more than 100 former members of the Boston Movement, said he chose for years not to say anything publicly about the movement. Although he did not agree with its approach, Dr. Anderson said, he decided that it was just taking a different approach to the same Christian goals as other mainstream religions. Now he has a different view. “What I’m saying to you is I’ve seen enough hurt, enough distortion that’s come out of this that I don’t think it’s even Christian,” he said. “It’s more cultish.”

Dr. Flavil Yeakley, a professor of religion at the Church of Christ-affiliated Harding University in Searcy, Ark., who has written a book on the movement, agrees with that assessment. Dr. Yeakley, who is trained in psychology as well as religion, was permitted to administer personality tests to 900 church members. What he found disturbed him: About 95 percent of the members tested were experiencing personality changes, and more than half were moving toward having similar personalities. Those findings suggest a cult, he said. Many young disciples “have learned some very damaging techniques,” Dr. Yeakley said. “It’s like (a former member and Church of Christ educator) told me: ‘These guys have learned how to cut you open, but they don’t know how to sew you up.’”

Mr. Baird dismisses those charges as persecution. The group does not try to control the lives of its members and is being targeted mostly because of its success in attracting new members, he said. “Just as a starting point, ask the same questions about the first-century church,” he said. “Jesus was perfect, and they killed him. My reasoning is if you’re going to be a Christian, you’re going to take some hard-line stances, and that’s what upsets some people.”

### **Campus activity**

Although a relative newcomer to the area, the movement has already attracted the attention of some university officials because of what they call aggressive recruiting on local campuses.

Universities such as SMU, UTA, UNT and TCU are trading notes about the Boston Movement and other organizations. “This is one of the few times we (universities) have exchanged information about groups,” said Jeff M. Sorensen, director of student governance and organizations at UTA. SMU chaplain William Finnin Jr. said the Boston Movement has been banned from campus for a few months until an official investigation is completed.

Mr. X, a former Boston Movement leader who trained campus ministers, said the group sees colleges—and their concentration of idealistic and sometimes naive young people—as fertile fields for recruitment. “It’s where they see their prime source of leadership,” he said. “It (the movement) is very charismatic and dynamic, and everything is packaged very nicely to attract that type of client.” UTA was the first local College to confront the group. Twenty-one dorm residents demanded that the university stop the Dallas-Fort Worth Church of Christ Jesus from harassing them in their rooms, said Laurelyn Gaede, assistant housing director. Mrs. Gaede said she tried to talk to the church’s campus leaders but got no cooperation. “This illustrates right here that we’re not talking about your nice, typical Christian group,” Mrs. Gaede said.

Mr. Baird, the national spokesman for the group, said the movement places no particular priority on recruiting college students. The students are one target of the group’s overall efforts and make up about 20 percent of church membership, he said. “We reach out to students primarily because people at that point in life are idealistic,” he said.

Involvement in the church usually leads to a dramatic change in lifestyle for members, Mr. X said.

University officials are concerned about the group because some converts have failed classes, ended relationships with friends and relatives outside the church and ultimately quit school.

Kimberly Cameron, a sophomore at Texas Woman’s University, quit the church after she became convinced that she was involved with a cult. In the three months that she was in the church, she said, members tried to control her finances and her relationship with her boyfriend. Ms. Cameron said that when she told church members she could not afford to pay \$60 for a retreat, they replied, “You just need to put the money out now, and the Lord will provide.” She said she was then advised to go over her budget with another church member who would

help her figure out how to give more money to the church—even though Ms. Cameron was no longer working at her summer job.

In some cases, the intense demands to accept the group as the predominant force in their lives leads some students to reject their parents, Mr. X said. “Students have to agree their parents are lost and are going to hell,” he said. “People are turned against their families.”

Members’ lives revolve around “Bible talks,” Friday night devotionals, Saturday “group dates,” Sunday and Wednesday services and daily contact with “disciplers,” Mr. X said. New members become “disciples” and are assigned to “disciplers”—more experienced members who ensure that the recruits are following church rules. Former members said they were required to ask permission before they could do anything—from taking a trip to the mall to conceiving a child. Some disciplers even monitor the sex lives of their disciples, Mr. X said. “They wanted to know everything about us,” he said, referring to his relationship with his wife. “It got down to the frequency, positions—you name it.”

Mr. Baird acknowledged that some disciplers may occasionally be excessive in their attempts to guide a new convert. But he said no one is encouraged to try to control another’s opinions or thoughts or pry into private matters. “If you’re going to be a great athlete, you’ve got to have a great coach—that’s why we have mentors,” he said. “But we certainly don’t try to control anyone. If that happens, if we lose the ability to think independently, we’re cooked.”

Mr. X and other former leaders said they had seen movement churches use “sin lists” to elicit guilt and cooperation from recruits. During Bible studies with disciplers, UNT sophomore Stacy Stiner said, she was told to write down intimate details of her life. Disciplers then asked explicit questions about her sexual history and wanted the names of partners. Ms. Stiner also was asked whether she had ever participated in homosexual or bestial acts.

### Church expulsion

Complaints about the Boston Movement don’t stop at area college campuses. At the former Dallas Church of Christ, Mrs. Justice said, she and her minister, Rex Boykin, asked the movement to “reconstruct”—or essentially take over—their church of 300 members. Mr. Boykin said that during the reconstruction, he was required to go to Boston because, movement leaders said, he would need further training if he wanted to become an evangelist within the movement. While he was in Boston, Mr. Young, the church’s current minister, took over the church and moved into Mr. Boykin’s home, Mr. Boykin said.

Although Mr. Boykin eventually got his home back, he said he was kicked out of the church because movement officials didn’t consider him “minister material.” “It was pretty financially devastating to us,” said Mr. Boykin, who no longer attends any church. “Here you are an up-and-coming evangelist, a great guy. Next thing you know, you’re out.”

### Founder’s dream

Kip McKean, the 38-year-old founder of the Boston Movement has also known rejection. But he has seen great success as well. The son of a Navy admiral, Mr. McKean was involved in an evangelical campus ministry at the Crossroads Church of Christ while a student at the University of Florida in the early 1970s. During these years, Mr. McKean met ministers who introduced him to the concept of disciple-discipler relationships, associates said. As he moved through mainstream Churches of Christ in pursuit of his dream to be a minister, Mr. McKean has said, he found indifference, rejection, even outright hypocrisy. “I came to a deep conviction that being religious is not the same as being righteous,” he said in an editorial in the movement’s magazine, *Upside Down*.

He vowed to have a church alive with spirit. He liked the discipler-disciple approach. He saw the Bible as an innerrant guide to his ministry. After a few years, he decided that it was better to rent space for his churches than to build grand chapels, reasoning that most of the movement’s funds could then be spent on missions. When Mr. McKean became minister of a church in the Boston area, those ideas were put to work. He recalled his first year in the church as one of great growth. “By restoring the radical concept of a totally committed church, God’s power was unleashed and he gave us 103 baptisms the first year,” he said.

Today, the movement has churches in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio—its newest in Texas. It also has churches in Moscow, London, Paris, Tokyo and Cape Town, South Africa, among other places.

### ‘We love each other’

Movement members say critics and newspeople focus on negative aspects of the movement and fail to recognize the positive. Melanie Brown of Fort Worth said the church is “persecuted” because its members are more committed than those who attend mainline churches. “You can see how much we all love each other,” she said. “Before I started coming here, I had hardly any friends.”

David Phillips of Garland said that although the church has stirred controversy and may have made mistakes, he does not regret leaving his old congregation to attend the Dallas church. “I didn’t

leave where I was to be fooled by something else,” he said. Laurie Merrick of Irving said the church has “radically” changed her life, and the criticism of it hasn’t weakened her faith. “They said the same things about Jesus,” she said. “They said he was a crazy man. “It’s not just religion,” Ms. Merrick said. “It’s life.”

But former members of the movement often have a harsh view of it. Ms. Stiner, for example, said that a traumatic, monthlong encounter this fall with the church has left her disillusioned and suspicious of all churches. “I felt raped, not physically, but mentally and emotionally,” she said. “They took something from me that I can’t get back.”



Newsweek Magazine, March 15, 1993

## Cultic America: A Tower of Babel

by Kenneth L. Woodward

**They tend to be small, scattered and strange. And on occasion their pursuers may outnumber their members.**

Waco is a wake-up call. If the cult watchers are to be believed, there are thousands of groups out there poised to snatch your body, control your mind, corrupt your soul. Witches’ covens, satanic rituals, Krishna consciousness, fanatic fundamentalists, black and white supremacists, New Age cosmic crazies—few are armed but most are considered dangerous. They’ll seduce you and fleece you, marry and bury you. Warning: do you know where your children are? Prophecy or paranoia—it’s hard to judge. Christianity itself began as a cult and so did America’s most distinctive, homegrown religious movements: Mormonism, Seventh-day Adventism and Christian Science. In religion, as in economics, the United States has always been free enterprising and market driven. Anglicans begat Methodists, Methodists begat Pentecostals, and Baptists now come in 57 colorful varieties. “That’s why we have the First Amendment,” says Leo Sandon, professor of religion at Florida State University. “If people want to follow Donald Duck, so be it. The First Amendment guarantees neither taste nor truth.”

But when Donald Duck turns out to be Charles Manson or Jim Jones, people die. Toward the end of the ‘60s, repeated shocks to the American psyche prepared the way for mesmerizing gurus. Coincidentally, changes in U.S. immigration laws allowed a number of Hindu, Buddhist and other spiritual masters to migrate here. Among them: the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, teacher of Transcendental Meditation whose followers now run a fully accredited university in Fairfield, Iowa; Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who purchased a ranch in Oregon, a

fleet of Rolls-Royces, and has since died, and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, the South Korean whose well-heeled Unification Church is developing into a worldwide faith. Since these masters are their message, their movements are labeled by many as cults. In religion, as in physics, actions breed equal and opposite reactions. Prodded by former cultists and parents who “lost” their children to the new religious movements, Christian and Jewish groups established an array of cult-watching organizations in the ‘70s. Today there may be more than 500 such groups, a figure that suggests that the watchdogs are almost as prolific as the cults they monitor. The largest is the Cult Awareness Network, which has 2,000 members in 20 cities and says it receives 18,000 complaints a year. And now these organizations determine what qualifies as a cult. How many cults are there? The answer varies from 700 to 5,000, depending on whom you ask and what they mean by “cult.” Sociologists routinely distinguish cults from sects, and sects from denominations or churches. Sects are usually offshoots of an older religious tradition and—if they thrive—often achieve the status of denominations. Cults are normally small, fringe groups whose members derive their identity and purpose from a single, charismatic individual. David Koresh is unusual in that he took over a heretical sect of former Seventh-day Adventists and turned it into a personal cult.

“The one thing all cults have in common is a leader who presents himself as the answer to all [the group’s] questions and choices,” says Woody Carlson, a sociologist at the University of South Carolina. But without further nuance that yardstick might well include everyone from Menachem Schneerson, the revered Lubavitcher rebbe, to Bobby Knight, the feared Indiana University basketball coach. The best working definition of a cult distinguishes the destructive from the benign. Focusing on behavior rather than ideology or creed, Marcia Rudin, director of International Cult Education Program in New York, defines the destructive types as “groups which manipulate, mistreat and exploit their followers and misrepresent themselves both to their followers and to the outside society.”

The groups that are among the most troubling, however, are those that may be armed. Very few of these are religious. According to former members, the Church Universal and Triumphant, an apocalyptic cult estimated at 5,000 in Montana, has amassed an arsenal. The movement, whose followers hearken to the words of Elizabeth Clare Prophet, is an odd assortment of survivalists, mystics and dooms-day-sayers. But a CUT spokesman says, “There’s no stockpile of weapons. The only guns the church has

are for hunting.” Cult watchers claim that other, smaller groups hoarding food and guns are scattered throughout the West—but details are lacking. Closer to the definition of a “destructive” but nonviolent cult is the blandly named Los Angeles Church of Christ, a branch of a movement that began in Boston and, with an estimated 100,000 members, is now the fastest-growing religious cult in cultic southern California. Headed by founder Kip McKean, the church allegedly practices a particularly domineering form of “shepherding.” According to cult watchers, each recruit is assigned a personal shepherd to whom they must report on their activities: when they wake up, what they eat, how often they masturbate and whenever they have sex with their spouses. Fraternalizing with outsiders is discouraged and church permission is often required of college students before they visit parents. The church did not return Newsweek’s calls. The cult-watchers network is now broadening its net. Researcher Rudin says that a new trend in cults stresses techniques rather than charismatic leaders and promises self-fulfillment rather than salvation. Instead of churches they use workshops but the result, Rudin insists, is the same “psychological hold, imprisonment and control over people’s lives.” These can be, she says, active on campuses and in corporate America, often appearing as benign efforts to help bring order and meaning to a chaotic culture. Again, the wonder is that there aren’t even more. In an age when millions of Americans feel codependent, when children readily label their families dysfunctional and there are as many therapies as there are pains, the search for a fast, fast relief can turn strange. G. K. Chesterton, an astute Christian apologist, once warned that when people stopped believing anything, they are prepared to believe everything. If the cult watchers are right, that time has come to pass.



Newsweek Magazine, March 15, 1993

## From Prophets to Losses

by David Gelman

**Who joins a cult? The alienated and the vulnerable.  
Who leads? A charismatic with a vision and no taste for limits.**

It can begin almost subliminally, with a couple of eye-catching sentences glimpsed among the notices for movers and painters at the bus kiosk: “Confused? Searching? Come meet kindred spirits. Refreshments.” Or the approach might be direct—an alert recruiter chatting up the lonely soul at the back of the church, the dazed-looking freshman on the

college library steps. “Why not look in on our group, we’re getting together tomorrow night.”

For Corey Slavin, it came from a co-worker. At 25, she was living away from her parents for the first time and feeling shaky, she confided. The other woman was reassuring. Corey’s parents obviously didn’t understand her, but never mind, she did—and so did God. From that comforting beginning, Slavin, who is Jewish, fell ultimately into the embrace of the Church Universal and Triumphant, a Montana-based Christian-cum-New Age group. The church leader had her followers build underground shelters against the coming nuclear holocaust while transmitting to them the amalgamated wisdom of “ascended masters,” such as Christ, Buddha and Hercules. Before Slavin got out, she spent much of her time “decreeing”—repeating the sect’s spiritual chant as much as five hours a day, at hypnotic speed. It often happens that way in the cults. Ordinary people, many of them favored with sound intelligence and high education, are recruited at a point in their lives when the summons to some larger collective purpose seems just the antidote for their alienation. Gradually they’re induced, under the sway of a mesmerizing leader and mind-numbing rituals, to surrender the judgment, the scruples and, sometimes, the savings of a lifetime. Slavin was one of the luckier ones. She stayed with the Triumphants only eight months, long enough to run through all her money, including the \$6,500 she paid for a space in the bomb shelters.

When she was hurt in a tumble into one of the shelters, she was told it was because she wasn’t “holy” enough. That started the doubts that led her to quit.

Outsiders usually shake their heads in disbelief at the more bizarre cultic practices. But in the calculated isolation that envelops members, almost anything is possible. At first, they are made welcome by fellow cultists, who always seem to be blissfully smiling. “Belonging” boosts their self-regard, and the cult leader’s often messianic agenda gives them a core belief that may have been lacking in their lives. But somehow they are also made to feel unworthy. Former members tell of a “1984” atmosphere that encourages cultists to monitor each other and report infractions.

**Chosen ones:** Sometimes, it appears cult leaders have all read the same operating manual. Many seem to know instinctively that an outside threat increases the cohesion of a group. They foster a them-and-us mentality: members are the chosen ones, and their mission is transcendent, whether it is building bomb shelters or preparing for the Second Coming. Everyone else is an “outsider” and a potential enemy—particularly family members.

Before long, a cultist's sense of well-being comes to depend on remaining close to other members. Social psychologist Richard Ofshe, who shared a Pulitzer for a newspaper expose of the Synanon cult, says that the tie with peers is what ultimately binds the members. An intimacy develops among them, based on revealing weaknesses in collective sessions. "Then the leader," says Ofshe, "can use everything they revealed to manipulate them."

The leaders themselves have no peers to keep them in line. They may start out benignly enough, but their increasing power over their followers becomes intoxicating. Many present themselves as prophets, with special trunk lines to God. Eager to preserve the illusion, members will rationalize the leader's abuses ("He's just testing us"). In the process, says Marc Galanter, a psychiatry professor at New York University School of Medicine, "leaders who are not necessarily grandiose may become so. There's an interplay between leaders whose needs become increasingly bizarre and followers who are willing to serve their every need." At that point, danger looms. "When there's absolute control, it suggests something is quite pathological," says Alexander Deutsch, director of inpatient psychiatry at New York's Cabrini Medical Center. "The group and the leader get so bound together that it's almost as if they were part of the same organism." The only check on the leader is the limit of his imagination: Jim Jones led his flock to a tub of poisoned Kool-Aid; former members say many Branch Davidians surrendered their daughters to David Koresh.

People, of course, do leave cults. They get out when their doubts begin to overwhelm their trust. In most situations, they're held back only by their own fears. "I've interviewed people who said they wanted leave for six months before they told their spouse, fearing the spouse might turn them in—only to discover the spouse had same desire and fear," says Ofshe. After they've resumed normal lives, defectors may be as puzzled as the rest of us over how they joined a cult to begin with. Slavin, who went to Wellspring, an Ohio rehabilitation center for ex-cultists, and then to a psychotherapist before she could pick up her life again, is still trying to come to terms with the episode. "I know that was in a vulnerable period," she said. "I felt lost. I didn't feel I could go to anybody." As it turned out, she went to the wrong people.

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Santa Monica College *Corsair*, April 21, 1993

## Church Criticized for High Pressure

By Chris Lebrun

Aggressive campus recruiting by the Los Angeles Church of Christ has prompted at least 10 complaints from Santa Monica College students, according to SMC Police Chief Andy Campbell. The LACC (not to be confused with the mainstream Protestant denomination, Churches of Christ) has also been the target of scrutiny by cult watchers and college officials nationwide because of its high-pressure tactics.

In light of the conflagration on Monday that led to the deaths of an estimated 86 persons in the Branch Davidian complex in Waco, Texas, students at SMC have expressed concerns about being "harassed" in the cafeteria by LACC proselytizers. One SMC student described the LACC recruiters as being "overly friendly" and "pushy." Another student said she was pressed to give her phone number and received several unwelcome phone calls from LACC members.

Inter-Club Council Chairman Daryll Robertson said students avoid eating in the cafeteria because of LACC activities. Tom McCurry, an LACC spokesman, said the church has a membership of 100,000 and has experienced rapid growth. "Just because our church is fast-growing, people think that it must be a cult," he said, denying that the church is a cult or that its activities are damaging.

Church followers meet every month at the Shrine Auditorium and more often in small groups in various locations, he said. According to former members of the church who agreed to be interviewed only on the condition their names not be used, the church uses a system called "shepherding" or "disciplining" to recruit and assimilate new followers. New recruits are assigned a personal "shepherd" they must report to on all their activities, including how often they have sex or masturbate, the former member said. "People give up their freedom of thought, to feel, to have any input on what their life will be like," the former member said. "Everything members are being taught is polarized—all evil or bad feelings must be purged and controlled."

The LACC has undergone scrutiny by cult watchers and college officials alike, because of its high-pressure tactics. LACC is an offshoot of the Boston Church of Christ, which has been banned from recruiting members on several college campuses such as Boston University. In an interview, Dr. Walter Enroth, a sociology professor at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, said the LACC is a "destructive but non-violent cult." The church's recruiting methods are forms of mind control, he said. Enroth has co-authored eight books on cults.

"These high-intensity, high-pressure groups cause people to burn out," Enroth said. "These groups impair the academics, occupations, and social lives of

the individuals involved.” Enroth says that the LACC’s methods are similar to those used by other cults. “They isolate individuals, restricting information that the members get,” he said. “This is an effective mind control method—it breaks down the individual’s identity. They achieve a personality change. They call this spiritual.”

According to an interview in the *Toronto Sun* with Dr. Robert J. Lifton, a pioneer researcher in mind control, the Boston Church of Christ (BCC), LACC’s parent church, uses forms of mind control to keep complete control over its flock. He lists the following criteria for mind control:

1. Environmental control: Limitation of all forms of communication with outside world.
2. Mystical manipulation: Extensive personal manipulation is used to provoke specific patterns of behavior and emotion in such a way that they will appear to have arisen spontaneously.
3. The demand for purity: Normal urges and tendencies become sins, and shame is used to control.
4. Confession: Carried beyond its ordinary expressions to becoming a cult itself. This enhances the groups hold upon the person and their guilt: is an act of symbolic self-surrender.
5. The aura of sacred science: Prohibiting any questioning of the basic dogma. The cult’s laws, rules and regulations are absolute and must be followed.
6. Loading the language: Characterized by the thought-terminating cliché. Complex problems are turned into brief, definitive-sounding phrases, easily memorized and expressed.
7. Doctrine over persons: The value of an individual member is insignificant compared to the value of the group.
8. Dispensing of existence: The cult environment draws a sharp line between those whose right to existence can be recognized and those who possess no such right. The religious cult draws a sharp line between those who will or will not be saved and groups who are not acceptable.

In the same *Toronto Sun* article Buddy Martin, a cult expert, said that these criteria can be applied to the BCC. “Members are urged to reside only with other church members. There are few conversations without supervision. Individuals are manipulated into becoming like those at the upper levels of the organization,” Martin said. “They instill a sense of guilt by making people think that they have not been living up to what they should as Christians. Questions by members are not encouraged in Bible talks,” he said.

Another controversial church practice is the limitation of who members associate with. Reginald Greene, a Cal State LA student, says that when his girlfriend joined the LACC she was told to sever all

ties with Greene because he was not a member of the church. McCurry said that the church does ask members that they exclusively date other members within the group. “Both people must first be devoted to God, and then they can have a higher purpose,” he said.

Greene said that once his girlfriend joined LACC, “her personality started changing. When the leaders asked her to stop dating me, she did so immediately ... I personally believe that they are a cult.” Greene started an organization called Cult Awareness Resources (CAR), a group that is devoted to giving students information on high-pressure groups. After starting CAR, Greene says that he has been constantly harassed by members of the LACC.

Members of the group have been tearing down anti-cult fliers that he posts, he said.

Concerned families who see their children change personalities in a matter of weeks sometimes turn to “exit counselors” who deprogram the members. An “exit counselor,” who asked to remain anonymous, said that sometimes the cult members are so brainwashed that they need to be kidnapped. “It’s important to see the relation of this group to cults like the Branch Davidians of Waco, Texas and the Jonestown group — even if they don’t have the same beliefs,” the counselor said.



Santa Monica College *Corsair*, April 28, 1993

## Cult Scandal Responsible for Student’s Masochism

by Josh Harris

A little more than a year ago, someone who was once close to me had become involved with a church group called the L.A. Church of Christ. For awhile, she seemed happy. She kept bragging to me about the church, telling me how much love there was and how great it would be if I joined the church.

Although I am not a religious person, I decided to humor her and attend one of their meetings. When we attended the service, I noticed she was right, there was a lot of love in the air. People were holding hands and hugging, everybody was smiling.

A little while later, my friend once again persuaded me to attend the church meeting. She was slowly becoming obsessed with the church. They had convinced her to attend the Sunday meeting, the Tuesday bible studies and the Friday “Be-with-the-body” nights. The church member who was supposed to guide her and advise her began telling her it was wrong and against the bible for her to associate with me. The church had instilled thoughts in my friend that the bible and church body were more important than work and education. She was becoming torn.

She seemed to always be crying. She had become so depressed that the only thing keeping her from suicide was her own cowardice at committing the actual act.

I still could not place exactly the source of her unhappiness; but by the time I attended the second meeting, I knew. This church had completely torn her apart. They controlled every move she made. They enforced with shame the principle that every action she committed must be aimed toward the bible, and anything negative in her life would send her to hell. This wonderful organization, this one with so much love, had stolen her soul and her basic existence. During that time it never occurred to me that the organization could be a "cult." I began arguing constantly with her, pleading with her to find a different church. Words like "brainwashing" and "mind-control" were often said, but not heard. No matter how hard I tried, I could not convince her that her religious involvement would neither pass her classes nor pay her rent.

Finally, she ended up leaving the church. Whether it was my persistence, or something else, she realized how bad the church was. It is easy to see how someone could be fooled by the love and attention the members of the church bestows. The emotionally weak, the foreign and any other students looking for acceptance and friendships are the greatest prey. As I talk to my peers about the LA Church of Christ, I have found that I am not the only person who has watched somebody they care about lose themselves to this "wonderful" group.



California State University *University Times*, November 9, 1992

## **Cults on Campus: Wolves in Sheep's Clothing**

Commentary by Rev. Albert G. Cohen

The struggle for the minds and souls of college students goes on everyday on campuses in Southern California as young people are harassed and intimidated by recruiters of high pressure religious groups. Rachel and her friend have just left my office at Cal State L.A. after sharing with us their experience yesterday in the student union. They had just come out of a Bible study group only to be accosted promptly by two women not just inviting them but insisting that they come to a discipling session that evening. As a high schooler she had already encountered cult groups so she recognized the technique and quickly turned them off. Others do not escape the web so easily.

A new campus dynamic of the past 10 years is the multiplication of destructive cults and with them the disturbance of aggressive proselytizing, which is the

opposite of the collegial, marketplace of ideas style characteristic of interfaith ministry. The attractive appeal of the cult is a combination of easy answers to life's problems coupled with a sense of belonging to what on the surface appears to be a warm, caring, friendly, intimate group. The price soon turns out to be complete obedience and surrender of one's individuality, usually including previous friends and family, and often resulting in poor grades, dropping out of school and giving up career aspirations. Some of the high pressure groups working on my campus are the Los Angeles Church of Christ (not to be confused with the mainstream Church of Christ), the Unification Church (known on campus as CARP), Scientology and Hare Krishna. They are all similar in their techniques of disorientation and mind control and usually manage to separate their followers from previous religious training and church connections, however tenuous.

John was in here a week ago. He became involved in one of the groups because of their active social program in combination with Bible study. The next step for John was confession of all of the most intimate details of his life to his mentor or discipler. He was also told that his primary goal in life at that point should be to recruit new members, which was explained to him as particularly vital because, "everyone outside the group has been condemned by God to eternal damnation."

The Bible study turned out to be superficial and in fact sometimes rigged to impress newcomers whose theological opinions are discounted anyway. When he resisted spending all available time as a recruiter and also persisted in asking questions about the group's behavior and expectations of him, he was accused of showing signs of weak faith in God, was charged with rebellious behavior, and was told that the last person who behaved badly left the group and went insane. Group attention to him was withdrawn completely, so he quit, at which point he was hounded night and day by phone calls for months and was told that he was twice damned to hell by God for his disobedience. John's story is repeated over and over again in one or another form as can be verified by campus ministers at our major universities.

What is the answer? Violation of university rules has resulted in suspension of some destructive cults from some campuses. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees free speech on public property and besides all opinions should be part of the mixture so that students can learn to analyze and make choices. On the other hand if students are being manipulated and lured away from the academic process, then they should be protected from unscrupulous religious scavengers. At the very least students should have available to them presentations

of a variety of the religious traditions which humankind has found valuable and helpful throughout the ages. At Cal State L.A. this happens through programming offered by the University Council of Campus Ministries, of which UMHE is a part. The university needs our participation in this marketplace of ideas and is grateful that your generosity provides our ministry to the students, staff and faculty.

Another answer is more thorough grounding of our high schoolers in theological understanding and commitment while they are still in their local church groups and attending worship services regularly. Charlie was giving his testimony at a gathering of campus ministers at UCLA last year. He had come from an Episcopalian background but would be representative of all our denominations in questioning the thoroughness of his religious instruction as he was growing up, a typical teenager not particularly interested in the fine points of doctrinal debate. This is a tough one. We would all like to do more with our children and young people, but how to motivate them when it must seem so abstract to them at that time? Yet it is not abstract for Charlotte who has been convinced that her break with the cult is a result of her own sin for which God will punish her forever, with no chance for forgiveness in this life or the next. She is searching for someone who will reassure her of God's redeeming love and mercy. We can do that for her.

Yet a third answer is in the outstanding contribution made by Reggie, a student at Cal State L.A. who was drawn into a battle with the cults as a result of his personal engagement in challenging their influence in his life two years ago. He is the founding energy behind a chapter of CARES, Cult Awareness Resources, an officially recognized student organization organized to provide information and resources to the campus community about cult activity. The Campus Ministries office receives about two dozen calls a month from distraught parents, friends of recent converts and discouraged cult drop outs who are looking for a new grounding in reality and for personal support, psychologically and theologically.

National surveys show that millions of Americans are currently involved in religious cults at one level or another. It might be prudent for those of us committed to the mainstream denominations to take note of this trend and ponder its meaning for the future of the church.

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Sassy Magazine, May 1993

## **"They Steal Your Thoughts"**

by Mary Ann

**The New York City Church of Christ tells people what to wear, how to think and who to date. Lydia was a member for almost two years. Then she realized it was a cult.**

When people think *cult* they envision glassy-eyed freaks wearing long, flowing robes, sporting shaved heads and trading flowers for pennies at airports. But the New York City Church of Christ is much more insidious because its congregation seems normal and nice. It offers prospective members total happiness, a close-knit community and spiritual solace. Who could resist? Lydia couldn't. She's an articulate, older-than-her-years 17-year-old who's been out of the cult for a year and a half, but she still gets really worked up about it. "I want to warn people about the church. It seems completely harmless at first, but it's actually a cult. And a really painful thing to go through," she says. "You find this group where everyone seems to love you. It's something to be a part of, and they tell you that it's the answer to all your problems."

I ask her to explain what a cult is as we sit in her parents' huge house in Peekskill, NY. "A cult is a group that rapes you of your mind," Lydia says, raising her index fingers to her temples. "It's like a cloning factory, so after a while you can't even think your own thoughts." Lydia heard about the NYC Church of Christ for the first time when she was 13. Her mom, Linda, had joined the church after a couple of people she really hit it off with asked her to a meeting. She thought Lydia should check it out too, which she did.

Lydia was totally transfixed by how happy all the members seemed. "I was in junior high and really rebellious. Also, I was confused about religion and why we were here anyway. My mom told someone that I was coming, who told someone else. It's called 'love bombing.' They all know who you are and surround you with all this love. "That first meeting was strange. It was just singing and clapping and all this talk about God. Somebody asked me if I wanted to study, and I asked what that meant. They said, 'Well, you just sit down and we talk about what our church is about.' It sounded really harmless, so I said okay."

Lydia started hanging out about four times a week with the "teen zone," a group just for teenagers. They did typical teenage things, but with a religious twist "Every Friday night we had 'solid rock' which is when all the teens get together sing and listen to a sermon. It went on for two hours at a time, and they would say, 'I want to challenge you, brothers and sisters—this was the famous line—to invite 20 people to meetings.'"

There were other kids from Lydia's school who were invited into the church. "One guy came into the teen zone. He was loud and obnoxious—a normal teenage guy—and then he totally changed. He became this holy roller and started wearing suit jackets and nice shoes," she remembers.

The NYC Church of Christ is part of bunch of churches (more than 103 worldwide) started in 1979 in Boston by this guy named Kip McKean. He was kicked out of a branch of the more mainstream Church of Christ when people began saying he was using cult-like practices and manipulating members. He kept the Church of Christ name, simply adding the name of the city where the new church was started. (There's even one in Cairo, Egypt.) The most important people in church are the "leaders," usually a married couple who organize all the church events and fundraising. Just below them is the "assistant," then the "zone leader," who runs the meetings in each area. Next are "Bible-talk leaders," who lead scriptural discussions. Even lower down are the "discipling partners," group members who serve as spiritual guides for other members. At the bottom are the "disciples" themselves.

But it was hard to tell who was who. "Everyone in the church dresses, thinks, talks and even walks alike," Lydia says. "All the women wear flower dresses. I had my mom make me one so I could like them—it's emerald green with huge puffy shoulders." To maintain this conformity, the church makes it clear that anyone from the outside is "lost" or under the influence of the devil. "If you have a friend who isn't in the group, the church tells you, 'It isn't wise to go with them without a church member present.' If you do go, you're in big trouble. Some people get divorced, stop talking to their families. The church even arranges marriages, and you can only date people in the group."

Lydia attended the meetings, got rebaptized (a born-again ritual the church practices) and was so into raising money for the church that she sold some of her favorite bracelets and earrings. She also contributed her weekly allowance. In the six months following Lydia's baptism, she tried to apply the church's rules to her teenage life. She found it wasn't all that simple once she started liking a boy at school. "You weren't allowed to have any kind of flirtatious behavior because it would allow a guy to 'fall into sin,'" she says.

So Lydia would flirt with the guys only at school, all the while participating in Bible-study groups without ever talking about this crush. And she never told the boy about being in the church. "It felt kind of like I was a religious freak." She started to resent not being able to hang out with people at school, but the church still had a weird hold on her. "I was terrified," she

says. "They really put the fear of Hell into you. I'm not going to say the fear of God, because that's not God."

Meanwhile, Lydia's dad had also joined the church. He was hesitant at first, actually walking out of the first meeting he attended. But then the church—through Lydia—pressured him to come back, and the whole family was hooked. "After that I knew it must be right," says Lydia. Pretty soon her dad was asked to be a Bible-talk assistant. But his doubts returned with a vengeance.

"The other Bible leaders would talk extensively about how they proposed to get a new member into the group, what their problems were," Lydia's dad tells me. One time a member wanted to leave the group, and the church leaders asked Lydia's dad to get him to stay. "They mentioned that the guy was homosexual. They wanted me to manipulate him into fearing his past actions. It's spiritual blackmail," her dad explains. Just two months after joining, he left the church for good. Then "my dad would bring these books home that said the church was a cult," says Lydia. Which was pretty heavy for her. "I thought he was the devil. He said the church was wrong and my mom said it was right, and I was stuck in the middle. It was horrible." Lydia continued going to meetings but couldn't make a commitment to either stay or leave. So she started living a double life. "I was one person outside of the group and another inside." Finally, after a year of ambivalence, she "fell away," which is church slang for leaving the group. "I went to a Bible-talk leader and said that I was having a hard time. She said, 'Look Lydia, there are other people who want to come into the group to study. I don't have time for you.' After that I said, 'That's it. I'm leaving.'" Lydia convinced herself that she could leave the church for now and lead a normal life, then return before she died, when she was about 70, so she wouldn't have to go to Hell.

That summer, her dad sent her to a Lutheran church-supported camp. In the middle of the summer, he came to pick her up, and when she slid into the front seat, he told her, "Mommy's out," and she knew she finally had her mom back. Linda's return helped Lydia realize that no one in the church was happy, including her mom. "My mom wouldn't tell me if she was 'struggling'—that's what they call it—and any doubts were kept very secretive. You don't tell your family what you feel. You tell other people in the church." Lydia could also finally admit that the church was into more than just preaching the word of God. The leaders were totally into money. "We gave them \$80 a week, and we're not rich. The leaders would read a Biblical passage about God praising a woman for giving her last dime to the church," she says.

But you can't just quit. Church members called Lydia constantly. "It was harassment," says Lydia. "They didn't want her to talk to my dad and pressured her to bring the family back in. She was nervous all the time. As for me, I didn't speak to them at all. I didn't want to hear about them. "The cult was a closed little community. It's like a cell wall," Lydia adds. "It's thick, and they try not to let anybody out and anybody in. It's hard to explain what it's like to someone who hasn't been through it. I used to think they were right because they back up each little point by twisting every scripture. Most people don't know a lot about the Bible, so when someone interprets it for you, and it sounds good, you're most likely going to accept it." The NYC Church of Christ also has a standard answer for outside criticism. "When other people call the church a cult, the church calls it persecution. You know, 'They're wrong, they're lost, they're angry because the devil is working through them,'" says Lydia. Since she appears so assertive and together, I wonder if the experience, difficult as it was, benefited her in some way. "It definitely made me more daring. Now won't submit to anyone and I say exactly what's on my mind. Like the fact that I should have burned that ugly flower dress while I had the chance."

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The Independent (London, England), September 27, 1993

## Cult church 'planned to divert cash for UK use'

by Steve Boggan

### Mission funding discussed on tape

The London Church of Christ, which has been described as Britain's fastest growing cult, planned to divert money from Third World missions to fund its British operations, according to a secret tape recording obtained by *The Independent*. Church leaders have denied that cash from a £180,000 foreign missions appeal would be spent illegally in the UK, even though its third-in-command was taped saying some would support missions in Edinburgh, Oxford and Bristol.

If the money raised last month by the missions campaign is spent in the UK instead of the Third World and Australasia, as members of the cult were promised, then it would be in breach of the 1993 Charities Act and the Charity Commission said it would act. The Charity Commission is already investigating complaints about the church's activities, including allegations relating to funding and pyramid-selling techniques designed to draw in new members and increase income. *The Independent's* recording is of a conversation in which Dr. Tommy

Chan, the church's lead evangelist for northwest London and third-in-command in Britain, tells a fellow member that some cash will be used to buy computers and office equipment for branches in Edinburgh, Bristol and Oxford.

Nine hundred church members, who must give a tenth of their income to the church, were told at the end of July that they had six weeks to raise £180,000 for a "Special Missions Contribution" which, according to a campaign leaflet, was to be spent on missionary work in 17 locations, including Bombay, Bangalore, Sydney, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. John Partington, the church's administrator in Britain, said that all the money would go abroad. Asked whether any would be spent here, he replied: "No. That is not why it was raised." But on the tape, Dr. Chan discusses spending on foreign missions and adds: ". . . also, it is for churches in and around the UK like Edinburgh, Bristol, the little ones, Oxford. Because to support them, they all need a computer or something, some way to record things, so we buy them computers and support them. They need office or mail envelopes, paper, all kinds of things. We pay for them because they need help; they have only just opened . . . so the special contribution is purely for mission work, here, but mainly abroad."

Dr Chan, whose voice was verified by an independent source, accepted that the recording was genuine, but said he had been mistaken in what he had told his fellow member. "I was fully aware that this special contribution was purely for work abroad, so I know it would not be spent in this country at all," he said. Mr. Partington said Dr. Chan was mistaken and stressed that he had no control over church money.

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The Times (London, England), 22nd APRIL 1993

## UK Charity Comes Under Scrutiny

by Angela Mackay

Officials from the Charities Commission and Inland Revenue have started an investigation into the finances of the London Church of Christ, a controversial religious cult.

*The Times* has learned that the commission started an inquiry on Tuesday following claims by former members that the church was misusing some of the 1.2 million it raises annually from followers. Elaine Graham of the commission said: "We have received representations about this charity and are looking into allegations to see if there is cause for concern."

The Inland Revenue declined to comment. However a former member of the cult confirmed last night that he had been questioned by officials from the Inland Revenue investigating the cult. Information Network

Focus on Religious Movements (INFORM), a government sponsored body, said they were aware that the group was being looked into. A spokeswoman said they had received a large number of complaints about the activities of the group. Accused of breaking up families and plating intolerable strains on its members, the 1,200-strong LCC was granted charitable status in 1986. It has also established independent churches in Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Leeds, Bristol, Sheffield, Newcastle and Dublin. The church, which mainly attracts young middle class professionals, practices “total exclusivity” which means that unless one is a member of the LCC, it is impossible to be a Christian. FAIR, a voluntary support group for families of cult members, said yesterday that the LCC was the third biggest problem church based on their reports and complaints made to them. The Church of Scientology and the Unification Church (Moonies) rank first and second respectively. Since American cult members established the church in Britain in 1982, members of the group have gradually become concerned about some of the church’s financial practices. Ayman Akshar, 34, a former Bible study leader in the group, became concerned about its finances in 1990. For three years, Mr. Akshar claimed he and his wife, Jane, tried to penetrate the wall of secrecy surrounding the accounts but were persecuted within the group for their efforts. Mr. Akshar said: “We had been worried for a long time but when we tried to resolve these matters with the leaders, our criticism was not tolerated and in the end we were kicked out.” In March, Mr. and Mrs. Akshar were “publicly marked” by the group—its most severe form of censure. According to an LCC leader. The couple were “divisive” and working against the interests of the church. Consequently, members were banned from having any contact with the Akshars. The couple are now cooperating with the investigations.



Reader’s Digest (UK Edition), April 1994

## The ‘Church’ that ‘Brainwashes’ Britons

by Peter Browne

**Outwardly a respectable charitable organization, the London Church of Christ is, in fact, an active and dangerous cult**

Lucy Steele was on a London Underground train traveling to the research laboratory where she worked as a biochemist, when a pleasant young woman started chatting to her. By the time they parted, she had accepted an invitation to a barbecue that

weekend, given by members of the Central London Church of Christ. Living at home at 28, Lucy was hoping this church would be more friendly than the local Baptist one she attended. She returned from the barbecue in high spirits. “They made me feel one of the crowd,” she enthused to her parents. “It’s exactly what I’ve been looking for.”

But within weeks her mother and father were worried by the way the church was taking over their daughter. The warmth had gone out of their close relationship with Lucy. She was becoming withdrawn and losing weight. Recalls her mother, Christine: “She would look at me with a penetrating, emotionless stare, almost as if she were on drugs. I couldn’t break down the barrier.”

Lucy Steele was in the grip of a cult widely regarded as dangerous and the most active in Britain.

Operating under the cloak of respectability conferred by charity status, it can split members from their families and seems totally to control their lives. It was founded in 1979 in Boston, USA by breakaway preacher Kip McKean, and practices an extreme form of Christianity based on its rigid interpretation of the Bible, with followers believing that they are the only ones who will achieve true salvation. The church, now organized from Los Angeles, is disavowed by the traditional, mainline Churches of Christ which have existed in Britain and the United States for some 200 years. It claims 50,000 members in some 50 countries—around 1,300 in Britain, where it was first “planted” in 1982,

The London congregation is said to be one of the largest outside the U.S. According to *Shining Like Stars*, a London Church of Christ manual which *Reader’s Digest* has obtained, “There are 12 million lost souls living in London destined to go to hell.”

The cult uses different names, which ex-members claim are often chosen to cause maximum confusion with respectable religious groups; typically, in Edinburgh the disguise is the Edinburgh Christian Church. The Central London Church of Christ has recently been known as the International Church of Christ, while other branches in the capital may go under such titles as London City Fellowship.

Members are all trained in the techniques of “tubing”—approaching people on the Underground—and “blitzing”—recruiting in shopping centers and high streets. The aggressive touch is characteristic: the manual describes a recruiting campaign as “Operation Devastation,” while the effusive welcome for potential members is termed “love bombing.”

Students are a prime target, with university halls of residence described as an “evangelistic paradise.” In 1992 cult activists were discovered to have infiltrated most, if not all, of the ten halls at University College

London. The National Union of Students has warned student unions across the country, and International Church of Christ recruiters are now banned from many campuses including London, Manchester and Birmingham.

### Soul Search

Not all recruits are young, though they are in the main middle class, intelligent and idealistic; they include businessmen, solicitors, accountants, engineers. Often they are friendless in a big city, beset by spiritual uncertainty, or in the aftermath of a broken relationship. Says Ursula MacKenzie of London-based Family Action Information and Rescue (FAIR), which advises relatives of cult victims: "Recruiters tend to seize on weakness." Marine engineer Bill Wildsmith had moved from Sheffield to Surrey to take up a new job. On holiday in Tunisia, two girls befriended him and, back in England, persistently telephoned to invite him to go to church with them. "I was short of a social life, so eventually I agreed," says Bill, who had no religious convictions. "My first impression was that it was a load of rubbish—people dancing around, clapping and singing 'Jesus will fix it'. But they were so friendly that I got drawn in. Within six months there was nothing else in my life. I had completely lost interest in my career and my family."

The key characteristic of a cult is that it uses psychological coercion. The International Church of Christ demands total submission, through "discipling"—a sort of spiritual buddy system. To Ian Hayworth, founder of the Cult Information Center, which receives up to 80 calls a week from anxious families, "It's a systematic technique of mind control." Every recruit is answerable to his discipler, someone "more mature in the Lord", who in turn has his discipler, and so on up the hierarchy. Dr. Betty Tylden is a consultant psychiatrist who has treated many former members of this and other cults for psychological disorders. She describes it as "a totalitarian system which puts untrained people in positions of complete power."

### Divine Rights

New "disciples" soon learn that there is no room for doubt. "Because leaders claim to be appointed by God, to question what they are saying is to question God," says Greg Williams, a civil servant who spent seven years as a disciple. "When that is instilled in you day after day, you come to believe it." Disciplers try to control every aspect of disciples' lives, even how they spend their money. When Bill Wildsmith paid £350 for a camera, he was smitten with guilt for not seeking his discipler's advice first. "I rang him from a phone box outside the shop, and he told me it

was far too expensive. He instructed me to change it for one costing less than £100, and make a donation to the church from the remainder."

The disciples' primary duty is to evangelize, and the more people they recruit, the faster they rise in the church. Frank Bennett (name has been changed to protect privacy), now a 24-year-old Sussex university student who joined the church at 17, was told to approach ten people and provide at least three names and phone numbers of potential converts every day. "Sometimes I would be sent back on to the streets until I had met my quota. I knew disciples who were out there till past midnight." A good monthly score brings public praise from the preacher during a service, a poor one rebuke as "a struggling Christian." Declares Ayman Akshar, who fell out with the leaders after seven years as a trusted senior member: "The whole system is founded on manipulation—one moment encouragement, the next humiliation, until you comply. Most disciples become people-pleasers, and will do anything to look good in the eyes of their superiors."

Akshar came to London from Damascus as a 25-year-old in 1984 to study the English legal system. Two years later, seeking an answer to his doubts about Islam, he joined the Central London Church of Christ and soon became an ardent discipler. Today a leading opponent of the cult, he admits frankly that his discipling was "a very, very bad abuse of power—though at the time I believed it was what God wanted me to do."

### Sunday Best

He was encouraged to "hammer" his flock, and "break" them, until they meekly bowed to demands which no one in the outside world would tolerate. In their anxiety to please, disciples are driven to conform to the American cult leader's perception of the correct image: shortish haircuts, sharp clothes. Frank Bennett describes it as "basically a yuppie look," and adds, "Many dress like their disciplers, and even speak like them." They also feel obliged to reveal intimate details of their lives. Records of "sins," income, relationships, weaknesses, sexual habits, are passed to church leaders and could be used against those who step out of line.

The church's preoccupation with guilt leads many to become compulsive confessors. Bill Wildsmith remembers ringing his discipler to admit to masturbation, and being reduced to tears. "We prayed over the phone for half an hour, and then I had to drive up to London from Surrey to study the Bible with him till 4am." The cult's attitude to sex is bizarre. Says Bill: "When a group of us were watching television and there was a kissing scene, we had to avert our eyes." Disciples can date only if their

discipler approves—and even then, only on one evening a week, with another church member; any other alliance is liable to be broken up.

Ayman Akshar himself came under attack when he fell in love with a fellow member, a computer consultant. “They said ‘Jane’s not right for you. She isn’t broken. You must choose another.’” He refused.

After they were married, Jane told him how leaders had forced her to have her beloved cat put down [put to sleep]. “They wanted me under control,” she says.

### Forbidden Fruit

A dating couple is restricted to 35 minutes a week on the phone, and often a discipler lurks in the background to make sure they don’t exceed that time. When the church authorizes a marriage, disciplers decide the length of the honeymoon, and couples are expected to seek permission to have children. Single people are pressed to move into overcrowded communal houses, where their lives can be even more closely supervised. Frank Bennett, at 17, found himself sharing a three-bedroom house with seven other “brothers.” “I slept in the kitchen, another in the bath.”

Says Lucy Steele, who moved into a commune several months after the fateful barbecue that introduced her to the church: “On Friday nights we went out in a group—to the cinema, ice-skating or bowling—to prove how worldly and sociable the church could be. Underneath, it was a way of isolating you from anyone outside. The church wormed its way into every part of my life while I thought I was still making my own choices.”

Typically, disciples spend at least an hour a day in Bible study, an hour in prayer and an hour on the streets recruiting. Services are compulsory, as are regular “fellowship” meetings held far into the night. At the end of the day, they must complete a schedule of everything they have done. Many live in a state of permanent exhaustion. Some give up their studies—Ayman Akshar had to abandon his ambition of gaining a doctorate in international law—and other young members often find it impossible to build a career. “If it gets in the way, they tell you to give it up,” says Frank Bennett. “I knew very well-educated members who just flitted from one dead-end job to another.”

Disciples are constantly dunned for money to spread the word—around a million pounds each year. Every convert is strongly encouraged to “tithe” a minimum ten per cent of gross income—even if they depend on student grants or social security. Nor is that all. There are “special contributions”—twice-yearly levies of ten times the normal weekly contribution, plus collections at services. In 16 months, Bill Wildsmith was milked of around £6,000. “I was constantly

overdrawn. When I told my discipler I might have to borrow from the bank to meet my mortgage, he told me just to do it, and trust in God.” The discipler even tried to persuade Bill to buy a bigger car so he could ferry more people about.

Inevitably, many go heavily into debt, but the pressure to bring in money is relentless. Members have been advised to go to a major hospital to earn money by volunteering for an unpleasant experiment involving a biopsy—removing tissue from the nose and inserting pollen to induce hay fever. Yet church administrator John Partington insists: “Our one desire is to bring people to a happy life.”

Although the British organization claims autonomy from the US, the Los Angeles headquarters houses a database of worldwide finances. So money-orientated is the cult that at least two ex-cult members claim this database shows each Monday morning how much any member in any church has given the previous day.

In order to leave the cult, many fear that they will have to forsake God, and this fear is used as a form of group discipline: if you go, you will go to hell. At the beginning of last year the church banished some 400 “lukewarm” disciples who failed to bring in their quota of new recruits. Says Ian Haworth of the Cult Information Center: “They had their world exploded. One minute they thought they were the only truly saved people on earth. The next, they were heading for eternal damnation.” Even those who quit voluntarily live in fear. Bill Wildsmith left because he was deep in debt, his career was in danger and he could no longer take the demands of his overbearing discipler. But, he recalls: “For months I would drive to work very slowly, in case some idiot under the influence of the devil shot out of a side street and smashed into me.” It took him two years, with intensive counseling, to recover. Bodies like the Cult Information Center, FAIR and INFORM, a government-supported charity that gathers intelligence on new religious groups, are inundated with calls from parents pleading for guidance on rescuing their alienated children. Some parents resort to drastic action.

Christine Steele was so convinced that Lucy was being destroyed that she risked arrest for kidnapping. She persuaded her daughter to come home for a weekend, bundled her into a car with two security men, and drove to a remote cottage in Suffolk. There, for ten days, a former member of the Moonie cult reasoned with the young woman. After that had failed, her mother called in Graham Baldwin, a former London University chaplain who has helped more than 200 people to break away from cults by facing them with home truths about the way they have been manipulated. Only then did Lucy’s

illusions crumble. Today she is among the ex-members who help Ayman Akshar “to show people still in the cult how their minds are being stolen.”

### Paradise Lost

Graham Baldwin, who recently founded an organization called Catalyst to provide counseling and therapy, knows how traumatic it can be when cult members leave. “Once they try to come back into society, some can’t cope. They don’t know how to find a job or a place to live, or even how to deal with other people.” Betty Tylden likens leaving any cult religion to bereavement. “People have put their friendships, jobs, security and interests into one basket—and lost the lot. Many of my patients from the International Church of Christ were jettisoned because they had outlived their financial usefulness. Some are so disturbed and mentally ill that they have to go to hospital. They hear voices, see things, even believe they are being consumed by the flames of hell.”

The cult is now itself under fire. Its financial administration is being looked into by the Charity Commissioners and it is reportedly being scrutinized by the Inland Revenue. Meanwhile the church apparently continues to expand, boasting that it will “win as many as possible” new members. The only effective action against it is coming from the loose network of underfunded groups dedicated to raising awareness of the cult and helping its victims. Many of them see chilling similarities between the renegade church and the Branch Davidian sect, at whose headquarters in Waco, Texas, 27 Britons died in the fire that destroyed it after an armed confrontation with the FBI a year ago. There is the same power lust, a similar warped interpretation of the Bible and use of mind control.

There is still no legal remedy for parents trying to recover family members. And last year Prime Minister John Major ruled out specific legislation to curb cult activities, saying, “It would be difficult to determine what groups should be included and what excluded.” Those whose lives have been wrecked by the International Church of Christ have no such doubts.



The Washington Post (3 September 1995)

## Campus Crusaders

**The fast-growing International Churches of Christ welcomes students with open arms. Does it let them go?**

By Stephanie Griest

Fresh out of Cornell, Miguel Antonio Longo ventured to his parents’ home country of Puerto Rico to teach English and, as his father says, “do something significant for the people.” He’d been there just a short while when he met a friendly Christian at an art gallery in San Juan. Miguel, a devout Catholic, readily accepted an invitation to a Bible study.

Two years later, Miguel hanged himself in his Adams-Morgan apartment. His parents blame the International Churches of Christ. “When they kill the mind, kill the soul, it’s impossible to prove. But if you’re a parent, you know what he was like before he went in and what he was like after he came out,” said Antonio Longo, Miguel’s father, a physician in Alexandria.

Miguel had suffered bouts of depression during his senior year of college. Aug. 8, 1993, could have been a relapse. After severing ties with the church, he had seen a therapist and counselors and told them that he was overwhelmed with guilt over the pain he caused his parents, as well with embarrassment about having been, in his words, “conned” by the church. He did not leave a suicide note.

Could all this be the fault of a church? The evangelist of the Iglesia de Christo de Puerto Rico, a member church of ICC, has since left; ICC church officials in the States did not know the details of the story and would not comment. Miguel was a member of the church for only five months. Could such a short involvement affect him so deeply? Teresa Longo isn’t thinking of such questions now. She just remembers how much her son changed in Puerto Rico. Gone was his sense of humor, his joking demeanor. He only wanted to talk about Scriptures and his new “family.” When she finally asked, “Miguel Antonio, do you think these people who six months ago did not know you existed, could possibly love you more than us who conceived you, raised you, love you more than anything else in the world?” he said, “Yes.”

Joi Buckner, a 22-year-old graduate of American University, for two years refused to join ICC because she heard it was “a cult.” She even warned incoming freshmen about the church’s alleged tactics of “mind control” when she was a summer orientation adviser. But eventually, Buckner said, it burdened her conscience to be so close-minded about a group she knew little about. She decided to attend a Sunday service in October of ‘92.

Buckner said she was “cold and aloof” at first and didn’t let anyone get close to her. But certain things impressed her, such as the congregation’s racial

diversity. Its energy. She attended one Bible study, then another. She researched “cults” in the library—every day, she said. For eight months. It happened just before her 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, in March 1993. Buckner was sitting in her room, looking at all of her crowns, her trophies, her possessions. She was a co-captain of the speech and debate teams, an ambassador to the College of Arts and Sciences, Miss Washington, D.C. 1993-1994. “And I was thinking, ‘I have a boyfriend some people would kill for, and enough trophies to melt down and make a car, and I have so many friends and my parents are wonderful, but deep in my heart, I am unhappy,’” Buckner, who now works as a concierge, remembered. “From the outside, I had an ideal life, but from the inside, well, I felt I had been sufficiently humbled by God. And I said, ‘Well Joi, you can give this God thing a try, or you can choose death.’”

She chose the D.C. Church of Christ and said it changed her life. Gave it meaning. Happiness. She’s still a member today. It was the same church Miguel joined, just a different location.

The International Churches of Christ, though still tiny, is one of the fastest-growing churches in the nation, according to Church Growth Today, an independent Missouri-based research center. ICC has a goal: world evangelism by the year 2000. It claims to have already planted 175 churches in 70 countries in 17 years and boasts a 70,000-plus membership. Congregations rent auditoriums for their Sunday services. The Los Angeles Church of Christ, ICC’s headquarters, sometimes meets in the Shrine Auditorium, site last year’s Oscars. The D.C. Church of Christ has at times filled Constitution Hall. Services are dynamic. Seats fill up front-row first with zealous parishioners armed with legal pads or blank books, ready to take notes on the evangelist’s sermon. New visitors receive overwhelming welcomes of hugs and kisses by strangers who call themselves “brothers” and “sisters.” Asians and Caucasians mingle with Latinos and African Americans. It’s a young crowd: about half of the District’s 1,000-plus congregation consists of college students and recent grads.

“This is the only place you can be totally committed and be normal! Be commended!” Doug Arthur, a D.C. evangelist, shouted at a recent Sunday service. His comments were received like those of a politician at a party convention. Members say their beliefs and practices are based solely on an exact interpretation of the Bible. They are expected to attend church services at least twice a week, in addition to regular smaller gatherings for Bible study. Current members say they spend anywhere from 15 to 30 hours a week

on church activities. All new members must be baptized into the church before becoming “disciples.”

Then there are the ex-members. They also make an impressive group: For every three who enter the church, two leave, church officials say. Many have formed communities of their own. Nationwide, support groups abound. Telephone hot lines just for questions about ICC field calls on a weekly basis in New York, Los Angeles and Boston. More and more universities are adding sessions to freshman orientation about what they call “destructive groups,” which are sometimes led by former ICC members.

The New Religious Movement Resource Center in Boulder, Colo., says former ICC members are its most frequent callers. The Cult Awareness Network, based in Chicago, claims that it sends out more information packages about ICC than any other Bible-based group. And the Wellspring Resource Center, a recovery center near Albany, Ohio, says it admits more ex-members of this church than all the rest. “We feel like we’ve been spiritually raped,” said 21-year-old Walter Lee, a first-year medical student at George Washington University who was involved with the church for several months. He started a support group for ex-members in the spring of last year. “There were all of these people we trusted and thought were our friends, and now we feel like our world is down the tube.”

### In the Beginning

It started with Crossroads, a ‘60s movement of the mainstream Churches of Christ, now totally separate from ICC, in Gainesville, Fla., that was designed to recruit college students. Crossroads was led by Chuck Lucas, the campus minister at the University of Florida. Lucas practiced a controversial “discipling,” or mentoring, method called “one another Christianity,” an evangelistic-style of group Bible study. He inspired hundreds of students.

Kip McKean was one of Lucas’ protégés. He delved into the Crossroads Movement upon graduation and, as he explained in a 1992 issue of the ICC magazine *UpsideDown*, grew angry with the “so-called Christian students” and deemed the spiritual condition of the mainstream Churches of Christ “lukewarm to disgusting.” Other ministers became suspicious of McKean’s discipling methods; one church even cut off its support and let him go.

In June of 1979 in Boston, McKean led 30 would-be “disciples” in a discussion of the doctrine of their church. The Boston Movement, later to be called the International Churches of Christ (or Boston Churches of Christ—ICC can be distinguished from mainstream Churches of Christ, because the location

city usually precedes “Churches” in the name) slowly evolved from these meetings. McKean, who declined to be interviewed for this story, became the undisputed leader of the group, and still is today.

In August of 1985, Lucas was fired from Crossroads for what church, officials call “recurring sins in his life.” He is now a marriage counselor in Thomasville, Ga., and did not return a reporter’s calls. Elders from both churches say it was about this time that the Boston Movement completely severed its ties with the mainstream Churches of Christ. The disciples had already mapped out a plan for world evangelism. It was time to get started.

### Bible Talk

Early in the movement, McKean developed a series of nine Bible studies. Church members were told to memorize them and then teach the lessons to possible recruits. The studies are still used today and, according to Dave Anderson, are part of the groups “cult-like tactics.” “The studies are a narrowing progression of options,” said Anderson, the coordinator of both the telephone hot line and a support group for ex-members in New York called Right Side Up. “Your options are reduced to your agreement that this is the only church.”

Al Baird has a different opinion. “If you studied the whole Bible, that would take years,” said Baird, the ICC spokesman. “The studies are just an attempt to boil the Bible down to the basic ingredients of how you follow Jesus.” The Bible studies are intricate, and each one lasts two to five hours, depending on the number of questions a recruit has. Passages are taken straight from the Bible, but they are interpreted in away that some scholars call “Scripture twisting.”

“Their isolation of passages and lack of understanding on how they were spoken then and how they apply today cause extreme problems,” said Mr. X, a minister at a Montgomery County Christian church who has a master’s degree from Harvard Divinity School. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in Biblical studies at Catholic University. “They are playing fast and loose with God’s word, and they’ve refused to entertain the possibility they may be wrong.”

One of the first lessons is called ‘Discipleship Study.’ “[My discipler] wrote, ‘Disciple equals Christian equals saved equals heaven,’” Matt Ledoux remembered. He was a freshman at George Washington University last year and attended a few Bible studies at the suggestion of his resident assistant. “And underneath that, he wrote, ‘Not a Disciple equals not a Christian equals not saved equals hell.’”

Steffi Rausch, a 1995 graduate of the University of Maryland, was told to write down every immoral thing she’d ever done and give it to her discipler in the “Sin Study.” “I just cried and cried so much, and [my discipler] did as well. She said, ‘I did that too; it’s okay. Now it’s time to stop. Now you know the church, and you cannot go back and commit those sins again,’” said Rausch, who belonged to the church for about four months during her sophomore year. She has since started a group called Students Educating Against Mind Control at Maryland.

The church sees the studies as part of the challenge of being a Christian. “You can’t be a disciple and living in immorality,” said Baird, the ICC spokesman. “And you can’t be a Lone Ranger Christian.” That’s where the passage “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men [Mark 1:17]” comes in. According to church members, “fishing for men” or “reaching out” is a biblical duty.

“I just make it a natural part of my lifestyle. If the person standing in front of me in lunch looks friendly, I’ll ask them [to church],” said 21-year-old Fred McConnell, a senior at George Washington. He’s been with the church since his freshman year. “I reach out to maybe five to 10 people a day.”

### Reaching Out

Some school officials, like those at Georgia Tech, Marquette University and Boston University, have another name for “reaching out”—they call it “proselytizing,” and campus recruiters have he kicked off numerous universities for “harassment.” But the church isn’t an easy group to control, as both members and school officials will agree. “It’s a sales organization,” said Flavil Yeakley, who was a minister of the mainstream Churches of Christ for 25 years and is now a professor of religious studies at Harding University in Arkansas. “It’s a system based on production—how many converts you make—and reward.”

Jon Goodman, a 27-year-old ICC evangelist-in-training, said there are anywhere from half a dozen to 75 members of the D.C. Church of Christ at each of the following universities: George Washington, American, the University of Maryland, Montgomery College, George Mason, Howard, Georgetown, Morgan State and the University of the District of Columbia. Several of these schools have allowed their students to form officially recognized organizations, but not one campus group calls itself “the D.C. Church of Christ.” At George Washington, for example, students go by “G-Force.” At the University of Maryland and Howard, they’re known as “Upside Down.” In fact, names changed from

university to university nationwide. “Campus Advance” seemed popular. So did Greek names: students went by “Alpha Omega” at several universities in Georgia. At the University of Southern California, they chose “the Chinese Engineering Society” until the student activities office noticed that their president was white and a Spanish major. Students quickly switched their name to “The Good Clean Fun Club” after that.

Baird says there is a simple explanation for this. “We’re dealing with college students who are used to teams. They’re interested in picking a name for the team,” he said. “Now, you might think that’s being deceptive, or that we’re trying to hide something, but that’s all we’re doing.” Some universities complained of non-students entering campus grounds and proselytizing the vulnerable freshman and international populations. A reporter heard several accounts of church members positioning themselves outside guidance counselors’ offices for “reaching out” and of resident assistants recruiting lonely students on their floor.

“Everyone has a right to their religion. The line gets drawn when they start proselytizing or harassing students,” said Jan Sherrill, the assistant dean of students at George Washington, “The first thing [church members] say is that we’re doing it because of what they believe. They love being victims; they adore being martyrs.” According to former member Lee, students aren’t always asked to attend Bible Studies right away. “they make contact with you—it’s called ‘love bombing,’” he said. “People start calling you, and to a freshman or international student, it’s like, ‘Wow, I automatically have 20 friends who are always coming over and baking me cookies and inviting me to movies, dinner and volleyball games.’”

But Baird and Randy Jordan, an elder for the D.C. Church of Christ, said that the church wants to recruit everyone—not just students. Baird stressed that the church’s population is only about 20 percent college students, though former members and leaders said it is much higher. “The message we have is to meet people’s needs, and needy people respond,” said Jordan, a lawyer in the sect.

### The Baptism

Ashley and Anne are 41 and 27, respectively—a gregarious, athletic, highly educated couple. One’s a professor, the other an instructor at the same local university. They choose to go by their middle names because they didn’t want to reveal too much personal information, just their story. The two got involved with the D.C. Church of Christ in February. They left

in mid-July. Their phone hasn’t stopped ringing since.

They were in a rocky part of their three-year relationship, Anne says, when she first met an evangelist of the D.C. Church of Christ at a health club. Anne was looking for an intangible something—a feeling, a meaning, a new church, perhaps. She wasn’t ready to attend a service with the evangelist just yet, but she wanted to learn more about it. After three months of her probing questions, the evangelist finally introduced Anne to his wife. They two became fast friends and started studying the Bible together. “And she just started [quoting] Scriptures, answered my questions with Scriptures, and I was impressed by that,” Anne said of the woman who became her discipler (she did not wish to release her name, either). “I had never had anyone sit down and study the Bible with me before.

A few weeks into her studies, Anne moved out of the house she shared with her fiancé. “What they teach you is that appearance is just as important as anything else,” she said. “I went to them and said, ‘Look, we’re celibate and we want to be married.’ And they said, ‘Nope, you’ve got to move out. What do you think it is for someone looking at the outside? Are they going to think you’re a Christian seeing you living together?’”

Anne moved into a house with four other women from the church. That, she remembered, is when she “got real busy.” There were bible studies with her discipler, “Bible Talks” in groups, “Quiet time” each morning at 6 for private reading and prayer, Sunday services, midweek services, social functions, “reaching out,” “Family Gatherings.” Anne estimates that she spent maybe 30 hours a week in church activities. Leaders said the average is more like 15 hours, but most current members echoed Anne’s guess. One said his was even higher.

“[I spend] 168 hours a week, even in my sleep. The Bible says you need to love the Lord with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength,” McConnell, the senior at George Washington University, said enthusiastically. “I even write music about God.” Although she was baptized into the Catholic church as a child, Anne was rebaptized into the D.C. Church of Christ on Mother’s Day because she was told it was the only way she could be a “disciple” and be “saved.” Ashley followed, not long after. That’s when the trouble began.

“I got semi-rebuked one time because [Ashley] and I had gone out to dinner with another couple, and I was hugging him in the parking lot, and [the other wife]

said, ‘you know, i noticed that you were hugging him from the front.’ And I said, ‘So?’ and she said, ‘We were taught that you should only hug men from the back so that you don’t cause them to struggle.’” Anne remembered.

Dating is just one activity regulated by the church. Members are to date within the congregation, in groups of four or more, on Saturday nights. Curfew is usually midnight. “We almost always date with another couple because we want to protect each other from impurity,” said 22-year-old Paula Flores, a senior at George Washington and student leader of “G-Force.” “the best thing is, there are no expectations afterward, there’s no kiss, there’s not the worry of ‘What’s he going to want afterward?’”

Money was another issue. Anne groaned when she was asked about it. She said she gave \$25 a week in tithing, \$375 for the biannual “special contribution,” \$5 to \$10 a week for the “poor collection,” and maybe \$50 total for song books, shirts, tapes and other “incidentals.” “The [evangelists would] say, ‘Look, we don’t want you to give just that, we want you to blow out the special contribution so we can be the leading church,’” Anne said “And there were people who were mowing lawns and selling vegetables to make their special contribution. There were people selling wedding rings.”

Baird argued that almost all churches ask for a weekly 10 percent tithing, and many have special contributions and collections for the needy. But Anne and Ashley said it was the *way* the church collected money that gave them problems. Anne remembered in particular an evangelist rebuking a roofer for not giving enough.

“There’s an envelope that gets passed around [during mid-week services] and most people write checks. Apparently, the weekly [goal] wasn’t met and they found out it was him. And the evangelist came up and said, “This is totally unacceptable!” [The roofer] was made to feel *this* high; she said as her index finger barely hovered over her thumb. Still, members say they don’t mind giving. “That’s where trust comes in. I totally trust the church,” said 21-year-old Jacob Scott. He’s been a member of the church since his freshman year at American University. “I have total confidence that the money is being used wisely and biblically.” Something else worried Anne though—more than the time commitment, the rules, the money. “I never saw anyone question, not one teaching,” she said. Former members said there was a reason for that: they were rebuked for asking too many questions. Lee said he used to get “torn apart” by his discipler for interrupting Bible studies and frequently referred to the entire process as a

“breaking session.” Rausch, the former member of the U-Md. Group, said a church elder once pointed a finger at her and sternly said, “You have been a very bad girl,” when Rausch wanted to postpone her baptism.

“Clone is the perfect word for people in the church,” Anne said. “All the leaders are alike, they all preach the same thing, the disciples become more and more alike. You’re happy because you’re one of the crowd, but you lose yourself.” Those in the church had different feelings. “We’re all trying to become like Christ, so I’m encouraged that we’re more alike in mind and spirit,” said Scott, who is a nationally ranked captain of American University’s wrestling team. “If that’s the modern-day definition of a cult, then yeah, we’re a cult.”

### Leaving

Ashley laughs when he says he was a disciple only for “three days, 11 hours and 45 minutes.” That’s when Anne’s mother called. She had done some research on the church and had a phone number of two local exit counselors. Ashley says he had been suspicious of the church all along—now he just needed help getting Anne out.

According to Mr. X, exit counseling is the non-coercive process of in-depth Bible discussions, video viewing, long walks and longer talks with willing church members. Mr. and Mrs. X had been leaders of the Boston Movement for a decade and a half before they started counseling. Mr. X said he was fired from the church for challenging its doctrine; Baird says Mr. X left independently to pursue his doctorate at Catholic University. Nevertheless, Mr. and Mrs. X and all of the papers and books they have since written are considered “marked” and “spiritual pornography” by church officials.

In 1991, [they founded a ministry] that has since helped some 200 people out of religious groups, according to Mr. and Mrs. X. They boast a 99 percent success rate and say it takes the people they counsel three days, on average, to independently decide to leave. Anne took even less. “It’s so amazing to me that I can sit down and in just a couple of hours, in a very calm discussion with Anne, show her biblically where the group is off . . . and in just a couple of hours, show her how this ‘totally wonderful’ system can be dismantled before her very eyes,” said Mr. X.

It was pretty amazing to Anne too—and nothing like she expected. “I was told they take your Bible away from you and they kidnap you and put you in this padded room and like, torture you or something, I don’t know.” Anne was probably referring to called

“deprogrammers,” who have been known to charge parents \$50,000 or more to “kidnap” their child and “deprogram” them of indoctrination. Both Mr. X and Baird agreed that de-programmers sometimes use the very tactics cults are accused of.

Anne shook her long ponytail, leaned into one of the chairs and sighed. “This has just been a really frustrating thing. We want to make people understand who have not been through it, how people can get involved. It has nothing to do with weakness of character, or having a screw loose. It’s affecting people from all walks of life, every educational background and every family upbringing,” she said.

Still, Anne admitted that many good things came from the couple’s involvement. Their faith was strengthened, as was their desire to raise a Christian family. Their relationship was nursed back to health. They’ve even set a wedding date. Such wasn’t the case for everyone. Rausch no longer goes to church, except for an occasional holiday. It’s too difficult, she said. She’s no longer religious, but rather “spiritual.” “God gave us the ability to make our own decisions—that’s the greatest gift—and they took that away from me,” she said. “And it’s taken me three years to get it back.”

Some members never get it back, like Miguel Longo. Antonio Longo says his son couldn’t escape the guilt or “the embarrassment of getting conned.” Religion was ruined for him and he never went to church again, according to his parents. “They thrived on guilt and that’s what killed him. The therapists, the counselors—we just didn’t have time to remove the damage,” Antonio said.

But what about the 70,000 members still in? A reporter heard countless uplifting stories of students who claimed the church “saved their life” from sin and damnation. “I’m sorry there are people who have not been happy with us. I wish they could be like most people whose lives have changed,” Baird said. People like Paula Flores. “How long will I stay in?” she said, her coal black eyes surprised. Flores joined the church six months after she moved here from her home country of Bolivia in 1990. “As long as I have breath.” She smiled and finished her iced coffee. Her eyes are innocent and sweet.



Chronicle of Higher Education, 20 November 1996

## Recruiting Tactics of a Religious Group Stir Campus Concerns

### Some educators warn that it acts like a cult; others say students can make up their own minds

By Mary Geraghty

Pittsburgh—A lonely student would quickly feel welcome at a Greater Pittsburgh Church of Christ service. On a recent Sunday, a stranger was immediately greeted by a member with a warm smile. As other members arrived at the hotel meeting room where the church holds its services, they made a point of introducing themselves and finding out who the visitor was and how she had heard about their group.

Of the 60 or so people in attendance, most appeared to be of college age. The service began with lively singing and hand-clapping and continued with two hymns—nothing out of the ordinary for church services. What was unusual took place during the hour-long sermon. All of the participants diligently took notes on everything that Jack Armstrong, the church’s evangelist, said. His topic was the conversion of Saul, as described in the Acts of the Apostles, and the importance of encouraging conversion today. Conversion is a key element of this group’s faith, as well as what gets it into trouble on many campuses.

The Pittsburgh church is part of the International Churches of Christ, which is not affiliated with the mainline Church of Christ. The international group is known for recruiting drives aimed at students and for heavy proselytizing—which critics say amounts to harassment and intimidation. At least 20 colleges have banned it from their campuses, according to the American Family Foundation, which describes itself as a cult-education organization.

The Rev. Robert Watts Thornburg, dean of Boston University’s Marsh Chapel, calls the church “the most destructive religious group I’ve ever seen.” Boston stopped allowing members on its campus in 1987, when they refused to stop proselytizing students door-to-door in the dormitories, he says. Other colleges that have banned the group include American University, Boston College, the Georgia Institute of Technology, Marquette University, Smith College, and the University of Southern California. As branches of the church have popped up across the country, mainly in large cities with several campuses, college officials have had to decide what, if anything, to do. Some clerics and administrators say they have an obligation to warn students away from the group, while others say their job is only to provide students with information and let them make their own religious decisions. The church arrived here two years ago, but students have reported heavy recruiting only in the past year. As their complaints have increased, so has the debate over what to do.

The group was started in Boston in 1979, when about 30 people broke away from the mainline Church of Christ. Members of the new church were determined to go back to the roots of Christianity, practicing the kind of “discipling” described in New Testament passages about first-century Christians. They believe that to be true disciples, they must bring the word of God to those they encounter in their daily lives. The group now claims to have more than 120,000 members around the world. Those who call the group a cult say their objections have nothing to do with theology. They say they are opposed to the way it pursues students—calling them constantly and waiting for them outside their classes—even after the students have said they are not interested.

“The group cuts across the very core of what higher education is about,” Boston University’s Dr. Thornburg says. “It refuses to receive questions or have any kind of discussion of an idea. It simply says ‘Believe and obey,’ and if you do anything else you are hard of heart.” Dawn Lynn Check, acting director of United Campus Ministry of Pittsburgh, which serves students at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh, says members of the group deceive students whom they are recruiting by pretending simply to befriend them and by not mentioning the church specifically. She started holding meetings to warn students about the group after several students complained to her about being approached by members of the church. Since she began speaking out against the church, Ms. Check says, she has received a few anonymous telephone calls “telling me to keep my mouth shut.” “I’m not going to back down from this,” she adds, “because it’s wrong.”

Mr. Armstrong, evangelist for the Pittsburgh church, says he is not surprised that some people would label the church a cult. He points out that first-century Christians were a persecuted sect. “We are a very, very different church from what’s already established that’s out there,” he says. “Whenever you see something radical or different, of course you’re going to get that label that it’s a cult. I wish these campus people who put this label on us would take the time to understand us.” Mr. Armstrong, who joined the church 10 years ago as a freshman at the University of Georgia, says campuses are a natural place to look for new members.

“If I.B.M. wanted to recruit, they would go to a college campus, because that’s where new, idealistic, educated people are going to come from, and you can take those people and implement their talents,” he says. “We reach out to students because that’s when people have been most prone to be open to new ideas, because they’re young and idealistic.”

Michael C. Murphy, dean of student affairs at Carnegie Mellon, says that as far as he knows, the church has had a “very limited” impact on campus. But he says he is bothered by the church’s refusal to join the Interfaith Council, the umbrella organization for religious groups with recognized status at Carnegie Mellon and Pitt. Ms. Check also points to that refusal. “If you’re legit, why not join the Interfaith Council?” she asks. “Why are you going around campus in this anonymous fashion?” In order to be accepted on the council, campus ministers must sign a statement that they will not proselytize on the campuses. Church leaders may not recruit students individually—a common tactic of the International Churches of Christ.

Tamara Mhone, a graduate student in public policy at Carnegie Mellon and a member of the church, denies that she forces her beliefs on other students. But she makes no apologies for trying “to find people who want to know the truth.” And to do that, she says, she has to ask students directly. She joined the Philadelphia branch of the group in 1993, while pursuing her first graduate degree, in communications, at the University of Pennsylvania. A woman approached her on the street and asked her the same question Ms. Mhone says she now asks students at Carnegie Mellon: “Are you interested in studying the Bible?” At the time, she says, she felt that there was something missing in her life. She says she accepted the invitation hoping to find a new spiritual dimension. Less than a month later, she was baptized into the church. She broke up with her boyfriend “to focus on my relationship with God,” and started associating almost exclusively with other members of the church.

It is this type of major life change, along with the zealous recruiting that leads Ms. Check and some other members of the Interfaith Council to refer to the group as a cult. They also question a requirement that members tithe—give 10 per cent of their income to the church—without knowing specifically where the money goes. Marcia Rudin, a spokeswoman for the American Family Foundation, says her group receives more complaints about the International Churches of Christ than about any other group. The church “fits the profile of a cult in every way you define them,” she says. According to the reports she has heard, she says, the church disrupts students’ career plans, isolates them from their families, and tells them whom to befriend, whom to date, and, in some cases, whom to marry. Many other colleges report getting such complaints. The church denies the allegations.

Despite such reports, some members of the Interfaith Council hesitate to label the International Churches of Christ as a cult. Tom Stoddard, campus minister

for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, says college students are old enough to make decisions about religion as long as they have all of the information available about a given church. “We need to let students know that there is a group on campus and they will approach you in these ways,” he says. “At that point we should drop it without making any judgments. I would say, Be aware. I wouldn’t say, Beware. That would be pejorative. Since my religion has been called a cult in the past,” he adds, “it’s hard for me to generate the kind of fervor” that is shared by others on the council. Many students who have been approached by members of the church in Pittsburgh say they don’t realize until later that they’ve been talked into attending a church service or Bible study. Erin, a freshman at Carnegie Mellon who asked that her last name not be given, says two women came up to her while she was studying outside the cafeteria early this semester. She says they did not identify themselves as members of the Greater Pittsburgh Church of Christ. When they asked her if she would be interested in talking about the Bible, she agreed. Later that day, though, she felt uncomfortable about the meeting. In high school in Nashville, Erin had been active in a United Methodist youth group and had considered others in the group her closest friends. “I had been here long enough to start missing aspects of my spiritual life,” she says. “I thought I was feeling uneasy because they were confronting me with something that I knew I needed to address but hadn’t the whole time I was in Pittsburgh.” So when the two women approached her, Erin says, she was vulnerable to their friendly invitation. When

she decided against joining the Bible study, they tried harder to bring her in, she says. “One of them would just randomly show up outside my classes, because in our little small talk, I’d basically told her my class schedule. I was kind of intimidated. I felt like I was making her feel bad by saying I wasn’t going to go.” Sister Bernadette Young, a campus minister at Carnegie Mellon’s Ryan Catholic Newman Center, says students like Erin are the most susceptible to the proselytizing of the church. “College-age students are vulnerable because they’re facing critical issues when they have the least support in life. Members of the group are pleasant, enthusiastic, and outgoing. Who wouldn’t fall for it unless you have strong support somewhere else?”

Ms. Mhone, the church member, says it is like a family to her. She says she will finish her master’s degree in the spring but plans to stay in Pittsburgh to continue helping the church to grow.

Before she joined, she says, she was interested only in achieving for herself. Now, she says, “planting the church is my first priority.”

As for Ms. Check, of United Campus Ministry, her first priority is making sure that students here learn about the Greater Pittsburgh Church of Christ from her organization before a member of the church approaches them.

“I am concerned with protecting the integrity of students’ right to explore their spirituality in a safe way, whether they are Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or whatever,” she says. “This is a church that takes away your choice.”

# Chapter III

## Responding to the International Churches of Christ

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## Often-Asked Questions About the ICC



# RESPONDING TO THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST

**I**n the three years since I left the International Churches of Christ/Boston Movement (hereinafter referred to throughout this article as the “ICC”), I have received numerous telephone calls, visits, and correspondence regarding our affiliation with the group. On average, fifteen to twenty people call me each week with questions or comments about the ICC, and we receive ten to fifteen letters per week as well. Many who call are current members of the organization, seeking answers to issues that are troubling them. Others have read my book, *The Anatomy of Calvary: An In-Depth Study of the Cross*, and are curious as to why one of the movement’s scholars would have left the group. Still others are parents, spouses, and in some cases children of members of the group, frightened and dismayed because of a loved one’s membership in the ICC.

Generally speaking, the questions raised by these individuals are predictable. Some speak of personal matters and wish to hold their conversations in strictest confidence. Many who are ICC members know that if they are “caught” speaking with me they will be punished in some manner, especially those in leadership positions; in several cases, leaders who have since left the organization have told me that they were regularly “monitored” by the ICC’s top echelon to check whether they were communicating with me or with some other leader who had left the organization. It is important to realize how dangerous this type of communication is regarded by both the ICC member and the upper-level leaders; since virtually everyone who has called us, willing to listen to “the other side of the story” about the ICC, has ended up leaving the organization, it is little wonder that the ICC leaders have continually warned its members against speaking with me.

In this chapter I will attempt to address several of the more frequently raised questions and issues regarding the ICC. Rather than present this information in a dry or clinical fashion, I will attempt to maintain a conversational—at times even adversarial—tone throughout this chapter. As the discussions that I have with ICC members generally lead them to make the decision to leave the organization (or at least

make the decision to do the research necessary to properly evaluate the nature of the group they have joined), I will try to maintain some semblance of a conversational style in this section.

It is important to bear in mind that often the individual still affiliated with the ICC who calls is still quite hostile to those outside the group, and so great tact must be employed in responding to these questions and discussing these issues. This information and material should not be viewed as “points” to use in winning a religious argument; rather, they represent, to my mind, the best lines of approach for a discussion that stimulates the latent rational thought processes and decision-making abilities of the individual in the ICC. As the ICC has suppressed these abilities in the name of “unity” and “loyalty” to the group, they must be rediscovered and gently stimulated so that the individual can again think for himself or herself. Often, parents and loved ones emotionally close to the individual in the ICC do not have the critical disengagement necessary to observe this development, or at least be able to effect its change to a more healthy self-esteem and individually-determined reality. At times, the individual may need to be challenged to study the scriptures more on specific biblical or doctrinal issues before he or she would ever admit that it is even possible for the group to err in other matters. Often, someone in the ICC will challenge me by saying, “Just show me one case where you can prove that they have purposefully lied, and I’ll listen to you.” After being shown incontrovertible evidence of not only one but many deceptions, the ICC member is more disposed to listen. At times they call in fear and confusion, yearning for an answer that is truthful and helpful. It brings to mind the biblical proverb: “An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.”

Special biblical studies exist (please consult the next chapter for several) that can show the ICC member that the Bible itself encourages individual thought and judgment, that testing and evaluating—even disagreeing with leaders—are not behaviors that are “sinful” in themselves, but represent a very healthy Christianity. I like to show them just how opposed to religious tyranny Jesus of Nazareth was, and how

committed to inclusiveness and liberty the early Christian church was as well.

Later in this chapter I will detail fully the process that an ICC member usually goes through in leaving the organization, and the right (and wrong) ways by which that process may be influenced. It is important to note here that intervening in an incorrect way or in an unprepared fashion with an ICC member is almost always worse than not intervening at all! Timing is everything, and proper preparation and study prevents a harmful outcome. We are not interested in winning arguments or scoring points in some debate, but rescuing an individual from a religious system and mentality that I consider a prison. Nothing less than achieving this goal should be the measure of our success. The following questions are the ones most generally asked about the ICC organization.



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### **“Why did you leave the ICC?”**

Although I had observed many abusive practices and heard questionable doctrinal positions taken during my 15-year affiliation with the ICC and its predecessor at Crossroads, until the summer of 1991 I believed that the good intentions of the group still outweighed the bad. For years I hoped that time and the growing maturity of the leaders would see that such abuses be corrected. Especially after the demise of the Crossroads Church of Christ and the firing of evangelist Chuck Lucas, I felt that the leadership of the ICC would surely have realized the folly of one-man authoritarian rule and unaccountable leadership. Indeed, since Kip McKean and I were both personally mentored by Lucas, I felt that we each had an “up close and personal” vision of the terror of such religious fascism. I hoped that McKean would take steps to ensure that the well-documented abuses of the Crossroads era were not duplicated in Boston. Indeed, over the years and in several personal conversations with McKean, he went out of his way to assure me “how different things in Boston were from Gainesville.”

In 1987 Kip McKean approached me with the prospect of moving to Boston. My wife and I were currently in leadership positions in the Denver Church of Christ. Although we were wary of the problems of Crossroads repeating themselves in the Boston ministry, and had already taken measures to ensure that they were not being repeated in our own ministry in Denver, in retrospect we did not ask enough questions about the Boston Movement before moving to Boston in 1988.

Upon our arrival in Boston, we came face to face with abusive problems in the activities, practices, and teachings of the Boston Church of Christ, at that time

the hierarchical headquarters for the ICC. To my mind, our years in Boston served only to underscore the adage that “those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them.” Sadly, it seemed that, far from wanting to learn from the mistakes of Crossroads, the leaders at Boston were more interested in trying to convince new members that they had never been affiliated with the Crossroads Movement in the first place. There was little desire to understand the reasons for the debacle of that ministry. Instead of honestly admitting their origins, they have continued to play down or deny altogether the source of much of their abusive teachings and practices—the Crossroads Movement. Since so much of the Crossroads ministry has been repudiated over the years (even by the current Crossroads church leaders, who have taken steps to cut off all ties to the ICC), the ICC quite understandably does not want its members to know the problems that have always been a part of her history.

My wife and I were recruited from the Denver Church of Christ, where I was serving as an evangelist, to join the staff of the Boston Church of Christ. Moving to Boston would fulfill a life-long dream of earning my doctorate in Biblical Studies at Harvard. I also thought that my being closer to the center of what was then called the Boston Movement would allow me to have a greater influence on it. I saw an opportunity to bring a more scholarly emphasis to bear on what I had thought was a serious lack of depth on the part of the leadership of the group. Most of the current leaders have no formal training in Bible, preaching, or theology. While this is not always a disqualification for ministry, when matters of doctrine or what the original biblical text taught were being addressed, few of the upper-echelon leaders have the training to objectively understand the biblical texts or their subtleties. In short, I thought that moving to Boston would be helpful to not only me but to the organization as well. The leadership of the ICC has consistently maintained over the years that they are being unfairly portrayed by the media as abusive or cultic, and have been “persecuted” by the media. They say that no one has taken the time to do an in-depth analysis of the organization. In the years that my wife and I were in Boston, we had such an opportunity. We did not arrive with “critical”, “negative” or “bad” attitudes, or the host of other thought-stopping clichés that the ICC usually employs to describe anyone who differs with the organization’s hierarchy. In fact, we were predisposed to support the ICC, defend it against its critics, and labored for years advancing its causes. We served in virtually every leadership position for the organization, even taking the initiative to start the

first periodical of the Discipling Movement, entitled *Discipleship Magazine* (the magazine was later entitled *Upside Down*). It would have been harder to find two people who were more “gung-ho” in our initial months in Boston. One of the ICC leaders even described me to Kip McKean as “a baptizing machine.” For that reason, we were given the responsibility of directing the recruiting efforts at the leading campus ministry in the Boston area at that time, Northeastern University. It was McKean’s stated objective to have me direct the entire campus ministry in the Boston metropolitan area.

The opportunity to closely observe the inner workings of the ICC during my years in Boston was a tremendously troubling experience. First of all, the initial promises made by McKean to both me and Marty Wooten (the other key leader of the Denver Church of Christ, who was promised that he “would be the lead evangelist for the Boston Church of Christ”) turned out to be untrue. McKean’s promises of my furthering my education at Harvard proved to be empty. I was forced to either stay in the ministry there in Boston or to resign if I wanted to continue my education. I had been enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Biblical Studies at the University of Denver, and would never have left Denver had I not been able to continue my education. In retrospect, I now feel that Kip promised me whatever it would take to get me and Marty Wooten “out of the way” in the leadership of the Denver Church, so that Boston could take it over.

At one point in the months prior to our moving to Boston, Marty Wooten expressed reservations about Boston and its ministry abuses. In a confidential discussion with Kip McKean, Kip told me to “do whatever it takes to get him [Marty Wooten] to Boston.” Although I was too naive to offer much resistance to McKean, in retrospect I have come to view our moving to Boston as a ruse so that the ICC leadership could take over a growing, thriving congregation in Denver and shape it to their own purposes. In a later conversation with another ICC staff member, it was reported to me that Kip McKean said “we promise them [meaning ministry leaders whose churches the ICC wants to take over] *anything* to get them to move to Boston.”

By similar tactics the ICC was able to take over the operational control and the financial assets of scores of other churches during the 1980’s, resulting in millions of dollars coming under their direct and unaccountable control. Land, business property, overseas accounts, and other assets have been taken over by the organization, with few of these transactions ever becoming known to the rank-and-file ICC member. The ICC has foreign land holdings conservatively valued at over 75 million dollars, yet

none of the ICC rank-and-file membership has any idea of these resources! Presumably this “embarrassment of riches” would have an adverse effect on the amount of weekly contribution given by the average ICC member.

The decade of the 1980’s has been vilified as a decade of corporate greed and spending profligacy. The terms “corporate takeover,” “insider trading” and the like came into usage during this time. How ironic that the Boston Church of Christ practiced its own version of the “hostile takeover” during this time, taking over established churches with promises of greater growth for the shareholders (spiritual “junk bonds” if you will), massive restructuring, terminating and reposition of leaders (removing anyone who fought for the interests of the church members), and the systematic raiding and liquidation of any and all church assets (land, cash in bank accounts, church buildings, etc.). By eliminating the leaders who could have mounted any opposition to McKean by luring them to Boston with promises of greater responsibility and power, the Boston Church of Christ was able to seize control of vast economic resources that would enable McKean to further his dreams of world conquest. Any leaders who disagreed with McKean or disagreed with the practices and teachings of the Boston Church of Christ once they relocated to Boston were terminated or forced to resign.

Every time I attempted to bring up the matter of my education and the scholarly needs of the organization and its leaders, I was met with a rebuff to the effect that “recruiting new members is the most important thing for you to do.” I very clearly was made to view any and all academic development and further scholarship as something to be feared and loathed (many of the ICC’s leaders actually boast in how *little* formal training they have received, a very anti-scholarly pose that presumably sets them up against more traditional religious structures; I found this anti-intellectualistic attitude a bit frightening at times). In spite of heading a ministry at Northeastern University that continued to lead all the other campuses in terms of recruiting new members, I was frustrated by what I saw around me. I saw students who were not graduating, spending more time on recruiting members, attending meaningless meetings and church activities, and taking five, six, and in some cases seven years to receive an undergraduate degree. In no way would this ever reflect favorably on the church’s ability to actually help students, such that others would view the church as a positive influence on campus and in the community.

At one point in my work for the Boston ministry, I tried to accept the fact that I would not be allowed to finish my education, and resigned myself to that

conclusion. I could not, however, live with myself or with my conscience. This was not just a career decision for me; it became rather an issue of conscience. I was eventually forced to resign from the ministry at Boston to pursue my education, and had to find other sources for funding this considerable expense. Even if the leaders of the Boston Movement did not see the wisdom of my decision, it was a decision that I had to make. I had a deep conviction about wanting to finish my education even if the group did not wish to support me while I was at school. I thought at the time that eventually the group would “come around” to seeing things my way, and that they would eventually need a leader who had taken the effort to educate himself. Perhaps one day education and formal training would be valued and not disparaged.

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**. . . often in the ICC, the person bringing a question or problem – even in a matter of doctrine – generally becomes the problem . . .**

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Personal matters aside, I had become increasingly concerned about doctrinal and ethical problems in the group. One of the areas where I saw these problems first was at *Discipleship Magazine*. Marty Wooten was soon replaced with an editor I considered more suited to Kip McKean’s desire to dominate the communication process in the organization, Roger Lamb. All stories, information, statistics, and content had to have McKean’s approval before they were published. I saw stories and articles that were written by others attributed to prominent ICC leaders, causing ICC members to conclude that these leaders had a scholarship and writing ability they didn’t possess. They were taking other’s work and making it their own, without credit or without the ethical standards of journalism. In some cases, misleading statistics of growth and numbers of baptisms were printed, and “blue-sky” projections and “preacher’s counts” were recorded as if they were completely accurate. The content of the magazine began to suffer as more and more of the magazine was devoted to suit the needs of public relations instead of accurately describing what was happening in the movement, or honestly struggling with the issues of doctrine and practice that were among us. One of the major areas of disagreement I had with the editorial direction of the magazine surfaced when the editors published an article entitled “You Might Be Fighting God” which chronicled the brief history of

the organization to that point in time. I was shocked as I read the pre-published galleys of the story, as virtually no mention of the Crossroads Church of Christ or the Crossroads Movement appeared. It was as if the writers were trying to create the impression that the Boston Movement started out of thin air in 1979, when Kip McKean took over the Lexington Church of Christ. Churches that were “taken over” by Boston were now being described as being “planted” by the Boston ministry. The sheer weight of this deception was overwhelming. In a later conversation with Kip McKean, I told him that the editors (of whom he was in firm command) were attempting to “air-brush” away all of the significant problems in both the Crossroads and Boston organizations, and hence keep the readers from seeing the all-too-human and altogether too claylike feet of the very individuals who were now in charge of the ICC. Perhaps it would not have been the most flattering of portraits, but it could have served as a reminder to not repeat the folly of unaccountable leadership and pyramid-like hierarchies of people-pleasers. The entire magazine staff seemed thrilled in the “new” direction that the magazine had taken, but I was deeply troubled. Although the graphics and photographic layouts were certainly “slicker” and more professional-looking, a certain feeling deep in the pit of my stomach bothered me. Were we more concerned about cosmetics and appearances than reality? Finally, I could take what I considered hypocrisy and deceit being published no longer—I tendered my resignation of my editorship to *Discipleship Magazine*. The full text of my letter of resignation (unedited) is included in the following pages. Needless to say, the letter prompted no small reaction on the part of the *Upside Down* editors, but many of the staff members of the magazine were never given the opportunity to know why I resigned. The manner in which my resignation was (mis)handled concerned me; if someone who had poured 6 years of his life’s work into something could be dismissed without even a hearing, how would the church leadership handle the even weightier matters I was concerned about? By this time I had become concerned about far more than simply the editorial content and direction of the magazine. I saw the magazine’s departure from ethical standards of journalism as a symptom of a larger problem—a problem that went to the heart of the Boston Movement leadership and organization. Doctrinal changes were being promulgated from Kip McKean and the leadership without any debate, dissent, in-depth study, and certainly without a clear biblical consensus. Doctrines regarding conversion to Christianity were being reversed,

August 21, 1991

Roger Lamb, Editor / *Discipleship Magazine* / 1  
Merrill Street / Woburn, Massachusetts 02180

Dear Roger:

It is with deep regret that I hereby tender my resignation, effective immediately, as editor of the Review Department for *Discipleship Magazine*. It is a decision I have reached with deep regret, as I was one of the original founders of the magazine, and served in many capacities throughout its history. As the marketing manager, news editor, managing editor, graphic designer, author of several articles over the years (I was also the director of the highly-successful *Discipleship Magazine* Bikeathon), and writer of nearly every review in the history of the magazine, no one has supported, written more, or worked harder for the success of the original goals of this publication than me; it is only because those original goals are now so much in jeopardy that I have little choice other than to resign. I have several reasons for this decision; they are as follows:

1) **A disturbing trend that has seen truth and a scrupulous regard for accuracy sacrificed to serve the needs of public relations.** Although this tendency has been observed in the news reporting during recent years (careless, inaccurate, "projected" or downright inflated statistics, baptism figures, as well as the commonly practiced but little-publicized "ghost writing" of major articles by authors other than those credited with the article), its most glaring example was in the recent story regarding the history of the Boston Church movement in the article on church history you and Tom Jones wrote in the Spring/Summer Issue. Your deliberate failure to mention the source of the Boston ministry and a large percentage of its current leaders as coming from the Crossroads Church of Christ borders on outright deception. The fact that several other leaders, evangelists (including the former editor, Marty Wooten), and others on the magazine staff encouraged you to at least mention Gainesville heightens the deliberateness of this decision. It is as if you are embarrassed for either the successes or failures of the Gainesville ministry (could anyone really attempt to explain the existence of the Boston movement without recourse to Gainesville?) and are attempting to present a story of origins that inadequately accounts for the beginnings of Boston. Our uninformed readers would be left to conclude that this movement originated *sui generis* from Boston alone. The fact that this same story, unchanged, was included in the *Making Disciples* booklet published in Boston, taught as the systematic teaching program of the congregation, and distributed as a part of the evangelistic outreach of the church makes the failure to own up to our origins more glaring. If virtually every news media story covering the Boston movement traces its origins back to Gainesville, should you not be a bit more forthright and at least explain the truth of the matter? Are people not going to find out this "dirty little secret" eventually? This

practice of "history" writing is called *revisionism*; it is the deliberate shaping and manipulation of information to present only what an individual or group wants others to know about itself. For your information, it is the current practice of the Mormon and Unification churches, and was a great part of the historiography of the Third Reich and communist Russian and Chinese regimes.

This is only one of a number of instances in which events and situations are portrayed in a manner that is deliberately untruthful. The continued practice of referring to churches that decided to affiliate themselves under the Boston umbrella as "church plantings sent out by Boston" (the Chicago church is perhaps the most-cited of these inaccuracies, and reflected in the "time line" portion of the previously-mentioned article) is another example of what could only be called deceptive. The fact that Cecil Wooten, the worldwide administrator, and Marty Wooten, the original editor of the magazine, have confronted you several times over the years about this deceptive terminology and you still continue to employ it leads me to believe that this is a deliberate attempt to change the facts to what you want them to be, rather than clearly portray exactly the sequence of events in question. It is as if you are embarrassed to admit any success or goodness preexistent to the onset of the Boston control of a congregation.

"The truth, *the whole truth*, and nothing but the truth" suffices for the courts of our land; surely Christians should take the standard higher. Roger, your desire to make the good look "even better" has undermined the honesty and integrity of the good works that are *indeed* going on among us. I believe the integrity of the magazine is called into question by this at best inaccurate and at worst deceitful writing. This is a far cry from the intellectually challenging and ruthless regard for honesty that once marked "our journal" as something different. Roger, if we have to account for every word spoken at the judgment bar of the Father, should we not be far more careful with what we write?

2) **The recent decision to rename the magazine *Upside Down*** (which I learned through a misdirected overseas letter rather than by a personal note or call) reflects not only poor communication with staff members (decisions being announced, not discussed, in a rather imperious manner), but also a growing superficiality with the magazine. Again, the original editor Marty Wooten registered strong reservations about this name change, as well as other members on the staff. I can only conclude that you take your orders from someone else not on the magazine staff. Who authorized so important a decision? Will the process by which the flagship magazine of the Discipling churches worldwide was renamed from a respected and distinctive publication to that of an entertaining but sadly-dated musical ever be known except by a few back-room judges? Why was the majority not heard? Were the readers themselves ever polled, as I suggested? I think that your desire to please others and ingratiate yourself to

the Boston and worldwide leadership caused you to forfeit your good sense; such easily-influenced lack of depth and integrity should not be charting the course of so important a magazine. It took a lot of hard work to get our periodical recognized by our own movement, the traditional churches of Christ, and the religious world in general as both an accurate and respected spokesperson for what is going on among the discipling churches. Imagine the regard or respect these groups will now have for a magazine called *Upside Down*. What sort of stability, security, and trustworthiness does this new name suggest? What will we do five years from now when the trendiness of this name wears off? Change the name again? Find a new buzz-word or slogan? These superficial "solutions" reflect only a desire for trendiness, rather than to stick with a magazine title that has become respected by our members and by outsiders alike.

It is as if you want the magazine to be slick, trendy, and savvy, like the world and its publications, rather than keep true to a biblical depth and spirituality. Packaging has taken precedence to content. The emphasis on graphical layouts, pictures, and improved design (though none suggested or welcomed these cosmetic improvements more than me) without a concurrent zeal for spiritual depth, insight, and the painstaking process of carefully crafting the written word—as if it what we say really matters in the hearts and minds of people—saddens me. For what have we labored so long and so hard? Is it for an "infotainment magazine?" It may be of use for public relations, but *Discipleship Magazine* unfortunately has become altogether shallow, hardly ever questioning the *status quo*, and seldom contributing to the on-going need for restoration of first-century Christianity. The cutting edge of the magazine's insight and its editorial challenge have been dulled by a desire to be accepted, to only talk about our successes (or the failings of other churches or other groups), and to never look within at our own spiritual needs or failings. The hard issues are being ducked (where was the retraction/clarification of the article on "The Umbrella of Authority," written by Al Baird? Do we still teach these doctrines? If we don't, did we ever rectify the fact that false doctrine or emphasis was promulgated in our magazine?) and a trendy slickness masks a disturbing superficiality in the major articles of the magazine and in its editorial direction. This trend constitutes a major rejection of the original goals of the magazine, and saddens those who have worked for its earlier successes.

3) Since you took over as editor, **your desire to feature only Boston-produced material in the review section constitutes an extreme narrowing of focus**, cutting off the readers of the magazine from a wider range of materials that would be helpful in their Christian life. It has become a regular battle to recommend materials that are not produced by Boston or a discipling ministry. Perhaps it is because you are uncomfortable with the thought of any other with the thousands of individuals whom I had taught the Bible and baptized now presumably in need of

person or group actually having something valuable for our learning. You have usurped the decision-making process normally reserved for a review editor, have opened or authorized the opening of parcels and correspondence addressed to me (for your information, it is a federal offense to tamper in any way with the mail), and you seem more interested in "getting free books" than in getting quality materials out to our readers.

Economic concerns drive the editorial/review process where once only quality held sway. Channels certainly exist for the Boston or New York ministries to hawk their wares without my being told to "push" books and videos that are three or four years old (and were previously reviewed and recommended in earlier issues in the first place); it is disturbing to have the original non-commercial aspects of the magazine subverted to economic concerns. It has always been my contention that the materials we review should be considered primarily for how they contribute to the spiritual lives of our readership, and not to whom their purchase would benefit. This decision subverts the recommending of materials and products to a self-serving economic principle and cheapens the entire review process. It is unethical, biased, and again not in keeping with the original goals of the magazine. In the long run, our readers will be smart enough to realize that you just want to sell them something, and the precious trust they should have in fellow Christians and in the magazine will be undermined.

I have enjoyed my work with the magazine since its inception, and feel a great sense of loss at these developments. They represent to me not so much a change in direction as a loss of seriousness, sobriety, and integrity—precious commodities in our world today. Jesus' concern for his disciples was that "they should know the truth," and rejoice in its liberating power. It is a formula that cannot be "improved" upon by deceptive half-truths and a desire to sell people something. Roger, do you love the truth? Is any of what I have said true? Are we not to love truth from wherever it comes? I hope and pray that you'll consider the truth of what I am saying and think hard about these questions. Please do not dismiss this letter as inconsequential.

Yours in Christ,

(signed)

Mr. X

cc: Elders, Boston Church of Christ / Original Editorial Board Members / Present News Editors Cecil Wooten, Worldwide Church Administrator / *Discipleship Magazine* Staff

(re)conversion and (re)baptism. It seemed that the need to "crank the numbers" (ICC terminology

meaning to increase the numbers of people joining the organization) was having an influence on the biblical doctrine of conversion to Christ. If these “new truths” that McKean was discovering would lead to thousands of members of the Boston movement being (re)baptized (with those conversion figures being mixed in with “new” conversions, creating inflated growth statistics that were greatly misleading), there was a serious issue that needed the benefit of serious study. If the ICC’s central teaching about how to become a Christian had changed so much that its top-echelon leaders like “elder” Al Baird and “elder” Roger Lamb had to be (re)baptized, the entire teaching needed to be examined. One would assume that, since they were (re)baptized they now qualified as “baby-Christians”—a movement term for neophyte disciples—they would by scriptural imperative not be qualified to serve as leaders in the organization. To my surprise, these men continued in their leadership positions. I was confronted with a paradox: the central teachings of the ICC about how to become a Christian had changed so radically from the Crossroads days to the point that anyone who had gone through a conversion experience at Crossroads was suspect when they moved to Boston. By their own standards, the conversion experiences and process for not only myself but for ICC head Kip McKean were now being labeled “false doctrine.” It came down to this conclusion: either Kip McKean was not a Christian because he had not been (re)baptized according to the new Boston teachings (and as a non-Christian would presumably not qualify to be the leader of the ICC), or the top man on the ICC was now espousing a biblically false and incorrect doctrine about how to become a Christian (Again, as a false teacher, he would not be the kind of person picked to be the leader of a Christian organization!). Either way, I saw a contradiction in life and doctrine that bothered me deeply. In addition, I was troubled by the entire process by which the leadership of the Boston Movement was radically recast into the “World Sector Leaders” structure that is its present form today. Who appointed Kip McKean to be the world ruler? Who appointed the structures? Who set the agenda? These decisions were simply announced by McKean to the ICC leaders in Boston, who were expected, as “good disciples” to get in line and accept all the changes that installed McKean as the undisputed leader of the ICC, and left very little in the way of checks and balances on the power and influence that he would have. I saw power corrupting the very people who had suffered under its abuse in the Gainesville ministry, and I was deeply concerned.

A few weeks after my resignation from *Discipleship Magazine*, I attempted to address my biblically-based reservations about the ICC organization with leader Kip McKean. To my mind at that time, they included the issue of the thousands of (re)baptisms which came from a serious misunderstanding of the biblical text of the gospel of Matthew 28:18-20, a works-oriented salvation and lifestyle, a pyramid leadership structure, and the role and authority of Kip McKean. These were not peripheral issues, but represented some of the core teachings of the organization. I wanted to organize a group conference of leaders to discuss these issues. Such a meeting should not be unique to those who have studied the New Testament, but would represent a radical change-in-style for those accustomed to the ICC’s way of decision-making. Although they are rather lengthy passages, two examples (with my own emphasis added) serve to highlight that it is not only necessary but indeed biblical to have meetings to iron out differences and discuss problems in a church, and the openness of the discussions:

**Acts 6:1-6**—<sup>1</sup> In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> **So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together** and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> **Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them** <sup>4</sup> and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." <sup>5</sup> **This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose** Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parnenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup> **They presented these men to the apostles**, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

**Acts 15:1-3; 6-12; 22** — <sup>1</sup> Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." <sup>2</sup> This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. **So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.** <sup>3</sup> **The church sent them on their way . . .** <sup>6</sup> **The apostles and elders met to consider this question.** <sup>7</sup> **After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them:** "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. <sup>8</sup> God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving

the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. <sup>9</sup> He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? <sup>11</sup> No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." <sup>12</sup> **The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul** telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them . . . <sup>22</sup> **Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose** Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers. I realized that asking for this kind of meeting would "get me in trouble," but if I was going to get in trouble for fighting for something, it would be about the core teachings of the organization, and not something less important like *Discipleship Magazine's* name change! My letter requesting such a meeting is enclosed, unedited:

14 October 1991 / Kip McKean / 1400 Pandora Avenue / Los Angeles, California 90024

Dear Kip:

In August of this year, you expressed a desire to meet and discuss the areas of disagreement between us, and you promised a fair and frank atmosphere in which these issues and concerns could be presented and discussed. I wish to challenge you to make good upon your word and that promise. In the interest of promoting Christian unity, and in trying to resolve what I have concluded to be serious doctrinal heresies in the Boston Movement, I hereby invite you to a discussion structured around the following guidelines:

#### Participants

The Boston Movement will be able to select any four individuals to participate in the discussions (yourself and three other men of your choosing; for your information, Marty Wooten has already expressed an interest in attending this meeting as one of the representatives of the Boston Movement). I will be selecting three individuals of my own choice as well. The unpleasant experiences of other individuals who have been intimidated and outnumbered by yourself and other Boston Movement leaders in other attempts to reconcile similar concerns leads me to believe that this is the only solution that guarantees fairness to all participants, and that the positions of each side on these matters will be accurately represented and defended. Since we have already addressed these matters personally in the spirit of Matthew 18, and since you yourself have already suggested a group meeting (again true to the "second step" of Matthew 18), that is precisely what I wish for as well. Such a meeting to discuss doctrinal issues is not unknown in both biblical and early church history.

#### Format

Each "side" will be allowed a 30-minute opening statement, clarifying the issues at hand, and representing their current thinking and practice. Following these statements, three hours each will be devoted to a discussion (with a structured and timed statement/response period for clarification maintained to insure that all parties present have ample opportunity to communicate clearly and without interruption their positions on these matters) for the following subjects:

- 1) Conversion and baptism, as taught and practiced by the Boston Movement and the New Testament;
- 2) Local church leadership and the hierarchical organization of the Boston Movement;
- 3) The use and abuse of authority in the Boston Movement and in the New Testament;
- 4) The practice of one-over-one discipling as taught and practiced by the Boston Movement.

Each "side" will be given adequate opportunity to present and defend their current teachings and practices in these matters, and to correct any misunderstandings or false doctrines that may have been taught in the past. Each will be accountable for only those positions that they have taught or otherwise published on the subjects addressed. More

specific structures for each of the three-hour segments will be developed upon mutual agreement once more concrete arrangements are in place. At no time will the discussion become focused primarily upon the character, shortcomings, or sins of individuals (as we believe that each of us is a sinner before God (Romans 3:23) whose righteousness is guaranteed only by Christ), but rather upon the four major issues identified in this document.

Believing in the necessity of an open atmosphere, and also having a conviction that we are responsible before both men and God for what we say and teach, it is our intention to record these discussions and to distribute them freely and without charge to whomever requests them, as they would represent the current practices of both ourselves and the leaders of the Boston Movement. We feel this to be a unique opportunity to rectify any misrepresentations made in the past by any of the parties involved, or to correct any false doctrines that may no longer be taught by the Boston Movement.

#### Date & Location

We are prepared to meet with you at any time, at any location, for as long as is necessary to adequately discuss these matters. Admittedly, a site that is "neutral" and within easy travel distance for all participants is difficult; I offer our nation's capitol in Washington, D.C., as a suggested possibility, but am certainly willing to accommodate any reasonably suitable alternatives. I would imagine that the meetings and discussions would last for a minimum of two days.

"Open heart, open Bible, open mind" used to be the theme of the Boston Movement leadership. It was that kind of restoration-like spirit that prompted each of us to previously respect and support the Boston Movement, at times at great personal and career cost. Recently, however, there appears to be a great reluctance to discuss any and all doctrinal matters with any but those who are already in agreement with Boston Movement teachings on these issues. We feel this spirit contrary to your own statements and claims to "openness" and "teachability." As Boston Movement evangelist Mike Taliaferro wrote in the *Boston Bulletin* (September 3, 1989, p. 93):

"We've got so much to learn, I hope all my life I'm a learner. But pride will cause me to be open to learning only from a smaller and smaller group of people. That's wrong. I want to always be a learner and for my disciples to be learners, and if I stop being a learner I pray God will take me out of the way."

We know that you have labeled several of us "enemies" and have forbade members of the Boston Movement to speak with us (at times without ever discussing your reasons with us prior to that decision). If enemies indeed we are, then Kip, I am calling on you to live up to the way you yourself spoke of treating one's enemies:

"The key to getting people to accept the gut-wrenching challenges of Jesus is love. Jesus teaches us that we must even love our enemies. It is so hard

to love your enemies, but we must be the dreamers who believe that even our enemies can become Christians" (*Boston Bulletin*, September 3, 1989, p. 92).

Kip, how can you call these men your enemies and refuse to meet with them in a fair and frank discussion of our differences? Is this the openness that the Boston Movement was built upon? The "gut-wrenching challenge" before you is to be a man of your word. I am sending this letter to Christian leaders worldwide (both inside and outside the Boston Movement) in an attempt to have them plead for your willingness to meet with us. As Al Baird said about the critics of the Boston Movement:

"We are still in the process of changing. Our critics look at us and say, 'You blow it here and you blow it there.' I listen to that and often say 'Amen, but give us a little time and we won't be there anymore.' A lot of our critics criticize us about things that happened several years ago, and we aren't there anymore. They are fighting our dust" (*Boston Bulletin*, September 3, 1989, 92), p.6.

We wish neither to be your enemies nor to fight your dust, only to fully and frankly discuss where we believe the Boston Movement to have departed from the teachings of the New Testament. If indeed we are in error and convinced by the Word of God to be so, we will publish our corrected positions and teachings as broadly as is possible. We want to truly resolve these matters so that the good works and plans of the Boston Movement can be encouraged, applauded, and even assisted by a wider fellowship than at

present, and we wish to provide a forum for discussion of issues that believe will eventually, if uncorrected, constitute the undoing of your movement. On behalf of the four former elders, seven former evangelists, and numerous zone leaders, house church leaders, and women's counselors, as well as the untold thousands who have left the Boston Movement, we urge you to not disregard this historic opportunity.

If a peace conference can be brokered in the Middle East by secular means, then surely our meeting is possible. If the Soviet Union can be brought to the conference table to disarm our world of terrifying weapons of mass annihilation, then surely we can meet and discuss our differences. The preservation of our union as Christians and our mutual plea for this world's salvation is such that we should go anywhere, do anything, give up everything, and pay any price to see it attained. Your rejection of this offer leaves us no choice but to conclude that you and the movement that you represent has no interest in clarifying or defending your doctrinal positions. Kip, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, please do not disregard this opportunity. I pray that you will respond in writing at the earliest possible opportunity.

the cause of Christ,

Yours in

(signed)  
Mr. X.

I had previously spoken of these matters with Kip McKean personally, in the spirit of the biblical model of conflict resolution presented in Matthew 18. Kip wanted my wife and me to visit his ministry in Los Angeles, but I wanted to resolve the doctrinal matters first in an environment where my character would not be the focus. Often in the ICC, the person bringing a question or problem—even in a study of doctrine—generally *becomes* the problem, resulting in a character assassination; I had witnessed the spectacle of someone walking into a meeting (presumably a personal meeting with a leader) and being confronted by 8 or more leaders, united in making the individual's character or previously-confessed sin (regardless of how little it may have to do with the problem) become the issue. This kind of meeting is called a "breaking session;" it is one of the all-too-familiar experiences of any leader who dares to question the organization or the practices of the ICC. I knew all too well the methods used by the ICC to "break" reluctant or questioning members, for I had employed them at times in my own years at Boston. I had also suffered these very same abuses against me at the hand of Kip McKean. In one case, I recall going to a meeting at Kip's home with several other leaders in Boston. Detail after personal detail of my life and the lives of others were cited publicly by McKean in an effort to "break" us and get us to increase our recruiting efforts. It is difficult to describe just how ashamed and humiliated one can be made to feel in such a situation. Personal struggles and even non-sinful confidences and dreams that you may have shared with a trusted colleague were now being openly bandied about by McKean, who used this illicitly-gathered information to shame and control us. I have always been concerned about keeping the confidentiality of confessions during my years in the ministry, but the ever-increasing use of previously-confessed sin to break and humiliate individuals in the ICC is a problem of grave seriousness. Yet the ICC continues the practice unabated and unchallenged. In one discussion with an individual who is now one of the specially-designated "teachers" of the ICC, I was told that "once an individual sins, he loses all his confidentiality rights in the Movement." Since orthodox Christian teaching suggests that we are all sinners, presumably all members of the ICC have forfeited their rights when they confess sin in the ICC.

As McKean wanted a meeting to "go after me", self-protection became a concern. I would never again "walk into an ambush" led by Kip McKean. I wanted a meeting with the issues up-front, on the table, with the comments and positions recorded for all to know and understand. In short, I wanted the kind of meeting described in the New Testament in Acts 6 and in Acts 15 where Christians (both leaders and non-leaders) addressed issues both of practice and of doctrine. The atmosphere in those settings was free from acrimony and personal character assault;

such was what I wished to see in a meeting with the ICC leadership.

Several of the leaders of the ICC were open to the idea initially, but it did not take long for the message to come down from Los Angeles and from Boston. I was telephoned by the leaders of the Boston Church of Christ and told that the letter's contents were "damaging the faith" of the people who were reading it. To this day, I do not know how any of the contents of the letter would "damage the faith" of any Christian. It is far more

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**I wanted a meeting with the issues up-front, on the table, with the comments and positions recorded for all to know and understand. I wanted the kind of meeting described in the New Testament in Acts 6 and in Acts 15.**

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damaging for the ICC to approach any and all criticism of the organization's practices by resorting to "information control" and silencing. After I vehemently refused to apologize for anything related to the request for a meeting (Gordon Ferguson, one of the Boston elders, had insisted on nothing less than my signed confession, to be printed in *Discipleship Magazine/Upside Down*), both my wife and I were "marked" by the Boston Church of Christ church leaders for the following:

- 1) Not joining the Washington, D.C., Church of Christ.** This group was the ICC chapter in our area. On the telephone, I asked Boston elder Gordon Ferguson if that group was the only "saved" church in the entire 6 million plus Washington/Baltimore area, and if it were possible that one could worship somewhere else and still go to heaven. My wife and I had worshipped at a mainstream Church of Christ at this time; we visited the ICC branch in Washington but it appeared to be even more harsh, immature, and legalistic than the Boston congregation we had just left. He responded in the affirmative—that the Washington, D.C. Church of Christ (ICC affiliate) was the only "saved" church in the entire metropolitan area! He stated to me personally that for this decision alone, both my wife and I were "going to hell."
- 2) Sending out a copy of the McKean letter to other leaders in the ICC.** For this we were accused of "being divisive" and "causing others to question their faith." To this day I do not know why wanting such a meeting would be considered "divisive" or cause leaders to struggle in their faith. To my mind, I would think a group that refuses to accept that it has serious disagreements and refuses to meet to discuss them would cause more people to "question their faith" than the meeting I was

proposing. I challenged Gordon Ferguson strongly for his cowardice in not standing up to Kip McKean and insisting on the meeting. I was angry that the men who had impressed me so greatly as courageous stalwarts for Jesus were sniveling cowards when it came to challenging Kip McKean. I told Gordon, in no uncertain terms, “The Lord added me to His church when I became a Christian, and there’s nothing that you or anyone else can do to throw me out!”

Like many other leaders, Gordon Ferguson knows that to challenge Kip McKean is to risk his employment, position and security. I have seen Ferguson publicly humiliated by McKean in leaders’ meetings, reduced to abject tears; this is one of the methods that McKean uses to keep any potential challengers to his power at bay. In retrospect, I was glad that I had at least a chance to write down my concerns at that time, and to communicate them to other leaders in the ICC. Such an act could never be considered “divisive” in a healthy religious group, where difference of opinion, variety of interpretation, and willingness to learn are encouraged. In an atmosphere where conformity to the leadership—no matter what the personal price—is prized as the most coveted quality, lackeys and sycophantic boot-lickers will always surround the leader. Such is what I saw in the ICC, with those individuals courageous enough to challenge the leadership always being dismissed as having “bad attitudes” and “opposing God.” McKean has stated publicly in several different contexts that “to oppose the leadership of the Movement, *to oppose the leader of the Movement, is to oppose God.*” If ICC members are not troubled in the pit of their soul by these statements, I have a great fear for them. By these same lines of argument, tyranny, destruction, and genocide have been inspired—all in the name of God or in the name of some “Movement.”

I don’t regret writing these letters in the least, though it cost me dearly, both financially and emotionally. Over the past three years, many leaders who have since left the ICC have been greatly encouraged by these letters, as they continue to underscore many of the major problems in the ICC even today. And no one can ever accuse me of having reached these conclusions by aid or influence of anyone or anything else, or coming to these conclusions about the ICC after I made the decision to leave the organization.

For the stated reasons above, the Boston leadership “marked” us and told people to have nothing to do with us, to not read our mail, to not call us to check out “our side of the story,” to rip up even our Christmas cards! In my opinion, the only reason we were “marked” was the same as for virtually every other individual or former leader of the ICC—for purposes of information control. Were the average member of the ICC to ever learn the sheer numbers of leaders who have disagreed with the top echelon leaders about beliefs and practices, there

would be a massive rebellion. Were they ever to have the opportunity to hear “the other side of the story,” the ICC leadership would be forced to confront itself and to “come clean” in a way they have as yet failed to do. As I did not consider the ICC’s “marking” both myself and my wife as indicative of a healthy religious group, my decision to sever any affiliation with the ICC (followed after several months by my wife) was finalized. Incidentally, the exact reason why my wife was “marked” has always eluded me. She did not write, sign, or otherwise contribute to the contents of my writing. Nor did she even agree with all of the material that I had written at the time these letters were first written. She did agree that a group meeting would be helpful in clearing up matters of disagreement. For this affront, she too was “marked.” I would also add that my wife has penned her own thoughts and experiences about her decade-and-a-half affiliation with this organization in a booklet. By this point in time (the fall of 1991), I was wondering if all these “horror stories” about “mind control”, “manipulation” and “information control” did not have some ring of truth to them. At first I saw only serious doctrinal problems in the ICC; later on I witnessed ethical and moral problems in the ICC’s top echelon. Both the doctrinal and the ethical problems—as well as the ICC’s steadfast refusal to address the problems—resulted in my no longer being able to support the ICC. The manner in which we were slandered, our character and integrity recklessly and maliciously impugned, and our friends purposefully alienated from us, led me to conclude that many of the actions of the ICC leadership were similar to those described of mind-control groups and destructive religious cults. What to me seemed a paranoid and defensive reaction on the part of the ICC leadership to a simple request for clarity and discussion on some serious biblical matters led me to conclude that it was in the best interests of any current ICC member’s spiritual and mental health to immediately leave the group.

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Since that time, I have spoken out against the unbiblical, unethical, and psychologically damaging practices of the group, and particularly the practices in its leadership. Nothing less than a full-scale repentance and repudiation of these doctrines and methodologies would be necessary for me to encourage anyone to remain in the group.



## WORLD REPORT

### DECEMBER 1992

CONGREGATION	SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	1/1/92 DISCIPLES	CURRENT DISCIPLES	1 MONTH NET GR	1 MONTH % NET GR	YTD NET GR	YTD % NET GR	12 MONTH NET GR	12 MONTH % NET GR
ABIDJAN	623	487	489	7	1.5	2	.4	2	.4
ACCRA	134		90	20	28.6	90	0	90	*311.1
ADDIS ABABA	33		9	-2	-18.2	9	0	9	*160.0
ALBUQUERQUE	143	62	89	-14	-13.6	27	43.5	27	43.5
AMSTERDAM	36	14	24	0	.0	10	71.4	10	71.4
ANCHORAGE	44		29	0	0	29	0	29	*212.5
ATLANTA	2102	1156	1347	-13	-1.0	191	16.5	191	16.5
AUCKLAND	199	131	176	1	.6	45	34.4	45	34.4
BAGUIO CITY	52		35	4	12.9	35	0	35	*272.7
BANGALORE	447	220	209	-16	-7.1	-11	-5.0	-11	-5.0
BANGKOK	136	82	79	-2	-2.5	-3	-3.7	-3	-3.7
BERLIN	91	64	91	3	3.4	27	42.2	27	42.2
BIRMINGHAM AL	70		24	1	118.2	24	0	24	*840.0
BIRMINGHAM UK	205	166	175	-9	-4.9	9	5.4	9	5.4
BOCOTA	135		103	10	10.8	103	0	103	*564.3
BOMBAY	245	161	157	6	4.0	4	-2.5	4	-2.5
BOSTON	4191	3576	3097	-64	-1.9	-479	-13.4	-479	-13.4
BRIDGETOWN	109		60	3	5.3	60	0	60	*300.0
BRISBANE	80		65	-1	-1.5	65	0	65	*127.3
BRUSSELS	90	35	55	-1	-1.8	20	57.1	20	57.1
BUENOS AIRES	205	231	138	-72	-34.3	-93	-40.3	-93	-40.3
BUFFALO	101	22	63	1	1.6	41	186.4	41	186.4
CAPE TOWN	197	170	166	-5	-2.9	-4	-2.4	-4	-2.4
CEBU CITY	90	80	52	-18	-40.9	-28	-35.0	-28	-35.0
CHAMPAIGN	326	238	236	-18	-5.6	-2	-.8	-2	-.8
CHARLESTON	128	49	73	-3	-3.9	24	49.0	24	49.0
CHARLOTTE	500	351	368	-22	-5.6	17	4.8	17	4.8
CHICAGO	2601	1738	2152	-100	-4.4	414	23.8	414	23.8
CINCINNATI	541	393	377	-28	-6.9	-16	-4.1	-16	-4.1
COCHIN	55		23	0	0	23	0	23	*137.5
COLUMBIA	507	321	307	-12	-3.8	-14	-4.4	-14	-4.4
COPENHAGEN	65	52	56	-3	-5.7	4	7.7	4	7.7
DALLAS/FT WORTH	650	277	387	-52	-11.8	110	39.7	110	39.7
DENVER	1050	741	700	-159	-18.4	-41	-5.5	-41	-5.5
DETROIT	354	183	258	-10	-3.7	75	41.0	75	41.0
DUBLIN	42	21	30	1	3.4	9	42.9	9	42.9
DURHAM	572	499	434	-25	-5.4	-65	-13.0	-65	-13.0
FIJI	64	46	53	-4	-7.0	7	15.2	7	15.2
GUADALAJARA	113	84	95	-7	-6.9	11	13.1	11	13.1
HARARE	364	330	293	-45	-14.3	-37	-11.2	-37	-11.2
HELSINKI	50	18	36	0	9.1	18	100.0	18	100.0
HILO	56	34	39	-3	-7.1	5	14.7	5	14.7
HONG KONG	1072	592	813	42	5.4	221	37.3	221	37.3
HOUSTON	218	82	125	-6	-4.6	43	52.4	43	52.4
INDIANAPOLIS	893	649	672	-26	-3.7	23	3.5	23	3.5
JACKSONVILLE	195	94	101	3	3.1	7	7.4	7	7.4
JAKARTA	338	142	229	7	3.2	87	61.3	87	61.3
JOHANNESBURG	526	587	534	-6	-1.1	-53	-9.0	-53	-9.0
KANSAS CITY	707	458	428	-33	-7.2	-30	-6.6	-30	-6.6
KIEV	326		194	31	19.0	194	0	194	*256.5

Figure 1. Internal Documents Disprove Claim of 'Rapid Growth'



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**“Basically, you probably had the problem. Anyone who leaves the ICC leaves God. Since you have left the movement of God, you have left God.”**

There is a perverse logic that ICC members are taught to accept—that the ICC is “the only game in town.” This claim to exclusivity allows a fantastic array of abusive practices and ethical short-cuts to be tolerated and even encouraged. After all, if one has the exclusive franchise on salvation, everyone has to “get in line” in order to go to heaven. Anyone who disagrees with the ICC is headed for hell. To leave the ICC is to not only leave a church, but it represents in the eyes of the ICC the most abject failure imaginable. Never mind that the present-day leaders of the ICC have in the past left churches where they felt abused or they perceived false doctrines were being taught; it is now the height of spiritual suicide to ever leave the ICC, or even to think about leaving. In the case of my own decision, it must be again reiterated that I never set out to leave the ICC. I wanted the group to change its course and to not repeat the same patterns of failure that had been seen at Crossroads. Because there was widespread disenchantment on the part of many Boston church members, I felt that something significant needed to be done. Recent studies based on the little data that the ICC does publish show that, while the group has certainly baptized thousands over the past decade, when one counts up those who have left the group or have moved away from Boston, there is a surprisingly low net growth in the past ten years! Recent published findings show that more than half of the ICC members leave the group, and that the average “life span” of membership in the ICC organization is about four years. What growth they have seen is generally in places where the organization is unknown, or where leader Kip McKean has siphoned off leaders from other outposts to buttress his own local Boston and later Los Angeles staffs. With the forced influx to Los Angeles of hundreds of leaders and members from around ICC, McKean can claim his own local group as the “pace-setter” in recruiting and growth, but it is an extremely deceptive claim. Many members of the organization have reacted to the group’s methodologies by leaving; in the past two years of 1992 and 1993, despite seeing more than 20,000 people join the organization, more than 30,000 people have decided to leave it. According to internal documents and based on my own statistical projections, ex-members now outnumber present members of the organization, in some cities on a scale of three or four to one.

The ICC member reading these words has to consider the following: are *all* these more than 30,000 people who have left evil and depraved, and going to hell? Did they *all* have bad hearts, filled with sin? If this is such a great group, why are so many people leaving? The ICC for years has held out the deceptive claim that theirs is “one of the fastest-growing religious groups in the world.” Based on their own statistics not only for baptisms but also for those who leave the ICC, the sheer weight of evidence argues against any such rosy growth evaluation. Having used statistics for years to inveigh against other more mainstream Christian groups, McKean and the ICC must now confront the inescapable fact that the longer they’ve been around, the more people they have seen leave their organization.

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**... are *all* these more than 30,000 people who have left evil and depraved, and going to Hell? Did they *all* have bad hearts, filled with sin? If this is such a great group, why are so many people leaving?**

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Is it possible to leave the ICC and yet not leave the Christian faith? Let’s consider for a moment the implications of our position on that question. If it is not possible to leave “God’s modern-day Movement” (as McKean describes it) without leaving God, was it possible to have a Christian faith before 1987, when the ICC’s doctrine changed radically and a great schism with other mainstream Christian groups began? *The conclusion one is forced to accept is that the group virtually invented Christianity when it promulgated its central exclusivistic teachings in 1987.* If it was possible to have a Christian faith outside the group before 1987, why is it now impossible to have that same Christian faith? What has so radically changed about the Christian faith that has made it impossible to leave this organization? Have they really “cornered the market” on salvation? On the other hand, if they have not cornered the market, if they are not the exclusive purveyors of Jesus, then their central tenet that to leave them is to court damnation is false. Their central teaching is in error. Could it be that other aspects of this organization— aspects and teachings heretofore unknown to most ICC members—are equally wrong and error-filled? Either this group invented Christianity in 1987 or they are in error about how to become a Christian and live the Christian

## WORLD REPORT JULY 1993

CONGREGATION	SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	1/1/93 DISCIPLES	CURRENT DISCIPLES	1 MONTH NET GR	1 MONTH % NET GR	YTD NET GR	YTD % NET GR	12 MONTH NET GR	12 MONTH % NET GR
<b>CHURCHES WITH 1000 OR MORE DISCIPLES</b>									
1. LOS ANGELES	4595	2197	3107	248	8.7	910	41.4	1152	59.7
2. MANILA	1808	876	1236	101	8.9	350	41.1	246	24.8
3. BOSTON	4452	3097	3397	79	2.4	300	9.7	700	26.3
4. MOSCOW	1505	838	1039	62	6.5	201	24.0	566	129.4
5. SAN DIEGO	2630	1424	1407	87	3.5	-17	-1.2	-325	-18.8
6. ATLANTA	2328	1347	1328	101	6.2	-19	-1.4	84	6.8
7. NEW YORK CITY	8242	2871	2840	87	2.4	-31	-1.1	130	4.8
8. SAN FRANCISCO	1853	1224	1133	43	3.8	-101	-8.3	30	2.7
9. CHICAGO	2961	2152	2049	90	4.6	-103	-4.8	-93	-4.3
<b>CHURCHES WITH 500 OR MORE DISCIPLES AND LESS THAN 1000</b>									
1. SAO PAULO	1240	619	811	40	5.2	192	31.0	-57	-6.6
2. MIAMI/PT LAUD	1340	624	805	74	10.1	181	29.0	-38	-4.5
3. MEXICO CITY	1047	667	836	36	4.5	169	25.3	232	38.4
4. DENVER	1301	700	835	87	7.3	135	19.3	11	1.3
5. DALLAS/PT WORTH	785	387	504	37	7.9	117	30.2	120	31.3
6. JOHANNESBURG	1164	534	647	27	4.4	113	21.2	75	12.1
7. TORONTO	1232	778	872	50	6.1	94	12.1	44	5.3
8. NAIROBI	778	422	511	22	4.5	89	21.1	132	34.8
9. HONG KONG	1397	813	900	11	1.2	-87	-10.7	-213	-31.0
10. SINGAPORE	806	805	642	16	2.4	77	12.2	-53	-7.2
11. OAHU	697	445	503	8	1.6	-58	-13.0	116	30.0
12. SYDNEY	730	445	503	13	2.7	58	13.0	-24	-4.6
13. WASHINGTON D.C.	884	570	621	18	3.0	51	8.9	32	5.4
14. INDIANAPOLIS	912	672	707	10	1.4	35	5.2	24	3.5
15. LONDON	1127	950	919	4	0.4	-31	-3.3	-299	-24.5
16. LAGOS	1309	1044	934	20	2.2	-110	-10.5	77	9.0
<b>CHURCHES WITH 200 OR MORE DISCIPLES AND LESS THAN 500</b>									
1. NOVOSIBIRSK	500	231	438	33	8.1	207	89.6	430	537.0
2. KIEV	532	194	307	37	13.7	113	58.2	214	230.1
3. PARIS	530	344	429	29	7.3	85	24.7	93	27.9
4. KINGSTON	744	398	481	10	2.1	83	20.9	-95	-16.5
5. PHOENIX	790	383	465	33	7.6	82	21.4	114	19.7
6. SACRAMENTO	342	224	291	64	28.2	67	29.9	67	29.9
7. PHILADELPHIA	635	400	463	17	3.8	63	15.8	124	36.6
8. MADRAS	347	170	320	11	6.3	50	29.4	75	51.7
9. TOKYO	332	183	233	14	6.4	50	27.3	33	16.5
10. JAKARTA	355	224	270	8	3.4	46	20.5	73	37.1
11. BANGALORE	452	209	253	13	5.4	44	23.1	24	10.5
12. KANSAS CITY	705	428	469	24	5.4	41	9.6	46	10.9
13. CAPE TOWN	292	166	206	10	6.1	40	24.1	59	40.1
14. NASHVILLE	542	346	380	-4	-3.0	34	9.8	64	20.3
15. NEW DELHI	417	207	240	10	4.3	33	15.9	64	36.4
16. ST. LOUIS	547	317	344	7	2.1	27	8.5	19	12.8
17. CHAMPAIGN	360	236	257	8	3.2	21	8.9	31	13.7
18. MINN / SAINT PAUL	490	321	324	12	3.8	5	1.6	-11	-3.3
19. ST. PETERSBURG	625	270	270	21	8.4	0	0	253	1488.2

Figure 2. Recent Documents Reveal Little Net Growth in ICC

life. It was considered "noble" and "courageous" to leave other church groups and affiliate with the ICC, because new members were told that such a decision was "based on the scriptures." Why should those same scriptures not be consulted when the false teachings and abusive practices of the ICC are now in the spotlight for

consideration? Is it now sinful to abandon an organization controlled by fear and motivated by guilt for one more perfectly manifesting the love and compassion of Christ? Is it now wrong to attend a church—as my family and I do—where those who join stay members

longer, and who are allowed, even encouraged to grow, to question, and to discover the rich variety of the Christian life? Why was it all right for McKean to “leave” several churches (or to have been fired by them, as the record clearly shows), and now it be considered the height of spiritual self-destruction to leave his organization? Is this *really* a healthy stance to take?

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**Either this group invented  
Christianity in 1987 or they are in  
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Another question that I would like the ICC member to consider is this: would there *ever* be a reason to leave the ICC? Could there ever be a circumstance, a pattern of abuse, a departure from scripture, a horrendous moral failure of the leadership, a cover-up of financial practices, that would justify one’s leaving the ICC for a more healthy religious group? If not, why not? Many members would respond by parroting the ICC’s contention that “even if there were problems, God would take care of them.” In my years of counseling others and observing this and other harmful religious groups, such reasoning is employed to the detriment of those members inside the group. To my thinking, God equips human beings with minds and rational thought-processes and expects us to use them in our Christian walk. We are commanded to love God, as the great commandment of Jesus relates, with our “heart, soul, *mind*, and strength.” Agreeing with leaders is never equated with love for God; in fact, there are ample warnings in the Bible to not be seduced by religious leaders who teach or practice false doctrines. When a religious leader—of any stripe or denomination—says “to oppose the leader of God’s movement is to oppose God” (as McKean recently said in a speech witnessed by hundreds (and recorded on tape)), you can be assured that it is an unhealthy religious group. In some ways, I feel that the ICC left me, in that it departed from its commitment to a Bible-based authority, and had embarked upon a methodology that seemed to be based on the oldest and shallowest short-cut, “the end justifies the means.” In short, the ICC leadership has no available process by which either their doctrinal deficiencies (for example, the group’s teaching on conversion, its pyramid-based one-over-one structure, the role and function of “apostle” Kip McKean, etc.) or its ethical problems (diversion of funds, deceitfulness by leaders in regard to financial matters, widespread violation of confidentiality and deceptive recruiting practices, cover-up regarding the sexual sins of its leaders, to mention but a few matters that I have personally witnessed) can be addressed or corrected. The

person wanting to discuss these matters or seeking to redress these problems *becomes the problem*, in my experience. Witness the regard for ex-leaders such as myself and Dr. Jerry Jones that ICC head Kip McKean now has. In a recent speech in Indianapolis, Indiana, McKean described our writings and analysis of the ICC in the following manner:

“How come these guys like Rick Bauer and Jerry Jones are so cotton-pickin’ convincing? I said, ‘Man, they could persuade all these people.’ And, you know, it finally hit me—it’s they themselves who were deceived. Therefore if they took a lie detector test, and they were asked, ‘Is Kip McKean evil?’ ‘Is the Movement evil?’ and they put the lie detector [on]—they’d say ‘This guy is telling the truth.’ That’s why they are so convincing. Their minds have been deceived and they are about the work of deceiving.”

The fact of the matter is, I did not cause these problems, I do not believe that I am either deceived or deceiving anyone, and neither did my being silenced from this group result in these problems being resolved. Since I have left, hundreds of other leaders, including evangelists, women’s counselors, missionaries, church accountants and staff personnel, have left, and their stories all have the same haunting refrain. What does one do when the group he or she is involved with refuses to change, and refuses even to address the possibility that there could be a problem in the first place? It is neither noble nor healthy to remain in such conditions.

There is a perverse and circular logic of sorts in this matter: if one leaves the ICC, he or she is leaving God (or so the group teaches). In ICC thinking, if someone has left, they have left God, and therefore could not have ever been correct in their reasons for leaving in the first place! Because of that position, virtually no one who has left the group could ever be considered correct. It is important to remember that, according to the group’s teaching, there is simply no valid reason for ever leaving the ICC. The teachers of the ICC, in various media interviews, have carefully hedged around this issue. Usually they will respond to the question “If you leave the ICC, are you leaving God?” with the rejoinder “If you leave Jesus and His church, you’re in danger of losing your relationship with God,” which sounds only moderately threatening. What is important to note is that, in the ICC’s thinking and teaching, there is no way to leave the ICC and maintain a relationship to God or to Jesus. They are one and the same thing—if you leave the ICC, you’re leaving God.

Many people in the ICC at this point will say, “God’s in control. If there are abuses and problems, God will deal

with the abusers and the deceivers.” I would simply ask the following question: how will God “deal” with these practices? What measures will God use to expose these problems? Could God ever use men and women of courage to bring these problems to the light of day? The Bible itself is full of accounts of courageous men and women speaking

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**Their version of hell did not frighten me; I had already lived for years in their version of heaven.**

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out against injustice and even religious tyranny—Jesus Christ himself spoke out against religious corruption and the hypocrisy of religious leaders far more than any other person in the Bible. Was it any surprise that the religious leaders of Jesus’ day “marked” him and “disfellowshipped” him from their religious organization? *The fact of the matter is that God is dealing with the problems of the ICC*—and using these ex-members and particularly ex-leaders in a powerful way to expose the problems of the organization. Those sensitive to the voice of God can hopefully see God’s workings in this issue. How else would God work to expose corruption in high places?

For me, the prospect of staying in an organization, frightened into submission and silence, forced to attend meeting after meeting and give and sacrifice against my will, without even knowing where my hard-earned money was going, was simply too much. It was not a matter of inconvenience for me, but rather it became a matter of conscience. Since I knew the leadership would oppose my leaving, I decided to try to let others in the ICC know the true reason why I left. I realized that opposing this leadership group meant that they would consign me to hell, but it was never something I feared. In my mind, this group could never get me to heaven (only Christ can do that, according to my understanding of the Christian faith), nor could it ever keep me out. Their version of hell did not frighten me; I had already lived for years in their version of heaven.

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**There is a self-defeating logic of sorts in this matter: if one leaves, one is leaving God (or so the group teaches). Hence, if someone has left, they have left God, and therefore could not have ever been correct in the first place! Because of that position, virtually no one who has left the group could ever be considered correct.**

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If I may be permitted a brief literary allusion, there is a moment in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* where Huck has to make a decision. He has been taught all his life that it is a grievous sin to help a runaway slave, yet his best friend, “Nigger” Jim, is nearing freedom as the two travel up the Mississippi. He is torn between his deep friendship for Jim, the inherent evil of slavery, and the corrupt ethical system that teaches the “evil” of helping a slave become free. In a poignant moment, Huck finally decides, “all right, then, I’ll go to hell,” and does not turn in his friend. Similarly, if one has to adhere to the ICC teachings, practices, and ethics to get into heaven, I would rather be somewhere else. That could not be a heaven by any stretch of the imagination.



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**“Well, the things you’ve described have never happened to me. I’ve had a rather pleasant experience in my affiliation with the ICC. Many of the things you describe have taken place only in Boston, New York, L.A., or the bigger churches; our group is different.”**

I am not seeking to indict the entire ICC membership, for I know that there are many good and sincere members in the group. The central problems, in my observation, lie at the upper-level of the group, in the power structure of the group, and concern both doctrinal and ethical matters. For years the central hierarchy in Boston and then Los Angeles denied that any problems existed in the ICC. After the overwhelming frequency and indisputable nature of the oral and published testimony from ICC members (current and former) became too difficult to deny, the ICC leadership has adopted what I would call

an “exceptionist” stance. Their standard rejoinder to accusations of abuses or problems goes something like, “well, that may have happened, but it’s really an isolated instance, or an isolated leader, or a young, overzealous disciple, or etc. The system is basically sound; we’ve just got a few bugs to work out and it will be ok.” Such problems are viewed as an exception to an otherwise healthy religious group. My question is this: *Is the ICC’s system fundamentally sound, or is it indeed responsible for consistently producing a product of abuse and heartache for over twenty years?* After reading the reports from both Gainesville and now Boston and Los Angeles, are we to conclude that all these people writing and observing the ICC are wrong? Are they all from Satan? Are the problems they observe and detail really “isolated”? Isolated from whom? My conclusion is that the only “isolation” that is going on is the isolation and control of this information by the ICC leadership. In any other endeavor, one would have to ask the question: if my product is so good, why do so many people who use it not want it anymore? In a recent television interview, ICC spokesman Al Baird remarked, “For every negative person you produce, I can produce five, ten, twenty positive people.” Is that really true? While Baird’s organization may certainly be able to get its members to all believe the same thing, the sheer weight of the thousands of ex-members who leave the organization each year has developed into a “critical mass” (as a former physicist, Baird would appreciate the analogy) that cannot be ignored. If these ex-members were to have left the ICC with rather ambivalent feelings about their involvement (“well, it may be nice for others, but it’s just not the right emphasis for me,” etc.) that would be one thing. The fact that most of the members who leave the ICC want nothing to do with it, with God, or with religion in general, and have a very visceral resentment toward the ICC, presents a public relations nightmare for the organization. If a medical practice produced so many casualties over a period of twenty years, they certainly would have been sued into oblivion by this time.

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**In any other endeavor, one would have to ask the question: if my product is so good, why do so many people who use it not want it anymore?**

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The leadership of the ICC has always treated ex-members as if they have the problem. Since there is no way to leave the ICC without leaving God (according to their teaching), anyone who leaves the ICC leaves God and is not to be listened to. The overwhelming number of

people leaving the organization should prompt the leadership of the ICC to re-examine its teachings and practices in the hope of retaining more of its members. After all, wouldn’t that be the smart thing to do? Instead of taking a long, hard look at the organization, they have continued to blame the critics and the people leaving the group, although many of these people are good-hearted people whose love for God attracted them to the group in the first case.

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**Even if I were to agree with you that the present ICC leadership is not corrupt or teaching unbiblical doctrines [which I don’t], upon what mechanism(s) are you relying to make you aware of such practices, were they ever to occur?**

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When the Space Shuttle *Challenger* tragically blew up a few years ago, it cost the lives of seven astronauts, including teacher Christa McAuliffe. Immediately NASA grounded all of the Space Shuttles. Every inch of these massive rockets, every aspect of their engineering, was analyzed with an attention to detail that was admirable. After all, the engineers had to account for the deaths of seven people, comrades who had trusted their engineering skills with their lives—a trust that one day had sadly proved to be unworthy. After a painstaking examination (by an independent oversight committee whose examination or findings could not be controlled by NASA), an engineering flaw was found in the booster rockets. A simple, inexpensive “O” ring was allowed to get too cold on the launch pad, and the brittleness of its seal caused explosive gases to mix, creating a massive fireball.

As a result of this tragedy and the following investigation, changes were implemented in the design of the rockets. Precautions were put in place to make sure that the cold weather conditions for the *Challenger* launch would never again be repeated. Lower-level engineers were empowered to raise questions and had authority from NASA to order a mission “scrubbed” if there was a grounded concern for the safety of the crew. It would have been ludicrous for NASA to assess this tragic loss of life and say, “Well, that’s just one rocket. Look at the 24 other times we’ve launched it and no one got killed.” Would it have been ethical to blame the astronauts? Imagine the officials saying, “Well, they just didn’t trust the engineers enough. You know how those astronauts are—they must have had bad hearts.” If this observation seems a bit too sarcastic, I apologize. After all, we are speaking about seven lives needlessly

wasted because someone didn't care enough to check the system thoroughly. Someone chose to ignore the warning signs, and lives were lost in the process. In the case of the ICC, far more than seven lives have been lost. The emotional, financial, and psychological toll—even the toll of suicides and actual lives lost—far exceeds the Challenger tragedy. The ICC leadership's reaction to this tragic loss? Launch more rockets! "Plant more churches!" "Work harder!" "Crank the baptisms!" "Get more hard-line, more radical!" Their response to the information showing the "engineering" problems with their organization? "Ignore the problems!" "Don't listen to the critics!" In fact, the response of the ICC to the ever-growing numbers of ex-members is to be even more brutally efficient in employing the same abusive "engineering" than ever before. In this twisted way, they may be able to gain a few new members, but at what cost?

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**The system of one-over-one discipling and the control structures employed by Kip McKean are so fundamentally flawed and inherently corrupting that even good people with the best of intentions end up hurting others and being hurt themselves. . . . this organization is "unsafe at any speed."**

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One question that I always try to get the ICC member to consider is this: Even if I were to agree with you that the present ICC leadership is not corrupt or teaching unbiblical doctrines [which I don't], upon what mechanism(s) are you relying to make you aware of such practices, were they ever to occur? Not that I accept for a minute the premise that the ICC has not crossed over the biblical and ethical "line," but consider, just for the sake of argument, a clean slate with perfectly good and upright leaders. What are the safety mechanisms to keep the leaders in line? Who is going to inform you about the "O rings" of the ICC? What checks and balances are installed in the engineering of the ICC to prevent abuse? What are the reporting procedures to ensure access to information that might indicate the onset of corruption at a higher level? It is more than saying "our books are available for you to see;" there must be an overall organization-wide awareness of the hazards of abusing power and authority, and a system of checks-and-balances already in place to address problems when they arise. Stating that "to oppose the leaders of God's

Movement is to oppose God," or "God picks the leaders, and you got to get behind them" (two recent McKean statements) to my thinking is a clear departure from the healthy dose of self-understanding and skepticism that the Bible teaches us to have about human authority. Consider again the question: Upon what (or whom) are you relying to inform you if the ICC ever would become corrupt? Is it the very leaders who have become corrupt? If they were corrupt, would they still inform you? I have wracked my brain to find an acceptable answer to this question (as have many other ex-members), but the only safeguard to this system I can think of is the case of a leader serving at a high echelon in the ICC observing improper practices or corrupt dealings and attempting to speak out. This is precisely what happened in my case, as well as in the cases of hundreds of other leaders who have opposed the teachings or practices of the ICC. Is it any wonder they have been silenced by the hierarchy? Is it any wonder they have been "marked" and ostracized by the leadership of the organization?

Rather than say that "this is basically a good system, it just has a few glitches that need to be fine-tuned," I would assert that, based on my own observations, some other assessment is warranted. The system of one-over-one discipling and the control structures employed by Kip McKean are so fundamentally flawed and inherently corrupting that even good people with the best of intentions end up hurting others and being hurt themselves. To employ the assessment of Ralph Nader when he criticized the Chevrolet Corvaire in the late 1960's, this organization is "unsafe at any speed." Based on my own observations, people with a happy relationship with the ICC are proving to be the exception rather than the rule.

In another sense, if one is going to take credit for the good experiences, one has to bear responsibility for the bad as well. Because something has not been personally observed by a member of the ICC has no bearing as to whether or not such an event occurred. Such reasoning would permit every evil except that which was directly observed by the individual. If a group's leaders are successful at covering over both ethical and doctrinal errors and sins, the rank-and-file members would never know the existence of such problems unless a leader spoke out about these issues. If leaders who speak out against these issues are silenced, banned, and cut off from other members of the ICC, it follows that very few people would ever be aware of the problems of the group. My advice for those who have experienced a rather benign relationship with the ICC leadership is this: ask the same kind of questions that I asked, seek for the same kind of information for which I sought, and stand for the same biblical truths for which I took my stand. Then see what happens. Ask to see the financial books—and don't settle for the deceptive one-page record of a "balanced" book that was recently given a rather naive member in

Boston. Imagine a \$60-million dollar-a-year business being able to track all its financial transactions on a single piece of paper! Even the IRS expects more documentation than that! It is a sad reality that the IRS gets access to more information about where the contribution of the average ICC member goes than even the members are allowed to know. My challenge is this: Have the courage and open-mindedness to speak with the hundreds and thousands of ex-members living right in the same city as you live (many of who have found other churches and are much happier in their Christian walk). If past history is any guide, the response of the leadership of the ICC to these questions will clearly demonstrate the attitude toward any critique of its leaders.

his or her business to become better informed and studious of these matters. The reason that media reports and articles have been assembled from a broad geographical area is to demonstrate that the problems in the organization are not cosmetic, nor are they limited to one geographical area, but rather are the result of core teachings of the group that produce a great deal of heartache and distress in the lives of its members.

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**. . . ask the same kind of questions that I asked, seek for the same kind of information which I sought, and stand for the same biblical truths for which I took my stand. Then see what happens . . .**

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I understand that there are groups within the ICC that have a much more Christ-oriented view of their membership, and whose immediate leaders (ministers, local evangelists, etc.) practice a "kinder and gentler" version of the ICC doctrines. For the most part, it has been my experience that such individuals don't last long within the ICC leadership, because they are either not able or not willing to practice the harsh dictatorial dogmatism that the upper echelon ICC leaders believe is necessary to generate and retain large numbers of converts. At any moment, it is important to realize, a local leader can be removed, fired, shifted, etc., without any input or approval from the local congregation. The leadership structure is intentionally tenuous, with Kip McKean making all the decisions to hire, fire, move, and force the resignations of leaders who don't adhere to his program.

Nothing could demonstrate this situation more clearly than the case of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, led by evangelist Ed Powers. In the spring of 1994, Powers suffered an injury that required an extended convalescence. During this time of bedrest, he studied the Bible's teaching on many of the issues that separate the

What is more, the central hierarchy of the ICC is supported by every local group. While one's own congregation may be less harsh or brutal than the Boston congregation or the Los Angeles congregation, all financial support eventually flows to Los Angeles and helps to continue the abusive and corrupt practices in the upper-echelon leadership. Until local groups cease to financially support the hierarchical headquarters, they must bear some measure of responsibility for the error and corruption in those places. In short, every member has to answer to the charges brought against the ICC, and should therefore make it

ICC from healthy Christian groups. He came to the conclusion that the local Indianapolis group should no longer be forced to send money to Los Angeles, to send leaders whenever the LA group wanted them, or to submit in every area of opinion to human leaders thousands of miles away. At that point in time (and without any advice or influence from ex-members or former leaders, I might add), all Powers wanted to do was return the Indianapolis Church of Christ to the self-governing status of its original charter. He wanted it to become a simple, New Testament Christian fellowship, governed from within rather than from the ICC headquarters in Los Angeles. While Powers was settled in these convictions (and ready to resign if he was not given a hearing), he found a surprising acceptance on the part of his immediate staff (all 18 of the staff voted, many at the risk of their livelihood, to support Powers' positions). When he presented his findings to the Indianapolis congregation, he was met with thundering support and encouragement. After a vote of 780 to 5, the congregation voted to "secede" from the ICC.

What was the response of the ICC to this decision? First of all, the ICC began a "smear campaign" against Powers, calling every member of the Indianapolis group and spreading misinformation about "his real motives." Instead of engaging in a healthy discussion about these matters, he has been smeared, "marked," "disfellowshipped," and consigned to hell's darkest (and hottest) corner. There is simply no way to disagree with Kip McKean; those who have tried can attest to his imperious and dictatorial manner.

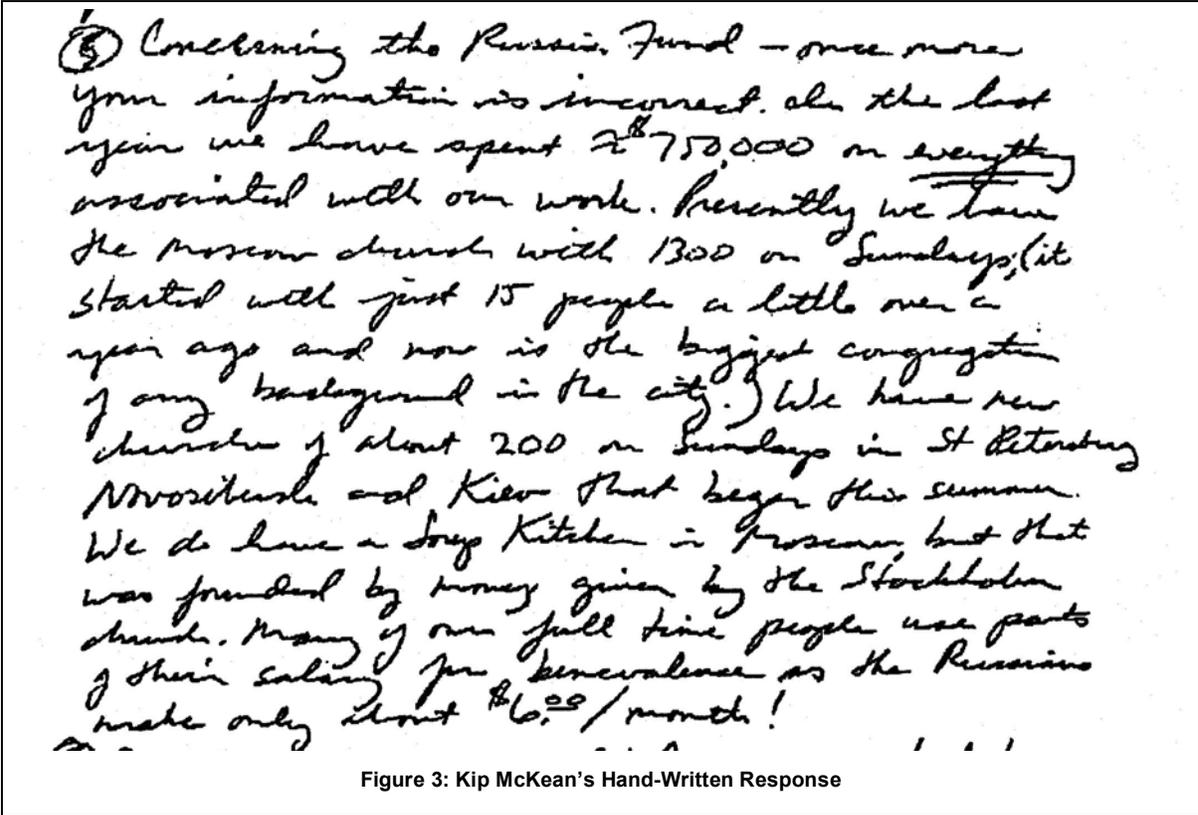


Figure 3: Kip McKean's Hand-Written Response



**“Well, although the group has been criticized doctrinally by people like you and Dr. Jerry Jones, at least they have a good record in matters of ministerial use of funds and sexual ethics.”**

If these improper activities were going on, could one trust that the leaders would be candid and forthcoming about admitting their problems? If they have demonstrated a defensive posture toward other allegations, blaming the accuser, would it not stand to reason that they would deny any of these other allegations as well? Would they not also seek to discredit both the accuser and the accusations? How could one ever know that these practices were going on, unless one was a leader, privy to the activities of the upper-echelon, behind-closed-doors policy discussions of the ICC leadership? In point of fact, I have been involved with the leadership at that level, and have documented and witnessed examples of financial misappropriations of funds, deceit and fraudulent financial practices, as well as the covering up of the sexual sins of several ministerial

leaders. In one case, a minister continued to lead even after he had been caught in several affairs with younger women’s leaders in his zone—he was later put in charge, of all things, the youth ministry! I have both the name of the minister, and the testimony of two witnesses on the ministry staff who personally witnessed this situation.

SS#	SALARY	L.T.D.	G.L.	TSA	HEALTH	RETRO.	6% FEE	SECA/TSA	TOTAL
	4987.63	9.98	18.00		623.14	43.46	41.67		736.25
	2520.00	5.04	13.00				1.38		24.42
	5171.00	10.34	18.00	375.00			24.20		427.54
	4776.00	9.55	13.00	150.00			10.65	674.76	862.96
	1771.00	3.54	4.50				0.48		8.52
	3510.00	7.02	13.00				1.50		26.52
	1618.00	3.24	4.50				0.46		8.20
	<del>1984.51</del> 1968.18	<del>3.83</del> 3.97	4.50	150.00	193.64	14.87	22.02		388.96
	1612.00	3.22	4.50				0.46		8.18
	2369.00	4.74	16.00				1.36		24.10
	3168.00	6.34	18.00		349.39	14.87	23.32		411.92
	<del>4226.94</del> 6868.94	<del>13.74</del>	18.00				1.90	591.05	624.69
	2967.00	5.93	18.00				1.44	419.00	444.37
	2060.00	4.12	4.50				0.52		9.14
	3131.36	6.26	18.00				1.46		25.72
	4983.00	9.97	18.00	150.00			10.68		188.65
	6170.00	12.34	18.00		623.14	43.46	41.82		738.76
	2529.00	5.06	18.00				1.38	356.26	380.70
	3016.00	6.03	18.00				1.44		25.47
	3666.67	7.33	18.00	150.00	623.14	43.46	50.52		892.45
	2330.16	4.66	18.00	0.00		0.00	1.36	359.66	383.68
	<del>4885.77</del> 4881.00	<del>9.38</del> 9.77	18.00	150.00			10.64	625.37	813.39
	6038.00	12.08	18.00	<del>150.00</del>			10.80		190.88
	3431.00	6.86	18.00				1.49		26.35
	6868.94	13.74	18.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	19.90	0.00	351.64
	4993.43	9.99	18.00	300.00	623.14	43.46	59.68	572.76	1627.03
	2877.94	5.76	18.00				1.43	528.00	553.19
	1469.00	2.94	4.50				0.45		7.89
	6478.00	12.96	18.00	150.00			10.86		191.82
	2083.00	4.17	18.00	0.00			1.33		23.50
	<del>6062.51</del> 8101.65	12.20	18.00	300.00	623.14	43.46	59.81		1056.61
	1841.00	3.28	4.50				0.47		8.25
	1770.90	3.54	4.50				0.48		8.52

Figure 4: Internal Documents Show Wide Disparities and High for Leaders

6. Property owned by the LA movement

We've been told and our boys understand that the LA movement does not believe in owning property nor does it own property. Evidence would seem to suggest otherwise. LA County records indicate that the LA Metropolitan Church of Christ purchased property for \$1,300,000. What funds were used to purchase this property and what funds will be used to maintain it? Is membership in general aware of these arrangements?

What are your plans for the ten acres in downtown Tokyo? Is the congregation aware of this activity?

7. Russia Benevolent Fund

Is it true, as has been stated publicly, that approximately \$3,000,000 has been raised for the Russia Benevolent Fund. How much of this money has actually reached Russia? Please give an accounting of the use of this fund.

8. Overseas Bank Accounts

Are there overseas or off-shore accounts owned by the movement or any of its paid staff?

9. Discipline

Is it true that one of your evangelists was found to have had sexual intercourse with a number of female members and yet he continues to hold a position of leadership in the Washington branch? Why? Is it true that only a week after being confronted with his sin, he was put in charge of the teen group? We've heard locally that he now claims to have significant association with Washington, DC, leaders including Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and yet, a call to the Judge's office indicates no such relationship exists. Scripture tells us that Satan is the father of lies. Who is your evangelist serving, God or Satan?

Is it true that the Boston church of Christ supported Chuck Lucas for several years after he was fired by the Crossroads elders for repeated homosexual activity? What was the amount of that support and why was it provided?

Why do you practice "breaking sessions" where as many as eight members verbally tear apart another member? Where is that condoned or encouraged in scripture? We have numerous friends in and out of your movement who have experienced this practice so we know it is wide spread. The only other place we see this practice consistently used is in destructive cults. Why should your movement need to use such offensive tactics?

Figure 5: Letter Asking Where Contribution Went

Another example of the leaders' double standard concerned the activities of a Boston sector leader/evangelist. Although he walked into a Bible Talk meeting in New York City and passed out intoxicated on the floor (in front of all the members of the Bible Study), he was permitted to continue to lead a Sector in the Boston organization.

Another former evangelist for the Boston congregation had been caught several times in sexual sin in several cities, over a period of years. When finally the problems could not be overlooked (he had been transferred rather than disciplined several times, owing to his position as World Sector Leader and "loyalty" to Kip McKean), he was allowed to resign, with no word given to the group other than the statement that he was "having marriage problems." If a regular member left the group under similar circumstances, the ICC would have had no scruples about divulging the nature of the sexual tawdriness of the individual—there is simply no getting around the fact that there is a double standard when it comes to the leadership of the ICC.

On a much darker note, I am aware of at least four suicides that have been attributed to membership in the ICC (both in the Boston area and in other ICC groups as well). I am also aware of a young man who attempted suicide while a university student in the Boston ministry, and have met several others whose suicide attempts they attributed to ICC membership. The true number of suicide victims (those who killed themselves either while in the movement, or those who succumbed to guilt and phobic indoctrination ("if you leave the ICC, your life, marriage, family, business, etc., will be a failure) may never be known. The ICC has understandably not been forthcoming about the total number of suicides in its brief history, but it is a tragic story that no doubt one day will be shockingly told. Of all the dark secrets of the Boston Movement, this is perhaps the greatest and the most fearful to ponder. ICC leader Al Baird has stated that "our statistics are much lower than the national statistics." Well, what are the ICC statistics? Why do they fear releasing this information?

In regard to the handling of finances, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been collected for benevolent projects throughout the world, and the funds have been appropriated for such things as Kip McKean's travel, ministerial hotel rooms, and other administrative expenses, without ever telling the congregation where the money was really going. McKean's recent article in *UpsideDown* entitled "Revolution through Restoration" painted a self-drawn portrait of meager living and frugal lifestyle; this image runs hard against the reality of a beautiful beachfront home and a six-figure income for his family.

Kip McKean has even admitted that millions of dollars that were collected for Russian humanitarian relief efforts (much of the money was donated by members, but a significant percentage was solicited and donated in the secular community as well). People thought they were giving "to help feed the poor Russians," but in reality they were giving money to further the administrative, travel, and recruiting expenses of the Los Angeles Church. I was told by a former ICC member that he witnessed one of the Los Angeles leaders training ICC members how to solicit funds from the general public. They were purportedly told to solicit door-to-door in their neighborhoods, with any available small children in tow, and ask if donors wanted "to help the poor starving Russians this winter." I have enclosed an excerpt of a letter in Kip McKean's own writing, responding to questions asked by a concerned donor. The pertinent sections of both the donor's letter and McKean's handwritten response (which, hidden in the glowing rhetoric, reveals *that the only benevolent work in Russia was a soup kitchen funded by another group in the ICC*) are included as figures 3 and 4. To this day a full accounting of these funds has never been made. I know of one case in Boston where funds were collected from the general public ostensibly for charitable purposes and were simply placed in the general administrative coffers of the ICC, a legal violation called commingling by the Internal Revenue Service. I know because I was the person heading up the fund-raising effort. The ICC is currently being investigated by the Charities Commission in London, and they have been fined by the Inland Revenue (the United Kingdom's equivalent of the IRS) for fraudulent practices as well.

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**. . . I have been involved with the leadership at that level and have documented and witnessed examples of financial misappropriations of funds, deceit and fraudulent financial practices, as well as the covering up of the sexual sins of several ministerial leaders.**

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There is a massive amount of money contributed to the ICC's "benevolent" institution Hope Worldwide, Ltd. that, in my judgment, has simply not been accounted for properly. The manner in which the initial HOPE/LOVE offering was spent by the Central London Church of Christ, and the subsequent disbursement of these funds to Hope Worldwide Ltd. has also a rather murky history. In a personal conversation with one of the accountants of the Central London Church of Christ (who was flown in from Boston to "straighten out the books"), he remarked to me how deplorable the record-keeping was of these and other funds. Perhaps we should attribute all these problems simply to sloppiness; the lack of forthrightness to repeated requests for information about these matters, however, does not appear to me to be consistent with an "above board" approach to financial accountability. In another case, a member of the Hope organization, a doctor serving as a volunteer on the Hope staff, asked for a complete accounting of the funds and where they were going, as she was troubled by the apparent discrepancy between the millions collected and the pittance she was able to use for her medical work in Philadelphia (letters attesting to these facts are in my files). She remarked to me that she "kept on hearing stories about the ICC buying nightclubs, but I had to go to the drugstore—and spend money out of my own pocket—to buy cotton swabs for my patients." Here was a classic case of an ICC member—not just a member, but a physician on the Hope staff as a clinical volunteer—asking "to see the books." She was greeted with a barrage of accusations and innuendo by Hope Worldwide leaders, and her character became the issue! She was even threatened by Hope leader Pat Gempel (one of the World Sector leaders reporting directly to Kip McKean) with the termination of her romantic relationship with a man in the ICC. As it invariably does in these confrontations, her ability to trust the leaders quickly became the issue, rather than the proper accounting of the funds in question. Because of the intimidation of the ICC leadership, she was cowed into silence—and the information regarding all the records and financial books of the Hope Worldwide organization (and its ties to the ICC) was never given to her. I issue this challenge to anyone reading these words—track down the money, get the facts, get all the information (from the amount of cash collected, to where it is deposited, to the off-shore accounts, to the land holdings and other off-the-books items—and see what you find. If the ICC leadership wants to put to rest these serious questions, let it publish all the pertinent data, or permit an accounting firm not under its employ to do a thorough accounting of *all* the books and financial records of the ICC.

## ***"I'd Like to See the Books . . ."***

### **Guidelines for Curious Disciples**

Before you schedule an appointment with the local ICC chapter to look at the financial records, ask them to provide you with the following information. As your contribution also helps fund the ICC organization worldwide (the so-called "Administration Fee" paid to Los Angeles), you have a right to know about the finances of the ICC headquarters as well. As securing this information may take some research and phone calls, ask the ICC staff to prepare this information, in written form, before your appointment.

1. **Cash tracking** (from contribution to disbursement) of all "Special Contribution" funds. It is important to get, not just a sheet listing the amount contributed, but the actual tallying sheets used by the individuals counting the cash collected at the event. Then check to see how much of that cash got deposited in traceable accounts.

2. Listing of **all corporate assets**: real estate, investments, off-shore accounts.

3. Listing of **foreign holdings** (properties valued at millions of dollars are virtually unknown to rank-and-file ICC members).

4) Get **answers** to the following questions:

- Has the ICC ever paid its leaders out of the cash contributions? If so, where and how much?
- Has the ICC ever been guilty of tax evasion?
- Has the ICC ever commingled funds for ministry purposes with funds for benevolence?
- Has the ICC ever been levied fines for financial irregularities?
- Is the ICC a member of any Christian financial accountability program outside its ranks?
- How much does the ICC spend annually for lawyers and lawsuits?
- What are the salaries of our evangelist? Our World Sector Leaders? Our World Leader Kip McKean? Is it true that the McKean's salary is over \$100,000, not accounting expenses?
- Has the poor contribution ever been used by the leaders for their own personal expenses?

5) **Get your answers in writing**—and don't take "no" for an answer!

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**I issue this challenge to**

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**anyone reading these words –  
track down the money, get the facts,  
get all the information (from the  
amount of cash collected, to where  
it is deposited, to the off-shore  
accounts, to the land holdings and  
other off-the-books items – and see  
what you find.**

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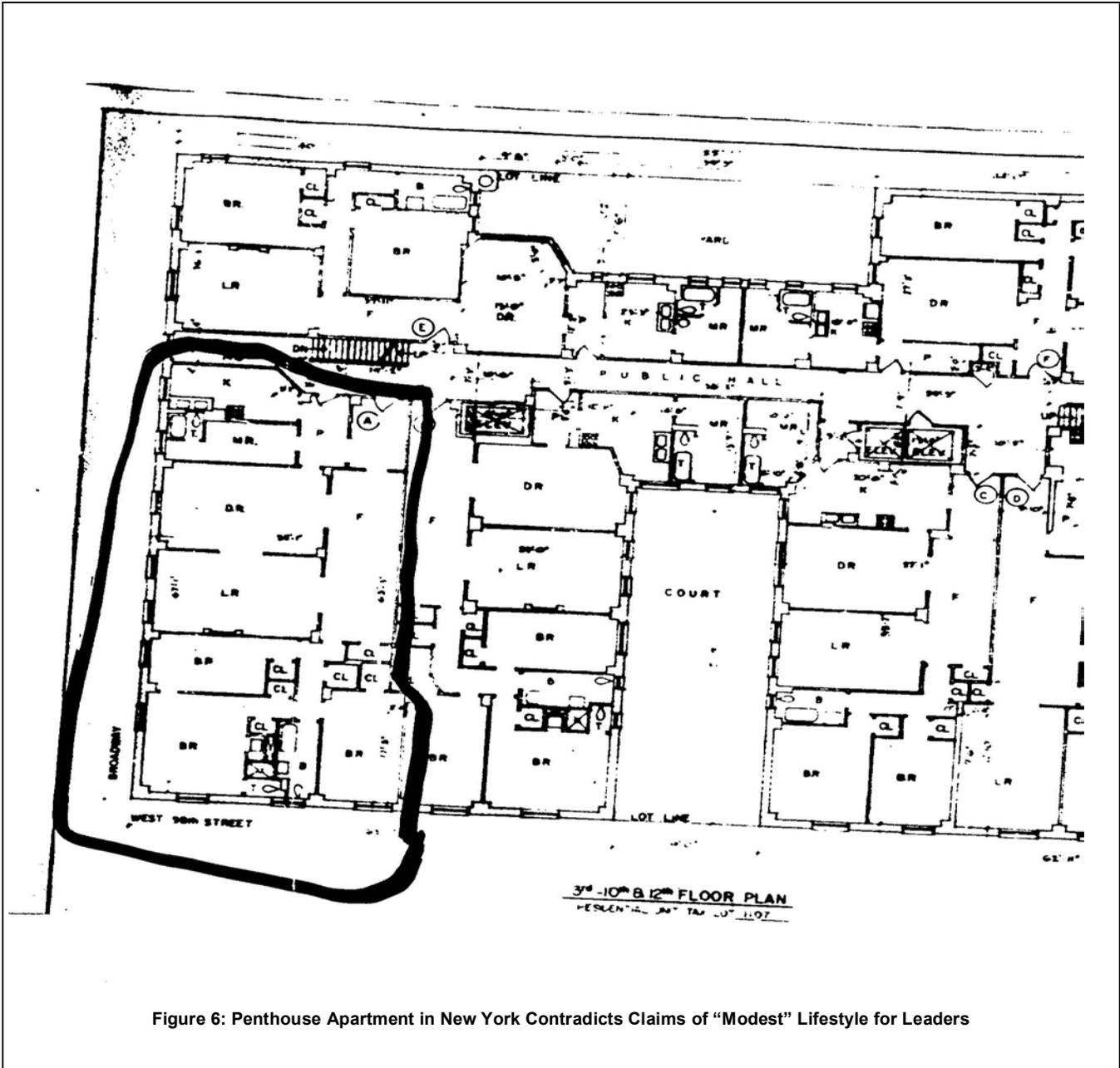


Figure 6: Penthouse Apartment in New York Contradicts Claims of “Modest” Lifestyle for Leaders

The leadership of the ICC has not released any financial data (to either its members or other interested parties) regarding the salaries of its upper-level leadership. Claiming that their salaries are “on a par” with other clergy, they have not made known the true nature of the combined salary package (such off-the-record matters as housing allowances, travel and entertainment, etc., often doubles the total compensation package). If the ICC were truly willing to let its books be open, it would release this data. Recently, one of the ICC’s larger affiliates amended their by-laws so that only officers of the corporation (usually the evangelists or elders of the local group)

could have access to key financial data. After for years insisting that their “books were open to any member,” the Boston chapter of the ICC in 1991 took steps that could only be characterized as limiting the access to key information about the financial affairs of the ICC. This is not in keeping with its stated goals to be open and above-board in all its financial matters. In 1993 the BBC’s respected “NewsNight” Program did an in-depth analysis of the ICC, particularly the London affiliate. It also examined the relationship between the Central London Church of Christ and the Los Angeles Church of Christ. Those researching the story were able

to contact former accountants for the church, track key financial data, and evaluate the propriety of the expenses, salaries, and lifestyles of the ICC leaders. An excerpt of the interview (video are available at <http://www.iccinvestigation.com/media.htm>) revealed the following about these areas:

Humility is not the first word that springs to mind when describing where the [ICC] shepherd lives. Just 200 yards from the Pacific in California's exclusive Manhattan Beach is the home from which spiritual guru Kip McKean runs his multi-million pound empire. It's not a mansion, but in this part of town houses are worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. . . they certainly aren't sacrificing as much as their followers think they are.

In 1990 members [in London] were told the average full-time leader earned 161 pounds a week, 644 pounds a month. This internal wages document shows [at this point, an internal London ICC document is shown] that some were paid many times more than that. One evangelist, for instance, [reference on the page is to Douglas Arthur] received a total of 3,260 pounds gross a month. The church says there was no intention to deceive. But there are other hidden extras, too. This tropical island [photo of tropical island] was used for an expensive leader's conference and holiday. The top men have also received large amounts in expenses and advances, almost 13,000 pounds in one case.

The church says its staff is willing to give generously to the poor, but the financial accounts show millions of pounds eaten up by the movement by administration and wages, while the amount of money going for benevolence is tiny, just 1% in 1990.

Charities specialist Pesh Frangie has analyzed the figures for *NewsNight*. [quote from Mr. Frangie]: "It seems to me when I examine this set of accounts and I compare them with other charities which I look at of similar size and complexity, these accounts don't tell me very much. I would normally expect to see more than two pieces of paper with some numbers on it. . ."

The church says any mistakes are due to enthusiasm and naiveté, but Aymon Aykshar says he knows why some of the figures don't add up. [quote from Mr. Aykshar]: "As I was helping in the church office I saw some of the money from the poor contribution put in a drawer and some of the leaders—not just one

or two of them—helping themselves to the drawer with no record or accountability."

It is hoped that this brief listing of information is sufficient to cause the reasonable reader to question whether the ICC has been as up-front and above-board as it is wont to allege.

If there are really no problems in these and other areas, why is the ICC so reluctant to open up its records? Why not tell the congregation why ministers are being "transferred" or are "resigning," or about the "marriage problems" of ministers? The sexual dalliances of Crossroads minister Chuck Lucas were also covered up in a similar manner (in fact, the ICC leadership continued to financially support Lucas after he was fired from Gainesville, and maintained the cover-up regarding the reasons for his being fired). At one point, I wanted to speak frankly about the history of Chuck Lucas and

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**. . . in fact, the ICC leadership continued to financially support Lucas after he was fired from Gainesville, and maintained the cover-up regarding the reasons for his being fired.**

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his being fired to his daughter, who was serving on the staff of the Boston Church at the time. Tragically, two years had gone by since Lucas was fired, and she apparently still had not been told the true reason why her father had been fired. Understandably, she had blamed both myself and the other members of the ministry staff at Crossroads for making the decision to fire her father. Not knowing the true extent of his sexual sins, she had assumed that we had been harsh and unforgiving toward him by firing him at Crossroads. Knowing that the truth of his termination would result in the repair of not only our relationship but of her family, I discussed with Kip McKean whether to bring up these matters with Leigh Ann Lucas. As Leigh Ann Lucas and her husband were reporting to me and under my charge at that time in the Boston Church of Christ campus ministry, the situation was quite awkward. Kip McKean absolutely refused to allow me to speak about the situation to Leigh Ann; I was puzzled at the time by his strong reaction to my suggestion. In a few days, Leigh Ann Lucas and her husband were abruptly transferred out of my supervision! If the group's leaders have been deceitful or less-than-forthcoming about their doctrinal positions, why should we assume that they would be truthful about their finances and personal morals? If a man cannot be trusted in small areas (where he is accountable), should we expect him to be trustworthy in larger areas in which he answers to no one? Where does such "logic" come from?

Does that not go against everything Jesus said about personal integrity and faithfulness? One simply cannot isolate or insulate one's dishonesty or corruption, claiming that "well, there may be doctrinal abuses and personal abuses. but at least we're clean in the area of sexuality and finances." It simply does not wash, and it is simply not true. This is the ICC version of "the Big Lie" that, through constant repetition, has come to be accepted by the average ICC member. If there were nothing to these allegations of sexual or financial misdeeds of the leadership of the ICC, why is the ICC not forthcoming in providing the documentation that would presumably exonerate them?

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**If the group's leaders have been deceitful or less-than-forthcoming about their doctrinal positions, why should we assume that they would be truthful about their finances and personal morals? If a man cannot be trusted in small areas (where he is accountable), should we expect him to be trustworthy in larger areas in which he answers to no one?**

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"Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely," the 19th-century British Lord Acton once said. It is my opinion that the unaccountable and ever-increasing power that the upper echelon of the ICC wields over the membership is resulting in a greater and greater corruption at that level. I saw problems which have no built-in controls of ever being reported to anyone outside the inner circle. If there were serious problems going on in the ICC, the members must hope that someone at that level would speak out about them, and would call the other leaders to repent. The fact of the matter is that those problems do exist, former leaders have spoken out about them, and they have been disfellowshipped and silenced for their boldness and courageous decisions. Does this speak of the manner in which these problems are addressed by the ICC?



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**"I was told that the ICC teaches leaders to regard all confessions with the utmost confidentiality. What about this so-called "Sin List" that was featured on ABC's "20/20" program?"**

Violations of confidentiality are unfortunately one of the common denominators that many who have left the ICC allege. The details of one's personal life, sins and other embarrassing information that were discussed in the context of a one-to-one Bible Study end up being passed "up the line," so that leaders are privy to a host of information about the members in their charge. I have observed this process, I have taken part in this process, and I have used information obtained in this manner for the purposes of controlling the behaviors of members in my charge while a leader in the ICC.

The allegations of violation of confidentiality that are reported by ex-members usually boil down to a "he said—she said" type of argument, with the ex-member making an allegation, and the ICC spokesman or leader denying the charge. Readers or viewers are left to conclude who is the more sincere, as there is little convincing proof offered to carry either side of the argument. The sheer weight of the allegations of such breaches of confidentiality, coming from a wide variety of sources over decades of analysis of this organization, would at least bring to mind the old adage "where there's smoke, there's fire." Rigid, convincing proof, however, was nowhere to be found—it was always one person's word against the other.

In the spring of 1993, however, I came into possession of a shocking document. It was a computer printout with the names of scores of members of the Boston Church of Christ. Not just their names (grouped by House Churches), but shocking and private details about their lives. Their sexual sins (many committed years before their affiliation with the ICC), their failures, their racial and ethnic differences, even perceived mental health observations, all crudely assembled into a master document—a congregational "Sin List," if you will. Here are some brief excerpts of the contents of the document (with the names expunged):

"\_\_\_\_\_ — Mega-weak, may not have become disciples at all; was recently unfaithful; He is emotionally numb, and she has abused him verbally . . . lots of bad dynamics here."

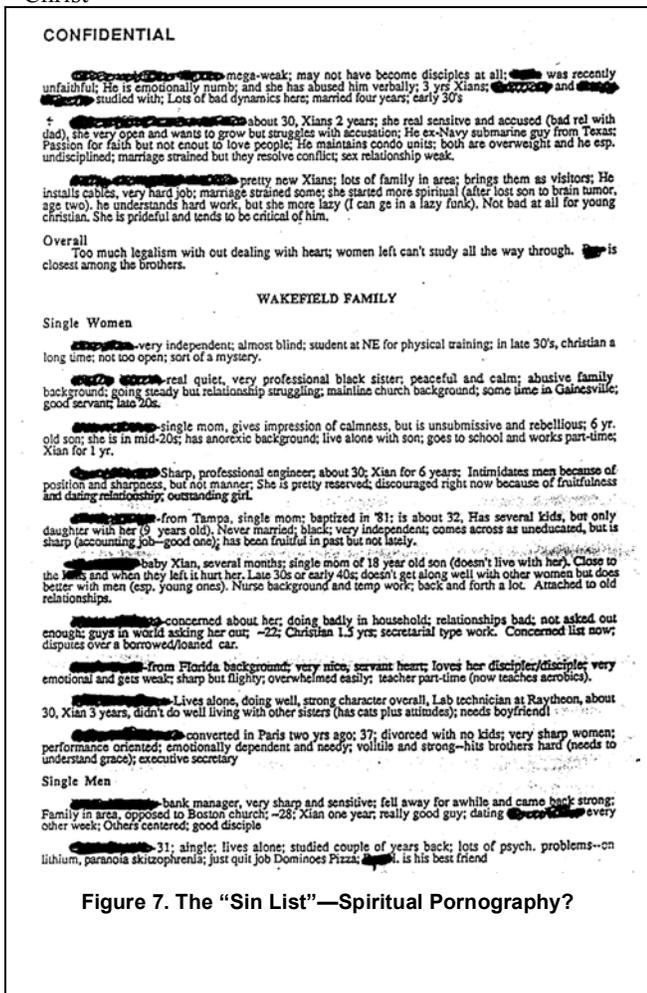


Figure 7. The "Sin List"—Spiritual Pornography?

"\_\_\_\_\_—she real sensitive and accused (bad rel. with dad), both are overweight and he esp. undisciplined . . . sex relationship weak."

"\_\_\_\_\_—gives impression of calmness, but is unsubmitive and rebellious; has anorexic background."

"\_\_\_\_\_—has several kids, never married, black, very independent, comes across as uneducated, but is sharp (accounting job—good one). . ."

"\_\_\_\_\_—31, single, lives alone; lots of psych. problems—on lithium, paranoia skizophrenia [sic]. . ."

"\_\_\_\_\_—[about a married couple]: He found out about her pre-marriage abortion just before she baptized—hasn't been the same since. Dull spiritually; hot guy business-wise."

"\_\_\_\_\_—Xian [abbreviation for 'Christian'] 3 years. Tied in closely (too) to \_\_\_\_\_. Had lesbian background with Coast Guard woman before conversion."

"\_\_\_\_\_—has a lot of problems and causes a lot; 9 year old son; in church 5 or 6 years, rebaptized; very critical, may be mentally off, skitzo stuff; provokes reaction; is not being disciplined; needs to be dealt with strongly; can't get along with anyone . . ." "\_\_\_\_\_—Puerto Rican; he has emotional problems—explosive . . . has son from previous relationship . . . very prideful and insecure . . . hits wife and his mother—a mess; she afraid to stand up against him; may need to separate."

"\_\_\_\_\_—just over from Malden, a mess, depressed, on lithium and other medications; her elevator doesn't go to the top; talks about herself incessantly; bright, but messed up, doesn't work, childish."

I want to assure the reader that there is a lot more of this material, and I am not exaggerating the tone or tenor of the ICC leadership's assessment of its membership by these selections. Complete pages of this list in its original format are enclosed as figures 7 and 8 for your consideration.

I remember when I first read this document, and felt the revulsion in the pit of my stomach, when I realized the cynical implications of its contents. Worse still, there were many people on this list whom I had known (as it contained many people whom my wife and I had met during our years in Boston)—I felt like I had, in a sense, "peeked through a keyhole" into the most sensitive areas of their life. It was, to use a phrase the current ICC leadership has used to describe my writings about the ICC, sheer "spiritual pornography." Not only were there intimacies detailed for the leaders to know, but the crude, unprofessional, racist, and cynical assessment of these rank-and-file members is so blatantly detailed. Were the members to ever know in what low regard they were held by their leaders, a revolution would ensue.

How did I get the document? A former zone leader in the ICC turned in the document, stating that he had personally received it from ICC Elder/Teacher Gordon Ferguson. I knew Ferguson personally during my years in Boston, and was staggered by the implications of this material coming directly from him. Here was a case of widespread violation of ministerial confidentiality—not on the part of some overzealous new convert, or from a group not closely tied with the ICC hierarchy, but coming directly from the ICC headquarters at the time—and from one of the key leaders in the ICC. If this list illustrated their attitude toward confidentiality in Boston, imagine what it must have been elsewhere!

I did not publicize the document for some months. When I watched a television interview with Ferguson, aired later that year, the subject of confidentiality came up. The following is a verbatim transcript of the interview [video

available at  
http://www.icocinvestigation.com/media.htm]:

**NewsCenter 5 (WCVB/ABC TV) Investigative Reports, May 19, 1993**

**Interviewer:** "Are their [members] confessions confidential?"

**Gordon Ferguson:** "Yes."

**Interviewer:** "Former members say that the confidentiality of their confessions was broken routinely."

**Gordon Ferguson:** "Well, that's not the way we normally do business. I mean, I don't know the specifics you're talking about or if there are some, I would not say that things like that have not occurred, but I do know that our emphasis is on confidentiality because we are talking about close relationships."

I was shocked that here he was, acting as if violations of confidentiality were a rare exception, or things he didn't know about! Not only was Ferguson not telling the truth, but I had written proof that he was deceiving people—both inside and outside the ICC— with these claims of

strict confidentiality. I decided to finally do something about this heinous deception. I handed a copy of the list, with all the names carefully blacked out, to the producers of ABC television, as they were preparing to interview Al Baird, spokesman for the ICC. The following is a verbatim transcript of the pertinent part of that interview:

**ABC Television's "20/20" Program, 10/15/93**

**Interviewer:** "Do you keep these confessions confidential?"

**Al Baird:** "I absolutely keep them confidential, and I teach that they should be kept confidential."

**Interviewer:** "Then what about this 'Sin List' that's passed around?"

**Al Baird:** "I don't know of a sin list. Show me a sin list that gets passed around by leaders of the church."

[interviewer shows list to Baird]

**Interviewer:** "You haven't seen this?"

**Al Baird:** "I'm not familiar with this. If this exists, this is totally wrong, and if I found out that someone did this, this could even be grounds for their dismissal."

For the first time, here was an ICC leader admitting the obvious—that this list was wrong, and that somebody should be punished for this breach of confidentiality. I was willing to believe Al Baird's assertion that he did not know about the document, and willing to take him at his word that he would act to address the problem. I expected the leaders of the ICC to immediately apologize for the document, and take the steps outlined by Al Baird in the ABC interview. I was startled when I began to hear several members from ICC affiliates all over the world explain to me what their leaders had been saying about the printout. In one case, an ICC leader said, "Mr. X. is pretty good with a computer. It would not have been a problem for him to come up with that list all by himself." That particular interpretation made me angry—I did not author this list, and I had no way of knowing all these sordid details about these individuals. I felt as if I was in the ICC all over again—and again, I was the critic bringing the accusation. Instead of admitting the obvious, I was again being put on trial. This time I was being blamed for creating a document which I didn't create! I immediately sent a registered letter to Al Baird (figure 10, included on the following pages).

CONFIDENTIAL

33; Xian same time as Jim; strong personality and soft heart; kind of beaten down; low self-image; rough pre-Xian days; they lived in huge house with her father.  
30; college FB player; accountant; very sharp; Xian since Fall of '87; He found out about her pre-marriage abortion just before she baptized—hasn't been same since. Dull spiritually; hot guy business-wise.  
sharp, open; very good, as with [redacted], very generous; husband hurts her, she is doing great; very outgoing.  
Xian since 1980; solid but husband is NC; can get discouraged, strong and faithful; about 30.

STONEHAM FAMILY

Single Men

31; Xian 2 years, studied with [redacted], talented but too cautious; warm good guy; computer programmer; BT doing well  
30ish; interned at Pueblo at one time; in holding pattern with life at present; works for leathercraft, work and administr., hot and cold spiritually; emotionally based. lives with [redacted]  
Bapt in NE campus ministry; rehabbed; knows the jargon but hard hearted; hard to live with on a daily basis; lots of attention—is it bearing with the weak or putting up with sin? want to move when finishes a second degree this June; very sporadic; 30ish.  
knows what to do, but heart level motivation is tough; doesn't give away his heart; not totally open; two of his closest friends fell away, one here, one Chicago, one M/one W.  
accused legalist; hard time getting forgiveness; Masters degree with engineering; critical of self and others, about 25 or 26; very talented  
about 42; converted here, emotionally hurt; lost wife in divorce; emotionally immature (immob); special case converted by Tim B. works at Staples.  
dependable guy, but dull and low key as leader; not very open, great guy overall, really wants to get married, 24 Xian two years

Single Women

Xian 3 years, tied in closely (too) to [redacted]. Had lesbian background with Coast Guard woman before conversion, doing well spiritually  
growing but pretty insecure; improving a lot but needs work on discipline and building relationships.  
very unusual, almost split personality (jecky/kyde); didn't speak until five years old; can be very warm or very vicious; needs challenge/help; 32; works for medical co.  
insurance sales/service rep; real insecure about 25; goody two shoes when young; very uptight about how people see her. Throws temper tantrums, a problem, sincere enough but feels hopeless and gets critical.  
steady, joyful, etc. but self-righteous; Xian 2 years, large family with her in the middle works for Sherman, almost 31 (looks young) conflict avoider.  
28; Xian 2 yrs; live with the Jankas; very prim and proper family but she totally rebelled; immature but heart changing; people pleaser and insecure; lazy, but working on it. Accountant for Harvard's publishing dept. (non-degree).  
Marrieds  
good couple; she degree; prim and proper background. much different; they met in bar. Xians about two years; rough background, but they are growing and doing well now; child, 3 yrs; John does manual labor, but has hurt back; Weak in building friendships; [redacted] from Brazil.

Figure 8: Boston Computerized "Sin List" Printout—Violation of the Confessional?

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**I did not author this list, and I had no way of knowing all these sordid details about these individuals. This time I was being blamed for creating a document which I didn't create!**

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I was angry that the ICC was making me the scapegoat for a problem they had created, and that the average member of the ICC had no idea of the serious problem that the organization's hierarchy was apparently concealing. On the other hand, there could be some value in these events. Here was a consummate test of organizational integrity for the ICC. Would they do the right thing? Would the people responsible for this list ever be brought to the judgment and correction that they so obviously needed? Would the entire incident be simply "covered up?"

Imagine my shock a few weeks later when I received, not a letter from Al Baird or from Gordon Ferguson (as of this writing they have yet to respond), but from their lawyers! The letter is included as Figure 10. This was rich! I was being threatened by expensive lawyers trying



**Figure 7. Al Baird confronted on ABC television: "I'm not familiar with this. If this exists, this is totally wrong, and if I found out that someone did this, this could even be grounds for their dismissal."**

to intimidate me from letting the ICC know about its own problems. I was being threatened without ever having been spoken to (a clear violation of Matthew 18:15-17) by anyone in the ICC leadership.

26 October 1993

Mr. Al Baird / Los Angeles Church of Christ  
3530 Wilshire Boulevard / Suite 1750 / Los Angeles, California 90010

Dear Al:

I am writing you this letter to let you follow up on a request made through ABC television. The producers of ABC's "20/20" program said that you were most concerned about the "sin list" that was displayed in the program that aired on October 15th, and that you wanted to obtain a copy. It was my understanding that you already had a copy of this document, but I am certainly glad to provide you with another copy to validate its authenticity. Lest there be any further concern about its authenticity, we also have a version with the names of individuals clearly identified. To validate the accuracy of the document, ABC contacted individuals on this list, who in turn verified the accuracy of their sins and uniformly expressed contempt and revulsion for the fact that intimate details of their life had been confessed and that information had been communicated to third parties without their awareness.

Al, I share your apparent shock and revulsion at this document; I too agree that whoever circulated this information deserves to be immediately terminated from the International Churches of Christ organization. Truly, your swift attention to this ministerial discipline would demonstrate that the upper echelons of the group are able to discipline themselves. For this reason I am informing you that this document was originally obtained from Boston Church of Christ elder/teacher Gordon Ferguson. I am looking forward to your swift redress and public apology on this matter. It has further come to my attention (through tape recorded messages in several International Church of Christ settings) that members in the leadership of the International Church of Christ are stating that this document is a complete fabrication, wholly invented by me on my own computer. To the extent that your organization formally accuses me of purveying this true "spiritual pornography," I am greatly concerned that your group is now liable to an accusation of slander. I trust that you too see the problem that this presents to the both of us. Now that you now know without doubt from where and whom the document originated, I trust that you will take these swift steps in the following matters:

- 1) The unconditional termination of elder Gordon Ferguson;
- 2) The public acknowledgment of guilt and liability for the aforementioned document originating from the leadership levels of the Boston Church of Christ;
- 3) An immediate ceasing and desisting from any communication (public or private) that this document was somehow fabricated by Mr. X.;
- 4) An immediate and public apology to both International Church of Christ members and Mr. X for any communication that construed this document as forged or otherwise fraudulently manufactured.

Please write if there is any need of further clarification of these matters. Again, let me reinforce my agreement in your statements regarding this document made during the ABC interview. I am awaiting your response to this information.

Sincerely,

(signed)

Mr. X

Enclosures: Confidential Sin List, Boston Church of Christ

CC: Mr. Mark Golden, producer, ABC television; Gordon Ferguson, elder, Boston Church of Christ

**Figure 8: Letter from Mr. X to Al Baird About "Sin List"**



And as if things could not get any worse, I heard yet another interview with Al Baird, this time on Canadian television's well-respected "5th Estate" program. As the interviewer spoke with me prior to her speaking with Baird, I gave her a copy of the list. Surely having had the benefit of my explanation, and having the opportunity to ascertain if the list indeed was manufactured by the ICC in Boston, Baird would now be able to answer the reporter's questions about the list's origins with far more clarity and candor than before. Now he would be compelled to "come clean" and let the world know the serious breach of confidentiality that had occurred in the ICC. I was again to be disappointed in my expectations. The verbatim transcript of the interview is as follows:

**Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's "5th Estate" Program, 12/93**

**Interviewer** [holding up list]: "This is dirt on people. How they're performing, recruiting people, what their sexual peccadilloes may have been."

**Al Baird**: "I don't know what you want me to say. I said I don't approve of that."

**Interviewer**: "Scott Deal [former top-echelon leader from Toronto, Canada] said that this information wasn't always written down, but that it was passed around, talked about . . ."

**Al Baird**: "We do not keep lists like that. I have never seen a list like that."

I was shocked, but not completely surprised. Baird had continued to claim that he had not seen the list, even though he had received a copy from me months ago! What was I to do? I had appealed to Baird, appealed to Ferguson, and had two separate reporters give the organization a chance to do the right thing. I decided to test one of the key foundations of the ICC—that the top echelon leaders are able to disciple each other, and clean out corrupt practices at the very top of the organization. After all, this is the premise that most of the members of the ICC are relying upon to guarantee the ethical standards of the top leaders. I decided to write Kip McKean a letter. It is enclosed in its entirety, on the following page.

I have done all I can do to point out this grievous wrong. I leave it to the members of the ICC to consider whether the actions taken by the upper-level echelons of the ICC are consistent with ethical principles of not only ministerial confidentiality, but the ability to admit you're wrong when you are caught "red-handed."

Mr. Kip McKean  
Los Angeles Church of Christ  
3530 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1750  
Los Angeles, California 90010

Dear Kip:



**Figure 9: Al Baird on "Inside Edition": "It wasn't circulated . . . that was a list from one leader to another. The leader of the group must know his people . . . he's got to know the sins that you're, ongoing basis, struggling with."**

This sordid exchange would have been bad enough, but it got even worse in early 1994. The list again was shown to Al Baird, in a recent television interview on the television program *Inside Edition*. What would Baird say this time? Would he finally admit the all-too-obvious? The verbatim transcript of the interview appears as follows.

**"Inside Edition" Program 05/94**

[Sin List presented to Al Baird]

**Al Baird**: "It wasn't circulated. That was a list from one leader to another. And someone took the list, and gave it to you."

**Interviewer**: "The things on this list should have never gone beyond the person, the disciple."

**Al Baird**: "That's exactly [right]. The leader of that group. The leader of the group must know his people."

**Interviewer**: "Oh, so the leader should know my sins?"

**Al Baird**: "No, not all your sins. But he's got to know the sins that you're, ongoing basis, struggling with."

I am bringing a matter to your attention in this letter that as worldwide leader of the International Churches of Christ (ICC) you should want to know.

Enclosed please find the history of correspondence between myself and Al Baird, one of the World Sector Leaders of the ICC. These letters detail my attempts to register concern regarding the computerized "Sin List" distributed by Boston Church of Christ Elder (and now Elder/Teacher) Gordon Ferguson, a list detailed in the October 15 airing of ABC's "20/20" program. As you may remember, Al said "show me a sin list that gets passed around by leaders." ABC's John Stossel then showed him the list, and Al claimed that he had never seen the list, and further added "if this is true, then this could be grounds for dismissal." I agreed with Al's assessment of the situation, furnished him with another copy of the list, and informed him that we received these documents from Gordon Ferguson. We also have the original from Gordon with the names clearly displayed, but for confidentiality's sake did not reveal those names on national television (ABC television's legal department had to contact several of the individuals on the list to corroborate the information, which was proven to be both accurate and a breach of their confidentiality).

As the correspondence clearly details, I wanted Al to be a man of his word, and asked the ICC leadership to apologize for its actions, terminate Ferguson, and immediately cease and desist from portraying me as the originator of this information. I have several sources on the record attesting to the fact that leaders in the ICC are stating that Mr. X. is the originator of the "sin list." The only communication I have received in the months following my letter to Al was a rather threatening letter by the law firm which represents your organization.

Kip, has it really come down to lawyers and lawsuits? "If your brother sins, show him his fault..." the Scriptures teach. I've gone to Gordon, I've gone to Al. I've given the evidence to both of them in the hope of clearing up this horrible matter. Instead of a simple apology, now

After listening to the various versions by which ICC spokesman Al Baird attempts to explain this list, here are some questions to consider:

the ICC is going to lawyers. Instead of doing the right thing, thus far the ICC has chosen to respond with threats from lawyers which have no legal standing. Is this the manner in which godly men respond to a correction? If they are wrong, why do they not apologize? If they are not wrong, why do they not demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt that they indeed had nothing to do with the creation and distribution of this list?

Kip, you're in charge. You're the discipler of these men, your World Sector Leaders. Are the men at the top of the ICC accountable? Are you accountable? Can they truly disciple each other and keep corruption out of the upper echelons of the organization? Do they have the openness to accept correction and reproof even from someone you regard as an enemy? Your actions will speak volumes of your true convictions in this matter.

Please don't have your lawyers send me another letter. And please don't have them threaten me with "republication" of something that your organization is responsible for. To issue that kind of charge only shows that your organization is trying to assert some kind of copyright ownership claim for the document, which is what I've maintained all along!

Instead of threatening me, do the right thing. Do the thing that Jesus would do. Answer the critics (myself included) who have maintained that the leaders in the ICC do not hold one another in line. Restore our trust that you folks are honorable men capable of correcting an egregious practice.

As always, I am available to discuss this matter should you decide to seek further information or clarification. Until that time, I find no reason to alter the sequence of events and information as they have been detailed in this correspondence. Furthermore, I will continue to distribute this information as widely and broadly (and in whatever form) as I see fit. I await your response to this matter.

Sincerely,  
(signed)

Mr. X.

- Has the teaching on confidentiality changed in the ICC from fall of 1993 to spring of 1994? When and where was this promulgated? Is it now the accepted

teaching to pass information and confessions “up the line” to ICC leaders? Are the ICC members aware of this “new” doctrine?

- Was is wrong for Gordon Ferguson to give this list to another leader in the ICC? If not, why not? (It is important to also realize just how many people had to have participated, cooperated, and communicated in the gathering and recording of all of this information on these ICC members). Even Baird’s phrase “the leader of that group” (as an exception to the confidentiality standards) is deceptive—many others in the ICC hierarchy would still have needed to violate confidentiality before the leader could acquire a complete list.
- Why did Al Baird change his explanation? Was it because he found out the list was from Gordon Ferguson?
- Why didn’t they speak to me about it?
- Why did the ICC threaten me with their lawyers?
- Why hasn’t Kip McKean dealt with Gordon Ferguson and Al Baird? Why has the leader of the ICC not in clear and unambiguous language condemned the actions of his subordinates? Was what they did wrong? If it was wrong, why is it being protected?
- Is Al Baird lying? Is he saying one thing (“we teach confidentiality”) and allowing another (“the leader of the group must know his people”) standard of practice to exist—and this on the part of a fellow Elder/Teacher of the ICC? Baird’s claim made on ABC television that “I absolutely keep them confidential” is suspect to its very core.
- The list not only contains material information about members’ sins, but also evaluations about members’ race, financial status, and perceived mental disorders. Are people, as Al Baird said on *Inside Edition*, “ongoing basis, struggling with ...” being Black? Being Puerto Rican? What place does such racial and ethnic prejudice have in the ICC? Since Baird has not apologized for this material, are we to presume that this kind of information is acceptable for ICC leaders to have?

In case there is any doubt about the legality of passing confessions “up the line” so that a leader can “know his people,” I will cite from a recently-published handbook written for churches by one of the leading legal advisors to churches nationwide, attorney Carl F. Lansing. In his *Legal Defense Handbook for Christians in Ministry* (NavPress, 1992), Lansing devotes an entire chapter to the subject of breaches of confessional confidentiality. I will cite but a few passages for consideration:

Confidentiality in counseling settings is essential to the counseling process. Obviously people who enter counseling could not feel a sense of trust and confidence in their pastor if they thought the subject matter of their sessions might be communicated beyond that relationship without their permission. **Confidentiality and privacy are essential to any spiritual or psychological interaction that effectively deal with serious, personal matters . . .** Careless or intentional disregard of the confidentiality laws in your state could ultimately cause serious legal consequences to you and your organization. . . The liability is both personal against the pastor or counselor violating the confidence and corporate against the church or parachurch organization that employs him. **As in all areas, the acts of an organization’s staff and volunteers are the acts of the organization.** So as an individual counselor, you could be sued successfully along with the organization or church to which you belong. **Even board or committee members who were guilty of negligent supervision in the face of obvious prior abuses of these obligations could find themselves exposed under the laws of their particular state.** Confidentiality is serious business (pp. 240, 242, emphasis added).

Although the ICC does not consider the Catholic Church to be a truly Christian church, the confidentiality of the confessional is certainly an area where the ICC could learn a great deal about from the Catholics:

It is absolutely wrong for a confessor in any way to betray the penitent, for any reason whatsoever, whether by word or in any other fashion. **The confessor is wholly forbidden to use knowledge acquired in confession to the detriment of the penitent, even when all**

danger of disclosure is excluded (*Code of Canon Law*, Canons 983-84).

Could we have discovered the true reason why the ICC leadership has heretofore been less than candid about this document? Perhaps they are more concerned with legal exposure than the ultimate judgment—before the judgment bar of God. It is hoped that this brief litany of problems would appear grievous enough to warrant anyone reading this article to seek out an explanation of these activities from the leadership of the ICC. I stand by each and every one of these charges, and if I am shown to be mistaken, I will gladly correct this record and these allegations. It is not my intent to defame or make libelous accusation, and I recognize full well the biblical injunction against bearing false witness. I firmly believe, however, that these incidents present a clear and consistent pattern of abuse and corruption that has infiltrated the upper echelon of the ICC.



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### **“Are you saying that the International Churches of Christ organization is a cult?”**

The is the one question that I am asked most often, and so I have had the opportunity to do a great deal of reflecting before answering. The answer is always more detailed than a simple “yes” or “no.” Some personal background and clarification of terminology is in order.

The term “cult” is used and understood in a variety of ways, both in our world today and throughout religious history. It is important to know how someone uses the term before applying that definition to the ICC. One of the prevalent uses in the general media for the term “cult” is in describing a Jonestown, Guyana-like group led by a crazed paranoid like Jim Jones, the Charles Manson “Helter Skelter” group in Southern California a few decades ago, or the Branch Davidians cult of Waco, Texas. Another usage is by religious historians or theologians, who use the term to describe an offshoot group or splinter faction from an orthodox Christian church, usually advocating some heretical teaching or departing in some significant manner from an accepted core teaching of the Christian religion. By this definition, such groups as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Unification Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) would be classified as cults.

When average ICC members hear their group referred to as a cult, their frame of reference is generally to either of these two understandings of the usage of the term. Not having personally observed any outrageously corrupt or wicked behavior, and not

knowing the nature of which the group has indeed departed from orthodox Christian teaching in several key areas, they reject out of hand the assertion that the ICC could ever be considered cultic.

Additionally, the term is such a visceral, “red-meat,” or flash-point term that it usually evokes an immediate (and often emotional) denial on the part of a loyal ICC member. Thorough indoctrination from even before the point of time when an individual joins an ICC group insures that they are predisposed not to ever entertain the possibility that they have joined a cult.

Generally speaking (and I have been on both sides of the argument), the discussion that ensues after this question is raised becomes emotional, with a great deal more heat than light generated! Clarification of terms is essential. The simple question, “What do you mean by a cult?” would go far in diffusing the emotions in the discussion and looking more objectively at the possibility that the individual may have unwittingly joined a group that could be considered cultic.

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### **Thorough indoctrination from even before the point of time when an individual joins an ICC group insures that they are predisposed not to ever entertain the possibility that they may have joined a cult.**

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Although the ICC is not thought of as a cult by the previous two defining standards (although the recent decision to describe Kip McKean as an “apostle like Paul” and “undisputed leader of the Movement” may cause some to grow in their concern that he is appropriating Jim Jones-like power in an uncontested pyramid-style organization), there is another standard definition for the term “cult” that must be considered before answering the question about the ICC and cultism.

It was only after reading Dr. Robert Lifton’s pivotal work *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* that I became convinced that what made a group a “thought-reform” group (Lifton’s less emotionally-laden term) or cultic was what a group practiced, not what they believed. Lifton’s work, based on the study of thought reform techniques used by the Chinese Communists in the 1940’s and 1950’s, identified characteristics that were consistent with both the Communist regime and religious cults. If a group practiced several or all of Lifton’s criteria,

they would by definition be considered a cult. His criteria includes the following key areas:

1) **Milieu (Environment) Control.** The group environment is significantly isolated from the surrounding world. This would not only include physical isolation, but techniques and control systems intentionally put in place to restrict the members' contact with the "outside world." The cult serves as a haven from the outside world, with security being the goal achieved for each obedient member. The borders of the cult, rigidly controlled through a variety of behavioral and doctrinal systems, erect in effect what is a wall between the cult member and the outside world. Cults control information through their teachings, their activities (often with a frenzied pace with little time for travel, reflection, or contact with outsiders), and by physically isolating members from "worldly" or "unspiritual" non-members.

2) **Mystical Manipulation.** Springing from a claim to exclusivity as the sole arbiter of truth and divinity in the world, the leader of the cult can reinterpret reality to better suit the groups' aims and purposes. The leader(s) see themselves as divinely called for carrying out what Lifton calls "the mystical imperative," which in ICC terms is "evangelizing the world in one generation." This goes far beyond even the rather exclusivist claims of fundamentalist Christian churches who view their religion (though not necessarily their particular denomination or church) as being the only "saved" group in the world. Intense activities including singing, chanting, recruiting, and listening to passionate speeches are carefully orchestrated into an environment that, with time, can become a narcotic for the average member. The "high" resulting from being "in the spirit" can place the member on a treadmill whose speed is controlled by the leader. This experience can be difficult to reproduce outside of the cult's environment, leading members to mistakenly conclude that the cult is the sole source of spirituality in the world. The member is asked to accept the manipulations of the group, the reinterpretation of world events given by the leader, or alternately to reject even the legitimate criticism of the group by outsiders. Any individual doubt is reconciled by an appeal to ultimate trust (or faith) in the leader or the goals of the group.

It is important to see how the ICC's demand and incessant monologue about "Trust Issues" fits into this matrix. Any doubts about the group are usually interpreted by ICC leaders as arising from "Trust Problems" in the ICC member—either originating in pre-cult trauma in childhood, or arising out of some "sinful" response or "bad attitude" towards a present issue. There is fundamentally no question or issue

touching the core mystical center of the cult that can be legitimately raised.

3) **The Demand for Purity.** The existential world of the cult is sharply divided into the land of good and the land of evil. Reality is starkly portrayed as a black/white duality, with little room for ambivalence, nuance, or inconsistency. As Lifton describes, "the good and the pure are of course those ideas, feelings, and actions which are consistent with the totalist ideology and policy; anything else is apt to be relegated to the bad and the impure. Nothing human is immune from the flood of stern moral judgments. All 'taints' and 'poisons' which contribute to the existing state of impurity must be searched out and eliminated."

This demand creates the ability to control or influence behavior through guilt and shame. To effect this control, the ICC can tap into a database of shameful and embarrassing details about an individual's life (provided by the ICC members through individual studies and systematically passing these "confessions" up the line to the ICC leadership cadre). By repeatedly bringing guilt and shame to the individual ICC member, he or she can be manipulated and controlled.

The quest for purity involves eliminating any non-approved emotion or response from the behavior patterns of the individual member. All traces of playfulness, questioning, spontaneity, doubt, fear, anxiety, or longing are proscribed by the group leadership in the incessant appeal to "Be a Good Disciple." Nothing less than utter conformity to this impossible goal is the frustrating lot of the dedicated cult member, which leads to a tremendous sense of guilt that one is not attaining the goal. This guilt reinforces the behavior and sets the individual up to repeat the endless cycle of guilt leading to modified behavior leading to recrimination for failure leading again to guilt. Those in the ICC know that "nothing is ever good enough"; there is always, incessantly, the challenge to "Take It Higher."

4) **The Cult of Confession (Spiritual Bulimia).**

Closely related to the demand for purity, the therapeutic value and biblical doctrine of confession of sin is magnified completely out of healthy proportion. As Lifton again describes, "there is the demand that one confess to crimes one has not committed, to sinfulness that is artificially induced, in the name of a cure that is artificially imposed . . . in totalist hands, confession becomes a means for exploiting, rather than offering solace for, these vulnerabilities."

Certain ICC behaviors illustrate this phenomenon. One is "the Sin Study," where a prospective recruit is required to write down all the sins he or she has ever committed. The prospective recruit is rigorously

questioned about every intimate detail of these events, with a rather lurid preoccupation on unnatural sexual activity including bestiality, incest, or other perversions. If the ICC leader does not feel that the recruit is being completely forthcoming, he or she will be ordered to fast and pray to remember even more, and to have the concomitant sorrow for the totality of this evil behavior. The recruit must be “broken” in the eyes of the ICC, ready to do whatever the group demands to receive the forgiveness for these sins. Hence, confession can become a trap for even more confession, until the recruit feels that he or she can never confess enough! During my days in Boston, I was told to “confess even the temptation,” as the demand for purity, coupled with an inordinate desire to know the inner psyche of the ICC member, drove the leaders further into what I would call “spiritual bulimia”: the bingeing and purging of guilt and fear through regular and systematic confession, with little forgiveness and little assurance of hope. As if pre-membership confession wasn’t enough, the constant demand for “more and better” confession illustrates itself in “the Reconstruction Talk” or “the Life Talk,” where a member of any duration in the ICC can be confronted with a demand to confess even more details of present behaviors or thought patterns that may be threatening to the organization. Again, fear, guilt and shame can be brought to bear on the recalcitrant member by bombarding them with embarrassing and shameful details from their past. This procedure is called a “Breaking Session.” It is practiced with great frequency in the ICC.

##### 5) **The “Sacred Science” (Spiritual Monopoly).**

The group claims to have the only correct doctrine of living and religion in the world, and is the exclusive arbiter of truth. The leader of the group is above all healthy criticism and questioning and is regarded as the final spokesperson for God in earth. The “sacred science” of the organization is seen in its various doctrines and teachings, teachings that are above questioning because they have arisen through a divine source—either a sacred book or a divine revelation of sacred truths to the group’s leader. As Paul Martin describes, this doctrine gives the cult its impetus for recruiting efforts:

In other words, the system that practices sacred science claims to have an answer for nearly everything—from health to economics, world affairs, psychology, and spirituality . . . The cult believes that it has the corner on the truth. No other group does. In contrast, the truth held by other established religions is open to question, argument, and examination. In aberrational Christian churches, the sacred science may concede some truth

outside the camp, but would hold that no other churches have the full blessing, commitment, vision, or dedication that it has. Only their group has the sacred science. Thus, this truth must be shared with others. The entire earth becomes the target for new recruits (from *Cult-Proofing Your Kids*, by Dr. Paul Martin. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993, p. 188).

In the ICC, virtually all of life’s significant decisions have to be approved by the ICC leadership. This is called “Getting Advice” (in this context, see also the next identifying trait, “Loaded Language”). In reality, it is seeking permission for any and all activities through ICC-approved channels. In areas of dating, of employment, of academic endeavor, of economic activity, of virtually every conceivable area of life—the “wisdom” of the discipler is sought to guide the ICC member. I remember an evangelist in the ICC boasting to me that “I don’t do anything in life without first running it by my discipler.” If this is how the upper-level echelon interprets “advice,” one can imagine how this message gets filtered down to the lower ranks.

6) **Loading the Language.** The group develops its unique jargon, indecipherable to the average vocabulary. Terms that have an accepted usage in communication become infused with greater power and meaning in context of the cult’s employment of the term. The vocabulary in the cult consists of numerous loaded words and phrases which the members interpret (or think they do), but which in reality act as “thought-stoppers”—they cause the individual to terminate all further cognitive activity in that area. Particularly when one questions the ICC, loaded terminology can come into play. Hence, a person who is not confessing all sins is not “Being Open” or not “Teachable”; if they question the group or the leader they have “Trust Issues” or are “Disloyal.” If a leader does not know how to address a member’s behavior or questions, the questioning member is simply told “Deal With It.”

On the other hand, those who obey all the group’s teachings are called “Good Disciples.” Words like “Awesome” or “Incredible” are used with a mind-numbing frequency that is difficult for the outsider to miss. Even my father noticed this change in my own vocabulary; in one conversation that took place while I was living in Boston, he asked me “Mr. X, if everything is awesome, nothing is truly awesome. If everything is incredible, is anything really credible at all?”

How this impacts the thinking processes of the cult member is devastating. As Lifton describes,

. . . the most far-reaching and complex of human problems are compressed into

brief, highly reductive, definitive-sounding phrases, easily memorized and easily expressed. These become the start and finish of any ideological analysis . . .

Totalist language, then, is repetitiously centered on all-encompassing jargon, prematurely abstract, highly categorical, relentlessly judging, and to anyone else but its most devoted advocate, deady dull: in Lionel Trilling's phrase, "the language of nonthought" (p.429).

7) **Doctrine Over Person.** There is virtually nothing more important than the furthering of the group's aims. All of life's decisions are interpreted (usually with the help of the group's leadership) through this lens. The personal experiences of an individual must be subordinated to the commonly-held values of the group. Any contrary experience or beliefs which question the basic doctrines of the group must be subjugated, or reinterpreted by the group's leadership.

Hence, even when incontrovertible evidence of deception or coercion is presented to the ICC, the stock response is denial. Since the individual bringing the allegation is either outside the group or actively questioning its practices, the doctrine of the group is viewed as superior to the individual and it is the individual who must be discounted. Even the descriptive phrase for the ICC, "The Movement" belies this aspect of its cult-like practices. It is always "The Movement" that is most important; it is always the individual who must sacrifice for the good, not of Christ, but "The Movement."

In this way "The Movement" becomes the "gospel" of the organization. In analyzing the content of hundreds of ICC speeches and sermons, I realized that an inordinate amount of concern was being devoted to "The Movement" over and against even they return to) who decide to leave the organization. There is virtually no way to ever leave the group without terminating your right to exist in the cult's worldview.

This elimination of the individual's right to exist is formally practiced in the ICC by the practice of "Marking" an individual. As was true in my case, any questioning that cuts to the core of the group's right to exist (or its rights to exclusivity) cannot be tolerated by the structures of the group; hence it is always easier to simply get rid of the individual. The group must cauterize itself against this potentially contaminating agent, so the offending member is branded as "taboo"—all further contact with this person is prohibited. The offending member has died in the eyes of the cult, and his place in eternal torment is more secure than the most heinous of mass murderers. In most cults, the "dispensing of

the most significant Christian doctrines that one would expect to find in a healthy Christian church. The collective thinking (called "A Kingdom Mindset") is always superior and more highly valued than any individual thoughts or aspirations. Other pursuits not directly benefiting the cult are viewed as "Not The Best" and hence must be discarded in lieu of furthering the group's goals. Many more people could be recruited to the cult during the time usually devoted to "worldly affairs"; the cult member is made to view his pre-cult life and aspirations as sinful and unspiritual in light of a new set of values and behaviors to emulate. Those who do not naturally model the group norm (the personality, in the ICC's case, of Kip McKean and his wife Elena) are made to feel guilty and unspiritual for their shyness (called "Being Into Yourself"). It was almost humorous to see the ways in which even leaders would ape the personality of McKean—even down to imitating his speech mannerisms and quirks of personality.

8) **Dispensing of Existence.** Directly related and resulting from the concept of group doctrine over individual personality, the practice of dispensing of existence means that the group is the sole judge of who has the right to exist in the organizational environment. Those outside the group are considered "unspiritual" or satanic, and they must be converted to the group's ideology or they will be lost forever. Anyone who refuses the group's invitation to membership is rejected as non-existent ("Not Open") by the group, and time spent with that individual (even in the case of siblings or parents, even spouses) is viewed suspiciously by other group members. Of course, anyone reverting to the outside world after being a member of the cult is viewed even more harshly. Loaded words like "Fallen Away" or "Traitor" or "A Synagogue of Satan" are used to describe former ICC members (or the churches existence" is metaphorical and symbolic, but at times cults have taken steps to physically silence, intimidate, coerce, or even murder its perceived enemies.

Aided by Lifton's process-oriented and behaviorally-driven definitions, I came to the conclusion that the ICC was a cult. In my own experience and based upon my own research, it is my opinion that the ICC is a harmful cult directed and dominated by Kip McKean. Until the ICC discontinues and disowns the cult-like practices and tactics described not only by Lifton but by others who have studied cults, it must by definition be considered to be a cult. My father used to say to me, "If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, and looks like a duck, you can call it a giraffe, but it's still a duck." If any group practices those behaviors that dispassionate experts in the field have generally agreed upon as being cultic, we

should at the very least entertain the possibility that this particular group could be considered a cult. Although the ICC vehemently denies that they are a cult by any definition, one has simply to ask the question, "Has any cult ever admitted that they were a cult?" Even groups that the ICC considers cultic will not admit that they are cultic; why would we expect any group to own up to the fact that it practices cult-like behaviors? Would we naturally assume that the ICC would own up to their own identity, if it were true? If we rely on the ICC leadership to determine whether or not they are a cult, we by force of logic naturally determine their answer—denial. If we look to others who have studied not only the ICC but hundreds of other groups, we find a different answer.

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The January 1993 issue of the ICC's official journal *UpsideDown* carried an editorial (pp.6-7) in which the writer attempted to defend the group against the charge of being a cult. After citing one of Webster's usages of the Latin *cultus*, which refers to a system of worship, the writer makes the superficial conclusion that the usage is too general to apply specifically to their organization. The writer also states the following blanket denial: "We are not a cult. At least not by the definitions of many of the people researched for this issue." The writer fails to list any authoritative outside source who would conclude that the ICC is a normal, healthy expression of the Christian religion. If there was ever a time to cite endorsements, it would presumably be at that time and in that article. The lack of support by those who study destructive religious behaviors (as well as orthodox Christian theology) is eloquent testimony when it comes to evaluating the complete and utter denial that the ICC has any problems in this area. At this juncture, I will cite some helpful definitions of the term "cult" or "mind control." The reader will

be left to judge whether these definitions are operative in the case of the ICC.

**Cult**—A relatively small, often transitory religious group that commonly follows a radical leader. A cult, unlike a sect, espouses radically new religious beliefs and practices that are frequently seen as threatening the basic values and cultural norms of the society at large. Therefore, people who are involved in cults frequently exhibit antisocial and neurotic behavior. In recent times, orthodox Christians have used the term to describe those religious groups that deny the Trinity and specifically the deity of Jesus Christ. Their teachings are contrary to historic Christian orthodoxy. The three dynamics of a cult are sociological, psychological (behavioral), and theological (from *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions and the Occult*, by George A. Mather and Larry Nichols (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Books, 1994), p. 86).

By **cultism** we mean the adherence to doctrines which are pointedly contradictory to orthodox Christianity and which claim the distinction of either tracing their origin to orthodox sources or of being in essential harmony with those sources. Cultism, in short, is any major deviation from orthodox Christianity relative to the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. (Walter Martin, *The Rise of the Cults*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955), p. 19).

**Ideological Totalism** does even greater violence to the human potential: it evokes destructive emotions, produces intellectual and psychological constrictions, and deprives men of all that is most subtle and imaginative—under the false promise of eliminating those very imperfections and ambivalences which help to define the human condition. This combination of personal closure, self-destructiveness, and hostility toward outsiders leads to the dangerous group excesses so characteristic of ideological totalism in any form. (from *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*, by Robert Jay Lifton. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), p. 436.)

**Cult**—Any religious movement that is organizationally distinct and has doctrines and/or practices that contradict those of the Scriptures as interpreted by traditional Christianity as represented by the major Catholic and Protestant denominations, and as expressed in such statements as the Apostles' Creed. . . the term cultic will likewise be used in a general sense to refer to any idea or practice consistent with any cult's doctrine or lifestyle but not consistent with the Bible's teaching as classically understood by Christians of varied cultures throughout the centuries. (from *Scripture Twisting: 20 Ways Cults Misread the Bible*, by James W. Sire. (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1980), pp. 20-21).

**A Destructive Cult** is a highly manipulative group which exploits and sometimes physically and/or psychologically damages members and recruits. A destructive cult:

- a) dictates—sometimes in great detail—how members should think, feel, and act;
- b) claims a special, exalted status (e.g., occult powers; a mission to save humanity)—for itself and/or its leader(s)—that usually sets it in opposition to the mainline society and/or the family;
- c) exploits its members psychologically, financially, and/or physically;
- d) utilizes manipulative, or “mind control” techniques, especially the denigration of independent critical thinking, to recruit prospects and make members loyal, obedient, and subservient; and
- e) causes considerable psychological harm to many of its members and to members’ families.

**The Methods of Mind Control:**

- a) extensive control of information in order to limit alternatives from which members may make “choices”;
- b) deception;
- c) group pressure;
- d) intense indoctrination into a belief system that denigrates independent critical thinking and considers the world outside the group to be threatening, evil, or gravely in error;
- e) an insistence that members’ distress—much of what may consist of anxiety and guilt subtly induced by the group—can be relieved only by conformity to the group;
- f) physical and/or psychological debilitation through inadequate diet or fatigue; and
- g) the induction of dissociative (trance-like) states in which attention is narrowed, suggestibility heightened, and independent critical thinking weakened. (both citations from Michael Langone, “Destructive Cultism: Questions and Answers”, as cited in *Prophets of the Apocalypse*, by Kenneth Samples *et al* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1994), pp. 164, 220).

It is not my business to tell people what to think, or what conclusions to reach. I do, however, want them to think, to read, to study, and to not reject out-of-hand and emotionally the possibility that they may have unwittingly joined a group that practices mind-control and cultic behaviors. There is a collection of other articles added in the next chapter that might provide more information necessary to establish at least the possibility that the ICC may be either a cult or a harmful or destructive religious organization.



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**“Well, I know that there have been problems in the past, but recently things are really changing. I know it’s going to get better.”**

It’s always the nature of a Christian to be optimistic, to hope for the best, and to believe in the possibility of redemption of any situation or person. Certainly, the grace of God should teach us that there is indeed no situation that, so long as we have life and breath, is completely irremediable. I certainly share these Christian hopes and aspirations.

Somewhere down the line, however, optimism and idealism must have a rendezvous with reality. People in the ICC need to have the same commitment to truth—no matter where it leads them, into or out of the group—that they had when they first joined the ICC. Generally speaking, the ICC has not specifically apologized for any major doctrinal error and/or any widespread abusive practice, and the leaders have consistently demonstrated a disingenuous response to any allegations of wrongdoing on their part. In my own experience, the typical ICC response to allegations of wrongdoing is usually, “Well, those things may have happened in the past, or a few people may have done those things, but we don’t advocate them anymore.” The problem is, the same problems and doctrines and errors continue to be practiced. In one classic statement by Randy McKean (ICC World Sector Leader and brother of Kip McKean) that has been characterized as an “apology” for wrongdoing by the ICC, he stated that “mistakes were made . . . things have been taught . . . things have been written” [in regard to the abusive practices of one-over-one authority in the Boston Movement]. Almost in mid-sentence, however, he goes on to lecture the audience about “their attitude when someone else is in the wrong”! McKean never states his confession in the present tense, active voice (in other words, “I sinned”, but rather “sins were committed”), and never gets specific about who taught the error, who wrote the article, and what specifically was wrong in the first place. What is more, he never states what the new ICC position on authority is. The only strident critique is directed at those who have been wronged or sinned against; they are again put on trial, this time not for their actual wrongdoing, but for their response to the wrongdoing and false teachings of their leaders!

This kind of episode is typical with regard to ICC “corrections” or “admissions” of error—usually vague and unspecified, with promises of change, but woefully lacking in detailed statements or clarified doctrinal positions, etc. Usually the critic comes in for his/her share (whether earned or otherwise) of abuse and character assassination. I think this is due to several reasons, including a lack of any well-thought-out or clearly articulated study of these issues by the leaders of the ICC, as well as a general evasiveness when it comes to admitting any wrong.

“Damage Control” and the appearance of change are the order or business, not real systemic change. For the most part, members are evasive or unaware when it comes to informing potential recruits of the ICC about its problems. This stems from a lack of honesty among the leadership of the ICC in admitting their own historical background, and a steadfast refusal to truly “come clean” and admit that theirs is a group with a rather checkered past. For this reason, most people who become members of the ICC are not exposed to all the information surrounding the organization. It has been my experience that the majority of people, upon receiving both sides of the story regarding the ICC before they make the decision to join, usually opt out of any affiliation with the group. Most people join the group after being invited to “a non-denominational Bible study”, “just a few of us neighbors/students who get together”; in reality they were recruited into a group whose initial invitation was at its core basis fraudulent and deceptive. The group Bible study sessions called “Bible Talks” are neither non-denominational nor informal, but rather are systematically contrived and manipulated into causing the unknowing recruit to think he or she is in an informal setting. In most cases, 90% of the members of the group are members, and many times are aware of the personal life of the recruit or any personal matters he or she might have thought were confidentially discussed with the ICC member who invited the potential recruit into the Bible Talk. In short, the organization starts with lies and deception, is sustained and protected by lies and deception, and ironically continues to exist by charging ex-members and critics of the organization with dishonesty and the publishing of “spiritual pornography.” While every organization and church has its difficulties and drawbacks, the basic flavor of this organization, its basic *ethos*, is one of deceit. Is that a healthy environment for anyone?

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**The question remains – what has really changed about the International Churches of Christ? Its leadership? Its structure? Its relationship with other Christians outside the ICC membership? Its view and treatment of those who leave or who have serious questions about it? What has really changed – foundationally – about the ICC?**

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For these reasons, it is difficult to trust the ICC leadership for either an accurate assessment of the organization’s problems from the past, or in their promises that they are going to change problem areas in the future. ICC members who rely only on their leaders’ version of either past history or current problems need to clearly understand that they are not operating with all the facts. Such a practice goes against biblical admonitions to search all things and to test things against the scriptures. If the leaders were ever being deceitful in their statements toward the ICC membership, there would be no accepted way of ever squaring their statements with any other source or record. Since former leaders of the ICC, parents, other non-members, any religious authorities or scholars, or other persons outside the ICC are not accorded any credibility when it comes to speaking about the problems of the ICC, members are forced to trust their leaders’ version of reality. If the ICC leaders are at the same time corrupt, there is no acceptable mechanism for either knowing about it or correcting the problem. I do not see this present structure as either healthy or unintentional. Are things indeed getting better? There are several questions that immediately come to mind: Better than what? How can one rely on the ICC leaders’ version of either “how things were” or “how things are right now”? If the judgment is based on empirical data (the number of people leaving the ICC, upper-echelon leaders being replaced or resigning, etc.), it would be difficult to assert that things are getting better for the ICC. If the sheer numbers of people who have left the ICC in its history are taken into account (that number I would conservatively estimate as at least 40,000), it is indeed difficult to maintain a cheery outlook. If dramatic, foundationally-altering decisions had been made to radically recast both the structure and

leadership of the ICC into a more biblical model, then such confidence could be justified. The question remains—what has really changed about the ICC? Its leadership? Its structure? Its major doctrines? Its relationship with other Christians outside the ICC? Its view and treatment of those who leave or who have serious questions about it? What has really changed—foundationally—about the ICC?

It takes a greater leap of faith than I am presently capable of making to accept that a group that employs a deceptive historical portrait of the past, a present punctuated by dissension, desertion, and doctrinal departure, maintained and protected by a rigid and insular authoritarian structure that brooks no opposition, will in the future somehow change and evolve into a biblically-structured, doctrinally sound, and emotionally healthy organization. If real change were ever to take place in the ICC, it would have to include the ouster of Kip McKean and a radically restructuring of the entire organization from the top down. Such actions do not appear remotely possible in the foreseeable future.

ICC members who agree that there are problems need to employ the same thought processes that led them into the ICC to lead them out of the organization. Is it right? Is it biblical? Who is the true authority for my life, Jesus and His Word or the ICC's leaders or teachings? Those ICC members who remain in the group "waiting for a change," (as I did) invariably subject themselves to years of disappointment and frustration, hoping against all hope that the kinds of serious changes that need to take place will ever occur. Life is too short, and eternal life in Christ too precious, to hold either hostage to a brutalizing legalism and doctrinal departure that have remained unchecked and uncorrected for years within the ICC.



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**"People like you and Jerry Jones are only speaking out against the ICC for the money. I bet you make a lot of money; isn't it true that those of you former leaders who are involved in exit counseling people out of the ICC have become wealthy because of your stance?"**

This is one of those questions that grieves me to even answer, and I generally have to pray not to lose my patience or temper while answering. Let's consider

the facts. For me to leave the ICC meant that I had to give up my employment with the Boston Church of Christ, my career as a minister (as no church outside the ICC would employ an ICC-trained minister—for some pretty understandable reasons), my education, my home, my ICC friends (most of whom obey the ICC edict not to speak to me or read my letters), and quite nearly my marriage (at one point my wife had been advised by ICC leaders to leave me and take her stand with the ICC; it was one of the very things that made her reconsider her own involvement with the group). My livelihood as an author, a traveling lecturer and teacher, and a scholar were adversely effected, without receiving so much as a dime of any severance pay, insurance coverage, or so much as a simple "thank you" from the organization I had served at great sacrifice for eleven years (as my father commented, "with all the class of an untipped waiter!"). Financially, I had no savings, no investments, and no resources (we had been pressured to donate anything of value to various ICC fund-raising promotions, and had foolishly even donated the one item of any great value to us, my wife's engagement diamond; to this day she has but the wedding band). By making the decision to oppose the ICC, I realized that I was cutting myself off from any future hope of employment in the ICC as a minister or teacher.

At present, I work full-time in the computer and education field in the Washington, D.C. area, at a job that quite frankly was created for me by my father, who had formed a company with my brother fourteen years ago. He hired an ill-prepared and untrained man with few skills in the field—only because I had no place left to go. I hesitate to think where my wife and two children and I would be were it not for the graciousness of my parents.

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**I have a standing offer – I'll compare paychecks and bank accounts with Kip McKean and the ICC leadership anytime.**

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My personal dreams have been radically changed, as my plans to receive a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies have needed to be placed on hold due to the demands of a full-time job. My wife is also working full-time. Mind you, we're not complaining, and are counting our blessings to be out of the ICC, but the claim that "we did this for the money" is patently absurd. I have a standing offer—I'll compare paychecks and bank accounts with Kip McKean and the ICC leadership anytime.

With regard to Dr. Jerry Jones (one of the men most vilified by the ICC leadership, and a former leader in the group), I can personally attest that his character and lifestyle are not that of one “living off” the ICC. Jerry supports his family by itinerant preaching and lecturing, as well as the sales of several books that he has written. I can personally attest to his modest and sacrificial lifestyle, living far below the living standards and income of upper-echelon ICC leaders. The ICC leaders who recklessly hurl such allegations at former leaders like Jerry Jones and me need to be forthcoming about their own financial status first. They need to take a stroll through Kip McKean’s exclusive beachfront neighborhood, or gaze at the lavish penthouse apartment of ICC World Sector Leader Steve Johnson (see Figure 6), before they speak out against any financial profiteering. Many leaders who leave the ICC are threatened financially if they speak out against the organization. Even the meager severance pay that the ICC provides a few former leaders when they are terminated or forced to resign is used as a club to intimidate them into silence about both the way they have been treated and the overall problems in the ICC. Former leaders who speak out against the ICC are in many cases risking everything to take that stance.

The notion that an individual would seek to be compensated for his or her time and expertise in helping others leave the ICC needs to be examined and evaluated. I can personally attest that it often takes days of discussion with an individual, counseling, doing in-depth Bible study, and going through an emotionally wrenching process to not only demonstrate the problems with the ICC, but help the individual redirect his or her spirituality into a more healthy Christian group. It’s not a simple five-minute chat! When one considers the psychological problems inherent with the group, and their practice of phobia indoctrination (“if you leave the group, you’re going to hell”, etc.), as well as all the programmed misinformation directed against former ICC leaders, there is quite a bit to discuss with an individual seeking to leave (or even question) the ICC. If a person devotes hours and in some cases days to this activity, should he not expect compensation? Where does he or she get the funds to put food on the table?

It is true that unscrupulous “exit counselors” exist who prey off the fears and emotions of loved ones having family in the organization. In one instance, I was offered a \$500.00 “finder’s fee” for referring families to an individual who charges \$5000.00 per day of “exit counseling.” Needless to say, I do not support this kind of extortion, and have spoken out against these exorbitant and unethical practices. I am aware that there are unqualified, uneducated, and ill-prepared individuals who pass themselves off as

“experts” in the field, and recommend that families investigate carefully anyone’s qualifications to do this kind of work. Fraud and extortion are wrong no matter who is practicing them.

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Having said this, the criticism by ICC leaders that ex-members are being compensated for their position against the ICC is almost humorous. Where do the ICC leaders derive their financial support? Do they huff such invective at people like me for free? No, they are supported, and quite well, I might add. Who really has the vested financial interest that is being protected? Is it not the present ICC leaders who derive their lifestyle from the contributions of their unknowing flock? In fact, the only secularly-trained counselor of the ICC charges church clients in excess of \$100.00 per hour for his services; are the fees charged for those who are counseling those leaving the ICC really that exorbitant in comparison? None of the ICC’s top-echelon leaders is self-employed in any non-ICC pursuit, and all of them realize that their continued financial support is contingent upon their supporting “the party line.” I know that there are several ICC leaders who privately oppose their own group’s teachings and practices, but their precarious financial position (wives and children to provide for, etc.) makes it impossible for them to consider leaving the ICC.

In short, the charge of financial profiteering lobbed at former leaders of the ICC and those who work full-time as exit counselors can only be answered when both groups are willing to lay out all the financial records on the table for all to see. I am ready and willing to “open up my books”; where are the records of the ICC leaders? Funny, but the old proverb about “those who live in glass houses” comes to my mind.



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**“Well, I guess that you and other former ICC leaders just couldn't ‘hack’ the lifestyle of a true disciple, the cutting edge mentality that is necessary to survive in the ICC. That’s the real reason why you left.”**

I took part in a radio talk show a few years ago when an ICC leader leveled this charge, and I have often heard it applied to others who have left the ICC. Since members are prohibited from communicating with excommunicated members such as myself, the ICC leadership is free to give just about any reason to their members about why someone left. Such statements are usually made by those who are completely unaware of the immense sacrifices made by ICC leaders who decide to leave the organization. In addition to the financial hardship and the emotional hardship of being separated from close friends, people who leave the ICC know what it means to be slandered, ostracized, and rejected because of their spiritual convictions. They have decided to leave a legalistic shell of a religion for a truer Christianity, whatever the personal cost. They remind me far more of Jesus than the safe and comfortable ICC leaders who criticize them.

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Personally, it is difficult to describe just how much it hurts to be misunderstood, to have your motives questioned, your character assailed, and your family

maligned by those who once claimed life-long friendship, gratitude, and allegiance to you. The price for the stance I have taken is quite costly in every area. Truly, it would have been at times much easier, in a sense, not to ever oppose or leave the ICC. It is precisely because I am a disciple of Christ, not of a corrupted and legalistic religious system, that I have had to make this decision. Those who glibly assert that mine has been the easier course have never entered upon it.

Those who have opposed or left the ICC know far too well the personal price they have paid to ever equate their decision as some sort of abandonment of Christ’s call to discipleship. Christ’s same call to discipleship now calls me to “bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty for the captives, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” I know of no other group that consistently produces more people in need of mended hearts, freed souls and consciences, and lives lived by grace, not law, than the ICC.

In addition to my responsibility to lead both myself and my family to heaven, I endeavor to try to bring as many others with me as possible. I regularly teach and preach in my local church, and try to project a Christian example at work and in my neighborhood. Although I don’t feel the need to justify myself in the eyes of the ICC or anyone else, most people who know me and observe my life see it as consistent with that of a Christian.



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**“I’m staying with the ICC because there are no real churches that are ‘on fire’ evangelistically, or are as committed in their membership, as the ICC. In short, there is no viable alternative to the ICC.”**

This statement is usually made by someone who realizes that there are serious problems within the ICC. Unfortunately, the constant bombardment that members receive inside the organization has caused the person making this kind of statement to conclude that there are virtually no acceptable Christian groups outside the borders of the ICC.

Think about this observation. Did this mean that before the ICC came along (in either its Crossroads form—the early 1970’s—or the Boston incarnation—beginning in 1979), there were no Christian groups in the world? Do we really believe this? This observation needs to be discussed in detail, for it reveals a lot of what the ICC leadership has

conditioned their members to think. They have so constantly inveighed against other churches, particularly the mainstream Churches of Christ (from which founders Chuck Lucas, Kip McKean, and many of the older ICC leadership originally came), they have convinced their membership in large part that there is virtually no spiritual life outside the ICC membership.

The son of an elder in the San Diego chapter of the ICC decided to leave the group and attend a mainstream Church of Christ congregation in the San Diego area. Initially, the elder stated to the congregation that his son's decision was acceptable, and that he thought his son "was still a Christian." If the ICC was consistent in their statements to the media and concerned parents of ICC members that "we don't believe that we're the only Christians," this stance would be the only rational one to take. The decision of the elder's son, however, was not interpreted in the same manner by Kip McKean and the ICC leadership, and illustrates the group's candid assessment of other churches or Christian groups. The elder in San Diego was summarily removed from the San Diego leadership (in spite of the fact that he had been one of the founding members of the congregation), and he and his wife were forced to relocate out of town (in spite of the fact that the man was 65 years old, and his children—and grandchildren—all live in the San Diego area!). This incident illustrates just how vitriolic the ICC stands against any and all churches or Christian groups. Although when cornered in a discussion, an ICC leader or spokesperson may state "well, we don't believe that we're the only group, the only ones saved, etc.," in reality their actions betray their true thoughts—they firmly believe that they are the only group that is going to heaven, and once you leave the ICC, you are headed for certain and eternal damnation.

For this reason alone, I consider membership in the ICC to be spiritually harmful and dangerous. They are proclaiming an exclusivity that goes far beyond the bounds of accepted orthodox Christian doctrine. What is more, the internal control structures of the ICC keep the general membership from learning about the true problems in the group. Hence, the frame of reference that most members have is generally not an accurate one for evaluating whether another group may or may not be Christian in the first place.

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The ICC has done a remarkable job at keeping their membership unaware of the structural problems inherent in the group. Cosmetically, most people are fooled by the veneer of excitement, the fiery preaching, enthusiastic singing, and overall level of adrenaline, and make the mistake of equating these elements as the crucial identifying marks of a New Testament congregation. Unfortunately, these aspects of the ICC dull members from ever considering whether below the surface there are more severe problems.

The ICC has been compared to a dysfunctional family, and in many aspects, the comparison is a valid one. Although many dysfunctional families have serious problems of abuse and/or addiction, the members of the family have become adept at masking these problems from outsiders and being able to put a veneer of respectability over their dysfunctionality. Such is the case with the ICC. Hence, members who are unaware of the serious doctrinal and ethical problems in the group are then forced to compare their "perfection" with the magnified problems "out there in the denominational world." In sermon after sermon, the ICC members are bombarded with accusations that all the other churches outside the ICC are dead, that the only hope for the gospel to spread in the 21st century will be through the efforts of the ICC, etc. Having no valid basis for comparison, the ICC member is phobically indoctrinated into thinking that if he or she leaves the ICC, he or she is leaving God.

The ICC claims to be the perfect church, but such a reality is belied even in the New Testament. There were no perfect churches then (we would not even have most of the New Testament epistles were it not for the glaring imperfections in both structure and practice in the New Testament-era congregations), and there are no perfect churches in our present day. In the cases of other churches, errors and omissions are more openly recognized and accepted, and members realize that they are but sinners saved by grace. They are more open about their imperfections, and in that manner can work to improve or change. This is not to assert that all religious groups are the same, or that Christian doctrine is of little consequence, but the basic observation in this area is that I would rather be a part of a group that is honestly facing its weaknesses than one who is running from them and denying them. The neurosis of the ICC leadership, its practices and teachings, make it a far more dangerous group in which to live as a Christian than a group which may not have vibrant singing, hand-clapping, or frenetic preaching.



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**“I’m thinking about leaving the group, but I don't know how to say good-bye, and I’m afraid. I want to do things right, even if I’m going to leave. What are your suggestions?”**

Whenever an ICC member calls me, I know that he or she has already been doing quite a bit of thinking and evaluating. After hearing that virtually all doubting or questioning of the group or its leadership is attributable to Satan, and after hearing “horror stories” about what happens to individuals who leave the ICC, it is understandable that there is some “fear and trembling” associated with taking the first steps to learn the true picture of the ICC organization. In every conversation with a current ICC member, I endeavor to commend their courage, teach them that God wants them to know the truth, and that they can be confident in the truth, regardless of where it might lead them.

Being a former leader is helpful at this point, for I know the methodologies used (and Bible verses misused) by the group to enforce their rigid boundary control over their members. Fortunately, the Bible itself teaches a very healthy skepticism and self-protection toward all things religious, even claims of spiritual teachers or leaders who assert they are following the Christian religion. A few that come to mind immediately are the following:

Test everything. Hold on to the good. (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1)

These and other Bible verses can be used to help the ICC member realize that it is not sinful to question the ICC organization or its teachings; indeed, it is a very noble and commendable endeavor, and they should be encouraged for having the spirituality to ask such questions. Often, ICC members call me despite their being warned by ICC leaders that I am an evil person. I have been called all manner of things by both leaders and ICC members, and it usually doesn’t bother me; the fact that someone would telephone or write in spite of this barrage of misinformation is again commendable. I always try to encourage this healthy inquisitiveness and willingness to at least listen to “the other side of the story.” I always try to share with them a section of the biblical book of Proverbs, where in Chapter 18, verse 17, the following is written:

The first to present his case seems right, until another comes forward and questions him. The ICC has criticized its detractors, then forbade its own members the opportunity to hear the other side of the story. In one case during my years on the Boston ICC staff, I was told by an elder in the Boston ICC chapter that the “reason” why one ex-member was objecting to the group was due to fact that “he’s just a homosexual—and so’s his mom.” After I left the ICC, I had the opportunity to speak with this individual—and his mom—and found out that the Boston elder’s assessment was completely incorrect. These comments and critical assessments of ex-members by present ICC leaders serve only one purpose—to keep ICC members in the dark about the problems in the organization.

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Here are the suggestions that I give to ICC members who are thinking about leaving the ICC:

**1) Be courageous and thorough in your search for the truth.** I believe that the God of the Bible is a God of truth and love. Jesus himself said “You shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Have the courage to listen to all sides of the discussion. Take the time necessary to investigate, to evaluate, and to consider all the relevant information (see the enclosed Bibliography in chapter 7 for helpful information). Have the attitude to the people in the ancient New Testament city of Berea, who in Acts 17 are commended for both their open-mindedness and their thorough evaluation of a spiritual message: **Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true (Acts 17:11)**

It is interesting that the ICC itself uses this verse to justify potential members re-evaluating their current religious affiliation so they can join the ICC; it is strange that the same critical evaluation is then suppressed in the name of “loyalty” and “single-mindedness” once that individual joins the ICC organization. In other words, “it’s all right to question, as long as it happens before you join the group.”

**2) Be willing to talk to others who have left.** When I was considering leaving the ICC in 1991, I made the oft-repeated mistake of thinking I was the only person who had ever considered leaving. Such a thought must be considered foolish to those outside the group (after all, over 40,000 people have left the organization over the years!), but one should remember the absolute nature of the information control exercised by the ICC organization. Members are made to feel guilty if they speak to a former member who has left, and they are told all manner of evil about those who have left, particularly former ICC leaders. I made the mistake, for a few months, of believing all the evil and wicked things about the people who had left the ICC, and that such things would happen to me as well. Such a condition is called *phobia indoctrination*—an irrational fear is instilled in the ICC member that evil will befall any attempt to leave the organization. In my own case, I feared for my marriage; at times, I feared for my own sanity. It was not a comfortable position to be in—I felt that there was virtually no one who could understand what I was going through. I could not speak candidly to any other ICC members (including my wife), for I knew all too well that they would “turn me in” to the other leaders. I had unfortunately also cut off my former non-ICC friends, family, and other sources of good counsel that I could have sought out, following the ICC dictates to shun all non-ICC sources of counsel and information. What was I to do?

It was a tremendous relief to meet and speak with individuals who had previously left the ICC. Through support groups, former leaders’ writings, and other means available, I started to learn a completely different set of facts about the ICC. These people were not the evil and perverted sinners that had been described to me by the ICC leaders; in fact, many of them showed me a spirit of understanding and gentleness completely alien to my experiences with ICC leaders and counselors. It was tremendously encouraging to see that they had left the group and yet still managed to have good families, healthy self-images, and in many cases had even deepened in their spirituality. I had been told for years that “if you leave the Movement, you leave God;” imagine the profound sense of relief in meeting hundreds of people who had managed to break free of the ICC and still retain their spirituality. I felt tremendously validated in my own hunches and criticisms of the ICC—I wasn’t the only person who had seen these problems. I also

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learned a great deal about the practices of the ICC in other areas, such that I could no longer attribute the abusive practices to simply an isolated incident or an isolated leader or two. I would never have had the courage to take a stand against the ICC organization had I not known of the hundreds and thousands of people who have left before I did, many for the same reasons.

It’s very difficult to walk away from the ICC unaided, due to the rigid information control and coercive intimidation practiced by the ICC. I always recommend taking advantage of the opportunity to communicate with others who have been through similar circumstances and have “made it out.” In many larger cities, support groups exist for parents who have loved ones in the ICC, or for those who are thinking of leaving—all communication is handled in strictest confidence. Many people have given our phone number to call, and in many cases we are able to arrange some face-to-face meetings with ex-members in cities throughout the world.

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**Genuine Christianity has always been willing to meet openly in the public marketplace to discuss, debate, and defend its merits; why is the ICC so fearful of that encounter?**

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ICC members need to always remember the following observation: if the ICC *is* the true church, it won’t be going anywhere, and a questioning member can always re-join it after a thorough investigation. Genuine Christianity has always been willing to meet openly in the public marketplace to discuss, debate, and defend its merits; why is the ICC so fearful of that encounter? Could they be hiding something from me? If this group is so good and so right, why won’t they allow me the time and opportunity to discuss with

people who might have a differing opinion? If the group is so weak that it cannot stand such scrutiny, perhaps it might not be as Christian as I think it is. Whatever the case, my investigation is not going to cause it to have any problems—it might only reveal problems that are already there of which I was previously unaware.

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**Since there is virtually no one who has ever been allowed to leave the ICC with the permission and approval of the ICC leaders, why do people think that the manner in which they leave the ICC is so important?**

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3). **Realize at the outset that there is never a “right time” or a “right way” to leave the ICC.** There is a classic “Catch-22” mentality—they are “The Movement of God,” so they can’t be wrong. Even if they are wrong, you still can’t leave, because there are no other “movements” that you can join! Since there is virtually no one who has ever been allowed to leave the ICC with the permission and approval of the ICC leaders, why do people think that the manner in which they leave the ICC is so important? It seems silly, but many people (myself having been one of them) think that “if I do things the right way—ask my questions in just the right manner, show the right spirit, try to clearly portray the nature of the problems as best I can, somehow the leaders will stop this machine and completely change it.” It seems silly, but many ICC members persist in this notion. This myth dies eventually, but it dies a slow death—*there is simply no way to win when you play by the ICC’s rules.* I recall to this day the words of Kip McKean, spoken during a staff meeting in which he was talking about people who had left the ICC. He cited the rock song “Hotel California” by The Eagles, a lyric of which reads, “You can check out any time you like/But you can never leave.” Such is truly the case in the ICC, and those trying to leave it and preserve some measure of civility and communication are in for a surprise.

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**It seems silly, but many ICC members persist in this notion. This myth dies eventually, but it dies a slow death—there is simply no way to win when you play by the ICC’s rules.**

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In most cases, a simple and concise telephone call to the leader of the local ICC group is sufficient to communicate one’s decision to leave. It’s not really anyone’s business why somebody decides to leave the ICC, but most ICC members feel a duty to at least let someone know they are leaving. A simple phone call or letter to the leader is sufficient, and it should contain the following:

*A clear and unequivocal decision to sever all further contact with the ICC.* It is important that a certain firmness and settledness of purpose be communicated; the ICC will pounce upon any vacillation and attempt to re-recruit the member all over again;

*If a reason has to be given, it can be as simple as a statement to the effect that “there are practices and teachings of this group that I find objectionable. I will find another place to develop my spiritual life other than the ICC.”* Although I feel that this statement does not need to be given, it can help the ICC member who wants to make a break with the group without “slipping out the back.” In many cases, I simply advise the individual to move out (I suggest that one take all possessions and items of value that belong to him when he moves out of a living situation with other ICC members, for they are not always there when one returns to claim them). In other words, move out first, explain later. A letter written from home (or from a friend’s house) can be more than sufficient communication. After all, they have not exactly been complete and thorough in their communication with their own members; the ex-ICC member generally comes to realize that there is very little owed to the organization in matters of explanations.

*A clear “cease and desist” statement, given in an unambiguous and certifiable manner, that the individual leaving the ICC wants no further contact.* It is unfortunate and I run the risk of being misunderstood by hazarding this observation, but in my experience the only language that the ICC leadership appears to understand is language that is legally binding. A statement to the effect that “I will consider any and all attempts by you or anyone else in your organization to contact or otherwise

communicate with me after this point harassment, and actionable in the courts of our state” has a way of reducing the religious rhetoric very quickly. The ICC has been sued too many times to realize that it simply cannot afford to keep harassing its former members, and will simply redirect its energies at seeking out other uninformed people to recruit to the organization. Fortunately, the strong anti-stalking and harassment laws that have recently been enacted in many states in the United States can be applied in these circumstances. What is important to note is that the members wishing to leave the group must clearly communicate those wishes—having everything on paper brings an amazing clarity to matters that the ICC may wish to interpret in another fashion. Other simple things like changing one’s phone number, screening telephone calls, or simply moving to a different living situation can also help. Parents and other family members can also help perform this “gatekeeping” function.

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*Refuse any and all attempts to meet privately with any ICC members.* Invariably, when an ICC member is having doubts about the group and is thinking about leaving, the ICC group goes into overtime to try to stop that person from leaving. Meetings are planned, secrets sins about the individual are shared with people in the “chain of command,” and a series of meetings are planned whereby the reluctant member can be “broken” and brought back into the organization. These meetings are planned without the informed consent of the person thinking about leaving, often with several leaders simply showing up at an individual’s apartment or dorm room—they have even showed up at a person’s place of employment, waiting for him to get off!

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Since there is no way to adequately defend yourself in a “breaking session,” *don’t get into one*—simply walk away from this kind of emotional and psychological “ambush.” Refuse to meet with any ICC leader unless they will allow you to have someone outside the group accompany you—an ex-leader or counselor would be a good suggestion. In virtually every case, the ICC will refuse such a meeting. Since they do not have the courage to meet with their critics, don’t allow them the opportunity to harass, intimidate, or threaten you. Like all schoolyard bullies, they will flee anything that resembles a fair fight.

Many ICC members would like to “take a vacation” from the ICC for a few weeks or months so as to assess their involvement and make an objective decision. This desire is commendable, but unfortunately is not permitted by the ICC hierarchy. It is far better to simply sever all ties with the ICC. If a thorough investigation of the organization proves that it indeed is “the one true church” in the world, led by ethical and accountable leaders, it will always be there to return to and rejoin. Knowing that virtually anyone who looks at the ICC objectively from a critical distance usually leaves the group, the ICC leaders will not “allow” the individual that freedom, and will attempt to cut off any and all information to the ICC member. Attempts to “take a break” from the ICC are met with “breaking sessions” and intimidation by ICC disciplers and leaders.

In short, there is no “right” way to ever leave the ICC, just as there is never a valid reason for ever wanting to leave the group in the first place. When one realizes that the same rationale was used to dissuade people from leaving Jim Jones’ People’s Temple and David Koresh’s Branch Davidians, it can now become rationale to cause an ICC member to indeed leave the group—in whatever manner he or she wants to leave. “Simply leave the ICC” would be my advice; time will show it to be one of the best decisions you’ve ever made.



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## **“I have a loved one in the ICC. Is there anything I can do?”**

The short answer is simple—there is plenty you can do, but it can be either for good or for harm. I have seen many parents or spouses of ICC members react in a manner that only reinforces the hold that the ICC has on the member in question. It is vitally important to keep in mind some time-tested “do’s” and “don’t’s” in this area:

**Don’t React Emotionally.** The worst possible reaction that many families can have is unfortunately the one that many families do make, that of the emotional outburst and confrontation. Parents get alarmed (quite understandably) but make the mistake of thinking that a vitriolic outburst will be sufficient to carry the argument. Usually a family member will fly into a rage and exclaim, “Oh my God, you’re in a cult, and you’re all going to die like they did at Waco!” Such emotions and fears may need to be fully expressed, but at this juncture not directly to the ICC member!

The ICC has already prepared its members for this kind of parental response, so it usually accomplishes little good. In fact, by unwittingly helping to fulfill a “prediction” made by the ICC (“Your parents/spouse/etc. won’t understand . . . they will probably say we’re a cult or something silly like that”), an emotional reaction by family or friends only reinforces the authority of the ICC in the eyes of the member. Such outbursts only play into the strength of the ICC, and reinforce their authority and influence over a loved one who is in the ICC. In fact, this is precisely what the ICC wants to happen—to have the very individuals who could cause the ICC member to doubt the ICC, or to reconsider membership, be removed from the picture or diminished as a source of accurate and dispassionate information about the ICC. As the love of a close family member is one of the crucial elements in bringing someone out of the ICC, the organization does all it can to thwart or minimize that influence. It is always important to weigh the urge to emotionally react to a loved one’s involvement with the ICC with this understanding in mind.

In no other relationship are the implications of this emotional confrontation more significant than in the parent-child relationship. As the ICC does extensive recruiting on college campuses, the period of exposure to ICC recruitment also corresponds to one of the most difficult periods in all parent-child relationships—late adolescence and early adulthood. There is already enough stress on a healthy parent-child relationship during this time of adjustment as the child is moving away from home, reorienting

values to new-found freedoms, etc.; imagine adding to this mix the demands and imperious claims of the ICC organization. It is not a healthy mixture by any interpretation; care must be used in relating to the ICC member so as not to break what may already be strained lines of communication.

At times a parent may conclude that their child’s ICC involvement is simply due to “Junior finding himself,” a normal rite-of-passage into adulthood. In this case, the parent will stifle normal urges toward protection and care so as to allow the child to “learn” one of life’s important lessons—that “if it’s too good to be true, it’s usually neither good nor true.” The problem with this “hands-off” approach is that much damage can occur to the psyche, self-esteem, financial resources, and academic or employment record of the child during this “learning” period. In other words, the lessons are too painful to allow them to continue, and are ultimately avoidable. Often the parent is the last to see the lasting emotional damage (particularly if there is a strained relationship in the first place) that the ICC can have on a child.

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**It is important not to confuse tolerance with destructive religious behaviors; the issues with the ICC must always be framed in terms of unacceptable or harmful behavior, not unacceptable beliefs.**

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At other times, a loved one may defend the child’s involvement in the ICC by invoking the freedoms and religious liberties vouchsafed by the U.S. Constitution or the Bill of Rights. Confusing freedom of belief with license for outrageous or harmful behavior, however, is a completely different matter. I remember the words I used in recent legislative testimony when questioned in this area—*the issue is not belief, it’s behavior*. I would never want to proscribe anyone’s free exercise of religious belief. I would further argue that having the informed consent of all its members is a mark of a healthy religious organization. Freedom is the core value that I emphasize—freedom to think, to question, to oppose religious tyranny. Freedom of information, freedom of communication, freedom of thought and expression—these are the freedoms that any religious organization or affiliation should respect and nurture. If the ICC does not respect these core freedoms, then it is simply not a healthy religious environment. It is important not to confuse tolerance with destructive

religious behaviors; the issues with the ICC must always be framed in terms of unacceptable or harmful behavior, not unacceptable beliefs. In this manner, the behaviors of the cult are being evaluated, not the truth claims of any religious organization. Again, avoid any emotional confrontation—it only plays into the defensiveness and anti-family biases of the ICC. A better stance to adopt vis-à-vis a loved one's involvement in the ICC is to play the part of the casually interested family member. As long as the ICC member and his/her "discipler" perceives you as a potential convert and not a threat to the group, access and communication will not be cut off.

**Do Respond With Research.** The two primary motivations that lead an individual out of the ICC are 1) the innate desire to align one's actions with perceived truth; and 2) the love of a close friend or family member. Each factor is vitally important; love cannot substitute for factual information, and the truth is always a poor substitute for affection and loving concern. If you are a family member or friend of an ICC member, your bond of friendship must be augmented by information so that you can get "up to speed" on the ICC. The following works are essential to that end:

**General Information:** In addition to the media articles and other materials in this work, I recommend watching the *ICC Video Reports* Video presentation (VHS format). Available through <http://www.iccinvestigation.com/media.htm>, it features 5 recent news programs covering the ICC. A 2-hour introduction that can be used by individuals, groups or families, it's a "must-see" for obtaining a visual perspective of the ICC and its impact on individuals and their families. Relevant works by ex-members include Sue Condon's *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Both are first-person accounts that detail a portrait of life at the upper-echelon of the ICC. Sue Condon's work gives an additional insight into missionary life outside the U.S. My wife's testimony is a measured and intentionally restrained view written by a member of 16 years' experience in both the Crossroads and Boston headquarters, and details in a brief and highly readable form the history of one woman's membership and eventual leaving the organization. Because of its less strident and non-argumentative tone, it can be used effectively as a "first read" for ICC members who decide to examine "the other side" (in this setting, it is quite important not to supply information that is caustic or overly critical of every aspect of the ICC, as this might discourage further reading and study).

**The Biblical Issues.** Dr. Jerry Jones served as an evangelist and elder for the Boston Church of Christ for four years. Brought to Boston as a scholar, his responsibility was to lead the organization and train

its future leaders. As is the case with others having outside theological training, Jones raised serious objections to the methodologies and doctrines of the ICC. Because of his eventual opposition to the teaching and practices of the ICC, Jones was banned from the ICC, a process called "marking." He has chronicled the doctrinal deviations and abusive practices and teachings of the ICC since 1987 in three chronically-ordered works entitled *What Does The Boston Movement Teach?* (volumes 1-3, coming soon to REVEAL.org). The works are a compendium of statements, articles, and other publications of the ICC, along with a comparison of those teachings with more orthodox biblical teaching. In some cases the internal inconsistencies within the ICC's own teaching are glaringly apparent. As most ICC members transit out of the organization first by struggling with the biblical teachings of the group, these works are valuable in detailing where the ICC is in error compared with the biblical texts. Many statements from other ex-ICC members and leaders are also included in Jones' three works, as well as helpful studies for recovery.

*Churches that Abuse* by Dr. Ronald Enroth details the phenomenon of abusive churches that practice cultlike behaviors. Specifically mentioning the ICC in this regard, Enroth also details several other ICC-like organizations, giving the reader (particularly the ICC member) a sense that the ICC organization is not as unique in doctrine or practice as it claims to be. The ICC member reading this work is usually shocked to recognize that there are other "one true churches" around the world, and the similarity between the abusive treatment and heretical teachings of these other organizations with the ICC usually stimulates further study. Other helpful works addressing the biblical and spiritual aspects of the ICC are listed in the Bibliography in Chapter 7.

**The Psychological Issues.** Of all the sources for information about cults, mind control, abusive religious groups, and helping others to leave these organizations, Steve Hassan's *Combating Cult Mind Control* is by far the best work I have read. Hassan, an ex-member of the Unification Church (the "Moonies") details the cultlike aspects of groups like the ICC. Helpful subjects addressed include the phenomenon of cults today, understanding the components of mind control, exit counseling, and strategies for recovery. Having worked with Steve in several areas relating to the ICC, I have found his writing, insights, and assistance—both written and personal—invaluable. There are many books on cults in print today, but none is more valuable than Steve Hassan's.

Another recent offering that is very helpful is Dr. Paul Martin's *Cult-Proofing Your Kids*. Aimed at a

more preventive stance vis-à-vis cults and coercive religious groups, Martin (director of the Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center in Ohio, a counseling center for former cult members) directs his study toward parents whose children are either in a cult or who may be vulnerable to cult recruitment. Helpful chapters are included that assist in identifying cult-like “fringe” churches, cult-proofing schools and universities, and helping children recover from the cult experience.

As I have previously mentioned, it is crucial that one gain as complete an insight as possible into the ICC. Cult studies and psychological journals seldom address the spiritual issues and biblical questions raised in dealing with the ICC. In some sources, a decidedly anti-spiritual or anti-faith position is adopted that reduces the credibility of such sources when read by the ICC member, or in addressing some of the reasons for the spiritual discontent that led to the individual becoming attracted to the ICC ideology in the first place. Often, such clinical approaches to the ICC and other cults should be the last books consulted by the inquisitive ICC member, as they do not adequately describe the biblical problems with the ICC clearly and thus may be quickly dismissed by the ICC member.

On the other hand, merely studying the Bible cannot give an “insider’s view” of the corrupted and abusive behaviors associated with the ICC; for this reason, ex-member’s testimonials (either written or on videotape or, best yet, in person) are also an essential part of the matrix of information that must be provided to both parents and the ICC member. Only by combining the biblical, ethical, and psychological descriptions of the ICC in one’s research will a complete and detailed portrait of the ICC be generated. So get ready to read, be prepared to invest in the resources that will be necessary to arm yourself with one of the most important weapons in freeing your loved one from this group—accurate and insightful information.

**Don’t Retreat in Despair.** When a parent realizes the extent of involvement that their son or daughter has with the ICC, and begins to understand the true nature of “this new church” their loved one has joined, it is quite easy to become emotionally overwhelmed. Like the cult member thinking of leaving who imagines that he or she is the first person to ever contemplate such an act, the non-member parent or sibling can feel equally isolated. When one adds to this mix the often overly-sensationalized portrayal of cults by mainstream media of our day, the emotions can indeed run high (In one case, a writer wanted me to agree that “there is no difference between the ICC and the Waco, Texas cult of David Koresh’s Branch Davidians;” when I protested that

there were both similarities yet significant differences, he dismissed my analysis, presumably because his story would not be as “exciting” without the too-easy link). In some cases, ex-members and anti-cult exit counselors have exaggerated the damage done by the ICC, presumably with an eye to

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**Family members with loved ones in the ICC should not despair, but rather become informed, aware, and prepared to address the ICC’s impact and influence on their child or spouse. In three years’ worth of ministry and counseling to these families and to thousands of ICC members, I remain very optimistic that the requisite tools are available to help individuals out of this destructive organization.**

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profit from the parents’ fear of the ICC. It is a sad reality that getting an objective assessment of the ICC is a difficult task—and there are often financial objectives lurking behind every position—families seeking to learn more about the ICC are far safer by consulting a wide variety of sources.

On a note of encouragement, several things need to be kept in mind: the ICC is **not** Jonestown, Guyana, or Waco, Texas, in the sense that they are in imminent danger of becoming destructively mass suicidal. In my opinion and based on my own observations, Kip McKean’s behavior is personally troubling and disturbing to me, but as yet does not evidence the same psychotic destructiveness of a Jim Jones or David Koresh. Although there are troubling aspects of the ICC’s control and physical relocation of its members (ICC members who are in smaller “feeder churches” are often shipped in groups off to the Los Angeles headquarters, especially to buttress their membership and aid in recruiting), there is as yet not the insular and geographically isolated structural component of the People’s Temple organization in the present-day ICC. It is healthy that the ICC is still attempting to recruit members out of the “sinful world;” if and when this should cease (or if the ICC leadership would conclude that “all the

elect are chosen and now a part of us”), there would be greater cause for alarm.

More heartening is the simple fact that over 40,000 people have left this organization (exact records are kept by the ICC but understandably are not made known to the general membership), with many recovering completely from their ICC experience. The average duration of membership in the ICC is slightly over 4 years (as I’ve said in other contexts, “the more you learn about the Bible, and the more you learn about what it really means to be an ICC member, the more likely you are to leave the ICC”). There are many cases of individual ICC members simply deciding, without any additional assistance or outside prompting, to leave the ICC. In other cases, merely informing the ICC member (usually as a new recruit) that there is “another side to the story” of the ICC prompts the ICC member’s own curiosity, and providing the inquisitive member the adequate materials for self-study is all that is necessary. For ICC members who are in this type of self-study, getting in contact with ex-members for discussions (in person or on the telephone) is helpful during their transition out of the organization.

Family members with loved ones in the ICC should not despair, but rather become informed, aware, and prepared to address the ICC’s impact and influence on their child or spouse. In three years’ worth of ministry and counseling to these families and to thousands of ICC members, I remain very optimistic that the requisite tools are available to help individuals out of this destructive organization. There are also experienced and ethical guides who are able to help in that transition. For many parents, networking through organizations like the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) with other parents of ICC members is tremendously valuable and affirming. Hearing others’ stories (of both success and failure) is validating and encouraging, and availing oneself of the often substantial resources in your own community is one of the best ways to quickly “come up to speed” on understanding the ICC.

**Do Determine A Detailed Course of Action.** In the three years since I’ve been out of the ICC, my wife and I have helped hundreds of individuals leave the organization. Working as paid counselors, we have assisted families in getting their children or spouses out of the ICC. In virtually every case where an ICC member was willing to speak with me or my wife, the ICC member has made the decision to leave the organization. I have had the opportunity to speak with hundreds of current and former ICC members, their parents and loved ones, and have seen the effects of a variety of intervention strategies used to

attempt to bring someone out of the ICC. I have seen wonderful success stories and abysmal failures. Unfortunately, I have also met families who have spent thousands of dollars on untrained and self-designated “exit counselors” whose only qualifications appears to be their proximity to an anxious (and wealthy) parent of an ICC member. I have also seen the damage that coercive strategies such as abduction and kidnapping and other abusive “counseling” can have on the family of an ICC member, in some cases leading to complete estrangement and alienation. In one instance, a parent from Arizona called me and stated that a leading counselor “only does forcibles” in the case of the ICC. Such a strategy is simply an admission that the counselor does not know what he or she is talking about, and is ill-equipped to perform a successful (and non-coercive) intervention or counseling. It is sad to see such counselors adopt the same tired rationale for getting people out of the organization that the ICC used to recruit them in—their end justifies their illegal means. This is wrong, wrong, wrong! From a purely pragmatic standpoint, it simply does not work, either.

On the other hand, I know what works. I have seen far too many successful interventions to accept some self-styled “exit counselors,” who can only boast of a 30-40% success rate. There is a wide variety of strategies that can be used in helping an ICC member leave the group. Among them are the following:

**1) Do Nothing At All.** In some cases, the ICC member will lead himself or herself out of the group with any other intervention at all. Parents can supply information and assist with other resources as their child seeks guidance, but the real work is initiated and carried out by the ICC member. The advantages to this methodology is that it is the least intrusive, least expensive, and more family-centered methodology possible. If the latent thought processes and ability to objectively analyze or question have not been thoroughly suppressed by the ICC, this methodology has a fair chance of working. The disadvantages are obvious—the longer an individual is affiliated with the ICC, the greater the chance of psychological, marital, financial, academic, and spiritual damage occurring.

**2) The Family-Assisted Intervention.** Midway between a complete exit-counseling intervention and doing nothing at all (or hoping for the initiative of the ICC member), assisted counseling has been a helpful methodology in getting ICC members out of the cult. Essentially, the procedure involves getting the ICC member together with a family member who shares the closest emotional bond (spouse, sibling, parent, etc.), and a gentle yet structured confrontation ensues, gently led by the family member. It is

important that such logistical matters like a controlled setting, limiting access by other ICC members, and staging the intervention preferably in your home or another location are all significant details that should be arranged. The confrontation is initiated with a demonstration of affection and concern, a statement of respect for the autonomy of the ICC member, and a simply request to look at “more information” about the ICC. It should not be a 15-to-one confrontation (unfortunately this scenario dies a slow death, made popular by other intervention/recovery movements) filled with emotional outbursts of “see how much you’ve hurt your mother and me,” but rather a simple request from a trusted loved one to look at some more information for a period of time, and then to make an informed decision about staying in the ICC. In no manner should there be coercion, but rather, let the ICC member know that at the end of the period of research they will have the freedom to make their own mind up about their continued membership in the ICC. This setting and process defeats the phobia created by ICC leaders about “exit counselors” and abductions and forcible tactics; rather, who would fear a simple protracted analysis of something like one’s religion? After all, if the ICC is a Christian organization, they would welcome and encourage such an analysis. There will always be an opportunity to return to the group after one’s study, so what is there to lose? (there are a host of other “conversation-starters” that can be used to facilitate the discussion).

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**The kidnapping of anyone is illegal, unethical, and (from a purely pragmatic standpoint) simply not effective in seeking to lead them out of the ICC. If such is the counsel you have received concerning your loved one, my advice is to seek new counsel.**

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Upon agreement with the ICC member to study the issues, a carefully-planned presentation of the relevant biblical, ethical, and psychological information ensues. Family members provide the reading material, audio and video presentations, and also serve to limit outside distractions or interference by the ICC during the few days spent in this study. A recent 3-hour video presentation made by myself and Dr. Ron Enroth has been prepared for just such a setting. Coupled with the additional materials supplied, there is more than enough evidence--biblically, ethically, and psychologically--to convince

a person willing to at least listen and view the materials that there are compelling reasons to not be in the ICC. At critical junctures (or in the case of a setback), the telephone numbers and address of ex-leaders and local ex-members are available (in certain cities, there are even support groups where questions from current ICC members are answered) to the ICC member. In this assisted-intervention process, the ICC member is gently guided out of the organization by another person he/she already trusts. I have worked with families and provided the necessary materials and contacts to assist them as they lead their sons and daughters out of the ICC. In some cases, just a few hours on the telephone with an ICC member is all I need to encourage the process already initiated by the parents or spouse, or I can help out during a period of difficulty, questioning, or intransigence. Discussing follow-up and recovery issues is also vital following the intervention by the family.

The advantages of this methodology are again the fact that it is less intrusive than a stranger confronting the ICC member. In addition to limiting outside contact at the onset of the intervention, this method is one of the less expensive methods of intervening. Parents should expect to spend some funds for materials or to compensate an ex-member for his/her time spent discussing the ICC, but the overall costs are minimal. The disadvantages in this methodology relate to the level of communication already present (or lacking) within the family structure. If separation, dysfunctionality, or other stress on the familial relationships have rendered normal channels of communications unworkable, there will be difficulty creating them for this type of intervention. In the case of an ICC member with a long-term history of involvement in the organization, there may have already been a cessation of communication with family or other close friends. Additionally, family members may feel awkward or unqualified in a discussion of spiritual values, or in defining the biblical points of doctrine that are in error with the ICC, or simply may not be sufficiently respected by the ICC member to have credibility in the intervention. While the gospels record Jesus Christ as saying “a prophet has no honor in his home,” in the case of the ICC, the converse is true, as the ICC member, assuming his/her exclusivist role, often gives little “honor” to family members wishing to discuss religious matters.

**3) Non-Coercive Christian Exit Counseling.** I again wish to stress the non-coercive nature of this process, in contrast to the more sensationalized accounts of kidnapping and “deprogramming” made popular in the mainstream media. It is simply pathetic that some counselors still commend this practice, a

frank admission of their impotence in being able to address the ICC in any other manner than by one of brutality. To recall the time-tested adage, “Two wrongs don’t make a right.” The breakdown of trust caused by a forcible abduction is sometimes impossible to reconstruct. *The kidnapping of anyone is illegal, unethical, and (from a purely pragmatic standpoint) simply not effective in seeking to lead them out of the ICC.* If such is the counsel you have received concerning your loved one, my advice is to seek new counsel.

Having ruled out forcible methodologies and their advocates, we’re still not out of the woods yet when it comes to selecting a counselor. I have met many counselors who adopt a too-clinical pose in their discussions with ICC members, and immediately initiate their discussions with an ICC member with the subject of cults and cult involvement. The ICC organization has already prepared its membership for this kind of “frontal assault,” and the ICC member immediately denies that he/she is in a cult, and the topic is switched to religion and the Bible. Generally speaking, a stand-off ensues. This is the reason why many exit counselors only have success rates of 20-30%. To my mind, this is simply unacceptable. Since a family generally has only one chance to do an intervention, it has to work properly—and this methodology simply does not have the success rate high enough to commend itself. Since exit counselors pocket their fees regardless of their success, they simply move on to the next distraught set of parents—and leave another family in despair, thousands of dollars poorer for their trouble. I am sad to countenance the entire “exit-counseling” industry, for I have met few counselors who were principled in their approach and their ethics, fair in their fees, and effective in their methodologies.

A far more effective approach lies in meeting the ICC member on a common ground of authority—the authority and teachings of the Bible. It is far better to start with a basis of authority already shared by the ICC member (the Bible), and then detail how the Bible itself differs with the ICC’s core teachings. After that critical distinction has been made (i.e., that it is possible to be a Christian and not be a part of the ICC; in fact, the commitment to Christian doctrine and to Christ should lead a member of the ICC to leave the group, not remain in it), the counselor is then free to develop the other aspects of his/her presentation. In this approach, the counselor is employing the faith and trust in the Bible already present in the ICC member to propel the member out of the phobia indoctrination that says “to leave the ICC is to leave God.” After this critical explosive device has been diffused, the counselor can go on to detail the corrupt and oppressive practices of the

ICC’s leadership, again reinforcing the latent desire for truth and integrity in the ICC member. By this point in the discussions, the ICC member is already speaking in terms of “finding another church to worship God” or something to that effect.

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**This natural progression (from Biblical to Ethical to Psychological) helps the ICC member to understand their involvement with the ICC in terms they can understand, and in a process that they can accept and readily absorb. In most cases, this procedure is quite effective.**

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After a discussion of the ethical problems in the ICC (and this is where having the testimony and/or documents from ex-members is crucial), the subject of “how groups like the ICC act psychologically on their members” can be introduced. Video, audio, and other media are also brought to bear on this issue, and the overall subject of cult mind control can be brought out into the open in an atmosphere where the ICC member is far more likely to entertain the possibility that he or she may have been a victim of cult recruitment.

This natural progression (from Biblical to Ethical to Psychological) helps the ICC member to understand their involvement with the ICC in terms they can understand, and in a process that they can accept and readily absorb. In most cases, this procedure is quite effective.

Exit counseling’s disadvantages should be obvious—the expense to hire a trained and experienced counselors with the requisite skills I have described, the logistics of travel and other arrangements, and the overall intrusive nature of an intervention are challenging to many families. Convincing the ICC member to discuss the ICC and the Bible with the counselor is a hurdle that is somewhat difficult, but not insurmountable. For information about exit counseling’s promise and pitfalls, consult the relevant articles in Chapter 4.



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**“Is there life after the International Churches of Christ?”**

Quite simply, yes! Although it is often an emotionally traumatic process to leave the ICC, there remains the promise by the Lord that He will not leave us alone in a situation that we cannot bear. Spiritual reserves of courage, strength of conviction, and understanding are provided by the Lord in this transition. The help of other former members and former leaders of the ICC is an invaluable aid during this time. Having been programmed to think that your life will end if you ever leave the group, it is often a struggle to resist those mantra-like accusatory voices that the memory recalls. With time, with prayer, with the conversation and the understanding of family and other Christians, the wounds and scars of the ICC lessen. Life does indeed go on after the ICC; perhaps not with the happy, carefree bliss of ignorance, but nonetheless with an attitude of now “overcoming evil with good.”

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**The help of other former members and former leaders of the ICC is an invaluable aid during this time. Having been programmed to think that your life will end if you ever leave the group, it is often a struggle to resist those mantra-like accusatory voices that the memory recalls. With time, with prayer, with the conversation and the understanding of family and other Christians, the wounds and scars of the ICC lessen.**

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I can't claim to have completely put my own ICC experience behind me (I'm not sure I've met any former member who can truthfully say that either), but with each passing day the pain lessens. With the perspective of time and further study of the scriptures, I now can appreciate some of the good things I have learned over the years. What has not killed my spirit has only made it stronger, and I am grateful for that. For the rekindled love and appreciation for my parents and formerly-estranged brothers and sisters in my family, there is also profound gratitude. For the patient understanding of mutual commitment to love and hope that my wife has provided, our marriage has emerged through this challenge only the stronger for the experience. All things considered, life indeed does go on after the ICC!



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## Conclusion

This is certainly not all that one could speak of when discussing the ICC, but these questions should be sufficient for laying out the foundational issues. Other resources exist whereby the concerned individual can learn even more about the history and teachings of the Boston Movement (the three volumes of Dr. Jerry Jones, *What Does the Boston Church of Christ Teach*, immediately come to mind, as well as Steve Hassan's foundational *Combating Cult Mind Control*. The educated parent or loved one is the best asset in helping an ICC member leave the group. Information, prayer, Bible study, and open and honest discussion are nothing to be afraid of, unless a group has a vested interest in keeping their members in the dark about the issues.



# Chapter IV

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## Selected Articles, Studies & Testimony



# The International Churches of Christ

## **CULT**

### **ACTIVITIES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES— A Report from the Senate Education Committee, State of Illinois**

Senator Frank Watson, Chairman; Senator Arthur Berman, Minority Spokesman

#### **I. Background**

The Senate Education Committee was directed by Senate Resolution 448 to hold Public hearings on the issue of "Cult Activities on the Campuses of Illinois Colleges and Universities." The resolution was introduced in the Senate by Senator Frank Watson, Chairman of the Education Committee, on May 17, 1993. Earlier that Spring, Senator Watson had been contacted by the parents of a daughter attending a public university who had joined a religious group that the parents felt had harmed the daughter educationally, socially, mentally, and spiritually. The parents had tried to communicate with their daughter, her church officials, and university officials to discuss the problem, but were unsuccessful.

The parents contacted Senator Watson to intervene as the Chairman of the Education Committee. After discussions with the family, the daughter's church officials, and higher education administrators, Senator Watson felt it was necessary for the entire Committee to look into the situation as well as the larger issue of cult activities on college campuses.

A public hearing was held on SR 448 in the Senate Executive Committee on May 24, 1993. The Committee unanimously recommended that the Resolution be adopted by the full Senate. On May 25, 1993, SR 448 was debated on the floor of the State Senate. The Resolution was adopted on a vote of 51-0-5.

The Education Committee scheduled two hearings on the topic. The first was held on October 12, 1993 in the State Capitol in Springfield. The second was held on December 7, 1993 at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. At each of the hearings the following questions were posed to the witnesses: Is there a problem with cults on Illinois college campuses? If there is a problem, what is the extent of the problem? If there had been a problem in the past, what had been done about it? If there is a problem now, what should the State Legislature do about it?

The Committee hearings were open to the public and were well publicized. At each hearing there was an attempt made to hear from as many individuals and groups as time allowed. The hearings were not conducted as a "witch hunt" and the Committee was not "out to get" any particular group. As Senator Watson stated at the December 7th hearing, the body conducting the hearings was not the Senate Committee on Religions, but the Senate Education Committee. The Committee's sole concern is the education of the students of the State of Illinois. If their education is being harmed in any way, it is the duty of the Committee to investigate it and act on it within constitutionally permitted boundaries.

This report draws together the information and testimony the Committee received at the two public hearings. The report briefly describes each of the hearings, provides the written testimony provided at the hearings, furnishes the responses of the various campuses to SR 448, and outlines the Committee's findings and recommendations concerning the issue of Cult Activities on College Campuses.

A copy of SR 448 follows in this Section.

#### **SENATE RESOLUTION 448**

WHEREAS, The recent activities of David Koresh and his Branch Davidian sect in Waco, Texas have increased national awareness of the destructive nature of Cult activities; and

WHEREAS, It has been estimated that there are as many as 2,000 cults operating within the united States with 4 million to 6 million members; and

WHEREAS, Cult recruitment activities are often directed towards students on college campuses; and

WHEREAS, College students are particularly vulnerable to cult recruitment because they are often wrestling with becoming independent, overwhelmed with new responsibilities and relationships, adjusting to new environments, and anxious about their future; and

WHEREAS, College students who become involved with cults undergo personality changes, suffer academically, are alienated from their families, and are robbed of the very things universities were designed to encourage: freedom of thought, intellectual growth, and personal development; and

WHEREAS, Some college administrators have become concerned about cult activities on campus and have taken action to address the situation, but many others have failed to recognize the threat, have refused to deal with the problem, or are searching for policy directions as to how to deal with it; therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, That the Senate Education Committee is directed to hold public hearings on the issue of cult activities on the campuses of Illinois colleges and universities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate Education Committee shall solicit testimony from cult awareness organizations, former cult members, college administrators, campus security personnel, campus ministers, families of cult members, and other interested witnesses on the recruitment and organizational practices of cults, the extent of cult activities on Illinois campuses, the response of college administrators in Illinois and around the nation to cult activities, the debilitating effect of cult involvement on students, and suggestions for State or campus level policies on such activities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate Education Committee shall report to the Senate by February 1, 1994 a summary of its findings and recommendations.



### **Testimony of Leng-Pang Eng and Daniel Eng (a former member and leader in the Boston Movement) October 12th, 1993 Springfield Illinois**

Pursuant to SENATE RESOLUTION 448 by the SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS concerning cult activities, I wish to offer my testimony as a former cult member of a group commonly known as the Boston Movement. In my opinion, this group fits into the classification of a 'cult' because of the reasons to follow.

#### **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

In 1984 I was invited to join and be trained as a full-time leader of the now London Church of Christ (a branch of the Boston Movement) in Great Britain. I was 'discipled' i.e., trained, by one of their 2 leaders, James Lloyd. Together with 11 other members, I moved to Singapore in October 1987 to start a branch there, where I became one of the 2 main leaders. Following that, I moved to Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, to establish another branch in February 1990. My next move was to Bombay, India in April 1991 for 2 months to help lead their church there. Finally, during a one week trip back to London at the end of May, 1991, I decided to leave the group after a series of meetings with their top Movement leaders.

I believe I am qualified to speak concerning this group because of my past experiences with them as: 1) a member for 7 years (1984-1991); 2) a campus recruiter in all the cities mentioned above; 3) a church-planter; and 4) a leader—preacher, trainer, administrator and treasurer.

In my opinion, the Boston Movement is a totalitarian religious group which practices mind-control techniques as defined in the books *Combating Cult Mind Control* by Steven Hassan and *Thought Reform And The Psychology of Totalism* by Dr Robert J. Lifton. It uses this technique to produce and maintain the subordination of the members to its human leadership and strict control of most aspects of their lives.

#### **RECRUITMENT**

Potential recruits (p.c.) are normally unaware of this hidden controlling agenda when they first come in contact with the group. However, using psychological techniques under the guise of Bible verses the recruiters would gradually break down the self-esteem of the p.c. through a series of one-on-one 'Bible study' sessions. For example, normally the p.c. would have to confess and/or write out all his past sins to the recruiter including the most intimate and private details, as if he were pouring out his innermost secrets to a psychologist. But unlike trained psychologists, the recruiter would then use this information to 'beat' on the p.c. emotionally until he is 'broken about his sins' i.e., his self-esteem is destroyed. This confrontational approach can be very devastating—I have personally seen many individuals breaking down and crying after being subject to this kind of extreme humiliation.

Confidentiality of the p.c.'s sins is not kept; normally leaders higher up in the hierarchy would be privy to this knowledge. Very often this sin issue would be brought up to manipulate and control the member, especially when he starts to break away from their control. It is not uncommon for this to be used against him even after he leaves the group.

The p.c. has a hard time maintaining a clear mind and a positive self-image of himself during this constant emotional barrage; he is manipulated to feel extreme guilt. As he gradually succumbs to the psychological attack, he begins to develop a dependent personality. The recruiter usually becomes his 'spiritual advisor' as the p.c. embraces this new group.

## LIFE AS A MEMBER

Each member has a ‘discipler’ who is above him and controls his decisions. Although they claim that this is only an ‘advice’, those who disobey them are later on accused of sin, pride, insubmission, independence, unwillingness to grow, unspiritual, ungodly, unworldly, etc. The ‘advice’ would be for almost anything e.g. whom and when to date, fall in love with, ‘go steady’ with, and be married to, where to go to school, what kind of job to have, where to live, when to go for movies, etc., when and where to go for vacation, how much money to contribute, when and how often to have sex with the spouse, etc.

The members are constantly ‘urged’ to continually confess their sins and even ‘sinful thoughts’ to their disciplers—they are to be transparent. Everyone feels that they must confess everything to their disciplers to please God.

Members barely have time to do other things besides church activities. They are constantly monitored by phone calls, personal meetings and group meetings. Typically, they would be having church/group meetings almost daily. As the members get more involved, they begin to lose touch with their outside family, relatives and friends. They have now become extremely dependent on their disciplers and the group for their identity and self-esteem.

Questioning any leadership decision or advice is considered anathema, even if the questioner is sincere. They do not tolerate insubordination; members are rebuked immediately when their disciplers notice this. Even negative thoughts are considered evil and sinful; members must only have positive thoughts concerning the group and its leaders. A constant theme in their Bible lessons is pride and submission. Members think that when they submit to their leaders they are submitting to God. They associate the church and its leadership with God—thus the church cannot be wrong. No matter what the issue is, the critics are always wrong and sinful. This is drummed into their heads. They have a very polarized view of everything—either it is good and godly, or it is bad and worldly.

When a member misbehaves he will be strongly criticized by his discipler. Very often this person is placed in front of several other members who would attack him verbally at his ‘sin’ to discipline him. Sessions like this would sometimes go on for hours and would be repeated each week until the person is broken down. This is one of the most emotionally devastating and destructive techniques they use. The person feels helpless, emotionally drained, very confused and very distraught; on one hand they are claiming to love him but on the other hand they are verbally assaulting him. It is an emotional rollercoaster—and he becomes even more dependent.

## LEAVING THE GROUP

This is very traumatic for whoever wants to leave. The emotional support and ‘love’ of the group is abruptly withdrawn when the member leaves. Usually the member would have spent a lot of time considering the move before he actually leaves. The years of phobia indoctrination about leaving causes the ex-member to contemplate suicide once he is out.

He is very confused, uncertain about his future, and ostracized by his supposedly ‘loving church.’ He undergoes a ‘mourning’ period at the loss of very close relationships. He finds himself having difficulties making decisions and getting back into the real world. He is disillusioned and he feels that he has wasted his life. Trusting another person becomes difficult. His life dreams have been shattered. I have met many former members in various parts of the world who went through this. And the story is usually the same. No wonder most of them had suicidal thoughts, some lasting for 1-2 years. My brother, sister and I left the Movement separately. I left because I could no longer tolerate being treated abusively by my discipler and by other leaders. The 3 of us on our own considered suicide when we left. I had suicidal thoughts almost daily for a year and a half after leaving the Movement. My sister slashed her left wrist. Thank God she is still alive today.

## MY RECOMMENDATIONS

In my opinion I believe groups like the Boston Movement should be banned from colleges. Very often these groups would assume some other names. It would be great if college administrations keep check on what their campus groups teach. We believe in the freedom of religion but not the freedom to use potentially abusive psychological methods on people. Finally, each college should create student/public awareness of the characteristics of cult mind control.

LENG-PANG ENG & DANIEL ENG



## **Committee on Education, State of Illinois Senate Hearings, December 7, 1993; Opening Statement of Mr. X, on the subject of the activities of cults in the State of Illinois:**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, members of the Senate, ladies and gentleman: Thank you for the invitation and opportunity to testify before the committee today concerning the character and behavior of certain

destructive groups currently operating in the State of Illinois and in our nation today. My name is Mr. X, and I presently serve as the a director of a ministry organization that I founded in 1991 to assist families and individuals adversely affected by destructive religious groups in our world. I also serve as a minister for a church in the Washington, D.C. area, and have served in this capacity for over 15 years in several other churches around the country. I am the author of several books and articles on religion and religious affairs, and my most recent book is entitled *The Boston Movement: Media Reports and Analysis*. I have masters degrees in Literature, Biblical Archaeology, and my most recent degree was a Master of Theology degree, with honors, from Harvard University. My theological specialization is Apocalyptic Literature and Theology, and I am presently completing requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the Catholic University of America.

I have worked with hundreds of individuals and families regarding the subject of cult involvement and deconversion from destructive cultic organizations. My work and that of my wife has been responsible for hundreds of individuals being reunited with their families and becoming more aware of the unethical, unprincipled, and in some cases illegal behaviors of the groups in which they were formerly involved. Because of my former leadership position in such a group, my educational background and current scholarship, I was contacted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Treasury Department, Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms to serve as an unpaid consultant during the recent events at the Branch Davidian Compound in Waco, Texas. I have cooperated fully with several agencies of our federal government, notably the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service, regarding the activities of the International Churches of Christ, one such destructive cult of which I share a particularly close interest. I have submitted my findings regarding the events at Waco to the two oversight committees in Congress and look forward to testifying at hearings, which Senators Biden and Specter have assured me will take place some time early next year. I have also been interviewed by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *Newsweek Magazine*, *Time Magazine*, and such national television media at CNN, CBS, and ABC television, as well as Canadian, Australian, and British television and print media, mainly on the subject of destructive cults.

My interest in these groups is not merely academic, as I served for a period of 5 years as an upper-echelon leader in such a group. In 1986 I was approached by Mr. Thomas “Kip” McKean, worldwide leader and self-styled apostle of the International Churches of Christ (ICC), to move from Denver, Colorado to the Boston world headquarters of the organization. I was to receive a doctorate from Harvard, take on a teaching responsibility in an academy for their trainees, and to direct campus recruiting efforts for the organization, replacing Mr. Ron Drabot (the current leader of the Chicago branch of the ICC organization). Although I had reservations about the Boston organization for some time, I believed those who had said that the harsh and abusive practices of the group had been eliminated. To my regret and dismay, I found that not to be the case.

Based on my own observations and participation in the organization, and being trained by the highest echelon leadership of the ICC, I found it to be a group that practiced the classic behaviors identified by behavioral psychologists, sociologists, theologians, and mental health professionals as a cult mind control group. That being the case, I made the decision in the Spring of 1991 to oppose certain practices in the group, and called the leadership to accountability for their actions and unethical behaviors. Because of this opposition, I was excommunicated from the organization, and came quite close to losing both my marriage to my wife and my relationship to my two sons. My wife was at that time still a loyal member of the organization and considered my questioning of the ICC leadership somehow satanic. It was precisely because of the harsh manner in which the ICC addressed the simple objections and questions of a leader who was aware of the inner workings of the organization that caused her to leave the group as well.

Let me at the outset state for the record that I am a civil libertarian, and do not want my objections to the behavior of this and other mind-control groups portrayed as censorious, nor would I in any context wish to somehow limit the free and legal exercise of any religious beliefs or practices, however personally odious I may find them to be. The issue is not belief, but behavior. The issues are not the restricting of religious liberty, but the very implications and defense of those freedoms that we as Americans find at the very heart of our constitutional foundation. The free exercise and pronouncement of various religious positions or faiths is in no way limited, unduly constrained, or in any other way hampered by advocating the responsible and ethical practices that most other religious groups have already voluntarily adopted as a part of their own belief system. The only practices that I would like to see supported by the state are those of honesty, fair play, and integrity, and these in no conceivable shape or form unduly restrict the free exercise of any religious belief or practice.

Having worked with Ivy League institutions and several state university systems to design and implement curricula that expose incoming freshman and transfer students to information about the practices of cult mind control groups, I maintain that the dissemination of information is the critical factor in limiting the harmful effects of cultic involvement. The reason why cultic groups oppose these and other such hearings is not that they consider me to be a

genuine threat to the free exercise of their religious beliefs, but rather they regard the information and awareness that is created as a result of such discussions anathema to their recruiting efforts. Once students are informed about the unethical, unprincipled, and in some cases illegal practices of these groups, they are better prepared to address campus cult recruiters and can make an informed decision regarding their own affiliation with the group. It is that informed decision on the part of the individual that I wish to protect and nurture, and would in no way seek to hinder, limit, or proscribe.

In closing of this part of my remarks, let me again reassert that the issues before us today are not those of religious liberty, but rather responsible behavior. I am against coercive pressure and undue influence wherever it may surface and in whatever guise it may assume; indeed, I do not support the violent, exploitative, unethical, and in some cases illegal practices of so-called “deprogrammers”, and have spoken out against unethical practices on the part of those who are working to help individuals exit from cult groups. Two wrongs still don't make a right; I find some of the predatory and high-pressure tactics and practices among the exit counseling community as noxious and odious as those very same practices that I found in the hierarchy of the International Churches of Christ. I wish to again thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the committee for your interest, and at this time will respond to any specific questions that you may have.



### **Testimony Of Kyle V. Degge before A Hearing Of The Education Committee Of The Senate Of The State Of Illinois**

My name is Kyle Degge, and my purpose in coming before you today is to offer testimony regarding my own involvement in, exodus from, and current opposition to a religious group which has deep roots in the State of Illinois, and especially in some of this state's most prominent institutions of higher education. Having read H.R. 448, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Senator Watson and the other distinguished members of this committee for the courage and concern for the well-being of your constituents you are demonstrating by holding these hearings.

With respect to myself, while a Biblical Studies student at Lubbock Christian College. In December, 1978, I visited, for the first time, the Discipling Ministry church in Charleston, IL. I was very impressed with what appeared to me to be a very vibrant, exciting congregation of Christians. The church was called the Heritage Chapel Church of Christ, and from all appearances, it was succeeding in the most dynamic, impacting religious campus outreach I had seen, or known of, in my life. Having only conducted this local campus ministry according to their basic philosophical tenets for about two years at that time, this group had attracted, almost from scratch, about 200 students from the modest-sized student body at Eastern Illinois University. The leader of this group of zealous students at Eastern was a man named Thomas “Kip” McKean.

Mr. McKean had been schooled in the discipling philosophy by a dynamic and charismatic young minister named Chuck Lucas, minister of the controversial Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida. Beginning in the early Seventies, Lucas had undertaken the task of training and sending out many dynamic, zealous young men who spread across America establishing discipling-style campus ministries under the auspices of existing congregations among Churches of Christ. Although these campus groups, almost without exception, eventually precipitated church splits in their host congregations across the nation, the ideological descendants of these early campus groups eventually acquired sufficient numbers and confidence to launch an organizationally separate, and dynamically distinctive, new religious movement, variously, known as the Boston Church of Christ / Multiplying Ministries / Discipling Ministries / International Church of Christ Movement. The man at the helm of this movement today is none other than Thomas “Kip” McKean.

It was at Eastern Illinois University that McKean established his reputation and “track record,” leading to his being invited by a dying church in Lexington, Massachusetts to come be their minister. It was in Boston that Mr. McKean gained the necessary institutional clout and statistical/numerical superiority to become, formally (since 1988), the undisputed, worldwide leader of the International Church of Christ Movement, Vitaly instrumental to his meteoric ascension to preeminence was the fact that Chuck Lucas had fallen from leadership in 1985 due to “recurrent sin problems” never publicly revealed. This opened the door for Mr. McKean to step in and propel these churches down a path of total religious exclusivity, extreme fanaticism, and a radical agenda of world conquest. In the religious sense. However, even before Mr. McKean left Charleston to move to Boston, he trained several “disciples” under his tutelage who continued to perpetuate this group in the Midwest, and in Illinois in particular. Undoubtedly the most significant disciple McKean trained at Eastern was a young man from Geneseo, Illinois named Marty Fuqua. Upon graduating from Eastern, Fuqua was invited, with McKean’s blessing, by the DeKalb Church of Christ (a mainstream church at the time) in 1978 to move to DeKalb and establish a campus group at Northern Illinois University patterned after McKean's group at Eastern. Mr. Fuqua was very “successful” at Northern, and after just

four years there, set out with a group almost entirely recruited and trained in the DeKalb church, to “plant” such a church in Chicago. The new group located themselves in Oak Park In 1982, and incorporated as the Oak Park Church of Christ, beginning with about 35-40 people. Today, the Chicago Church of Christ numbers in excess of 2,000 members, and has sent out from here numerous additional churches in Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Canada. Their presence can be felt on every college or university of significant size in Chicagoland, including commuter campuses such as College of DuPage.

There were two additional replications of significance which have taken place directly from this group’s activities on Illinois campuses. In the early ‘80s, a group was sent to Champaign-Urbana from Charleston to plant the Cornerstone Church of Christ, now known as the Champaign Church of Christ. This church has consistently gleaned converts from the student populace of the University of Illinois. Also, In 1985, a second church was “planted” from DeKalb, moving about 30 people to Milwaukee, Wisconsin to establish the Lakeview Church of Christ, now known as the Milwaukee Church of Christ. Marquette University banned the group from their campus in the late ‘80s, and just a few weeks ago, their charter was revoked by U. W. H. due to abuses confirmed by the testimony of numerous witnesses in hearings held by University administration officials. If nothing else is established about this group, it should be abundantly clear that they are thoroughly committed to reproducing themselves and their cause as rapidly and in as many venues as possible. In fact, the battle cry of this movement is, “We will evangelize (read “conquer”) the world in this generation (read “in Kip McKean’s lifetime”).” Today, Kip McKean has enthroned himself atop a worldwide “kingdom” of more than 130 churches, numbering over 45,000 members, worldwide.

In 1985, after spending almost 5 years in full-time ministry roles in mainstream churches in Texas and Louisiana, and at a time of extreme professional and personal frustration and vulnerability, I was invited by the DeKalb Church of Christ to move with my family to DeKalb and become the “Lead Evangelist” of the church. Please bear in mind that for almost seven years, at that point, I had established relationships with “discipling” leaders, attended their seminars, retreats, and workshops, visited in their churches, asked every question I knew to ask, and truly believed I knew who and what they were and were about, that they had been truthful with me at every turn, and that I knew the product I was buying. I had also read everything I knew of that had been written about this group of churches, and if objective investigation had been sufficient to understand the nature and character of this movement, I should have qualified for a college degree. Over the course of those seven years, though friends in these churches had tried repeatedly to convince me to leave where I was and join with them, I never felt compelled, at any time, to have to join them to be legitimate as a person, a Christian, or a minister. However, when I found myself at a point of discouragement, disillusionment, and vulnerability, I discovered that I had little power to resist, once I allowed myself to actually make the trip to DeKalb, and experience the euphoria of their “dog and pony show.” I knew there were things about them with which I strongly disagreed, but they convinced me that I could come join them and help them change! And besides, other people for whom I had great respect were either speaking benevolently about them, or had actually been convinced to move to Boston or to other cities where they were and “helping them to change and mature.” It all just seemed to be too good to be true! Besides, I felt like I was well on the road to “burnout” in my work, and what could it hurt?

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the further particulars of my participation in this group, but think you have already heard sufficient testimony by others which has spoken of the sort of personal compromise, corruption, and relational destruction involvement with this group, and others which operate similarly, has caused in their lives. You have heard of the lying, brutality, exploitation of friendship, betrayal of confidences, “excommunication” of dissenters, and loss of self-respect and dignity. You have heard of educational dreams of lifetimes dashed on the rocks of the whims of “the cause,” of professional suicide, of marital destruction, the loss of the basic trust and fidelity so essential in any healthy marriage and family. You have heard of blatant and malicious disregard for laws and statutes of both states and nations. You have heard of victims of such groups who have struggled with confusion, disorientation, and suicidal depression, often for months or even years after leaving totalistic groups. To all of the above, and to much, much more, I would simply say that in my experience, it’s all true—it really happens.

I know you have heard a lot of mixed signals, and some would tell you that this is about the First Amendment, religious freedom, or other inalienable human rights. Well, Honorable Senators, I can tell you this. It was not respect for my freedom or for my rights to speak, or for that of others, that seductively led me to systematically manipulate, coerce, and deceive vulnerable, trusting people, people who never wanted to believe that a man who spoke in the name of God would so misrepresent myself and my church to them. In buying what the piper played, I thus exploited what I have for most of my life, save about 20 hellacious months, considered to be basic tenants of human decency and respect. It was not faith in my God that led me, week in and week out, to betray the very fidelity end fabric of my marital vows, giving up even the secrets of my bedroom in the name of “being open” about my life, and all at the behest of my trusted leaders. It was not people of decency and Integrity who, for seven solid years,

obviously and deliberately misrepresented to me, in the face of very direct questioning on my part, who they were and what their agenda was, for me and For others, I do not come before you today asking you to make a single recommendation, or introduce a single prospective piece of legislation against the legitimate, respectable, honest practice of religious faith, political belief, or personal development and improvement. What I, and I believe many literally millions of others who have been similarly taken in by such organizations, would ask you to consider today is what can and should be done by government to adequately illuminate the true agendas and practices of unscrupulous groups such as have been held forth as dubious examples in these hearings, and energetically search for ways to encourage the education of your constituents, and the public as a whole, about the devastating technologies of interpersonal control and manipulation which, when employed, whether by religion, political organizations, business, or otherwise, have consistently, throughout history, cost victims their most precious personal and interpersonal treasures, and left heaps of bloodied carnage across the human landscape. I am a Christian, I am politically active, I believe in personal excellence and enterprise, and I believe every human being does, indeed, deserve the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The issues at the core of this controversy in no way should threaten, mitigate, or limit such freedoms. In fact, the one unwavering constant in all totalistic groups is the agenda of control, limitation of freedom, and destruction of true human potential that is the birthright of every human being.

If education about such things were to take place when students go through college orientation, that would be a great thing. However, all too often, that would be too little, too late. Learning about totalism, about the dynamics of such tyrannical leaders in history such as Napoleon, Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, Mao, Ceauscescu, and others should begin at the middle and high school levels. My children are still in elementary school, and we have meaningful discussions about these things quite often. Certainly, we cannot ameliorate mass societal ignorance in weeks or months, perhaps not even in years. But we can and we must begin. We must look beyond the “what’s” of historical facts and get at the “why’s” of recurrent historical tragedy. This is not a perfect world, and there are no perfect solutions. As long as our society perpetuates the vacuum of basic decency, respect, and human worth at the root of our social ills, totalistic groups will always find fertile ground and unwitting victims. But, must we be content with the way things are? It is my hope and my prayer that we will not! I hope it is your collective desire and will that we must not. Thank you for your kind attention.



### **Ethical Problems in Exit Counseling**

by William M. Alnor and Ronald Enroth, *Christian Research Journal*, Winter 1992

In December 1984 a young woman involved with The Bible Speaks ministry of Massachusetts went home to visit her family. When she arrived, according to a notarized affidavit,<sup>1</sup> a visitor was there waiting for her. He brought a “hallway full of suitcase boxes,” which made her realize that his “visit was to be more than an afternoon chat,” she said.

Actually, the visitor was a well-known “exit counselor” (often referred to as a deprogrammer) hired by the woman’s parents to try to “rescue” her from a group they considered to be a cult. The young man related that he was there, the affidavit states, because “he had a church relationship with my father.” He wanted her to “consider all the sides” pertaining to her continued involvement with The Bible Speaks and to make an “intelligent decision accordingly.” “I asked [the exit counselor] what was his purpose for coming to my house, and he stated, ‘to inform you of the questionable practices of The Bible Speaks.’” Realizing that she had been set up, “I got up to leave,” she said. “I tried to exit my house when I was forcibly detained by my father and brother.” Later the document states that she made her “escape” by running out the basement garage door.

To be sure, The Bible Speaks ministry—which has since changed its name to The Greater Grace World Outreach and moved to the Baltimore area—is controversial and has generated denunciations from anticult groups worldwide. In 1983 the Christian Research Institute published a report on the sect (headed by Carl Stevens) stating that the group’s doctrine of pastoral authority was authoritarian, unbiblical, and abusive. In 1987 a U.S. Bankruptcy Court judge ordered the sect to return \$6.6 million to a millionaire heiress who had been manipulated into donating the money (see the Summer 1987 *Christian Research Journal*). The ruling stood up under appeal, and the sect was forced out of its 69-acre complex (which eventually went to the heiress). All this aside, was the exit counselor’s role in this case ethical? Since we haven’t spoken with the woman or the exit counselor, we cannot be sure. But if we take the document at face value as true, our answer must be that his actions were unethical. The document stated that the exit counselor said he had a “church relationship” with her father, which wasn’t true (her father was a Roman Catholic while the exit counselor was a Baptist from a city about 500 miles away). And the woman, a consenting

adult, was “forcibly detained” while the exit counselor tried to talk to her. Being forced to “escape” in the manner that she did must have been a traumatic experience.

This article, the result of an informal but extensive inquiry, is about exit counseling. During the past year or so the authors have spoken with many of the chief exit counselors in the country, and have consulted with many experts concerning the topic. We have also consulted with various evangelical countercult and apologetics ministries familiar with exit counseling. In order to insure a balanced approach, we have also spoken with—or read materials from—some of the most vociferous critics of the practice (and of countercult ministries and organizations), including spokespersons from various “religious liberty” groups that are often funded by the cult groups themselves.

### **LOOSE CANNONS?**

The result of our inquiry is that out of approximately 15 major exit counselors operating in America, only a few appear to conduct themselves in a manner that communicates a sense of integrity and ethical concern. The field of exit counseling is full of men and women operating like loose cannons in a shadowy world of secrecy that contains little or no controls on their activities and offers little or no enforcement of ethical standards. Further, the amount of money major exit counselors charge is often excessive and unjustifiable, especially since in many instances their clients are vulnerable parents—driven by panic over the conviction that their children are involved in a cult. Fees in excess of \$20,000 per case are not unusual.

Many exit counselors at times engage in activities that are unethical at best and illegal at worst. They do this by participating in cases where consenting adults (over 18 years of age) are physically accosted, tricked, and sometimes kidnapped; thrown into rented vans; and held against their will in some cases for weeks at a time. During these ordeals the exit counselors try to talk them out of their cultic involvement.

As Christians it is very difficult to endorse such tactics used on adults in light of God’s Word. Romans 13:1, for example, instructs us to be subject unto “the higher powers” of the land and to obey the authorities. The unlawful restraint and deceit used by many deprogrammers together with security teams hired to help out is contrary to God’s Word. We are told to *live at peace with all men* (Rom. 12:18) and to *speak the truth in love* to people with whom we disagree (Eph. 4:15).

At the same time we recognize there can be extenuating circumstances. What is a husband to do who leaves a cult while his wife stays, and his wife—under orders of the cult’s leadership—cuts off all communication with him? Since marriage is ordained by God (Matt. 19:6) and is a higher law than the government, it could be argued that the husband (or wife) should take matters into his own hands and try to free his spouse and children from the endangering sect. And what about cases where the sect poses an imminent danger to its members? Following the deaths of 913 people in Jonestown, Guyana in 1978 many tearful parents wished they had taken more serious action to get their loved ones out of the People’s Temple before it was too late. And what about the extremist Bible-based groups operating across America that believe it is not right under any circumstances to seek medical attention? Should relatives be expected to sit back and watch their loved ones die?

In cases where there is clearly an imminent danger to the health and well-being of cult members, we believe the best approach is to work through the legal system to ensure protection at the very least for children. Most states have, in one form or another, conservatorship laws which make provision for assuming temporary custody of minor children if a clear and present danger exists? But how do we define imminent danger? Is there any consensus on what imminent danger is? These are legal questions that must yet be worked out.

### **THE BRIGHTER SIDE OF EXIT COUNSELING**

Although only a handful of exit counselors (in our opinion) are succeeding at being professional and ethical in their endeavors, it is nevertheless true that many other exit counselors, whose activities we cannot endorse, have sometimes had a beneficial effect in helping people leave cults. A few have been helpful to cult researchers and evangelical ministries to cults in supplying valuable information needed to research various cult groups. And many exit counselors deserve credit for their willingness to fly across the continent on short notice to help a family confronted with a cult problem, not knowing in many cases when they’ll be able to return home. Some have literally lived out of suitcases for years at a time. Many have sacrificed their lifestyles, health, family life, and even personal relationships in their efforts to assist people leaving cults. (Most exit counselors are former cult members themselves and are motivated by their memories of how enslaving cult involvement can be.)

We also acknowledge the role of the occasional exit counselor—those who work on a sporadic basis. In talking with experts in the field, our guess is that there may be from 50 to 100 lesser known exit counselors in the United States, and many of these may be doing excellent and ethical work—particularly those working in conjunction with Christian ministries. Many of the critics of exit counseling, however, would disagree with this figure.

## CAN EXIT COUNSELORS POLICE THEMSELVES?

We applaud several recent secular anticult organizations' efforts to clean up the field. In the past few years there have been initiatives within both the Cult Awareness Network and the American Family Foundation toward creating ethical standards by which exit counselors can police themselves. However, we are skeptical about these moves, particularly when the guidelines are only voluntary and enforcement is dubious. More troublesome is what appears to be a built-in conflict of interest; the monitoring committees are run by exit counselors who themselves may have a vested interest in keeping their fees high and who may be tempted to protect their colleagues. Moreover, some of these same exit counselors are under review by other cultwatchers over alleged unethical activities surrounding their businesses, personal lives, and exit counseling practices.

For example, according to Carol Giambalvo of Florida (a highly regarded exit counselor), a committee of exit counselors met during the Cult Awareness Network's 1991 annual conference in Oklahoma City to take up the issue of ethical standards. What they decided, Giambalvo said, is that if one of them hears a complaint about a fellow exit counselor, they'll refer it directly to the counselor involved and advise him or her to resolve it voluntarily with the family. They also decided to agree on the types of fees they would charge. And they agreed on creating experience levels for the profession: those just starting out would be called "apprentices." For those who reach the rank of a full exit counselor (a determination made by other exit counselors at an informal annual meeting), it was decided that "reasonable fees" per case should range from \$400 per day to \$1,000 per day. "We can't set fees for each other but we feel these are in the bounds of fairness," she said.<sup>3</sup>

It can be argued, however, that daily fee schedules can be misleading, particularly because they don't include expenses or take into account the varied working styles of exit counselors. One well-known exit counselor from Arizona, who says he charges \$500 per day for cases, bemoaned the fact that another exit counselor from the East Coast came into his area and charged only \$300 per day for working with a family on a case involving the Potters' House (an aberrant Christian group). The Arizona exit counselor—who prefers the title "consultant"—said that although the other exit counselor charged less money per day, that counselor spent well over two weeks with the family (14 days multiplied by \$300 per day comes to \$4,200, plus expenses). This means that the other counselor actually cost much more than he would have, since he seldom spends more than five days on a case (five days multiplied by \$500 per day comes to \$2,500, plus expenses).

There is a more critical problem, however. For the major exit counselors to assemble and decide what their prices should be smacks of a price-fixing cartel similar to what the OPEC nations do regarding oil prices. As one Christian apologist from Arizona, who is frustrated with exit counselors, commented: "They are charging fees on the basis of what the market will bear, rather than on the need to help those caught in destructive religious systems. There's something very wrong with that."<sup>4</sup>

## SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

We know of Christian exit counselors who believe it is wrong to set a daily price on what they view as being the Lord's work. One Christian exit counselor from the Midwest, who wants little to do with the Cult Awareness Network due to its secular approach to what she considers to be spiritual problems surrounding cults, has worked on cases throughout America. She simply asks families to pay her expenses and, if they feel led to, give her an optional gift at the end of her stay with the family.

Along the same lines, there are some interesting developments within the evangelical cult-watching community where some are becoming increasingly involved in voluntary (i.e., no kidnapping) exit counseling as part of their ministries. Craig Branch of the Watchman Fellowship (along with others associated with that ministry) already does limited voluntary exit counseling and is seeking to expand his ministry's involvement in the area. Randall Watters of Bethel Ministries in Southern California has been involved in the field in both a publishing and teaching role for some time. Steve Hassan, a highly regarded Jewish exit counselor from Boston (and author of *Combating Cult Mind Control*, Park Street Press, 1988), has assisted Watters, even so far as conducting a seminar for Bethel ministries, teaching them how to assist people out of cults that utilize mind control. And Bill Kellogg, who heads the counseling ministries for the Spiritual Counterfeits Project (SCP) of Berkeley, California, has recently gotten involved in exit counseling. He has been drawing on the work of Carol Giambalvo (who wrote a helpful booklet offered by the Cult Awareness Network called *Exit Counseling: A Family Intervention*). Kellogg says that when people ask him what his fee is, he tells them they can make a voluntary gift to SCP if they want to.

Another positive development in the field of exit counseling is the fact that the largest rehabilitation center in America designed primarily for former cult members is the Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center in Ohio, a facility run by evangelical Christians. Because of Wellspring's effectiveness in helping former cult members acclimate to life outside the cults in a non-sectarian fashion, it has gained the respect and support of many of those

associated with the secular Cult Awareness Network (CAN), the secular American Family Foundation, and even Jewish exit counselors. Many exit counselors, including those we have problems with, refer members of cults to Wellspring following the successful completion of their cases. Recently psychologist Paul Martin, the founder and director of Wellspring, was named as a CAN board member.

### **KIDNAPPED AND DEPROGRAMMED**

Steve Hassan was kidnapped and deprogrammed against his will in the mid 1970s after he became involved with Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. As a result, he doesn't endorse any kind of situation in which adults are kidnapped.

"It's very hard to describe being held against your will," Hassan said in a recent interview. "It's very, very intimidating." "Multiply fear by 10 when you're in that type of a situation," he added. "That fear is not conducive to good counseling. It's a raw emotional state of survival."

Technically, Hassan's kidnapping and deprogramming was a "success," he said, but he added that it wasn't a classic case. He said that after he was snatched he reacted very badly to it. This led him to an "eye to eye, man to man" talk with his father, who helped orchestrate the kidnapping. After his bad reaction, his father told him that if he just listened and talked to the deprogrammers he was free to leave with no strings attached.

Years later Hassan realized he was still resentful of those involved with his forced abduction, and it was this, coupled with his studies over the years, that convinced him that involuntary deprogramming was not the way to go.

### **THE FATHER OF DEPROGRAMMING**

It was Ted Patrick who first coined the term "deprogramming" in the early 1970s. His best-selling book, *Let Our Children Go!* (Thomas Congden Press, 1976), made the practice even more popular as it helped inspire several movies showing "deprogrammers" in a positive light. In one popular Hollywood film released during this period, a deprogrammer is seen striking a restrained kidnapped cult victim who held beliefs strikingly similar to the Children of God sect. Patrick, who gained the nickname "Black Lightning," alleged that cult members were brainwashed and thus advocated deprogramming them through often arduous sessions—sometimes lasting weeks—during which time they were restrained. Earlier, in 1974, Patrick helped found the Citizens' Freedom Foundation, which evolved into the Cult Awareness Network.<sup>5</sup> However, Hassan noted that "Patrick's success...was far from universal, and numbers of unsuccessful rescue attempts returned to their group and sued him as well as family members. No doubt these caused further alienation, hardship and pain—as well as legal convictions. His methods were sensationalistic—abduction in broad daylight, car switches, hidden locations for the deprogramming, 24-hour security guards to prevent any escapes."<sup>6</sup>

Partly because of problems associated with these approaches, new methods of reaching people involved in cults began to emerge. Many began to conclude that the Patrick model was fundamentally flawed. As Hassan put it, the philosophy of deprogramming is that the "cult member is 'snatched' in order to 'break' them out of the cult trance via a process of 'deprogramming' the mind. The term sounds like one is dealing with a computer, and not with a human being with a mind and a special, separate identity . . . deprogramming operates outside of the law."<sup>7</sup>

### **THE EMERGENCE OF EXIT COUNSELING**

By the mid 1980s a new philosophy emerged in the place of deprogramming. The practice, known as "exit counseling," is based on the recognition of and respect for the conscious will of the cult member. The Cult Awareness Network no longer advocates deprogramming and its national board does not endorse abduction or false imprisonment, but rather voluntary exit counseling. It has also for some time been distancing itself from Mr. Patrick. But after surveying the landscape of exit counselors' techniques and tactics today, it is abundantly clear that Patrick's influence lives on. Many who claim to be exit counselors are actively involved in situations where cult members are abducted and are held against their wills for sometimes weeks at a time. Furthermore, individual people associated with CAN and the religious cults themselves often "refer to deprogramming and exit counseling interchangeably."<sup>8</sup>

One young woman who was formerly associated with the Church of Bible Understanding, an East Coast-based group headed by Stewart Traill (who, according to members, has the spirit of Elijah) told us that she was abducted off the streets of Cleveland by her parents. And a block from the snatching site, her parents picked up the "exit counselor" who began to bombard her with audio tapes denouncing cults, and played them continuously during a long drive to the Pocono Mountains. Once there, she was held prisoner while the exit counselor "acted like a maniac," she said. She added that when she would retreat to the bathroom, the counselor would stand by the door playing tapes, banging on the door, and shouting denunciations against cults. "It was very harmful," the young

woman said. “It was the worst thing I had ever gone through in my life. It was like mental torture and I wound up hating him.”

Equally disturbing is the fact that the exit counselor used in this case was a professing Christian who at the time had informal ties to several evangelical anticult and apologetics ministries. When questioned then about the case by one of the authors, the exit counselor declared that the woman’s parents tricked him and that he had no idea the girl was snatched against her will until after the case was in progress. But when the woman was told about the exit counselor’s explanation, she was annoyed. “My parents would be furious if they heard he accused them of tricking him,” she said.

That story had a happy ending, however. The woman did exit the sect, and through meeting with other people who also left the group, she was able to unravel the group’s techniques and theology in her own mind. She is still embittered, though, since the exit counselor did not give her any follow-up materials to help her adjust to life outside the sect.

Both Giambalvo (who is often assisted by her husband, Noel) and Hassan do not do involuntary cases in which a cult member is held against his or her will. In Giambalvo’s “Counselors’ Fee Scale Information” sheet (which she gives to prospective clients), they must answer *yes* to the following question before she takes the case: “Are you willing to work with us with the understanding that if the client should be prevented from leaving the intervention by any physical methods, we will also leave?”

Nevertheless, Giambalvo says that some exit counselors—even some associated with the committee pledging to police the profession—do “involuntary” exit counseling using varying rationalizations to justify it. Others who claim they don’t do “involuntaries,” she said, tell prospective clients they don’t want to know how the parents got their children to isolated locations in order to talk to them. Still others distance themselves from the actual act of snatching alleged cult members, yet they coordinate their efforts with the security teams responsible for the snatches.

There are exceptions to this trend. One professing Christian exit counselor from Southern California is up front about his role in kidnapping sect members. He is also among the few with his own security team trained to snatch members of religious groups. In a January 6, 1991 article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the man claimed to have “snatched” 15 people from religious organizations in the past year—despite the fact that he was involved in a highly publicized unsuccessful deprogramming incident that wound up in court. The parents who hired the deprogrammer were sued by their daughter, but the judge eventually threw the case out of court, saying that he didn’t think the parents should be prosecuted as criminals.

“I’m doing bigger and more exciting cases” [since that one], the deprogrammer boasted. “I’m doing double-snatchings. I did a family of four in Mississippi, and I did a double-snatch of brothers in Los Angeles. They were picked up simultaneously. All of them have been successful.”<sup>9</sup>

### A DISSENTER’S POINT OF VIEW

Dan Holdgreiwe, Executive Director of the Coalition for Religious Freedom in Alexandria, Virginia, is especially irked by the exit counselor just quoted. In the June 1991 edition of the *Religious Freedom Alert*, which is edited by Holdgreiwe, he ran a page-one picture of the exit counselor with a story of how he had just been arrested for kidnapping a 22-year-old woman from her home in Mississippi. The story details how the woman was seized when two men entered her yard under the pretext of looking for a lost dog. She was forced into a van and then transferred into a second van before being released by the Highway Patrol which stopped the van en route to a remote hunting cabin. (At press time the case has not yet been decided.)

Holdgreiwe, an attorney, wants to know why the anticult movement tolerates such activities by exit counselors. One of his arguments is that many people who are not members of destructive religious groups—even evangelical Christians—are being kidnapped and held against their wills. He believes it is a matter of religious liberty. While Holdgreiwe’s coalition is partly funded by the Unification Church, and it is a fact he has been personally linked to the Unification Church,<sup>10</sup> does this invalidate his claims? We do not think so.

It’s even more telling when Christians deprogrammed by this particular individual denounce his tactics. One woman whom the individual counseled out of the Church of the Great Shepherd—a small, now-defunct authoritarian group that operated in Alhambra, California—said that when the exit counselor approached the families of people who had children in the sect, “there was a real sense of pressure that they had to do it [snatch them] right then.” The impression given was that “if we didn’t have his counsel he didn’t know what would happen. Without his services we would be damaged.”

The woman added that the deprogrammer was helpful, “but I don’t think he did anything different than what a pastor should be doing,” she said, adding that her problem was not necessarily one of mind control. Her difficulty was that she didn’t have a proper understanding of the Scriptures and of legitimate biblical pastoral authority.

### **ARE THEIR FEES EXCESSIVE?**

This former member of the Church of the Great Shepherd was also upset by the fees charged by the exit counselor, and the more she traveled around comparing notes with others deprogrammed by this individual, she realized that money paid by grieving parents to him was in excess of \$250,000! Costs charged to deprogram her and her husband amounted to \$20,000 plus plane fare (\$500) and hotel expenses (another \$500). What’s worse is that she spent only a half day and an additional two hours with the exit counselor. Another family was charged \$50,000 for this exit counselor to kidnap and deprogram two of their sons who were in the sect.

She also claimed that the individual presented himself as a Christian, but when her family had questions about his bill, he turned “nasty.” “It was not his ministry,” she represented him as saying, “it was his business.” He also placed tremendous pressure on people leaving the Church of the Great Shepherd to go to cult rehabilitation counseling sessions with a California Christian psychotherapist at an additional cost of \$5,000—an experience that didn’t help her one bit. In the sessions the Christian psychotherapist did not discuss the Bible at all, and that was the very thing she most needed to hear about.

In a recent interview, the psychotherapist didn’t agree with the woman’s reasoning. “First of all,” he said, “I’m a psychotherapist. I’m not a theologian. I also don’t want them to confuse my role as an authority by answering spiritual questions. I don’t tell them how to live their life.” According to the fee schedule he provided, cult rehabilitation costs are \$4,500 (apparently a rounded figure), and this includes “reintegration of the victim’s thoughts and feelings, reintegration with the family, and reintegration with friends and the social environment.” Broken down, his costs are \$2,975 per week for 35 hours of psychotherapy, which includes diagnostic testing and reports, family counseling, and group therapy; \$700 for his assistant; \$400 for car rental and seven days worth of gas; \$200 for food; and \$250 for miscellaneous expenses.

Both in telephone conversations with the authors and in a written statement, the Christian exit counselor involved claimed that during the past three years his personal fee has averaged \$8,750 per case and that he puts in an average of 290 hours per case. “It’s hard to put a price tag on what I do,” he wrote. “I have faced three criminal trials—at enormous cost, and have been sued on a civil level numerous times (also, at great cost to myself and my family). I have never burdened any set of parents to help me with the tremendous costs involved with my legal defense. You must remember that I put my ‘butt on the line’ in every case that involved a snatch (which is the majority of my cases).”

According to his fee schedule, costs associated with a typical case add up to \$27,500. This includes \$3,100 for surveillance; \$13,700 for “Rescue Pick-up/ Security/Deprogramming”; and \$6,200 for miscellaneous expenses that include airline tickets, two vans, one rental vehicle, hotel and food and a week’s rent at a “safe house.” The \$4,500 fee for the psychotherapist was included in his fee schedule.

This exit counselor’s fee is fairly typical and in line with most others. According to another fee schedule given to us by a parent who used a different exit counselor, the average case—which includes exit counseling, security, legal fees, rehabilitation, airline fares, rental vehicles, and miscellaneous expenses—runs from \$19,000 to \$23,400. This fee schedule also makes clear another point that illustrates the nature of the business: they want to make it very difficult for anyone to trace the financial transaction to them. It states: “All payments are to be made in cash or cashier’s check. This will be discussed with you in detail prior to the planned intervention. We do not accept traveler’s cheques or personal checks unless there has been a stated agreement to do so.” Others have told us that most agreements between clients and exit counselors are on a cash-only basis, and that most agreements are oral, not written.

### **ARE CHRISTIANS SOMETIMES TARGETED?**

What about critics’ charges that evangelicals are sometimes being targeted by exit counselors? We believe there is some merit to these concerns. There is talk among some in the anticult movement that members of certain evangelical groups such as Jews for Jesus, Campus Crusade for Christ, Young Life, and others have become the targets of deprogrammings. Jews for Jesus has been especially hard hit by deprogrammers. (One Jewish exit counselor from Arizona told us he had done “many” Jews for Jesus cases.)

In addition, members of mainline denominations have also been subjected to deprogramming.<sup>11</sup> Certain anticult groups have withdrawn public support for Ted Patrick as he has been linked with deprogrammings over the years involving increasingly mainstream religious organizations.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Paul Martin, founder of the previously mentioned

Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center, agrees that some Christian groups are being targeted for deprogramming or exit counseling, and part of the reason is that “a lot of parents don’t understand evangelical Christians.”

Recently some parents contacted Martin to get him involved in a case where a young woman joined Campus Crusade for Christ, went away with the group for the summer, and never wrote her parents. “It caused a family disruption,” Martin said in an October 3, 1991 interview. “The family thought their daughter joined a cult,” he said, adding: “But I had to explain to the parents that in their daughter’s newly saved zeal she had incorrectly diminished her responsibility to her parents.” Eventually that situation rectified, he said.

In another related situation Martin said that a self-proclaimed “evangelical exit counselor” sent him (and several other evangelical cult watchers) a video tape of his talking a female Jews for Jesus member out of that group. Although it bothered him to hear the woman’s allegations of authority abuses within that organization he was more disturbed by the exit counselor’s lack of concern to steer the woman toward evangelical Christianity. Instead he seemed to foster her return to her roots in Judaism. Martin said he confronted the exit counselor about it. “I told him he was doing no one a service in taking on a case like that,” Martin said. “If I were an exit counselor, would I do a case involving Jews for Jesus?” he asked. “No. I think there are better ways of handling such instances.”

### **OTHER PROBLEMS**

Additional problems facing the evolving “profession” of exit counseling (some of which we’ve already alluded to) are a lack of appropriate educational credentials, deficient accountability structures, inadequate follow-up, and the fact that certain evangelical exit counselors believe it “unethical” to guide cult members into a fuller understanding of correct biblical doctrine.

On educational credentials, we know of only one prominent exit counselor, Steve Hassan, who has advanced master’s-degree level training in counseling. He is correct in calling for more professionalism in the field. This would give greater credibility to an occupation that is often associated with shadowy operations.

Although we have already touched on the issue of accountability, we should comment on how this relates to the handful of Christian exit counselors operating in the field. While these claim to be practicing evangelicals, the truth is that most of them are *not* accountable to the body of Christ for their activities. One professing Christian told us he seldom goes to church because he’s away most weekends on cult cases. He also didn’t have any kind of accountability group back home praying for him. His church was unaware of the fees he charged and the types of cases he was involved with. (This situation was not unlike another prominent Christian exit counselor from the West Coast.)

Some former cult members who received exit counseling have complained that after they were deprogrammed, they never heard from the exit counselor again. These Christian counselors were not available to answer deeper theological questions once their initial mission was accomplished. Furthermore, in many cases exit counselors deal only with mind control issues, leaving the former cult members to determine for themselves what constitutes correct biblical doctrine.

### **A WARNING ABOUT WORKING WITH EXIT COUNSELORS**

Christian ministries to cults need to be wary when dealing with exit counselors. Most exit counselors’ livelihoods are gleaned from the information they receive from others. In other words, when they work on a case, most will bring dozens of newspaper clippings, research files, and video tapes of news reports and testimonies from former cult members to show to cult victims. Often they receive these materials directly from cult ministries, who provide data and files on various cults with the hope that the materials will be used to the glory of God. Many major countercult ministries and evangelical cult researchers are visited often by exit counselors who hope to gain access to their information. One of the most prominent exit counselors operates in a vacuum cleaner-like manner, scooping up information from sources wherever he goes. He travels with a copier and has, on occasion, been able to work his way into the file rooms of various countercult ministries and into the research files of evangelical leaders.

Christian ministries need to consider how their contributors would respond to the fact that some of their material has facilitated kidnapping cases in which exit counselors were paid more than \$20,000. We urge caution in making research files available to most exit counselors unless assurances can be made that such information will not be used in unethical situations.

### **WHAT IS THE CHURCH TO DO?**

We have seen that exit counseling has become a big business mingled with instances of unethical activity. It has done so, at least in part, because the church has allowed it. The church, with the assistance of evangelical countercult ministries and other available resources, should be doing more to equip its own members in the areas of developing discernment skills, offering Christ-centered exit counseling, and providing the necessary rehabilitative environment.

For the Christian, the cults represent more than merely a social or psychological problem. In a very central way, they are a *spiritual* problem. While we can learn much from our secular colleagues about the dynamics of cultism, as evangelical Christians we should be in the forefront of concern about the need to get people out of cults. A truly Christian concern proceeds from an eternal perspective. What good is accomplished if people are extricated from cults but their spiritual needs (which drove them into the cults in the first place), including the question of their eternal destiny, are left unattended? Randall Watters has rightly noted that there is a “subtle hostility” to even legitimate forms of exit counseling on the part of some Christians, while many others are afraid of it. More of us need to be available to cultists who are open to leaving their group, so that as they abandon a false hope they will not be left with no hope. Rather, we can share with them the gospel hope that “does not disappoint” (Rom. 5:5).

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> On file at the offices of the Coalition for Religious Freedom in Alexandria, Virginia.

<sup>2</sup> However, this is a gray area.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Carol Giambalvo, 25 September 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Steve Cannon, Southwest Director of the Personal Freedom Outreach, 29 September 1989.

<sup>5</sup> See “A History: Citizens Freedom Foundation,” *The Journal for Personal Freedom* (1985) 1, 1:1.

<sup>6</sup> Steven Hassan, “Strategic intervention Therapy: A New Form of Exit Counseling Which Is Better than Deprogramming.” Unpublished paper, 1991, 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

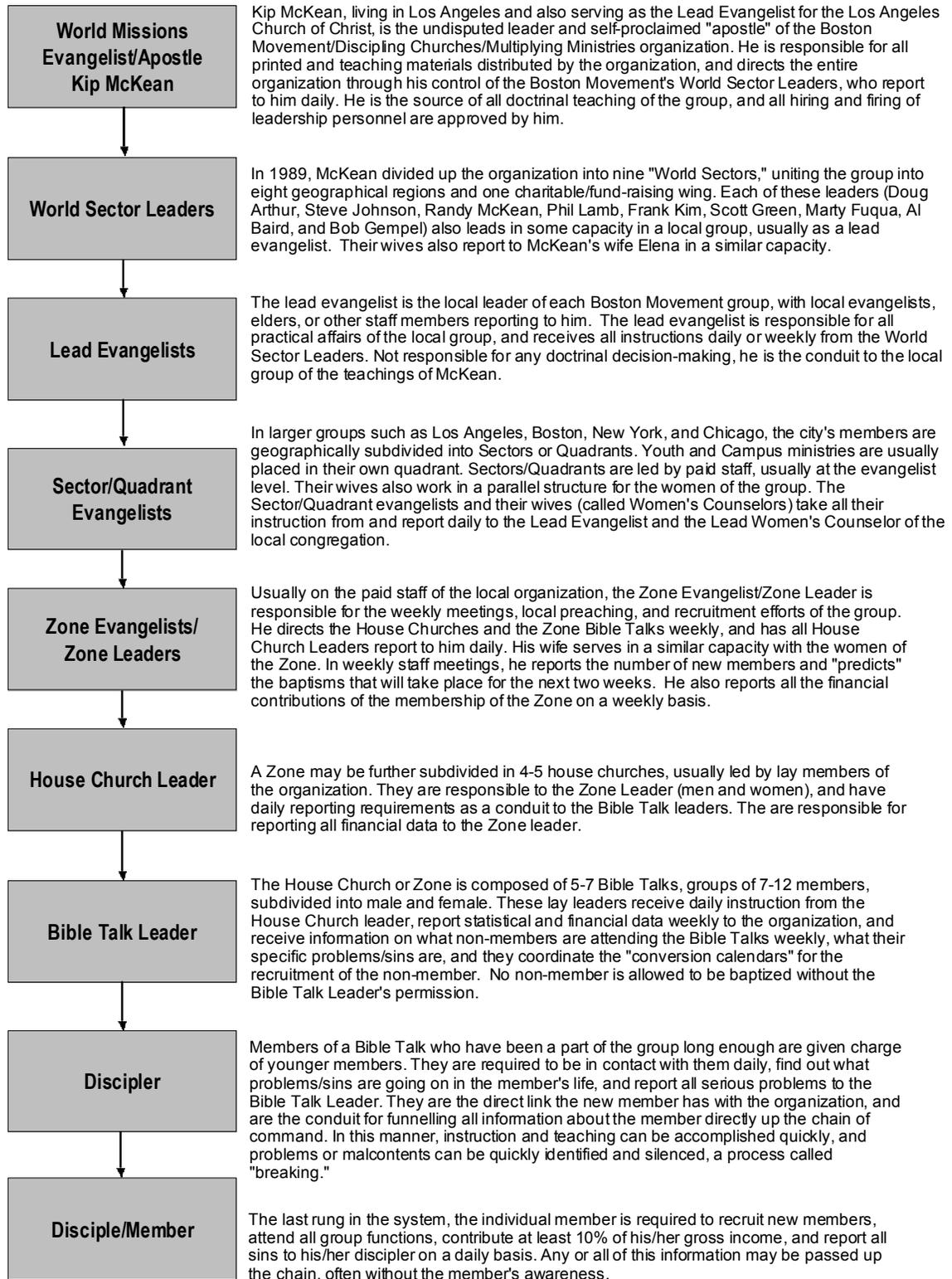
<sup>9</sup> Tom Gorman, “A Year and a Court Fight Later, Brown Family Still Torn,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Jan. 1991, b3.

<sup>10</sup> Holdgreiwe says he is a former member of the Unification Church who left on his own accord.

<sup>11</sup> Included among these are Episcopalians, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and Seventh-day Adventists. See John T. Biermans, *The Odyssey of New Religious Movements* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press), 56.

<sup>12</sup> According to vol. 1, issue 1 of the *Journal for Personal Freedom*, Patrick was barred from Canada for the attempted deprogramming of a Roman Catholic woman. He has also been linked with the deprogramming of two Greek Orthodox women (Biermans, 56).

### The Boston Movement: Structure and Lines of Authority



# A Word Study on Church Leadership

## I. Position of a Leader (Terms which designate leaders and the place or power he possesses; usually noun forms)

GREEK WORD	BASIC MEANING	NEW TESTAMENT USES	APPLICATION TO LEADERS
Arche (noun) <b>avrch,</b>	Beginning, first place, highest rank; the stress is in power and authority	Luke 20:20; used of civil rulers, "authority of the Gentiles"; Colossians 1:16 "rulers" often spiritual forces of evil, Ephesians 6:12	Not applied to New Testament leaders
Archegos (noun) <b>avrchgo, j</b>	Author or source, a chief, leader, prince	Acts 3:15; 5:31; Hebrews 2:10 (of Jesus, "author, prince")	Not applied to New Testament leaders
Archon (participle/subject form) <b>avrcon</b>	Ruler, prince, authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christ, Revelation 1:5 ("ruler" of the kings);</li> <li>of Roman and Jewish officials, Romans 13:3; Matthew 9:18; Luke 8:41 ("ruler" of the synagogue);</li> <li>of evil spirits, Matthew 9:34 ("prince" of demons).</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p> <p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p> <p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p>
Archo (verb) <b>a; rcw</b>	To rule, to begin, to initiate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christ, Romans 15:12 (one "to rule" over);</li> <li>of civil rulers, Mark 10:42 (rulers "lord" it over).</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p> <p>Rejected as applied to leaders</p>
Arch- <b>avrc-</b>	Often combined with another term to form the basic meaning of primacy or superiority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christ, 1 Peter 5:4 ("chief" shepherd); Hebrews 2:17 ("high" priest);</li> <li>of Jewish religious leaders, Matthew 26:57; Mark 5:22.</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p> <p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p>
Exousia (noun) <b>evxousi, a</b>	Freedom or right to act, authority, ruling power, official power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of God, Acts 1:7; Romans 9:21; Jude 25;</li> <li>of Jesus, Matthew 7:29; Matthew 28:18;</li> <li>of civil rulers, Luke 20:20; Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1;</li> <li>of all Christians, John 1:12 (the "right" to become children of God); 1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:13 (everything is "permissible", rights that Paul limited in this context);</li> <li>of disciples, Matthew 10:1 (over demons);</li> <li>of Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:8; 13:10 ("authority" . . . for building you up).</li> </ul>	Not applied to New Testament leaders (in all four usages)
Exousiazō (participle used as a subject) <b>evxousi, azw</b>	Having the right or power over someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of civil rulers, Luke 22:25 (exercise "authority" over).</li> </ul>	Rejected as applied to leaders

<p>Katexousiazō (verb) <b>katexousia, zw</b></p>	<p>Exercising power over someone, esp. in the political arena</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of civil rulers, Mark 10:42.</li> </ul>	<p>Rejected as applied to leaders</p>
<p>Dunastes (noun) <b>duna, sthj</b></p>	<p>Power, ruler, one who is able</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of God, 1 Timothy 6:15;</li> <li>• of demonic forces, Ephesians 6:12;</li> <li>• of all Christians, who have power from God, by the Spirit, and the cross, 2 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 3:16;</li> <li>• of human rulers, Luke 1:52; Acts 8:27.</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders (in all five usages)</p>
<p>Episkopos (noun) <b>evpi, skopoj</b></p> <p>Episkeptomai (verb) <b>evpiske, pto mai</b></p>	<p>Overseer, from the root word "to look at, pay close attention, superintend, guard." The word stresses active and responsible care.</p> <p>To look at carefully, to visit, to see to the needs of, to care for.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of Jesus, 1 Peter 2:25;</li> <li>• of church leaders, Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:7.</li> <li>• of God in sending Jesus, Hebrews 2:6;</li> <li>• of all Christians for one another, James 1:27; Hebrews 12:15; Matthew 25:26.</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to elders</p> <p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p> <p>Not applied to New Testament leaders</p>
<p>Diakonos (noun) <b>dia, konoj</b></p> <p>Diakoneo (verb) <b>diakone, w</b></p>	<p>Servant, table-waiter, minister. This is the predominant word for every leadership role (and every other role, for that matter), in the New Testament church</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of Jesus, Romans 15:8; Luke 22:27</li> <li>• of apostles and prophets, Ephesians 3:7; 1 Timothy 1:12;</li> <li>• of evangelists, Colossians 4:17; 2 Timothy 4:5; 2 Corinthians 4:1;</li> <li>• of all Christians, Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:5; 1 Peter 4:10;</li> <li>• of special servants or deacons, Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8; Romans 16:1 (feminine form); cf. Acts 6:2-4.</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to apostles and prophets</p> <p>Applied to evangelists</p> <p>Applied to all Christians</p> <p>Applied to deacons</p>
<p>Katakuriēontes (participle used as a subject) <b>katakuriēu, ontej</b></p> <p>Katakuriēuo (verb) <b>katakuriēu, w</b></p>	<p>One who is lord or master over others</p> <p>To bring under, to master, to gain dominion over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of elders (refused to them), 1 Peter 5:3;</li> <li>• of disciples (refused to them), Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:42.</li> </ul>	<p>Rejected as applied to leaders</p> <p>Rejected as applied to leaders</p>
<p>Kratos (noun) <b>kra, toj</b></p>	<p>Power, might, rule, sovereignty; compare modern use of "autocrat"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of God, 1 Timothy 6:16;</li> <li>• of Jesus, Colossians 1:11;</li> <li>• of the Word of God, Acts 19:20;</li> <li>• of Satan, Hebrews 2:14.</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders (in all four usages)</p>
<p>Kubernetes (noun) <b>kubernh, thj</b></p>	<p>Administration, government, from word for steersman or pilot</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of a gift to be used in the church, 1 Corinthians 12:28;</li> <li>• of a literal ship's pilot, Acts 27:11</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied to New Testament leaders (in both usages)</p>

<p>Poimen (noun) <b>poimh, n</b></p> <p>Poimaino (verb) <b>poimai, nw</b></p>	<p>One who tends flocks or herds, shepherd, stress on personal involvement, in patient care, devotion and integrity To tend, to feed, to guard or protect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of Jesus, John 10; 1 Peter 2:24;</li> <li>• of church leaders, Ephesians 4:11</li> <li>• of elders, Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-4</li> <li>• of all Christians, Matthew 18:10-14; Luke 11:23</li> </ul>	<p>Not applied Applied to pastor/teachers Applied to elders Applied to all Christians</p>
<p>Prohistamenos (participle used as a subject) <b>proi&lt;sta, me noj</b></p> <p>Prohistemi (verb) <b>proi&lt;sthmi</b></p>	<p>Root from "to go first," to lead, to preside or rule. A related idea is to stand or go before in order to assist, protect, or care for.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of a grace/gift, Romans 12:8;</li> <li>• of informal leaders, Ephesians 4:11 "pastor/teachers"</li> <li>• of elders, Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-4</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to all Christians Applied to pastor/teachers</p> <p>Applied to elders</p>
<p>Presbuteros (noun) <b>presbu, tero j</b></p>	<p>Older, men of wisdom and judgment; in Jewish and Greek society, men who made decisions and who were representatives of the people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of Jewish leaders, Luke 7:3;</li> <li>• of older men in general, Titus 2:2; 1 Peter 5:5;</li> <li>• of leaders in the church, 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22; 20:17.</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to elders</p>
<p>Hegoumenos (participle used as a verb) <b>h`gou, menoj</b></p> <p>Hegeomai (verb) <b>h`ge, omai</b></p>	<p>A leader, one who leads, from the word meaning to lead or to guide. Used of princes, military commanders, rulers. A Second meaning of the verb is "to think, consider, esteem," hence "esteemed ones"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of any disciple who leads, Luke 22:26 ("serve");</li> <li>• of Joseph in Egypt, Acts 7:10;</li> <li>• of brothers in the church, Acts 15:22;</li> <li>• of church leaders, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24.</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to leaders</p> <p>Applied to leaders</p>

**II. Function of a Leader** (Note: many of these words are verb forms that are covered in Section I)

GREEK WORD	BASIC MEANING	NEW TESTAMENT USES	APPLICATION TO LEADERS
<p>Antilambano (verb) <b>avntilamba, nomai</b></p> <p>Antilempsis (verb) <b>avnti, lhmy ij</b></p>	<p>To aid, to assist, to help.</p> <p>One who aids, assists, helps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of elders and all other Christians, Acts 20:35;</li> <li>• of a spiritual gift, 1 Corinthians 12:28.</li> </ul>	<p>Applied to leaders</p> <p>Not used in New Testament</p>

Agrupneo (verb) <b>avgrupne, w</b>	To be awake, alert, to keep watch over, to guard, to care for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of all disciples in their tasks, Mark 12:33-34;</li> <li>• of Christians in prayer, Ephesians 6:18;</li> <li>• of leaders (elders), Hebrews 13:17.</li> </ul>	Applied to leaders
Epimeleomai (verb) <b>evpimele, o mai</b>	To care for, to take care of.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:34;</li> <li>• of elders, equated with "rule" in 1 Timothy 3:15.</li> </ul>	Not used in New Testament Applied to leaders
Epitage (noun) <b>evpitagh,</b>  Diatasso (verb) <b>diata, ssw</b>  Prostasso (verb) <b>prosta, ssw</b>	The order or command of a superior; taken from the root word for order, "tasso" <b>tassw</b> .  To order, decide, regulate, rule.  To order, of those who have the right to command.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of God, Romans 16:26; frequent use in New Testament;</li> <li>• used by Paul in his refusal to command other Christians, 1 Corinthians 7:25, 2 Corinthians 8:8; Philemon 8;</li> <li>• of Titus the evangelist in a phrase meaning "with all impressiveness," Titus 2:15.</li> <li>• of Jesus, Luke 8:55; Matthew 11:1;</li> <li>• of Paul, to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 11:34; 16:1; to Titus, Titus 1:5.</li> <li>• of God, Acts 17:26; by Peter, Acts 10:33, 36.</li> </ul>	Not used in New Testament  Rejected as applied to leaders/apostles  Not used in New Testament disconnected from the message Not used in New Testament Applied to an apostle  Not used in New Testament
Kopiontes (participle used as a subject) <b>kopiw/ntej</b> Kopiao (verb) <b>kopia, w</b>	One who works hard at manual labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of Paul, 1 Corinthians 4:12; 15:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; Colossians 1:29;</li> <li>• of men and women with Paul, Romans 16:6, 12;</li> <li>• of informal leaders, 1 Corinthians 16:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; cf. Colossians 4:13; Acts 20:35.</li> </ul>	Not used in New Testament  Not used in New Testament Applied to leaders
Oikonomos (noun) <b>oivkono, mo j</b>  Oikodomeo (verb) <b>oivkodome, w</b>	From the verb to manage, regulate, administer; a steward or manager;  Lit., to build a house, to build up; to contribute to advancement, to edify.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of public officials, Romans 16:23;</li> <li>• of Paul, 1 Corinthians 4:1; cf. Ephesians 3:1-6;</li> <li>• of elders, Titus 1:7;</li> <li>• of Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:8;</li> <li>• of Christian prophets, 1 Corinthians 14:3, 24;</li> <li>• of all Christians, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14; Ephesians 4:12, 16, 29.</li> </ul>	Not applied to leaders Not applied to leaders Applied to leaders Not applied to leaders Applied only to prophets Not applied to leaders exclusively

Katartizo (verb) <b>katarti, zw</b>	From a word meaning suitable for a purpose, to equip, to unite or to bind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of God's word, 2 Timothy 3:17;</li> <li>• of Paul for converts, 1 Thessalonians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 13:9;</li> <li>• of Christians with one another, Galatians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 13:11;</li> <li>• of evangelists, pastors and teachers, Ephesians 4:12.</li> </ul>	Not applied to leaders Not applied to leaders  Not applied to leaders  Applied to leaders
Noutheteo (verb) <b>nougete, w</b>  Nouthetountes (participle used as a subject) <b>nougetou/n tej</b>	To impress upon the mind urgently, to counsel, to warn.  One who admonishes, warns, instructs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of all Christians to one another, Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:15;</li> <li>• of informal church leaders, 1 Thessalonians 5:12.</li> </ul>	Not applied to leaders exclusively  Applied to leaders
Parakaleo (verb) <b>parakale, w</b>	To call to one's side, to beseech, to exhort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• of God, 2 Corinthians 1:3ff; of Jesus, 1 John 2:1; of Holy Spirit, John 14:26;</li> <li>• of Paul, Romans 12:1 and quite frequently;</li> <li>• of evangelists, 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Colossians 4:8; 2 Timothy 4:2;</li> <li>• of spiritual gifts and prophets, Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 14:3;</li> <li>• of elders, Titus 1:9.</li> </ul>	Not applied to leaders  Applied to Paul Applied to leaders  Applied to those spiritually gifted Applied to elders

### III. Response to Leaders

GREEK WORD	BASIC MEANING	NEW TESTAMENT USES	APPLICATION TO LEADERS
Eidenai (verb) <b>eivde, nai</b>	From word "to know, to be acquainted," to respect. (Perfect form of <b>oi; da</b> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christians to leaders, 1 Thessalonians 5:12.</li> </ul>	used
Hegeisthai (verb) <b>h`gei/sqai</b>	To consider, to regard, esteem. Same root word as <b>h`ge, omai</b> —translated leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christians to leaders, 1 Thessalonians 5:12.</li> </ul>	used
Hupakouo (verb) <b>u`pakou, w</b> Hupakoe (noun) <b>u`pakoh,</b>	To obey; literally, to hear under, used of slaves answering the door, Acts 12:13. Obedience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of slaves, children, wives, Ephesians 6:1, 5; Colossians 3:20; 1 Peter 3:6;</li> <li>of Christians to God's Word, Acts 6:7; Romans 10:16;</li> <li>to God, Romans 1:5, 15, 18; 16:26</li> <li>to Paul's rebuke, 2 Corinthians 2:9; 7:15; 10:6.</li> </ul>	not applied to leaders not applied to leaders applied to Paul
Hupeikete (verb) <b>u`pei, kete</b> Hupeikete (verb) <b>u`pei, kw</b>	To yield, to give way to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christians to leaders (elders), Hebrews 13:17.</li> </ul>	used
Hupotasso (verb) <b>u`pota, ssw</b>	(Active voice): To place under, to subject.  (Middle voice): To subject oneself to, to submit, to follow the divinely willed order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of God and Christ only; Romans 8:20; 1 Corinthians 15:25, 27; Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:8;</li> <li>of wives to husbands, Ephesians 5:22-24</li> <li>of slaves to masters, 1 Peter 2:18;</li> <li>of citizens to rulers, Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1;</li> <li>of one to another, Ephesians 5:21;</li> <li>of Christians to servants/workers, 1 Corinthians 16:15-18;</li> <li>refused to leaders who do not act in live with the truth of the gospel, Galatians 2:5.</li> </ul>	not applied to leaders not applied to leaders not applied to leaders not applied to leaders not applied to leaders exclusively rejected as applied to leaders
Peithomai (verb, passive form) <b>pei, qomai</b> Peitho (verb, active form) <b>pei, qw</b>	To obey, to be persuaded, to be convinced; passive form of the verb which means to persuade/to convince, Acts 18:4; 19:8. Root word is to believe, to trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of people who accept the gospel, Acts 17:4; 28:24;</li> <li>of Christians to righteousness, Romans 2:8;</li> <li>to the truth, Galatians 5:7;</li> <li>of Christians to leaders, Hebrews 13:17.</li> </ul>	not applied to leaders not applied to leaders not applied to leaders used
Anechomai (verb) <b>avne, comai</b>	To endure, to put up with, to listen willingly (only in the middle voice).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Christians to one another, Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; of hearing exhortation, Hebrews 13:22; Christians to those who teach a different Jesus, 2 Corinthians 11:4, who enslave, etc., 2 Corinthians 11:19-20; this rejected by Paul, 2 Corinthians 11:21.</li> </ul>	not applied to leaders not applied to leaders rejected as regards leaders rejected as regards leaders rejected as regards leaders



## IV. Principles and Applications

The Greek language has leadership terms ranging from rigid authoritarianism to informal personal relationships. This study demonstrates that when the New Testament had such choices available to them they consistently chose the less authoritarian term to describe leaders in the church. The above chart is designed to provide those who want to study this topic with a list of words, scriptures and basic definitions. The study attempts to fairly represent the evidence, even when it has required a change of previous views. Sources for study were:

*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third Edition, Copyright (c) 2000 The University of Chicago Press. Revised and edited by Frederick William Danker base on the Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments un fer frühchristlichen Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English Editions by W.F.Arndt, F.W.Gingrich, and F.W.Danker.

*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Colin Brown, ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971.  
*Theological Wordbook of the New Testament*, G. Kittel, ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1964.

The most important application of this study is to enable the reader of our english translations to capture the "flavor" of the leadership words in the New Testament and, thereby guard against reading into these words meanings which are based on our experiences or preferences. In addition to this primary application, the following principles and applications are proposed as correctives of erroneous leadership views which are currently taught in the so-called "discipling movement."

**Principle:** New Testament leadership focuses in service, hard work, caring inter-personal relationships, and examples. These are the things which elicit respect, trust, imitation, and willing obedience. New Testament leadership does not consist of highly structured positions of power and authority which require absolute obedience to rules and opinions. Evidence for this is seen in the following:

- 1) Leadership terms are usually functional (actions) rather than positional (titles). Notice how present participles are used to describe leaders by what they do - "the ones working hard among you".
- 2) Emphasis is given to hard work, service, and responsible concern to meet needs of each other in the body.

**Application:** While care should be taken to encourage efficient working of the body, its simple structure as an organism must not be cast aside in favor of a highly structured authoritarian pyramid. Even the apparent biblical precedent of the Jethro principle (Exodus 18) should be viewed as an Old Testament model for the nation that is superceded by the New Testament body of Christ.

**Principle:** Words of inherent authority which require absolute obedience are always reserved as the right of God and the Lord Jesus through the word. This absolute power of deity is tempered by the revelation of mercy and grace which is accepted in the obedience of faith. When terms of absolute authority are seen in human rulers they are examples which Christian leaders are to reject.

### Applications:

1. Any concept of an "umbrella of authority" (government, master-slaves, husband-wives, parents-children, and leaders-members) which is expressed in the same type of leadership and response is clearly false.
2. The self-giving love of God in Christ and the "weakness" (by human wisdom) of the cross are factors which radically alter the Christian view of leadership (Cf. II Cor. 11:1ff; 11:16-12:13; I Peter 2:21-25)
3. Discipleship expressed in terms of a "discipler"\* who must be fully obeyed in everything by her/his "disciple"\* is unbiblical. Such unqualified obedience belongs only to God and is expressed by faith (Rom.1:5; 16:25). \*Jesus rejected this use of "discipler" and "disciple" since He is the only Master (Discipler) and we all are brothers (Matt. 23:8-11).
4. Every Christian must be guided to make their own faith response to Christ (II Cor.

1:24). Any demand or system which is contrary to this faith system which is our freedom in Christ is not to be submitted to (Gal. 2:5,14ff).

5. Evangelists--and any other Christian--should speak the divine word of scripture with all impressiveness/commandingness (Titus 2:15) but they are not, thereby, possessors of authority over the church or its elders.

**Principle:** A variety of leaders serve, equip, and guide the body of Christ at the congregational level. As congregations mature the primary responsibility of leadership is entrusted to a group of men called elders, overseers, and pastors. They are called to a servant leadership of/with the body rather than an authoritarian leadership over the body.

#### Applications:

1. Except for their decision-making and management responsibilities all the functions of elders are also to be exercised by every Christian. This suggests that elders are people already involved in informal leadership who are recognized and entrusted with leadership by the body - not by some higher official within or outside the congregation.
2. In view of this fact it is proper for congregations led by their elders (or congregations without elders) to appoint people to work in areas which are part of the elders' work (such as counseling, teaching, equipping, etc.). Some may be employed full time to do one or more of these works - a staff. They should exercise the same qualities of leadership as any other Christian since they do not acquire any special or inherent authority by virtue of being full-time ministers (servants). Whether deacons (special servants) or staff they should have authority ("right to act") within the limits of the work assigned to them.
3. The body functions best when leadership flows from and responds to the diversity of gifts in the body. Therefore, any congregation whose program does not recognize and utilize this diversity must not judge acceptability with God and worth in

the body on the basis of conformity to one program.

Note: A related topic to church leadership is the question of the relationship of Paul and his co-workers (missionary team) to the permanent structure of the church. A detailed examination of this relationship is found in Robert Banks: *Paul's Idea of Community*, Eerdmans, 1980, chapters 15, 16. Banks concludes that Paul did not make this team "the organizational link between the local churches suggesting the basis for a wider conception of *ekklesia* of a "denominational" kind" (p. 170). The rejection of local autonomy and growing authority over the churches by leaders in the discipling movement is contrary to New Testament practice.



## AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE CHURCH

by Byron Fike

Among discipling churches the issue of authority has created much division. One of the great difficulties in understanding much of the discussion involved in this controversy is a matter of semantics. Words such as "disciple," "advise," "repentance," and "submission" have differing meanings depending upon which side of the controversy one stands. The purpose of this paper is to examine the subject of authority relative to leadership positions within the church. The definition of authority under discussion is, "the right to control, command or determine."<sup>1</sup>

When authority is injected into a discipling relationship the discipler is given the right to bind not only principles of scripture but also matters of opinion upon the disciple.<sup>2</sup> Submission in such matters is not dependent upon whether the discipler is deserving or not, "because the authority comes from God; therefore, we are in reality submitting to God."<sup>3</sup> When one is told "to submit to a certain set of directions . . . and submits to the directions that he agrees with and ignores the others" he is viewed as disobedient and rebellious.<sup>4</sup> He is not simply rebelling against his discipler's opinion, he is seen as rebelling against God since "our obedience and submission are just as though we are serving the Lord (Ephesians 6:5-8); the authorities which exist have been established by God (Romans 13:1)."<sup>5</sup>

The implications of such teachings demand that a solid Biblical foundation be found that supports such a system. This has been attempted<sup>6</sup> but, as will be seen later in this paper, the scriptures used to support the authoritarian system of discipleship do not back up propositions set forth.

## Authority and Discipleship

Jesus drew a clear contrast between differing styles of leadership when he said,

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:25-28 NIV; see also Mk. 10:42-45, Lk. 22:25-26).

The two differing styles could be termed *Authoritarian Leadership* and *Servant Leadership*. Authoritarian Leadership argues from position. One must submit to the leader because he possesses authority. To fail to submit would be to subject oneself to possible punishment. Certainly the Bible recognized civil government as an authoritarian system.

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. (Romans 13:1-2)

Christians are commanded to submit to the authoritarian system of civil government. However, Jesus makes it clear that in His kingdom leaders will not lead in that way. Instead they will serve as servant Leaders. It has been argued that in Matt. 20:25-28 Jesus was not denying that men would possess authority in the church, rather, he was seeking to correct the abuse that such authority could create when given to men.<sup>7</sup> Actually, just the opposite is true! The word translated “authority” in Matt. 20:26 and Mk. 10:42 is scarcely found in secular Greek Literature and occurs only twice in the New Testament. In secular Greek the word was used to mean, “not the misuse of power, but its ‘possession and exercise.’”<sup>8</sup> Jesus is telling the Apostles that the kingdom is not built on the authoritarian model.

Jesus said that he was the sole possessor of “all authority” (Mt. 28:18). The Apostles had authority only by means of the power given to them over demonic forces (Mt. 10:1, Mk. 3:14-15, 6:7, Lk. 9:1) and the message they possessed. Jesus told them,

All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you (Jn. 16: 25-26).

He further promised them,

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you (John 16:12-14).

Jesus promised the Apostles that by means of the Holy Spirit they would be instructed with the authoritative message after his departure. In combatting those who were challenging the Apostle Paul’s authoritative message in Corinth, Paul boasts of the authority the Lord had given him. He calls it, “the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down” (2 Cor. 10:8; see also 2 Cor. 13:10). In Acts 2:42 one reads that the early church devoted themselves to the “apostles’ teaching.” They were not devoting themselves to the opinions and judgments of men but the authoritative instructions of the Lord Jesus. Paul recognized that he was not to bind his opinions upon others. In 1 Corinthians 7:25-28 Paul, speaking in reference to virgins, comments that he has no command from the Lord, however, he gives his opinion;

Because of the present crisis, I think it is good for you to remain as you are. Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned.

Paul is practicing what Jesus taught. He did not “Lord it over” or “exercise authority” over the Corinthians. His advice to them certainly sounds like good advice but one was not inherently rebellious or prideful should he reject it. Paul drew a clear distinction between the instructions that came from

the Lord (authoritative) and those that came from Paul (opinion).

### Authority and Church Leaders

The basic Greek word translated “authority” is *exousia*. This is the word used in Matt. 28:18 where Jesus proclaims, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” It is used 102 times in the New Testament but never in reference to any church leader other than the Apostles. There are seven other words translated “authority” in the NIV. Likewise, these are not used to refer to anyone in the church as having an authoritative position. Four times they are used to say one should not be in a position of authority.<sup>9</sup> Some have pointed to Titus 2:15 as a prooftext proving that Titus occupied an authoritative position.<sup>10</sup> The text states, “These, then, are the things that you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.” The word translated “authority” in this passage is *epitage*. The lexical definition renders this as, “with all impressiveness.”<sup>11</sup> Titus is to speak authoritatively as he presents the message of Christ. Paul is not giving him an authoritative position.

Hebrews 13:17 has often been used to promote the idea of authoritative positions within the church.<sup>12</sup> The NIV reads, “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority.” Much of the confusion results from the translator’s inclusion of the word “authority” into the text. There is no word for authority in Heb. 13:17 in the Greek text. “Authority” is not found in the translations of the RSV, NASV, NEB, KJV, ASV or NKJV.

Translators are not immune to reading into the text their own presuppositions. An example would be the KJV’s reading of “unknown tongues” in 1 Cor. 14. Rather than help the English reader better understand the phenomena of speaking in tongues, the KJV confused the issue with their inclusion of “unknown” into the text. Why insist upon using the word “authority” to describe the function of leaders in the church when Jesus obviously did not? If church leaders had inherent authority associated with their positions Jesus would have said so. Some have said that even though the word “authority” is not used it is implied that church leaders possess authority. Several passages have been used to support this idea. The only way to find these implications is to begin with the presupposition that authoritative positions exist in the church of Christ and interpret the passages in question to fit the presupposition.

One such passage is 1 Thess. 5:12-13, “Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you.” The word translated “over you” is *prohistemi*.

Paul does not identify the specific persons he makes reference to in the letter. The same word is translated in 1 Tim. 3:4,5 as “manage his own family,” and in 1 Tim. 5:17 as “direct the affairs of the church.” All three of these statements refer to elders. It would not be too presumptuous to assume that in the Thessalonian letter he is referring to the Shepherds. There is no inherent authority in the term *prohistemi*. In addition to its primary meaning, “be at the head (of), rule, direct,” it also means “manage, conduct,... be concerned about, care for, give aid,...busy oneself with; engage in.”<sup>13</sup> Notice how Paul uses this word in his Letter to Titus, “...so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good,” (3:8) and “Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good.” Paul does not tell the Thessalonians to “respect” and “highly regard” these leaders because of their position. Rather, he uses three terms to describe the function of these leaders: *kopiao* (work hard, toil, strive, struggle); *prohistemi* (over you, concerned about you, care for you, give you aid); and *noutheteo* (admonish, warn, instruct). By his use of *prohistemi* Paul is describing one of the functions of these leaders. He is not ascribing to them positions of authority.

The Thessalonian leaders are obviously deserving of recognition and therefore should receive special esteem and love. The same is true of Paul’s asking the Corinthians to submit to Stephanas and everyone else who “joins in the work and labors at it” (1 Cor. 16:15-16). Submission does not necessarily imply authority on the part of the one being submitted to. Hence, Christians are told to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21). The same is true of the obedience and submission required by Heb. 13:17. One obeys his leaders because Jesus is ruling in his heart, not because the leader has an authoritative position.

Another passage used to “prove” the idea of implied authority is Titus 1:5, “the reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.” Nothing is said in the letter to indicate how this “appointing” was to take place. To say that Titus occupied an authoritative position would be an assumption. To read such into the text would violate the principles of good exegesis. Carrol Osborne has noted,

The verb *kathistemi* in v. 5 also occurs in Acts 6:3 where the apostles mention their intention “to appoint” certain men. Now it is evident that they mean only “to install” with this verb, for in Acts 6:5 the seven were selected by the

people, but “installed” by the apostles with laying on of hands and prayer.<sup>14</sup>

To say Titus selected the men, disciplined them, appointed them, and continued to disciple them is truly a fantastic conjecture without biblical warrant. The proof-text most often quoted for discipling relationships is Matt. 28:18-20. To find authority in the discipler over the disciple is to say what Jesus never said! Jesus said, “All authority has been given to me.” Discipling relationships must allow Jesus to have all authority while teaching one another to obey everything Jesus commanded. The relationship between a discipler and a disciple must be governed by Jesus’ statement, “for you have only one Master and you are all brothers” (Matt. 23:8). In a similar way Timothy had no authority other than the authority of Jesus when he was told, “stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer...” (1 Tim. 1:3). Or when he was told, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tim. 2:2). Timothy possessed the same authority every Christian possesses today—the authoritative teaching of Jesus.

### Authority and the Word

God saw fit to preserve the authority of Jesus for all generations by providentially preserving some of the writings of the Apostles and other men inspired by the Holy Spirit. These have come to be known as the New Testament. By using the principles of good exegesis one may discover the authoritative message of Jesus for his life. The Bereans understood this principle when they “received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (Acts 17:11). The Scriptures are intended by God to be our only source of authority today.

In determining a Bible truth, one must first ask, “Is it right/biblical?” Of secondary consideration is the question, “Will it work?” When these questions are reversed it leads one to a perverted understanding of Scripture and contributes to one’s following the doctrines of men. There are certain means of interpretation which are invalid in terms of discovering truth. One such means is allegory. Allegory occurs when instead of concentrating on the clear meaning of a certain text, one inserts another meaning into the text. Stories such as Jethro-Moses, Saul-David, and rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem were not written to teach lessons on church organization, submissive discipleship, or reconstructing an existing church. At best such stories can be used to illustrate a point taught

elsewhere in the Scriptures. However, if the point in question cannot be proven elsewhere, Another invalid means of interpretation is proof-text taken out of context. 1 Cor. 3:16-17 does not prove the idea that one should not harm his body. The body Paul has reference to in 1 Cor. 3 is the same body he has been speaking about since Chapter 1—the Church. The proper proof-text to prove the point in question is in 6:19-20. Here Paul is clearly speaking of individual Christians’ physical bodies. By determining what one believes (or wants to believe), and then attempting to prove it by proof-texting, one runs a great risk of believing and practicing doctrines of man’s invention, not God’s. Any teaching that is to be authoritative in the life of a Christian must first be proven to be biblical. Authoritative positions have not been proven to be biblical. To put aside the word of God in this matter is to deny Jesus the Lordship we so loudly proclaim. May we as His followers have faith great enough to do things His way—rather than to be followers of men.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> American College Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1952 ed., s.v. “authority.”

<sup>2</sup> Al Baird, “Authority and Submission, Part VI,” *Boston Church of Christ Bulletin* 8 (October 4, 1987).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Part V, 8 (October 4, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Part VI, 8 (October 11, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Part IV, 8 (September 27, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> Marty Wooten, “Editorial: Authority and Discipling Models,” *Discipleship Magazine* (Fall 1987):4-8.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Werner Foerster, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 2:575.

<sup>9</sup> *katexousiazō* (Matt. 20:25, Mk. 10:42); *exousiazō* (Lk. 22:25), and *authentēo* (1 Tim 1:5).

<sup>10</sup> Wooten, “Authority,” p.7.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed., revised by William F. Arndt, F. Wilber Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 302.

<sup>12</sup> Baird, “Authority, Part III,” 8 (September 20, 1987), and Wooten, “Authority,”

<sup>13</sup> Bauer, *Lexicon*, p. 707.

<sup>14</sup> Carroll D. Osburn, “The ‘Authority’ of Titus,” *Firm Foundation* 97 (May 6, 1980):6.



## An Analysis of Matthew 28:19-20

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These verses which make up the famous "Great Commission" are found in a context after the resurrection of Jesus and prior to his ascension to God. Although there are many critical questions raised by this section<sup>1</sup>, this brief analysis focuses on the following issues: (1) the translation of the aorist passive participle *poreuthentes*; (2) the meaning of the word *disciple* and what it meant to make disciples; (3) the function of the two present active participles *baptizantes* and *didaskontes*.

(1) Since the aorist passive participle depicts an action which has taken place prior to the time of the main verb which in verse 19 is *matheteuw*, it is usually translated by some word such as "having," "after," or "when," in order to show that event has taking place before the event shown in the main verb. This results in a translation such as "having gone, make disciples," or "after you have gone, make disciples," etc. Clearly, to translate the aorist participle in this way means that the "going" to make disciples is secondary to the actual effort to make disciples. This translation is popularized in such expressions as "as you go in your daily life, teaching people, make disciples," rather than it being an imperative "go make disciples." The main objection, however, to translating the aorist passive participle as "go" is that it is not in the imperative mood. It is, in fact, a participle. However, in several places where the main verb is missing the context may call for an imperatival sense from the participle (cf. I Peter 3:7, 9; Ephesians 4:1ff., etc.) but this does not apply to Matthew 28:19 since there is a main verb in the clause *matheteus*. Other considerations, however, clearly show that the aorist passive participle *poreuthentes*, does have an imperatival sense in Matthew 28: 19.

The imperatival character of the participle under question can be seen by examining examples from the Greek Old Testament and from Matthew where a verb in the imperative is preceded by a participle as in Matthew 28:19 where the imperative *matheteusate*

<sup>1</sup> See for example some of the issues raised by Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Composition and Christology of Matt. 28:16-20," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 03(December 1974):573-84 and by Grant R. Osborne, "Redaction Criticism and the Great Commission: A Case Study Toward a Biblical Understanding of Inerrancy," *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 19(Spring 1976):73-85.

is preceded by the participle *poreuthentes*.<sup>2</sup> Several examples of this construction occur in the Septuagint (cf. Genesis 27:13; 37:14; Exodus 5:18, 12:32; 2 Kings (LXX 4 Kings) 2:16;

1 Maccabees 7:7). In Matthew the use of a participle with a main verb in the imperative mood, where the participle takes on an imperatival sense can be seen in 2:8, 13, 10; 5:24; 6:6; 11:4; and 21:2.

One of the clearest examples of this construction is in Matthew 17:27 where Peter is told to "go to the sea and cast . . ." Here the aorist passive participle *poreutheis* occurs with the second aorist active imperative *bale*. In Matthew 28:7 the women are not told "as you go," report to the disciples that Jesus is raised from the dead, but rather, "go and report." When Matthew 28:19 is examined in the light of parallel constructions elsewhere, it is clear that what is being said there is "go and teach" rather than some weakened idea such as "as you go" or "if you happen to be going" teach. There is great urgency shown by the imperatival use of the participle to "go and make disciples."

(2) The function of the aorist active imperative *matheteusate* "make disciples" in verse 19 is not debated in most religious groups except in regard to the previous master and the master to the disciples) is seen at least in the New Testament, to be an overlapping relationship.<sup>3</sup> But more specifically, what did it mean to be a disciple of Jesus, what did one have to know, and how did the transaction take place?

In comparison to the disciples who gathered around Rabbinic teachers, the relation of Jesus to his disciples was quite different. Not only did Jesus call his disciples (in particular the twelve), but also the allegiance was personal. The person of Jesus, who he was, determined the entire nature of discipleship. In contrast, the Rabbis drew followers largely because of their knowledge and methods. While on one hand disciples joined themselves to a Rabbi because of his knowledge and ability, the key factor in the disciples' relationship with Jesus was faith in him.

Another major difference between the disciples of Jesus and the Jewish model of discipleship is that in Judaism discipleship with a master was a transitory stage, the goal being for the disciple to become a

<sup>2</sup>For an excellent discussion of this topic see Cleon Rogers, "The Great Commission," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 130(July 1973):258-67. The examples cited in this study are those of Rogers.

<sup>3</sup>David Daube, "Responsibilities of Master and Disciples in the Gospels," *New Testament Studies* 19 (October 1972):1-15.

respected Rabbi himself, independent from and even superior to his teacher. But with Jesus' disciples, discipleship was not a first step with greater things to come in the future, but was instead the goal and the fulfillment of their destiny in life.<sup>4</sup>

It follows that Christian discipleship has to do with a personal relationship with Jesus based on faith and commitment to him and unlike disciples in Judaism, the initial rink with Jesus is not to be based on his knowledge or methods but instead focused on allegiance to his person. That is the ultimate goal for the true disciple. In the New Testament conversion stories the model of discipleship just discussed is what emerges. The basis for "entry level" discipleship is not full blown knowledge of all aspects of the Christian faith. but rather the consistent picture is that people enter into a relationship with Jesus based on faith, repentance, and baptism. For example, in Acts 2:38 those who are stricken at the realization of their sin in killing Jesus ask what to do. Peter does not follow up with an extensive discussion of how all nations are to be converted by specific methods of evangelism and how disciples are to lead their lives in every minute detail after conversion. Rather, since he is dealing with discipleship at the entry level he simply tells them to repent and be baptized.

In every case of conversion in Acts the focus is on relationship to Jesus first and not on some catechetical process of teaching on various subjects of importance to the church such as Jew/Gentile relationships, how the world is to be converted, or how the church is to be organized—all vital and important topics, but irrelevant for the person becoming a disciple. What that person needed to know was very minimal—that he was a sinner and that by faith, repentance, and baptism he could become a disciple of Christ.

It is assumed that the disciple will grow in knowledge and awareness of other matters of importance to fulfilling discipleship such as the nuts and bolts of evangelism, how to worship acceptably, and how to practice pure religion. If a disciple is to know everything or almost everything before becoming a disciple, then why did Jesus spend three painful years teaching his disciples more fully? Why should Christian leaders today expect that people who become disciples know a plethora of methods, techniques, and church growth strategies in order to become disciples? To say that a person has to know more than that he is lost and can find the Savior by

<sup>4</sup>See the study of discipleship by Karl Heinrich Rengstoff, "Mathetes," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 4, especially pp. 448-52.

faith, repentance, and baptism is to go beyond the teachings of the New Testament.

To contend that those who were baptized without going through catechism (i.e., learning all the proper evangelistic strategies) have to be "rebaptized"<sup>5</sup> even after serving twenty to thirty years as a Christian, but apart from the Boston Movement, is totally inconsistent with the New Testament and actually amounts to a redefinition of "entry level" discipleship in non-biblical terms. On that line of thinking the apostles themselves would have had to be "rebaptized" since it is not until later (Acts 1:8) that the grand strategy for evangelizing the world is given. What about those who became disciples without knowing that? Was theirs an invalid discipleship? Of course not!! They were disciples because they had entered the relationship with Jesus in the same way that all disciples do by faith, repentance, and baptism. To bind more than that is to give a human definition to entry level discipleship. When a person becomes a disciple he must "count the cost" (cf. Matthew 8:18-22, etc.) but the Boston Movement has its own definition of that based on its own subjective outlook and interpretation. Cult leader Jim Jones decreed "count the cost" in a much more severe way than Boston and makes its definition look anemic. It is clear that definitions of such phrases can be made on a sectarian and elitist basis. To require "rebaptism" based on one's subjective definition of the term is wrong headed and divisive. How one "counts the cost" will differ, although certainly it is at the heart of becoming a disciple and of discipleship. For one person "counting the cost" will involve after conversion teaching in a Christian school with lower pay than could otherwise be made; for another it means working long hours helping the terminally ill; for another it means tending unruly children in a home for orphans; for others it will mean focusing on evangelism with all their might. Have they not all "counted the cost"? Why judge a brother or sister not to be a Christian because they interpret "counting the cost" in a way that differs from mine? All love the Lord and by faith cling to him. Are those who do not "specialize" in overt evangelism not disciples and have to be baptized into one narrow definition of what "counting the cost" means? God forbid! No, all these are disciples and serve the Lord. Surely only the most arrogant kind of interpretation would demand "rebaptism" of those who have done what the Bible says to be saved and are serving the Lord in accordance to their talents and gifts.

In Paul's body imagery concept, all Christians are part of one body but various functions attain in the

<sup>5</sup>Or to be truly "baptized" for the first time, in Boston parlance.

body (1 Corinthians 12:12ff.). Because a person is a foot and not an eye does not mean he is not part of the body. Thank God some are called to be evangelists, but thank God also that some “count the cost” by working with children whose bodies are eaten alive with cancer. Who is to say one has counted the cost and not the other? Are they both not members of the body, but using their gifts in different ways? Who has the authority to demand that one who became a Christian years ago be “rebaptized” and become “entry level” Christians when in fact they have “counted the cost” in some way other than that prescribed by the Boston program?

3) In Matthew 28:19-20 those who have decided to follow Jesus are baptized and taught further. The two present participles *baptizontes* and *didaskontes* are variously described as either modal participles (showing the manner by which the making of disciples is to be accomplished) or as circumstantial participles (showing the circumstances by which disciples are made). In either case, the purpose of the participles is to show the means by which the making of disciples is accomplished. Clearly the participle *baptizontes* is iterative, that is, it is done from time to time when converts are made rather than continually. The teaching *didaskontes* is however to be done continually so that the disciples can grow into maturity.

The objective of the teaching is that they will keep “all the things that have been commanded” to them. Since the word “to keep” (*terein*) is a present active infinitive, the idea is that the disciples which are made are to continually keep all that they have been taught. That disciples have to be taught continually indicates that not everything was taught to them at the point of entry into the Christian faith. The passage ends with a tremendous promise: “behold I will be with you all the days until the completion of the age.” The phrase “behold I am with you” is an echo of the statement in Matthew 1:23 about the Lord’s name being Emmanuel which means “God with us.” Matthew’s Gospel opens and closes with the same drastic promise that the Messiah “will be with us.”

### Conclusion

The structure of Matthew 28:19-20 reveals that the commission has to do with the command to “make disciples” augmented by the aorist participle “go” which also is part of the imperative force of the Construction. How the “discipling-making” is to be done is indicated by the two present participles “baptizing” and “teaching.” These verses, when seen in the context of Jesus’ role as teacher, and his followers as learners (“disciples”) suggest that the disciples who are “made” must be completely

devoted and committed to the person of the Lord before they can be baptized and taught further.



## Criteria for Mind Control

Dr. Margaret Singer

### 1. CONTROL OVER TIME

- Especially thinking time
- Techniques to get a person to think about: group beliefs of group

### 2. CREATE A SENSE OF POWERLESSNESS

- Get people away from normal support systems for a period of time
- Provide models of behavior (cult members)
- Use in-group language
- Use of songs, games, stories the person is unfamiliar with or they are modified so that they're unfamiliar

### 3. MANIPULATE REWARDS, PUNISHMENTS, EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO SUPPRESS OLD SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

- Manipulate: social rewards / intellectual rewards
- Manipulate experience: altered states of consciousness / hypnosis
- Hypnosis: speaking patterns, guided imagery, pacing of voice to breathing patterns, parables, stories, repetition, boredom, stop paying attention to distractions, focus inwardly to what's going on inside you
- Chanting, Meditation
- Teach thought-stopping techniques
- Work them up emotionally to a negative state: re-experience past painful events, recall negative actions/sin in past life
- Then rescue them from negative emotion by giving them a new way to live

### 4. MANIPULATE REWARDS, PUNISHMENTS, EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO ELICIT NEW BEHAVIOR

- Models will demonstrate new behavior
- Conformity: dress, language, behavior
- Using group language will eventually still the thinking mind

### 5. MUST BE A TIGHTLY CONTROLLED SYSTEM

- No complaints from the floor

- Pyramid shaped operation with leader at the top
- Top leaders must maintain absolute control/authority
- Persons in charge must have verbal ways of never losing
- Anyone who questions is made to think there is something inherently wrong with them to even question
- Phobia induction: something bad will happen if you leave the group, if you leave this group, you're leaving God, Guilt manipulation

### 6. PERSONS BEING THOUGHT REFORMED MUST BE UNAWARE THAT THEY ARE BEING CHANGED A STEP AT A TIME

You can't be thought reformed with full capacity and informed consent.



## THE CHARISMATIC GROUP: A SUMMARY

Taken from: *Cults: Faith Healing and Coercion*, by Dr. Marc Galanter (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 197-199

If there is a science to the study of the charismatic group, then the student may find it useful to refer to some operating principles. To this end, the following summary has been prepared.

The charismatic group is a close-knit community defined by the following primary characteristics: It has a strongly held belief system and a high level of social cohesiveness; its members are deeply influenced by the group's behavioral norms and impute a transcendent (or divine) role to their leader. These groups may differ among themselves in the particulars of their ideology and ritual behavior, but they do share several traits in common, some listed below. Certain groups may conform only in part to this model and to that extent they are all expressions of this phenomenon in modified form.

### Entry into the Group

Charismatic groups are likely to emerge at a time when the values of a society are felt to be inadequate for addressing major social issues. Individuals are more prone to join if they are unhappy because of situational problems or chronic distress and if they have limited affiliative ties to family and friends.

Groups generally engage new members by creating an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and support and offering a world view that promises a solution for all existential problems. Engagement (or conversion) entails experiences of intensely felt emotion or perceptual change. It also provides a relief of neurotic distress and a feeling of well-being. For the convert, these experiences serve to validate the group's mission.

### Experience of Membership

The group's leader is reputed to have the potential of bringing a resolution to the problems of humanity. In interacting with followers, the leader is also drawn into believing the grandiose role accorded him, and then justifies his behavior by referring to the transcendent mission suggested by the group's philosophy. This can cause him to make demands on his followers that outsiders would see as petulant and abusive.

The group attributes special meaning, colored by its philosophy, to everyday language and events; this meaning is usually related to dogma or written code attributed to the group's leader or progenitor. Recruits experience a *relief effect* with membership. That is, the closer they feel to their fellow members and the group's values, the greater the relief in their emotional distress; the more they become emotionally distanced from the group, the greater their experience of distress. This relief effect serves as the basis for reinforcing compliance with the group's norms, as it implicitly rewards conformity with enhanced well-being and punishes alienation with feelings of distress. It also keeps members from leaving the group because they are conditioned to avoid the distress that results from relinquishing the benefits of the relief effect.

Group behavioral norms generally structure all areas of members' lives, their work, sexuality, socialization, and intellectual pursuits. Activities in these areas are preferentially carried out with other members, so that outsiders are generally shunned as friends and colleagues. Membership is characterized by levels of "sanctity," so that a member is continually striving to achieve a higher level of acceptance by conforming all the more with the group's expectations. Such conformity generally results in members' experiencing considerable privation.

### The Charismatic Group as a Social System

The group operates as a close-knit social system to assure its stability. It does this by manipulating the activities and views of its members. Members' activities are monitored closely, either by formally designated observers or other general members. Compliance with the group's norms is assured by the members' need to avoid estrangement and resulting dysphoria if they appear to question these values. Scapegoating of recalcitrant members helps to maintain a sense of goodness and trust among members.

Information is managed to minimize dissonance between the views of the group and the contrasting attitudes of the general society. The group may therefore engender attitudes and views that fly in the face of reality to prevent destabilization in members' commitment. Implicit "evidence" of the credibility of the group's ethos is also provided by new members, and aggressive recruitment therefore helps stabilize the entire system.

Boundary control is exercised by the group to protect it from threatening incursions from without. The group will therefore engender a suspicious attitude toward the general society to protect its members from assimilation. A clear

difference is drawn between members and nonmembers, in terms of their innate value as people. Nonmembers are accorded less moral weight, and may be deceived or snubbed to assure the stability of the group as a social system. Charismatic groups come into conflict with the surrounding society in a number of ways. They disregard the concern of the families of new converts. They behave in a defensive and paranoid way toward outsiders suspected of being hostile to the group. They aggressively maintain ideologic positions at variance with those of the general culture.

After their initial most zealous phase, charismatic groups may follow any of these courses: They may become bureaucratized with the charisma of the original leader ascribed to the group's leadership hierarchy. They may assimilate into the broader society if the group's self-protectiveness and isolation are not sustained by the leadership. They may come into direct conflict with the surrounding society because of differences in ideology and defensiveness on both sides, potentially leading to violence. To escape a negative outcome, these groups may also migrate to an isolated setting.



## HOW TO SPOT A CULT

by Joseph M. Hopkins (reprinted from *Moody Monthly*, July-August, 1979, pp. 6-7)

Since many cults have Christian bases, it is often difficult to discern their distortions of biblical truth and Christian terminology during initial contacts. Joseph M. Hopkins, professor of religion at Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA, offers these twelve common characteristics of Christian-based cults.

- 1. A dynamic leader.** A cult is usually started by an individual with great personal magnetism, with a genius for attracting followers and inspiring their confidence. Examples: Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormons; Charles Taze Russell, Jehovah's Witnesses; Herbert W. Armstrong, Worldwide Church of God; "Moses" David Berg, Children of God; Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Unification Church.
- 2. New revelation.** This leader tends to be a strong personality who is unwilling to accept traditional religious teachings and who develops his own do-it-yourself theology. Usually a person with enormous ego and ambition, he (or she) arrives at the belief that God has called him (or her) to be the channel of His end-time revelation. Examples: Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science), who thought she alone possessed the key to correct biblical interpretation and so wrote *Science and Health With Key to the Scriptures*, David Berg (Children of God), who teaches that his "MO Letters" are God's Word for today.
- 3. One true church.** As the cult leader gains followers, he comes to believe that his group of disciples comprises the "little flock" God has called out of the world—that they are God's "One True Church," the 144,000 of Revelation, who will reign with Christ during the Millennium. All other churches are Satanic counterfeits. This doctrine is taught by the Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), Jehovah's Witnesses, the Worldwide Church of God, the Children of God, and many other sects.
- 4. "Last days" belief.** Most modern cults teach that we are living in the last days—the end-time of civilization. To their group alone has been given the commission to warn the world of its impending doom. Only they will be spared the "tribulation" and will participate in the rapture and the future world government of Jesus Christ. Examples: Jehovah's Witnesses, Worldwide Church of God, Unification Church, and Children of God.
- 5. Zealous evangelism.** Because of this belief, it is imperative to proclaim the bad news of God's apocalyptic judgment and the good news of the coming kingdom to the world before the end. Often terrifying warnings and denunciations are stressed more than the good news of God's redemptive love in Christ.
- 6. Separation from the world.** Because "the world" is corrupt and soon to be destroyed, the "true believers" must renounce this world's evil system. They must be willing to suffer persecution for their faith, to be counted "fools for Christ's sake." In many cults, separating from the world involves a rigorous lifestyle—forsaking drugs, alcohol, tobacco, illicit sex, and the "material trip."
- 7. Total commitment.** Disciples in many cults are admonished to "forsake all" and turn over all personal property to the organization. A Pennsylvania girl who converted to the Druids in New Mexico surrendered her car, stereo, guitar, clothing, jewelry, and a \$1,500 bank account when she moved into the sect's desert commune. In some cults money is raised by peddling merchandise and/or cult literature. In others multiple tithes are collected, the members depriving themselves and their families while cult leaders live like kings.
- 8. Intensive indoctrination.** All cults without exception subject new converts to intensive indoctrination. During the indoctrination period there is constant supervision; lectures, drills, and personal study dominate the day's agenda;

members are given little time to think or sleep. Many ex-members testify to having been hypnotized or brain-washed by this high-pressure indoctrination.

**9. Authoritarian government.** The pyramid authority structure-government from the top down—is the rule in most cults. The cult leader, as God’s representative on earth, is revered and obeyed; and absolute submission to him (her) and the hierarchy is required. A number of ex-members have testified that they were so dominated and controlled by cult authorities that they would have killed their own parents if asked to do so by leaders. *Fear* is employed as a club to compel obedience, to silence complaints and questions to prevent defection.

**10. Persecution complex.** Cult leaders generally are paranoid, viewing with suspicion and antagonism “outsiders” (especially the press and parents seeking to retrieve their children). Paranoia extends to those inside as well as outside the organization. If there is a doubt or question, its source must be Satan. Those who challenge doctrine or question authority are severely disciplined—and may be “disfellowshipped.”

**11. “Works righteousness.”** Some cults openly admit that they teach a “righteousness” (right standing with God) based on faith *plus works* instead of “faith alone.” Others declare that they teach salvation by faith alone—but contradict themselves by insisting that salvation is limited to those who are baptized into their organization and conform to its doctrines and legalistic requirements. Several aspects of cultism point to a religion of law rather than grace: new revelation, the “one true church” concept, rejection of “the world” (with adoption of rigorous prohibitions and disciplines), total commitment (with lofty standards of “100 per cent discipleship”), stress upon individual performance (memorization, witnessing, fundraising), and blind submission to cult authority.

**12. Defective Christology.** Most Christianity-derived cults distort Christ by compromising His deity, and His unique role as Savior. Rev. Moon flatly states, “He (Jesus) can by no means be God Himself” (*Divine Principle*, p. 210).



## Binding Up the Broken: Counseling the Victims of Cults and Spiritual Abuse

by Lawrence A. Pile, *Ministries Today Magazine*, May/June 1994

When I first sat down to write this article more than a year ago, the dramatic armed standoff was still going on near Waco, Texas. Agents of the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and other law enforcement agencies were on one side, and members of a heretofore obscure religious cult known as the Branch Davidians were on the other. This desperate situation climaxed in a blaze on April 19, 1993, with a tragic loss of more than 80 lives, including those of 25 innocent children. Many cried out for answers. Among the questions:

- How could intelligent people follow someone like cult leader David Koresh, who claimed to be the “lamb” of the book of Revelation?
- How could they accept Koresh’s assertions that it was God’s will for him, the “new messiah,” to claim their wives and daughters as his own to produce “grandchildren” for God?
- How could people who say they try to live by the Bible engage in deadly armed conflict with law officers?
- What will become of the cult members’ children who lost one or both parents in the final inferno?
- What will happen to the adult cult members who survived the ordeal?
- How can any of these lives be put together again?

Similar questions arose several years ago in the aftermath of the murders of a family of five. They had failed to measure up to the standards of another cult leader, Jeffrey Lundgren, in Kirtland, Ohio. His group was a radical offshoot of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Many of Lundgren’s followers sit in prison today, convicted of conspiracy to commit the murders. They are mostly inaccessible to those who could provide the sound biblical and psychological counseling they so desperately need. One former member, a woman who became a *de facto* wife of Lundgren, sought rehabilitative counseling after she was released from prison. However, lack of funds meant no counseling was available. As a result, today she is ardently loyal again to her former abuser.

These are extreme, highly publicized cases. Yet there are many people—more than we might think—currently dotting our landscape and even filling our pews who suffer from past experiences of spiritual abuse to some degree.

### What is a Cult?

The word “cult” is capable of a broad range of definitions. Among Christians, it usually means any group that teaches heresy regarding fundamental doctrine. The fact is, however, doctrinal orthodoxy does not preclude cultic abuse, as we shall discuss later. Perhaps a better working definition of “cult” would be *any group, religious or secular, that uses abusive, manipulative methods to attract and retain members*. In the religious realm, it is a group which, as a matter of practice, violates Scripture in doctrine and/or practice to the detriment of its members (and sometimes non-members or ex-members).

Typically, a cult will incorporate the following basic characteristics:

- It emphasizes certain Scripture passages out of context while ignoring and violating others;
- It has a domineering or manipulative leader or leaders;
- It requires total adherence to the commands and teachings of the group without allowing disagreement;
- It persuades its members of the importance of work for the group and its goals at the expense of necessary rest or involvement in other worth-while endeavors;
- It believes that it alone possesses the fullest, most accurate or *only* expression of the truth.

No one knows for sure how many cults or abusive churches exist today. The figures depend on how “cult” is defined. By the definition given above, a good estimate is some 3,000 organizations in America today that could be termed cults. An estimated 5 million or more cult members live among us in the United States alone. The number of ex-cultists is also estimated in the millions. What has happened to these folks?

No doubt many have joined (or rejoined) traditional churches, including evangelical Protestant or charismatic churches. Many others have turned to Roman Catholicism or returned to the Judaism of their heritage. Still others have either joined other cults or have rejected all organized religion. Without question a great many, perhaps in the tens or even hundreds of thousands, are living lives of frustration, anxiety, depression and spiritual confusion as a result of their cultic experience. And many of them are sitting in our pews on Sundays. How can we, as Christian pastors and leaders, help them discover the “abundant life” Jesus promised?

### Myths About Cults

To be most effective in helping victims of cults and spiritual abuse, Christian leaders must first abandon a number of commonly held myths regarding cults.

**Myth #1: Cults always hold and propagate heresy concerning historic "fundamentals" of the faith.** Many assume that cults believe false notions about the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, salvation by God's grace through faith alone, and other doctrines the church has held as essential to true faith down through the centuries. However, cultism can exist *even where these truths are firmly held*—if behavioral abuse occurs alongside them. At Wellspring Retreat and Resource Center, the rehabilitation facility where I serve as staff counselor, we have documented that 29 percent of former clients came from psychologically and spiritually abusive churches or organizations that held to the Apostles' Creed or other universally accepted statements of faith.

Another 45 percent came from churches or organizations that deviated from traditional creeds on only one or two points. Most Christians would think these are “fringe groups” rather than outright heretical churches.

**MYTH # 2: Ex-cult members do not have psychological problems; their problems are wholly spiritual.** The assumption is that only *non-Christians* join cults, and they join for such carnal reasons as the desire for power, pleasure, prestige or money. Therefore, the pat solution to their problems is for them to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and submit to Him as their Lord. Their problems are assumed by many Christian leaders to be caused by disobedience, weak faith and/or lack of faithfulness. Ex-cultists themselves often believe that their difficulties come from their spiritual failings.

However, as we've already noted, groups that promote genuine Christian doctrine, led by born-again men and women and composed largely of believers, are not immune from cultic practices that often inflict serious harm. Those who leave cults, whether they are Christians or not, frequently suffer significant depression, loneliness, anxiety, low self-esteem, over-dependence, confusion, inability to concentrate, physical complaints and, at times, psychosis. They need help, not pat answers.

**MYTH # 3: Any psychological problems suffered by ex-cultists were already present before the individual joined the cult.** This myth assumes that “normal people” don't join cults. Much thorough research with former cult members, however, clearly shows this misconception cannot stand the light of scrutiny. It has been demonstrated that the percentage of cult members with pre-cult psychological problems is only slightly higher than that of the general population.

Strong people can become vulnerable to cultic seduction at any point in their lives. Vulnerability may come in a variety of forms: loss of security through leaving home for college, the death of a spouse or breakup of a relationship, the loss of a job or a move to a new location, a serious illness or accident. Some fall prey out of a valid desire to contribute to humanity by bringing spiritual, political or social enlightenment to others, or by working to alleviate poverty and suffering. Cults, as well as legitimate churches and social organizations, can offer people that desired security or idealistic cause. Sometimes, whether the seeker joins a cult or a church can depend on which gets to him first.

**MYTH #4: Cults practice mind control that is obvious, sinister and dramatic.** When hearing the term “mind control,” some people picture scenes from the classic motion picture *The Manchurian Candidate* or something similar. But mind control does not require physical restraint, a prison camp environment, or sinister behavior

modification methods like the use of drugs, hypnosis or beatings. In fact, mind control often occurs in situations that appear most benign.

The authoritative book on the subject, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*, records the findings of psychologist Robert J. Lifton, who studied the experiences of men and women who were held in communist Chinese prisoner of war camps during the Korean War. Lifton identified certain characteristics of thought reform or mind control that researchers have since recognized as typical of cults. For example:

- *Milieu control.* Communication from without and within the group is controlled or manipulated to produce a significant degree of isolation from the surrounding society.
- *Mystical manipulation.* The leader's claim of divine authority or spiritual advancement allows him to interpret events or sacred texts as he wishes. Prophecies or pronouncements can be made at will, all for the purpose of controlling group members.
- *Demand for purity.* The world is viewed as black and white, and group members are constantly exhorted to strive for perfection. Since perfection is impossible, however, guilt and shame become powerful control devices.
- *The "Sacred Science."* The doctrine of the group is considered to be the ultimate truth, beyond all questioning or disputing. The leader of the group is likewise above criticism as the spokesperson for God on earth.
- *Doctrine over person.* The personal experiences of the group members are subordinated to the "truth" held by the group. Apparently contrary experiences must be denied or reinterpreted to fit the prescribed doctrine.
- *Dispensing of existence.* The group abrogates to itself the prerogative to decide who has the right to exist and who does not. Usually held non-literally, this means that those outside the group are unspiritual, worldly, "Laodicean," satanic, unconscious or ignorant, and they must be converted to the ideas of the group or be lost.

All of these aspects of mind control working together exert a powerful influence over the average cult member. To help those coming out of cults, pastors and others must have a grasp of how these techniques operate on the individual. In fact, in our experience of counseling cult victims at Wellspring Retreat, we have found that explaining the dynamics of thought reform goes a long way in promoting healing. The victim learns that he was not "weak" or "stupid."

Strength and intelligence have virtually nothing to do with vulnerability to cultic seduction. On the contrary, it is the strong and intelligent who are the most common recruits. Cults don't want the weak and less intelligent; they want, and tend to get, the "cream of the crop."

### Helping the Victim

Ultimately, those of us who want to help victims of cults and spiritual abuse must focus on four keys to healing.

**1. Recognizing and avoiding characteristics of cults.** The person who leaves a cult or abusive church on his own and without assistance does so because he has finally acknowledged the existence of perhaps a handful of doctrinal errors or behavioral offenses. It is, however, quite likely that he has not recognized all such problems. As a result, the former cultist may look for another group or church that has abusive or cultic characteristics—just not the ones he has recognized.

For example, a former member of a church in which the pastor was verbally, physically or sexually abusive may look for a church whose pastor rejects these offenses, but who may instead promote himself as God's spokesman above questioning or criticism. The ex-cultist may still be convinced that ministers are rightly viewed this way. Thus, he must be shown the clear scriptural teaching that it is not only the believer's *right*, but also his *responsibility* to examine critically (i.e., rationally and with discernment) whatever he hears (see Acts 17:11; 1Cor. 14:29; 1Thess. 5:19-22). The fact that Paul felt free to reprove Peter (Gal. 2:11-21), submitted himself to the possibility of correction (Gal. 1:8), and commanded Timothy to rebuke unrepentant elders (1 Tim. 5:19-20) tells us that no one is above reproof.

**2. Overcoming hermeneutical anarchy.** Doctrinal aberrations are usually the result of a failure to observe sound hermeneutical principles of Bible interpretation. Cult leader David Koresh is perhaps the most prominent recent example of an errant Bible teacher who interpreted the Word of God according to his own set of rules (or lack thereof). But ministers who apply Old Testament concepts of the anointing to New Testament pastors in a way that says they are above criticism are just as guilty of "scripture twisting" as was Koresh. People who leave destructive cults and spiritually abusive churches are invariably the victims of this kind of mishandling of the Bible. Therefore, for them to make progress on the road to healing they need to be taught fundamental principles of Scripture interpretation.

**3. Grasping the grace of God.** Virtually all cults and abusive churches have a distorted or nonexistent understanding of the grace of God. This is manifested either in a system that binds its members by legalism or abandons them to licentiousness (ironically, cults can have a mixture of the two in different areas). Even a church

that teaches a clear and biblical concept of grace can violate this teaching in its practice and in unspoken rules and expectations by which it may bind its members.

The individual who has come out of a cult or abusive church needs to hear an articulate message of God's glorious gift of acceptance through His Son, Jesus Christ. The former cultist must come to understand that God loves him in spite of his sin and offers him salvation as *a free gift* when he places his trust in the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross. Further, once in the family of God, he needs to see that he continues to receive God's blessings and acceptance freely, and not on the basis of his performance.

**4. Participating in a nurturing fellowship.** Numerous studies and our own experience in working with ex-cultists at Wellspring Retreat show that most people join cults not primarily because of the doctrine, but because they believe the group will meet some personal need—the two most common being loneliness and insecurity. No matter how orthodox its doctrine, if a local church does not provide the warmth of a caring fellowship in which everyone feels welcome, accepted and nurtured, it will lose members to other groups that offer such an environment. And if a former cultist fails to find genuine fellowship in a new church, he may be tempted to give up on God altogether. What cult survivors need is to find true shepherds who have a sincere compassion for the hurting. They need to find pastors who will not only “admonish the unruly,” but make special efforts to “encourage the fainthearted,” “help the weak,” and “be patient with all men” (1Thess. 5:14).

Cult recovery is a long-term process. The deeper the involvement, the harsher the abuse and the more thorough the scripture twisting, the longer will be the recovery period. But with knowledgeable, compassionate and patient counseling, wise teaching and abounding love from pastors, ministers, church leaders and members, the ex-cultist can regain emotional stability—and enter a vibrant, joyful experience of the abundant grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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# Chapter V

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## **Study Guide to the International Churches of Christ: A Topical Listing of Doctrinal Positions taken from ICC Leaders and Teachers**

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## Study Guide: Statements of Belief and ICC Doctrines

Compiler's Note: The careful and complete analysis of the ICC in terms of its doctrines and practices is the focus of another work, *No Other Gospel*, published in 1996. This chapter merely breaks down salient aspects about the ICC's teaching into the following categories: Authority, Autonomy (that is, the leadership style and structure of the ICC), Discipling, Baptism, The Role of Kip McKean, The Conversion of Kip McKean, The Conversion of Bob & Pat Gempel, Individuals Opposed to the ICC (and the ICC's reaction to them), and other topics of interest group under a final Miscellaneous category. In every case the statements reprinted below represent information from the primary source material reprinted in its contextual source. In some cases patterns of development, evolution, and contradiction will show themselves to the careful reader. The comments of the compilers are neither impartial nor unbiased (those who would claim themselves such are far more dangerous critics, in my mind, for they do not know how their own experienced have colored their interpretive vision), but rather, represent a gentle probing of the reader to compare the actual record with the rather manufactured and revised "history" written by the ICC leaders. The presence of an asterisk (\*) generally indicates the comments of one of the compilers. Quoted material following an asterisk indicates other material from the previously-cited speech or publication.

### SECTION 1: AUTHORITY

**1983 Carolina Seminar; "The Role of the Evangelist" - Kip McKean:** "Obviously we realize the elders are the highest office in the church and the evangelists are under their authority when there are elders. I have always remembered my studies in the book of Judges. It changed my attitude toward spiritual leadership."

**1984 "Questions About Gainesville and Boston Ministries" Kip McKean: (co-taught with Chuck Lucas):** "It is also important for us to remember that we do not have a lot of information about structure in the New Testament. We certainly know that over the church there are the elders. The evangelists serve underneath them in another authoritative office. And of course we have deacons, a non-authoritative office."

**1986 Campus Ministers Seminar; "How to Raise Up Elders" - Kip McKean:** "Because once you place one of those elders into their role and officially recognize them before the congregation as an elder they are above you in authority and now they direct the affairs of the church...It was very interesting to me that I had some challenges when I first went to Boston in that there were already two elders that were already placed in that place and I went there saying, "Okay, I was going to serve underneath them."

\*One of these original elders, Russ Hulbert, left the Boston Church in disagreement with its teachings and practices. The other original elder, Paul McNeil, is deceased.

\*At this time, Kip still believed the elders directed the affairs of the church. Note as we continue the change in teaching about the role of evangelists and elders.

**August 1987 Boston Bulletin; "The Role Of The Evangelist" - J.P. Tynes:** "One of those anointed of God for special work within the Kingdom is the evangelist. As surely as the Holy Spirit makes men overseers or elders in the church (Acts 20:28), the evangelist is also anointed of God for a particular function (Ephesians 4:11-12)...It is true that all Christians walking in the light are holy and God is indeed with everyone of them. However, it is also true that through His Spirit certain men have been assigned responsibilities to lead in the Kingdom and that to oppose them is to oppose God who anointed them."

Kip McKean at end of J.P. Tynes' article: Editor's Note: "I would like to personally thank J.P. for this excellent series of articles on the Evangelist. They have been forthright and Scriptural."

**1987 Denver Conference; "Go Make Disciples" - Kip McKean:** "These evangelists—they are not guys you vote on to be over you. These guys are of God. They are of God like David was of God and Jeremiah was of God and Moses was of God. These guys are of God!"

**1987 World Mission Seminar; "Why Do You Resist the Spirit?" - Kip McKean:** “The evangelist without elders in the congregation is the authority of God in the congregation. The only time he is not to be obeyed is when he calls you to disobey Scripture or disobey your conscience and even if he calls you to do something that disobeys your conscience, you still have an obligation to study it out and prayerfully change your opinion so you can be totally unified.”

\*Notice the inference as to whose opinion is right.

**September, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Authority and Submission" - Al Baird:** “But what if the government is abusive? Submit! What if the laws restrict my freedoms? Submit! What if government persecutes and kills Christians? Submit! Are there no exceptions? Only two: (1) God must be obeyed if governmental authority is contradictory to God's authority (Acts 4:19) and (2) the Christian must not violate his conscience (Romans 14:23)...Because God institutes authority, even abusive and confining authority is to be respected...If it were true that leaders can only expect Christians to obey direct commands from the Bible, then they can call for nothing that any other member can call for...God's promises are absolute and are there for the taking of anyone who walks under the umbrella. However, when one ventures out on his own, out from under the umbrella, he has left God's promises of protection...Similarly we expect every member to be disciplined by a more spiritually mature Christian who is given the authority to teach him to obey everything that Jesus commanded (Matthew 28:20)...We also teach that every member has the right to appeal any decision in matters of opinion to the elders and evangelists...We submit to authority, not because the one in authority deserves it, but because the authority comes from God; therefore, we are in reality submitting to God. In the same way, we give respect to the one in authority, not because he has necessarily earned the respect, but because we unconditionally give him respect unless he is in rebellion to God...Submission is not disobeying the Word of God or ones conscious. These are the only times one must not submit...Filtering is disobedience and rebellion. It is a major problem in being disciplined...It is definitely true that there will be abuse of authority and we must learn to deal with it. This does not mean that authority in the hands of leaders is bad, but it is dangerous if not handled in a Christ-like way...It is not an option to rebel against their (spiritual leaders) authority...When we are under authority, we are to submit and obey our leaders even when they are not very Christ-like.”

\*Did the first-century church always submit to the governing authorities? Did they not worship at times in secret? Adopting this posture would have meant that the church could never speak out regarding institutionalized and legally-protected abuses in society, such as slavery, which it began to in the 17th and 18th centuries.

**November 1, 1987 - Cincinnati Speech - Dick Runge:** “You see we're not in a democracy. The Bible doesn't talk about a democracy. It's a benevolent dictatorship, really when it gets right down to it. Jesus was a benevolent dictator. That's a compliment; that's not bad. Monarchy is a very common form of government. It just so happens that Jesus is the king...So submitting is going ahead and saying okay even if I don't agree as long as it doesn't violate scripture and as long as it doesn't violate my conscience...Submission isn't understanding...I'm going to be moving to New York at the end of next month—and I've already decided that I am behind the decisions that are made there. I've already decided. Whatever, I'm behind it. I don't care what it is...That doesn't mean that I am not going to ask any questions; that doesn't mean that I am not going to say, "Can you explain this to me," but it doesn't make any difference whether I understand it or whether I would have come up with the same idea or whether even if I agree with it, I am already behind it. Now, some of you may say, "That's just throwing your brain away." No, that's biblical submission. It's trusting in God to direct things...That doesn't just apply to the evangelist or the elders in the congregation. It applies to your discipling partners too. Because that's delegated authority. It applies to your Bible Talk leader because that is delegated authority...And ultimately, submission is trying to learn and develop convictions from the direction that I have been given. No, you don't throw your brain away.”

\*Was not the "Council at Jerusalem" in Acts 15, or the choosing of the seven in Acts 6, more describing of a democratic process?

**January 7, 1988 San Diego Missions Conference - Tom Brown:** “The evangelists disciple and lead to the Lord in the New Testament the elders, train them and disciple them and then perhaps they move on.”

**May, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Progressive Revelation" - Gordon Ferguson:** “Probably some critics will no doubt say that we begin some practice and then go to Scripture in order to justify it. But the issue is whether or not the

Bible does in fact justify it. Bottom line, to criticize fruitfulness for Christ demonstrates a pretty hard heart and closed mind anyway...Any religious group which strongly emphasizes doctrinal accuracy runs a risk of losing perspective and losing God...An insistence that we must have "book, chapter and verse" for anything new has virtually guaranteed that we will have nothing new, even if the old is a failure...A better motto for disciples who are "progressive" would be the following: "Where the Bible speaks we are silent; where the Bible is silent, we speak." Thus, if God has specified something, we shut up and submit. But if He has not, then we have the freedom to discover the most effective way to carry out His principles...Although He did not condone carelessness with doctrinal matters, he clearly taught that subjects like "justice, mercy and faithfulness" were far more important (Matthew 23:23). We follow Christ on a path, not a tightrope...The whole issue of authority which surrounds this subject is not a problem unless pride makes it one. Both elders and evangelists have authority in the church because both have responsibilities which are biblically defined. Responsibility determines authority...the responsibility of discipling elders still rests with the trained evangelist."

\*Are we not to expect "doctrinal accuracy?"

\*Steve Johnson spoke about proving righteousness through growth in October, 1987 at the Freed-Hardeman College Forum, he said, "to say that where there is growth you have God's approval is not only erroneous, it is dangerous. I don't believe that growth ever indicates an absolute that God is with this particular group of people. Otherwise, you have to give credence to everything from Nazi Germany to the Moonies. I do, however, believe, that those who have God's approval are going to grow."

**June, 1988 Denver Reconstruction - Kip McKean:** "God's people have always been a kingdom and not a democracy. In a democracy you vote, in the kingdom you obey...The only times you don't obey him (Preston, the evangelist) is, if it violates Scripture or your conscience. But other than that, in all opinion areas, you obey...when he assigns you to a House Church, when he assigns you to a Zone, when he assigns you to a Bible Talk, you will go, because that's part of the plan."

\*Notice the statements made by Al Baird in his 1992 Authority article. Is Al saying that Kip was wrong?

\*There are contradictory statements made by Kip in Para. 51 of Revolution Through Restoration compared to Marty Fuqua's comments in the "Cutting Edge" in regard to opinion.

**June 26, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "McKean Becomes Missions Evangelist; Brown to Lead Boston Church" - Kip McKean:** "In turn the Elders and I have asked Tom Brown to become the lead evangelist for the Boston Church...Certainly with the Browns taking the leadership of Boston alongside the Gempels and the Bairds."

**Sept.-Oct., 1988 Boston Bulletin; "The Attitude of Christ Jesus" - Joe Garmon:** "If we are to imitate Jesus, we must learn not to fear authority over our lives. Our trust is based not on the righteousness of the person in authority but on the power of God to take care of godly, submissive people (2 Peter 2:9). Jesus taught submission to authority...Everyone has someone in authority over them, even Jesus...When we trust God, we do not have to be afraid to submit to abusive authority."

**May 14, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Al and Gloria Baird to Lead Boston" - Kip McKean:** "As God raised up Moses and then Joshua, so I believe with all of my heart he raised up Tom and now Al Baird...Truly our God has raised up a prophet to lead the Boston church into the twenty-first century."

\*Al Baird was taken out of this position only one year later.

**May, 1990 "The Boston Movement As a Revitalization Movement" - Marty Wooten:** "The leadership of the Boston Church has admitted that abuses have taken place which have led to people leaving the Boston Church. For example, in some cases the delegation of authority to relatively young Christians had led to mandatory opinions, rather than the fostering of patience, flexibility, and love (page 157)"

\*Marty Wooten cites a conversation with Bob Gempel, one of the elders of the Boston Church, in which he admitted that some of the material written by people in Boston on these subjects was overstated and should never have been published (page 183-184)

\*May, 1990 - Boston Al & Gloria Baird are taken out of the main leadership role in the Boston Church.

**May 5, 1990 Boston Speech; "Authority" - Randy McKean:** "Here is [sic] a few statements you need to listen to. I believe that some have taught this authority thing wrong. Let that sink in. I believe that some have taught this wrong here in the Boston Church."

\*This speech was made after Randy was given full authority over the Boston Church. Is Randy saying that Kip was wrong? Randy does not get specific about who or what was wrong. What has changed since this statement was made?

**September 1, 1991 Dallas Speech; "Faith is the Victory"- Willie Flores:** "I didn't ask for volunteers; I told everybody they have got to get out. That's right. I believe that a leader can tell the people to go out! I said everybody this Saturday and Sunday...If you call yourself a disciple, go out...You ain't [sic] a special case!"

**January 19, 1992 Boston Bulletin; "Continuing Restoration" - Wyndham Shaw:** "I praise God we're moving from one-way direction-giving to two-way friendships in our discipling."

**Al Baird:** "Let us all become Bereans who examine the Scriptures daily to see if what we are teaching and practicing is true (Acts 17:11)..Don't assume that you are not mature enough or not in a position to raise questions or share your discoveries. Anyone with a disciple's heart can discover the truths of God from His Word. We encourage you to call us with your insights that you think will restore more completely our understanding of following God."

"We need to imitate the Christ-like qualities which we see in others (1 Corinthians 11:1)."

\*Have the relationships moved from a "one-way" direction? Notice what Kip McKean states in regard to holiness in his 1994 Indianapolis speech.

\*The ICC does not condone members asking questions like the Bereans. Individuals who ask too many questions are labeled "critical."

**Spring, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Discipleship: A New Look at Authority" - Al Baird:** "Religious movements throughout history have died because leaders were too proud to admit error and change; let us never give Satan that chance to destroy us, but always seek to put the truths of God and his Word into practice in our lives...We need to continually examine ourselves to make sure we are following Jesus and walking as he did (1 John 2:6)...I wrote a series of articles published in the Boston Bulletin about authority and submission. In retrospect I wish that I had taken more time in prayer and consideration on the subject, because the wrong emphasis was given for discipling relationships. There was too much emphasis put on authority and too little emphasis on motivating out of love for God...The Bible teaches that authority is from God, and therefore, is good but can be abused and misused. When a person has to appeal to the use of his authority to accomplish God's purposes, he has usually lost the battle...Rather than this leader being just anyone who leads another person in a spiritual relationship, it refers to a leader who is recognized by the whole group, such as an evangelist or elder...I believe that delegation is right and good, but that we delegated too much, and in some cases to disciples who were not mature enough to use it wisely...Leaders should be able to call meetings of the body, call for greater sacrifices, call for specified evangelistic outreach efforts or prayer times, etc., but are wrong to call someone to obey such things as choice of food, car, clothes, exact amount of giving."

\*See Financial Section for Kip McKean's quote on tithing made in 1992. The ICC does call their members to obey in exact amount of giving.

"A leader has no biblical reason to expect obedience in the area of advice...Blind, unthinking obedience can be very dangerous...I have taught and written that unless your leader calls you to violate Scripture or your conscience, obey him in all areas of opinion...I now believe that his previous teaching was too much the mentality of the "general" and not enough of the "father." For instance, it has been said that if any evangelist asks you to move to particular zone or Bible Talk, then you need to move. That may need to be the end result unless the two of you come up with a better plan, but it omits the process of persuasion and motivation that leaves the people confident and excited. The end result is the same, but the heart is very different."

\*See Discipleship section for Ron Drabot's quote on advice made in 1991.

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** "During my years at Charleston and Memphis, I devoted myself to studying the Old Testament. At this major turning point in my life, I came to a deep conviction that, unlike the traditional Church of Christ which claimed only to be a "New Testament church," a better understanding of God's eternal plan would cause us to be a Bible church.(Para.12)"

\*Kip did not disagree with the traditional teachings of the church of Christ until late in 1986 or early 1987. See the quote made in the Heritage Chapel article in 1979 and other quotes up until 1987.

"I came to differ with the Churches of Christ whose creed is "to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent." This creed dictated that one must have specific authorization by command, example or necessary inference from the Bible to do anything. It developed a legalistic, pharisaic mindset that sowed the seed for much dissension and division producing the factions of the Churches of Christ. For example, the whole mandate to only "call Bible things by Bible names" is contradictory because the word "Bible" is not even in the Bible!...I believe that we should be silent where the Bible speaks and speak where the Bible is silent...In building a life, a church or a "system" for a movement, we are "free" to do anything the Scriptures do not specifically, by command, by example or by necessary inference prohibit. (Para. 13)"

\*Kip wants the movement to be called a Bible church but is contradicting himself with the argument about the word "Bible" not being in the Bible. The word "Bible" is a transliteration of the Greek word *biblion* which appears some 32 times in the New Testament and is translated with words such as writing, bill, or book. Kip's attitude toward the silence of the Bible is very dangerous. If this argument were consistent within the movement then why not be autonomous? The word "autonomy" is not found in the "Bible." Yet, the example of autonomy is found. This is a contradictory argument.

"When a person began to train full-time, we called them interns. After several months—in some cases years—when the people of that ministry had confidence in the intern's walk with God and his ability to impact people's lives to become more like Christ, the man was formally made an evangelist. (Para. 24)"

"Not that we have always initially been correct ourselves. For example, I was wrong on some of my initial thoughts about biblical authority. I had felt that church leaders could call people to obey and follow them in all areas of opinion. This was incorrect. I feel very badly for people who were hurt by this wrong stance. Hebrews 13:17 teaches Christians are to obey their leaders in the work of the church as they lead in what the Bible teaches, so as not to make their work a burden. However, the leaders are not to lord it over the church and not to bind it with burdens it cannot bear (Matthew 23). (Para. 51)"

\*Al says it is wrong to call someone to obey in exact amount of giving. Does Kip consider the practice in L.A. a matter of opinion?

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; "The Super Church" - Kip McKean:** "We're all under the authority of our leaders - whoever disciples us in the Lord."

"We have a vertical authority. We do have a hierarchy. I'm sick and tired, 'we don't have a hierarchy, we don't.,' – we do! And so does every other religious group that I know of..we have lines of authority. I don't apologize for that.. "I've got men that have their own independent churches, and I selected those men, because you've got to have the right guys on top."

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; "The Cutting Edge" - Marty Fuqua:** "Being on the cutting edge develops within you a sense of a disciple. I want to be under authority. I want to be asked upon to do things that call upon me to be in the position that Jesus was in. Some of you avoid these positions like the plague. These positions define your spiritual life. They develop your spiritual life. How good a disciple are you?"

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** "Right here, the Bible says, 'there was insolence.' What's insolence? When someone under the charge of the Lord's anointed raises up to challenge their authority. That's insolence."

**July 31, 1994 LA Bulletin; "A New Elder in LA" - Mark Mancini:** "It is impossible to become an elder in the Kingdom without an outstanding family life."

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; "Shepherding the Flock" - Al Baird:** "The answers are there, and I'm convinced they're not all that complicated. In LA we have begun to tackle the problem. I'm not standing here as an authority saying, 'we've got all the answers.' But we have begun to tackle the problem."

**"Preach the Word" - Kip McKean:** "But how can you say you love the ministry? How can you dare say you love God, if you're not spending hours, and hours, and hours with him every week. I put before you that you're either deceived, or you're a liar. That you're either into preaching for the prestige, or the power, or simply to collect the paycheck, and that scares me."

"Now I don't believe that a woman has authority over a man, but I do believe the women have been given charge to teach the women. And I think this is why we aren't getting as many sharp ladies in our church is they love it when they see the women teaching the women, and not the men bossing them around."

## **SECTION TWO: AUTONOMY (Local Church Self-Government)**

**April, 1979 Times-Courier Article; "Heritage Chapel: The Issue Is The Bible" - Leaders, Heritage Chapel:** "The Bible also teaches the church was established by Christ and the Bible sets a pattern for its function, organization and worship. We follow that pattern and have no human creed or books of traditions...Each congregation of the Church of Christ is independent and autonomous. There is no hierarchy. Heritage Chapel Church of Christ is not controlled by any other congregation in Florida, Texas or anywhere else."

\*Kip McKean was on the leadership staff as the Campus Minister of the Heritage Chapel congregation at the time this article was published.

**Early Boston Study Series - Kip McKean:** "Now, we understand this, churches are autonomous and so different elderships have set up different times for the churches to meet."

**June 14, 1982 Chicago Letter to Area Churches - Cecil Wooten:** "This is a letter of information regarding the new congregation which started meeting at 460 Lake Street in Oak Park on June 6, 1982. You, as established congregations in or near the Chicago area, deserve to know the basic facts about this new congregation...About 2 years ago, Martin Fuqua, Campus Minister at DeKalb, was deeply impressed by the rapid growth of the Church of Christ in the Boston area. He started exploring the possibilities of getting an equally effective campus ministry program started in the Chicago area...In order to start a new congregation with a full time evangelist, the assurance of a substantial amount of money at the outset was an obvious requirement...Marty Fuqua, with the help of others, solicited and successfully raised adequate support for one year from Churches of Christ across the country...One such church was the Lexington Church of Christ in the Boston area...The Lexington elders plan to continue their financial oversight of the congregation in Oak Park for a limited time only. Their intent and expectation is that the new congregation, although presently autonomous, will become fully financially self-supporting within its first year...Since we are a self governing (autonomous) congregation and until such time as qualified men can be identified and appointed as elders, the affairs of the congregation will be under the direction of a leadership committee comprised by the undersigned: Martin Fuqua; Ben Holt; James Krause; Cecil Wooten."

\*This letter clearly indicates from its content that the Chicago "planting" did not originate in Boston. Also, Ben Holt and Jim Krause are no longer in the movement. Cecil Wooten and his son Marty have disagreed with Kip and the elders in Boston over Chicago being represented as a "planting" many times.

**1983 Rocky Mountain Evangelism Seminar; "Proclaimed to Every Creature" - Kip McKean:** "But you know, we also need unity between congregations. We understand that the churches of Christ are autonomous. I think we are fully aware of that."

**1984 Campus Ministers Seminar - Kip McKean:** "I think this is one of the things that when there are perhaps other churches of Christ in the area, some of the churches or some of the cities that we have targeted, we just explain

to them that "hey, we want to go down to the inner city. We want to help the people there...Now, when we first started planting churches--I must be the first to admit that we made some mistakes—very often we just went ahead with our plans and just very naively didn't share that with some of the other congregations that were in the area...This is no longer our practice...And where we've made mistakes, we've tried to genuinely be humble in Christ and to be able to apologize to them and because they are good brothers in Christ, we have always been able to build some good bridges."

**June 17, 1984 Boston Bulletin; "House Churches" - Jim Blough:** "The establishment of house churches also marks one more step toward our goal of restoring the spirituality, discipleship and evangelistic impact of the New Testament Church...The beauty of God's plan of church leadership is that a church of 1,000 members can remain united under one eldership...We eagerly expect, then, that in June 1988 the membership of the Boston Church will exceed 25,000, with a Sunday morning contribution of over \$400,000. This is by sight, simply reproducing what has already been done. Just imagine what can be done by faith!"

\*This goal was not reached. Kip has now set a goal of 80,000 members for the L.A. Church. See statement in "Super Church" section.

**March 28, 1986 Letter to the Crossroads Church - Kip McKean:** "The Lord put it upon my heart to write this letter of appreciation to all of you. In a very real way, I owe you my ministry, my marriage, and my very soul...In Boston, we have so many former members of Crossroads, and we treasure each of these individuals, because they have been so well equipped for the ministry!...We realize that the scriptures stress by example the autonomy of each congregation."

\*Up until this time, Kip believed in church autonomy.

\*First movement reconstruction - December, 1986 in Kingston, Jamaica. Reconstruction is the term used by the movement to indicate a take over of the authority of the local congregation by the Boston Church.

**1987 Women's Leadership Conference - Kip McKean:** "But you've got to understand that we are in the process of restoration. The Holy Spirit is working and it is not that new truths are being revealed, but the old truths are coming clearer. There is a difference."

\*If "old truths are coming clearer," why has the movement changed doctrinally?

**July 26, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "The Atlanta Church of Christ" - Kip McKean:** "At the invitation of Sam Laing and the other evangelists of the Atlanta Highlands Church of Christ, the Elders, the Lindo's and I sought to inspire an evangelistic revival in the congregation. However, due to opposition from within the congregation...the Elders and I were asked by these same evangelists to consider planting a new congregation."

**1987 World Missions Seminar, Boston - Kip McKean:** "We talked to Sam. "Brother, you need help. You need training. Let us go down and help in the Atlanta church." Sam said, "Okay."

\*Did Sam invite Kip or did Kip invite himself?

**1987 World Missions Seminar; "Atlanta Story" - Al Baird:** "I laid out the plans of Sam coming to Boston and Andy going to Atlanta...Boston discipling the leaders there in that situation and directing the work there."

\*Did Al contradict himself just two months later? See quote from Freed-Hardeman Forum in October, 1987 of this section.

**1987 World Missions Seminar, Boston - "Why Do You Resist the Spirit?" - Kip McKean:** "If you are not in a discipling ministry, you need to move to one...Why do you resist the spirit and not move?...God is trying to forge a remnant. Not only is He calling people in from mainline churches--and we've got to pull these people in...And there are divisions between us and the mainline church because, as it says in 1 Corinthians 11, there has got to be divisions so they can show which ones of us has God's approval."

\*Kip essentially states that the mainline church does not have God's approval. Kip has set himself and the standards of the movement up as judge.

**August 16, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "San Francisco Church of Christ" - Kip McKean:** "Tom and the evangelists asked the Boston leadership to officially direct the work... The evangelists and women's counselors would resign and become interns. Therefore, when they are appointed in the future, they will be recognized in Boston as well as in our church plantings...I foresee this to help form a uniform standard of recognition throughout the multiplying ministries."

\*Jimmy and Maria Rogers were appointed evangelist and women's counselor before leaving for Kingston for the reconstruction. They were not given this position upon their return to Boston in 1988 to lead the N.U. Campus Ministry. They were appointed again in February, 1991. The same events transpired in the case of John and Sandy Owen, as well as other evangelists formerly appointed while in Boston churches. Often a change of location masks a demotion to a non-evangelist/women's counselor role. Why does this happen?

**Aug. or Sept. 1987 - San Francisco Speech - Kip McKean:** "Now that Boston has taken over the directorship of this work...Some people I heard had some problems with an article that was written about the San Francisco church. That is disappointing...You can tell a lot about a person's heart if they get bad attitudes, before they give the benefit of doubt to a brother...You have no elders here, and so Frank Kim as your evangelist will be directing the work...(Kip speaking with his Dad) "You told me that in the churches of Christ each one was totally autonomous. Have you changed that?," he said. "Have you changed that?" "Well, yes, Dad I never found the word autonomy in the Bible."

**1987 Boston Speech - Al Baird:** "Now is each congregation, in a sense, autonomous? Yes, I believe in that even though the word autonomy is never mentioned. I mean there are to be elders in each congregation where there are qualified men and they are to oversee that flock. However, it is really becoming clear that evangelists have the role of tying these congregations together, through relationships, through influence."

\*Is Al contradicting Kip?

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman College Forum - Steve Johnson :** "After the discussion we had last year, it remains to be seen what our involvement in Kenya will be and it will only go if there is a great deal of agreement between us and the people who are already there, and I think a relationship has been established like that."

\*This is not what Steve Johnson did when he went into Kenya two years later, nor is it how to Boston Church planted churches in their future plantings.

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman - Al Baird:** "Al was asked his view of the Cape Cod Church of Christ and responded by saying, "I certainly recognize them as the Lord's church." I do not direct the San Francisco Church. I am not overseeing the San Francisco work or the Atlanta work and neither are any of the other elders. There is more evidence in the Bible for brotherhood than there is autonomy although I believe each congregation governs itself. Yes, I believe that."

\*This is not what Al said just 2 months previous at the World Missions Seminar.

\*This statement contradicts Kip's statements just 2 months previous in a San Francisco Speech.

**October 22, 1987 Southeastern Leadership Conference, Atlanta - Sam Laing:** "A pillar church is not a plan by anybody, anywhere, including Boston, to take over the world, or to take over your ministry, or anybody's ministry...It's got to be, have great disciples in it who are really getting the job done at home. You can't just do it by proclamation...You've influenced all these people. And so you become a model to them. What does a model mean? It means people look to you and say, "This is the way we ought to do ministry."

\*As a pillar church, Boston is no longer "getting the job done at home." This is why the L.A. Church is now the model of how ministry should be done. Note comments from Kip's '92 speech to the leaders on the "Super Church."

**October 25, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Remnant Theology" - Bob Gempel:** "Not even Moses himself was part of this remnant, for he had failed to trust enough in God (Numbers 20:12)...Dare we call ourselves the Lord's church in the face of no growth?...The quality of the work is at issue...At this time, as a group, only the multiplying ministries can point to growth rates that can fulfill God's vision for the worldwide mission and are thus reflective of expert building...Note that we are not saying that only those who are part of the remnant will be saved. We fully expect to see Moses in Heaven."

\*See growth statistics in Miscellaneous section.

**Nov. 1, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Friends are Friends Forever!" - Thom Bogle:** "Replacing "Congregational Autonomy" with Congregational Cooperation. The traditional idea that each group of disciples in a city is entirely autonomous from other disciples is not found in the Bible."

**November 15, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Terminology" - Sam Laing:** "In the church, as in other realms of life, we must come up with names for things. If the Bible has a name for it - we call it that. "Bible names for Bible things" was the old Restoration slogan. If what we are doing is related to carrying out God's will, but is not specifically detailed in the Scriptures, we still have to call it something! It is certainly not unscriptural to use a shorthand form of designation for the various functions the church enacts to carry out its work...And above all, let us courageously refine our ministries and terminology by the standard of the Scriptures that we may continually be moving closer to the will of God!"

**Dec. 20, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "The San Diego Church of Christ" - Kip McKean:** "The Mission Church leadership wanted to imitate the Boston Church of Christ and thus become a model (pillar) congregation for the entire Southwestern United States...The pattern in the first century was for each church to have as its local leadership—elders (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). However, these congregations were never to be isolated and separate from each other. (Autonomy is not even mentioned in the Bible.) Instead, from time to time evangelists were sent into the church to "straighten out" (Titus 1:5) the church and to call each member back to the apostles' teachings and lifestyle (1 Corinthians 4:14-17). Therefore, the Boston Church will not be "over" the San Diego Church, but Tom Brown will continue to disciple (give input and direction) to his Timothy, Bruce Williams. Bruce will disciple and further train the Elders (Titus 2:2), who direct the affairs of the church (1 Timothy 5:17)."

\*Does Kip believe the elders "direct the affairs of the church?"

**January 7, 1988 San Diego Missions Conference - Tom Brown:** "We're smashing some big traditions like this whole issue of autonomy...The evangelists disciple and lead to the Lord in the New Testament the elders, train them and disciple and then perhaps they move on."

**May 15, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Progressive Revelation" - Gordon Ferguson:** "Unless a congregation exists which is really making and training disciples in a multiplying way, such a church must be planted!... When a congregation is not living up to the standard of biblical discipleship, it must be called to repentance. Obviously, only congregations which want to be true disciples are open to this process because no person or group can be forced to repent...One real hindrance to brotherhood unity has been an ungodly view of church autonomy..."Church autonomy" as we have practiced it is an invention of sinful man—an ungodly tradition."

**Summer, 1988 Denver Reconstruction - Kip McKean:** "The word autonomy is not even mentioned in the Bible."

\*for that matter, neither is facsimile, copier, or automobile. The concept of local self-government for churches and for congregations to cooperate together without a organizational headquarters or hierarchy is found throughout the New Testament. I think that Kip McKean has confused the Israelite Kingdom and the monarchical rule of Saul, David, and Solomon for the structure of his own organization today. For a refutation of that structure, see the word study on "Leadership" later in this work.

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** "In the many churches where there was no desire for help, an obligation to God was felt to call out the true disciples and ask them to move to the "Boston churches," preferably called "multiplying ministry churches." Thus we set about gleaning the remnant into what was clearly now a movement of God...Though there can be no single "greatest" church, for we are all one body, the

Boston Church is the Jerusalem of God's modern-day movement...In late 1986, it was decided to call to repentance both "mainline" and "campus ministry" churches that were willing to pay the price to multiply disciples...Each member was called to either renew their commitment at baptism to be a disciple of Jesus, to be baptized as a disciple, or to leave."

**August 2, 1989 - Al Baird:** Al was asked about a young lady converted in Boston who became a part of the Nashville movement church.

Al Baird: She is Nashville. She is not in my—I love her.  
 Question: She does not belong to your church?  
 Al Baird: I am an elder in the Boston Church.  
 Question: So you have no...  
 Al Baird: I don't have any oversight of the Nashville Church.  
 Question: Who assigned the evangelist there?  
 Al Baird: I appointed him.

**Nov. 5, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Browns Return to Boston, Fuquas to Los Angeles" - Kip McKean:** "They (Fuquas) courageously led Boston's first church planting to Chicago, which has become one of the largest churches in the world and has influenced, by plantings and reconstructions, the ten churches of the Midwest and Canada."

**January 7, 1990 Boston Bulletin "Dallas" - Nick Young:** "Dallas is a city full of idols. The worship of self has become the religion of the people. There is also the idol of traditional religion."

**March 2, 1990 St. Louis Speech - Steve Saindon:** "They say that our churches are not autonomous...Traditional churches have—is that each church is a self-governing body in and of itself. Okay. They are independent. Now, you know, they are brothers in Christ, but they are independent...Autonomy is a nice word for sin. Autonomy is not found in the Bible."

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** "Already the Holy Spirit has planted a church in Dallas and that is going fantastic."

**May, 1990 "The Boston Movement As a Revitalization Movement" Marty Wooten:** "In August of 1988 a clear line of demarcation was obvious between the Boston Church of Christ in terms of the local congregation and the "Boston Movement" as a worldwide organization."

**January 19, 1992 Boston Bulletin; "1992: The Year of the Bible/Continuing Restoration" - Randy McKean:** "Over time many believers (a remnant) were drawn in through "reconstructions" - a restarting of a congregation by calling all to be true disciples of Jesus."

**"Continuing Restoration" - Wyndham Shaw:** "It (restoration) also required the humility to change direction when what we're doing is shown to miss the mark of God's Word. I praise God we're moving from autonomy to a world brotherhood of relationships between church leaders."

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** "I purposely developed this study to draw a sharp biblical distinction between the Lexington (later renamed Boston) Church of Christ and all other groups...Out of these convictions from the Scriptures came one of the crucial characteristics unique to our movement—a true church is composed only of disciples. (Para. 17)"

\*Kip did not draw any of these "distinctions" when the group went by the name of the Lexington Church of Christ. These "distinctions" were not drawn until some time late in 1986.

"I have never believed or taught that anyone has to be baptized into the Boston Church of Christ to be saved...I do not know of any other church, group or movement that teaches and practices what we teach as Jesus taught in Matthew 28:18-20: one must make the decision to be a disciple, then be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins to be saved and receive the Holy Spirit. (Para. 18)"

\*The Boston Church does believe that if you are outside of a movement church you will not be saved, see new statements made by Nick Young in the "Tulsa Reconstruction" section. Also, Kip contradicts himself in the first two sentences above.

“Given the restored Bible concept of one church in one city and a true church being composed solely of disciples. (Para. 21)”

“After working with them on their plans for several weeks, I called Marty and Chris Fuqua, who Elena and I had trained for the ministry in Charleston and Boston. We asked them if they would lead a church planting in the city of Chicago. After much prayer, the four of us decided the team be composed of disciples from my old ministry in Charleston, disciples from Marty's present work in the campus ministry at Northern Illinois University and any disciples from mainline churches in the Chicago area, like Cecil and Helen Wooten. To further strengthen the work, later I asked my good friend Roger Lamb to serve as co-evangelist with Marty. The Chicago church began with about 50 members in June 1982. (Para. 22)”

\*Cecil Wooten was involved in the original decisions pertaining to the "Church of Christ in Oak Park." This church also claimed autonomy (see quotes earlier). Also, Roger Lamb did not move to Chicago until the elders in Chicago invited him to join the staff there.

“Later in 1986, the mission team to Johannesburg was sent out, an historic event in South Africa because the church was multi-racial from its inception. Also that year our first foreign-speaking church plantings were sent to Paris France, led by Frank and Erica Kim. (Para. 23)”

\*Kip neglects to mention that the Johannesburg Church was reconstructed in the early summer of 1988 with a team led by Ron Drabot. As well, Kip does not mention that Tom and Ann Turnbull co-lead the team with the Kim's to Paris. The Turnbull's have since left the movement opposed to its teachings and practices.

“Everyone was encouraged to take the First Principles Class. We found that these leaders had to unlearn their past traditions and misconceptions before they could really learn how to build churches. (Para. 28)”

\*The First Principles Class was required for anyone in leadership within the Boston Church. It was not simply "encouraged." Also, Kip felt differently about those who could "build churches" when he wrote the members at Crossroads in 1986.

“With the passage of time, the mainline Church of Christ's concept of autonomy and the restorations in Boston, my relationships with others converted at Crossroads had eroded. Realizing this, in the ensuing two years I made a concerted effort to reach out to the leaders of this campus ministry element of the Church of Christ...Sam Laing and Tom Brown who were then leading struggling congregations only partially composed of disciples...Just before Sam moved to Boston, the church that he was serving split...At this time, the Crossroads church publicly distanced itself from the Boston movement because of the Atlanta planting and the many restorations from Scripture that Al Baird and I taught there. (Para. 29)”

\*The split in Atlanta happened when Boston came in to "reconstruct" the church. Also, Crossroads "distanced" itself from the Boston Church, because of the undoctinal practices and teachings of the movement.

“In late 1986, because so many leaders from so many different elements of the Church of Christ had moved to Boston or our plantings, we decided to call to repentance all types of mainline and all types of campus ministry churches who were willing to pay the price to multiply disciples. First, we would ask the interested church's lead minister to move to Boston to be discipled and further trained. (Para. 31)”

\*Kip neglects to say that these lead ministers were asked to move to Boston on a temporary basis, which was usually for a period of 4 to 6 months. Also, how many had moved to Boston or Boston plantings by 1986? The first reconstruction did not take place until December of 1986, therefore, not many had moved before that time.

“When we built these churches, we taught against the unscriptural church government system practiced in the traditional Churches of Christ. They believed that each congregation was independent and totally autonomous from all the others...(The word "autonomy" is not even in the Bible.) We also taught that the lead evangelists worked

with, and, for the most part, led and disciplined the elders to direct the affairs of a local church (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 5:17)...We observed that independent autonomy violated the command and spirit of scripture. (Para. 34)”

“As Isaiah wrote, "Only a remnant will return: (Isaiah 10:21-22). I saw all the way through the Bible that God, from time to time, took the few who were faithful and separated them from the unfaithful to have a purified people devoted to him...Nehemiah and the remnant in Jerusalem, and ultimately, the Jews who became the first Christians in the first century!..We felt an obligation to God to call out the true disciples...Thus, we purposefully set about to glean the remnant into what now was clearly a new, modern-day movement of God. (Para. 35)”

\*The Jews were not the only Christians converted in the New Testament, therefore, they were not the only members of the "remnant."

“True restorations occurred as first-century Bible doctrines were once more rediscovered: like one church-one city (Revelation 2-3); church government especially the role of evangelist and elders (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 3:1-7); one brotherhood, not autonomy of individual churches that causes division (Ephesians 4:4-6). (Para. 46)”

“Currently, Elena and I have our hearts set on building a "super church" in L.A. as a model for all the churches to grow and mature to God's glory (1 Thessalonians 1:7). (Para. 54)”

\*The Boston Church is no longer the model church of the movement.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “The Super Church was a part of the New Testament mindset...but the thing that happened in Rome is there were little groups, dare we say sectors, that had their own independent leaderships. They were not autonomous, by any ways or means. We’re all in the Lord, we’re all under the authority of the Lord, we’re all under the authority of the Lord, and we’re all under the authority of our leaders, whoever disciples us in the Lord.”

\*There is not an example in the New Testament of one church having authority over another church. The hierarchy of the ICC is modeled after Paul’s direction to evangelists in the 1<sup>st</sup> century? How much authority does Kip believe he has today? He continually compares himself to Moses, David, Paul and even Jesus.

“I’ve got men that have their own independent churches, and I selected those men, because you’ve got to have the right guys on top.”

\*There is not an evangelist in the ICC that has “their own independent church.” Anyone who shows “independence” is rebuked, challenged, called to repent or leave the ICC. Example: Ed Powers in Indianapolis.

“Let me just say something about reconstruction. Some of you guys, let me just lay it out, you flat didn’t have a church of disciples till we did the cotton-pickin’ reconstruction. Now remember that and flat get grateful. You got people from mainline, and you got people from campus ministry, remember what was done..you had a group of some disciples, and some ‘you-yo’s’ that you let in that you couldn’t tell the difference between the rest of you.”

“When I wrote that *UpsideDown* article, I laid out what I felt about the Bible. Church of Christ background that a lot of you guys have said, and I don’t have it by the way, I’m not one of those people caught up in sentimentality toward Church of Christ, Gordon. The Church of Christ has said, ‘oh, no creed but Christ, no book but the Bible,’ and their favorite is, ‘speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent.’ In other words, you must have authority, you must have it exactly in print to do what they do..I believe that you should - be silent where the Bible speaks, because God’s made it clear, and speak where the Bible’s silent. In areas of opinion, you’re allowed to do anything.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Marty Fuqua:** “Are we going to build a ‘super church’ wherever you are? This would be the sheet that we would take the statistics on, everyone would have a copy of this.”

**Kip McKean:** “We’ll kinda share about the LA Church, warts and all right here. Their sector (West) that they (Fuquas) took over had a quote membership of 450 in June, after we went through and did the life talk it was down to 200. Now most of those people aren’t there any more. Marty is a hardline guy.”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “We’re going to sit down and have a life talk with everyone in this church that wants to be a part of the Tulsa Church of Christ..We’re going to just talk through your life, just have a good little life talk, take 2 or 3 hours, and just talk through your life. One of the things we’re going to do in that time, we’re going to talk about your conversion.”

“I’m telling you the truth, people, this church planting is for your salvation. You’re lost, you’re lost. If this church planting hadn’t come, you would have been lost..When you walk away from the movement of God, there is no where to walk to. Walking out of the light into the darkness. There is nobody else, there is nobody else in this country that has the true gospel, that is trying to make disciples of Jesus. There is nobody else in this entire world. This is the movement of God! There is no place to go..You’re the one who needs to be saved, you’re the one who is going to go to Hell if you don’t repent..You were hell bound before this planting got here..This church was on the road to hell.”

“This is not just a church among churches. This is not just the best thing going in Tulsa. This is the movement of God, and we’re calling all who will be true disciples to align themselves with this movement of God. You think this is a church among churches, you can’t be a disciple. If you think there’s other churches out there you can go and be a part of and be just as good and just as saved as you are a part of a church of disciples, you can’t be a disciple.”

\*The ICC is now drawing lines of fellowship based on membership within a movement church. Every member is analyzed and scrutinized by the incoming leadership during a reconstruction. That leadership determines who is or isn’t a disciple. Those who are challenged to become disciples do so or leave the fellowship as lost.

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “Every single one of you are going to sit down and go through a talk, and it’s going to be a challenging talk about whether you really want to be a disciple, or whether you really want to be committed or not.”

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “We could have an incredible work in the Middle East...We tried to get a church established there (Lebanon) and we couldn’t because, quote the other denominations opposed us,’ so they don’t want any other quote new groups.’ To make a long story short, instead of getting a church, we’ve simply gotten an agreement to be able to have, if you will, an association, a fellowship there...This association will have obviously a benevolent element to it in reaching out and helping the poor.”

\*It is unclear as to the governmental regulations in this church planting. The ICC has been known to work around governmental laws in attaining visa’s and entering foreign countries.

“It’s not like we’re giving it (money) away to another church. We are one church, one kingdom, one brotherhood, amen..At no time previous to the vote did Ed let any of those over him in the Lord know of his intent nor of his discontent with the movement.”

“I believe that we are a Bible church. And there is a reason for some extent why the New Testament is so small, it’s because all of the principles in the Old Testament, all the stories, all the principles of God still hold. Now, there are some things, some covenants that have passed. We understand that from the book of Hebrews...Now we have validated that the things in the Old Testament happen as an example for us under the New Testament. We are living under the New Testament, amen. But we’re living with the same God as the Old Testament.”

\*The ICC is again using Old Testament examples of leadership to determine the authority structure in their organization. To my mind, this interpretive stance perfectly illustrates the folly of allowing but one person—Kip McKean, a man whose only formal educational training is a degree in Chemistry from the University of Florida in 1976—to speak *ex cathedra* for the entire ICC. To speak *ex cathedra* means that your doctrinal pronouncements are on a par with scripture. Perhaps taking Kip’s interpretation to its illogical conclusion might illustrate the problem more clearly. If there was a Kingdom of Israel, there would be a kingdom of God on earth (the ICC). Perhaps we then need a king or prophet (like David)—in this case Kip is conveniently positioned himself in that role, however

much he may disclaim the title, he has the power, and that is all that is necessary for him. Why stop there? The ancient Israelites invaded and slaughtered those whom God commanded them to dispatch. Why not the ICC? The Israelites commanded circumcision—are we not to suspect this teaching lies just “around the corner” in the ICC? The Old Testament has been interpreted through the lens of the teachings of the New Testament by Christian scholars through the ages, men and women possessing a facility in the original Greek and Hebrew languages in which these writings first found form. To allow a chemistry major with a history of disruptive behavior and intolerance free reign on the biblical doctrines and practices of nearly 100,000 people suggests neither good sense nor a healthy estimate of one’s capabilities. For an organizational hierarchy such as the ICC to insist that its members “get advice” on nearly every behavioral choice they have, and yet for the leaders to so isolate themselves from any sources which may inform their biblical illiteracy seems somewhat hypocritical.

“We say, ‘well, the form of government in the kingdom of God must be a democracy.’ In the kingdom of God it is a kingdom. There are no votes. That’s a church of Christ business meeting. We did away with those things a long time ago.”

“It’s the whole community that’s holy. Moses, how come you have set yourself up to be the one over the Lord’s people? You’re not the only holy one amongst us. We’re all holy. Boy, doesn’t that sound spiritual? There was rebellion among the Israelites against Moses. You know, we have got to get our Pollyanna thinking dealt with. We are in the business of evangelizing the world, and it’s not going to be easy.”

“Autonomy is unbiblical. It’s not a word found in the Bible.”

“Somebody has said, ‘well why don’t we have a debate?’...It is written (in) Titus, ‘Don’t get involved in foolish arguments and controversies.’...To get involved in a debate would be sinful, wrong, and injurious. In my flesh, I go, ‘oh yeah, I’d like to debate.’...I’m telling you according to the Bible, I’m not allowed to debate. I’m not going to debate. I’ll study the Scriptures, one-on-one with anybody. Autonomy it’s not in the Bible as a word.”

“Why didn’t (we) go through Matthew 18?...You can only disfellowship somebody that’s in fellowship. If they don’t want to meet with you, they’re not in fellowship anymore.”

“So, I’m not going to be ordering the borders of Israel here, that’s for the Lord to do. Now, I’m going to be hard-line about what it takes to become a disciple. But I spent all the ‘80’s trying to bring in the remnant from these little churches..Notice, Moses was not a wimpy guy, ‘oh well, let’s just make peace, let’s get unified.’ Moses was not a guy to say, ‘let’s have unity at any price.’ He’s going, ‘hold it, I’ve gone to far? No, let’s see who is really holy before the Lord. You’re the ones that have gone to far.’”

\*Kip makes a statement about not drawing lines, and then within the next sentence speaks about bringing in the “remnant” from other churches. As already stated, in the process of a reconstruction, lines of fellowship are drawn. **August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “We believe that only one church was necessary—one small group of disciples led by spiritual people that knew God. That would be all that would be necessary...Because that is God’s plan, that disciples make disciples. We didn’t need 45 different, autonomous churches. There’s only one church in one city, and that my friend was radical.”

“I am disgusted by the attitudes of some of you who worry about what your role is in the kingdom. You say, ‘Well, I want to be the lead evangelist in a small church rather than the second leader in a big church.’ Hey, news flash. We’re one church, Amen!’ Well, I’ve got some nationals in my church. But they’re some of my best people. And there are very few that are sinless in this area. You are standing in the way of Jehovah God. You are a stumbling block to the evangelization of the world, because you are selfish. All you can say about is making your name great, your stats great. I am absolutely appalled at the lack of help that Cory has had in evangelizing the Middle East. Here we’ve got the roughest and toughest of the world sectors. And we got nobody offering up people.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Loyalty to Scripture”** “We believe the entire Bible is God’s Word and use it as the guide for our daily lives.”

**November 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; "Arabian Nights"** "The first century witnessed the birth of churches unparalleled since that time. In spite of tremendous cruelty, severe persecution and extreme poverty, these churches boasted numbers exceeding 20,000 disciples per church."

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Glory" - Al Baird:** "Kip McKean developed the Second Principles class as an intense either-session course on the Old Testament and taught it to the entire staff in November and December."

\*Kip continuing to support the structure of authority and one church over another by using the Old Testament as his example. Yet, the New Testament examples of church structure do not support this teaching.

### SECTION THREE: DISCIPLING

**April, 1984 Boston Bulletin; "Discipleship Partners" - Kip McKean:** "The proposed methodology will now include: ...two way sharing of victories and burdens in each of the Christian's lives from that week...All of us need to continually re-examine our methodology to see if we can restore more completely the patterns of God's Word and thus see the first century Christians' conquest of the World repeated in the Twentieth Century in this yet our generation."

**August 4, 1985 Boston Bulletin; "Dr. Jerry Jones Appointed Evangelist" - Kip McKean:** "When I first became a Christian during my freshman year of college, my heroes were men such as John F. Kennedy, Bart Starr and Dr. Christian Barnard. However, after a period of time my heroes became the Bible's mighty men of faith such as Moses, David and Paul, as well as such great men in our time - Chuck Lucas, Sam Laing, Tom Brown, Richard Rogers, Marvin Phillips and Jerry Jones. Along with my father, these were the men that I admired most. So one can only begin to imagine my excitement when Jerry, one of my heroes, came to Boston to contribute his Biblical expertise and to be further disciplined to Christ. Jerry and I are now best friends."

**August, 1986 Boston Bulletin; "Because You Say So" - Ed Townsend:** "A teachable heart never thinks "I've arrived." ...Proverbs 3:5 teaches: "Lean not on your own understanding." Often we rely on our own ideas and perceptions instead of listening to those who are discipling us...Do you fully obey when you're given direction and instruction or do you interpret, filter or revise what you hear?"

\*Al states that filtering is "disobedience and rebellion" in his articles on "Authority and Submission" in 1987. Al does not retract statements made by himself or Ed in his '92 article, "Discipleship: A New Look At Authority". Al does make a retraction in regard to part of what Ed misquotes in Proverbs 3, but note what Al and Steve Johnson do state about filtering in 1987 under the subject of AUTHORITY.

**June, 1987 Atlanta Leadership Conference - Jim Blough:** "I believe if I could become exactly like Kip, I'll be a whole lot more useful to God than I am by myself. I humbled myself before Kip. Kip says, "Brother, you do this." I say, "Okay." I don't argue, I don't question; I do it. Why? Because I want to be more effective for God."

\*Al makes a retraction about this statement in his 1992 article.

**August, 1987 Chicago Bulletin; "How To Be Sure You Are Not Disciplined" - Bob Harpole:** "Trust your discipler's motives, keep no hidden reservations and give the benefit of the doubt... In a word, your faith in God is reflected in your faith in your discipler."

**1987 World Missions Seminar, Boston; "Why Do You Resist The Spirit?" - Kip McKean:** "You are a disciple of someone else until you die."

**October 4, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Authority and Submission" Pt. V - Al Baird:** "We expect every member to be disciplined by a more spiritually mature Christian who is given the authority to teach him."

\*Al retracts this statement in his '92 article, see Authority section.

**October, 1987 Southeastern Leadership Conference - Wyndham Shaw:** “Because you trust me, and I trust Andy, you can trust Andy through me... You know we are telling you we haven't been annihilated black and blue, forced to do things against our conscience or seen Boston be a place that is not sensitive to people. It is not that way, folks. And so you do know Kip if you know me.”

\*Is Boston a place "sensitive to people?"

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman College Forum - Steve Johnson :** “If you come to me and say, "Steve, I want you to teach me how to date," I would say there are some rules. I don't tell you it is free advice so you don't have to take it, but if you want me to give it to you, then you are going to have to cooperate.”

\*Note Steve Sapp's statement on March, 1990.

**November, 1987 Chicago Speech; "Imitate Jesus" - Marty Fuqua:** “honestly, there are a few times that I bucked Kip. And I can tell you honestly that I did wrong every time. It was not right to be arrogant, to be proud, to be rebellious.”

\*It is important to keep in mind that Marty Fuqua, as a World Sector Leader, is the individual who presumably is called to “disciple” Kip and presumably keep him “in line and accountable.” Here we see the inherent flaw in the discipling pyramid as the ICC has constructed it: the leader at the top is surrounded by people who believe that disagreement with Kip is “arrogant, proud, rebellious.” This is not a healthy relationship from which to correct or admonish any misbehavior. No, the boss in an organization is not “discipled” by his underlings (especially when each of those men owe the boss—in this case Kip McKean—their very jobs in the first place). Hence the wisdom in local oversight by elders in each church, or in the case of a business, a Board of Directors or the stockholders of a publicly-traded company.

**November, 1987 Cincinnati Speech - Dick Runge:** “So submitting is going ahead and saying okay even if I don't agree as long as it doesn't violate scripture and as long as it doesn't violate my conscience...Submission isn't understanding...I've already decided that I am behind the decisions that are made in New York. I've already decided. Whatever, I'm behind it. I don't care what it is. I don't care what it means for me, as long as it doesn't violate scripture and as long as it doesn't violate my conscience, I am already behind it...Now, some of you may say, "That's just throwing your brain away." No, that's biblical submission. It's trusting in God to direct things...That doesn't just apply to the evangelist or the elders in the congregation. It applies to your discipling partners too. Because that's delegated authority. It applies to your Bible Talk leader because that is delegated authority...Ultimately, submission is trying to learn and develop convictions from the direction that I have been given. No, you don't throw your brain away.”

**1988 Boston Leadership Conference; "Discipleship Partners" - Kip McKean:** “To not have a discipleship partner is to be rebellious to God and to the leadership of this congregation... Friendship is what builds trust...The person that you are discipling must believe, must trust that you are out for God and their best interest. Because you see there is going to be some advice they will not understand. But if they trust that you are out for God and their best interest they will obey...They must believe that your judgment is better than theirs.”

**1988 Boston Leadership Conference; "Discipleship Partners" - Scott Green:** “Trust—it makes me want to obey the advice that I've received...I want you to do what I say because this is in the pattern of God...Now, I believe that disciples need to follow even personality traits. I think disciples need to imitate us wholly in what we do. I think we need to call disciples to do that.”

\*Notice '92 article to see how Al Baird would imitate his discipler.

**1988 Boston Leadership Conference; “Imitation” - Scott Green:** “You set your mind to be an exact replica, you set your mind to be an exact imitation, if you set your mind to do that, the Lord is going to carry you to be not only like your discipler, he may indeed carry you to some place scary!...One young lady came back to me (after a speech in San Francisco) and said, "I closed my eyes and I heard Kip McKean." I mean I gave that sister a big hug because that's my goal, that's what I want to be like. I want to be able to imitate Kip McKean. I want to preach like him, I

want to think like him, I want to talk like him. Do you see what I am saying? Are you an imitator or are you an information gatherer?"

\*Note that Green, like Fuqua, is a World Sector Leader, tasked with holding his apparent idol Kip McKean, in line. The reader is left to consider how healthy this arrangement is.

**Fall, 1988 Brockton House Church Reconstruction - Joe Garmon:** "A disciple is someone who understands that he is going to be disciplined by man. That it is God's will, it is his purpose, it is his plan and it is the only way that it makes your heart fully submissive to him when you are disciplined by another person...There is no other way to be in a right relationship with God."

**Sept. 25, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "The Attitude of Christ Jesus" - Joe Garmon:** "Jesus submitted not only to the Father, but to sinful man as well...God's plan is that everyone on earth be in a disciple's mode. Everyone has someone in authority over them, even Jesus. "Now I want you to realize that the head of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3)...This is discipleship, not merely following directions, but becoming like the discipler by imitation."

\*Jesus was perfect. Jesus and the Father were one, they were equal. Jesus had no need to be further disciplined. Also, the scripture used above is a misquote. 1 Corinthians 11:3 includes, "The head of every man is Christ."

**Sept. 25, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Follow Me" - Robin Deal:** "Pride will cause us to squirm and resist being told what to do and how to do it. Our discipler does not need to prove herself to us...Strive to emulate her outlook, reaction, thought processes. Obedience and imitation are God's answer for pride and selfishness...Ask yourself, in what ways is your obedience sometimes not exact? Do you filter your imitation of your discipler?"

\*Robin Deal is no longer a member in the Boston Movement, and has recanted her previous statement in this area.

**April 23, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Loving Your Family" - Barbara Porter:** "The true test of our trust and submission comes when we are called upon to trust and obey a decision contrary to what we normally do or think...We need to pray for his wisdom, and then trust that our disciplers will help us understand God's will."

**May 14, 1989 Chicago Bulletin; "How To Be An Awesome Disciple" - Eric Mansfield:** "We must accept that we are not objective about how we come across to others or how we think...An awesome disciple is one who assumes his discipler is more objective and accurate about his life than he is."

**July 16, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Trust Me!" - Terry Moore:** "Trust in the discipling relationship is absolutely essential. Without it we will never grow beyond our own limited understanding, beyond our own perceptions of ourselves and situations, because we are screening out everything that doesn't already fit in. We seriously restrict any growth we might have. We, like Peter, often times do not trust the people God has put into our lives."

\*Terry Moore is no longer a part of the Boston Movement.

**1989 Boston World Missions Seminar - Mohan Nanjundan:** "And if you would only become like them (discipler) all their flaws, you would be more like Jesus than you are right now. Do you really trust?...How much do you seek advice?...I remember one time as a young Christian, I sat down with Douglas Arthur and we had this conversation and Douglas said, "You know, Mohan, in our relationship 20 percent of your growth can come from me, and 80 percent needs to come from your effort."

\*Where does God come in the plan for growth of the Disciple?

**October 22, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Forever Growing" - Theresa Ferguson:** "Ultimately, if we do not trust these people, we do not trust God. To the extent that I trust my discipler, I am in reality trusting God."

**March 10, 1990 Boston Speech - Al Baird:** "You will notice I did not say independent or critical. Having a critical spirit is sin, but having a maverick spirit is being like Jesus."

**March, 1990 Atlanta Speech - Steve Sapp:** “If this is news to you--what we used to have in the church here, we had dating rules. Now, we didn't call them dating rules. We called them "guidelines." But they weren't guidelines, they were rules because if you didn't follow them, you got your hands slapped! And people put you in the doghouse and you know, it was like "oh, you got sin, brother; you've got a bad attitude.”

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** “Some of you have become reactionary and have backed off respecting your leaders...Now you have flat become one of the best critics around. That's sin! There is a critical element in this church that stinks. It needs to be rebuked!”

\*Kip decided to take Al Baird out of the position as lead evangelist in Boston. Randy McKean was brought back from Paris to take over in this lead position in Boston as Kip's "Timothy.”

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Randy McKean:** “Do you know what I say to organization? I say "amen to organization." Do you know what I say to discipling? I say amen to discipling...I'm not saying amen to a humanistic system.”

**May, 1990 Boston Speech - Randy McKean:** “It is proper and right, you need some help--start with your discipleship partner. If they really don't know how to help you, if they are not spiritually mature enough for that situation, go to your Bible Talk leader. If they don't really understand because they are not spiritually there to help you -- it's that deep of a problem or situation -- hey, you know, you go to one of the full-time people in the zone, or you go to the Zone Leader. You will seek advice when it is needed: you will be teachable; you will be submissive.”

\*Going up the line of "vertical authority" shows the hierarchy within the movement. Notice in 1992 that Kip admits there is a “vertical authority.”

**October 7, 1990 Indianapolis Speech - Chris McGrath:** “I heard reaction in every single zone about "I don't like it."...The problem with them (some guys in the zone) is they need to get their heart right and focused on God and blow it out! They don't need to be so concerned about their dating life--if they showed that compassion and urgency for the lost, then I might listen to them...All I said is no more dating only on a Saturday night between 6:00 and 12:00...Singles, you have a divided heart towards God.”

\*Dating - In early 1992 in the D.C. church, a couple was put off in setting a date for their wedding to the point that their frustration lead them to a Justice of the Peace. During the dating stage of their relationship, the brother was told to break off the relationship with the sister, because she was not "leadership material." They were told that their marriage was "not blessed by God", and have since left the movement church in D.C.

**May 19, 1991 Chicago Speech; "Power with a Purpose" - Ron Drabot:** “How many of you struggled with your pride or rebelling against advice?...How many of you just feel like I know what is best and I could do it better?”

\*Al does not believe this is a right attitude in 1992. See "Discipleship: A New Look At Authority" in this section.

**May 19, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "Dynamic Discipling" - Randy McKean:** “To lead a person effectively is to anticipate what his next step is before he even realizes he is ready to take it.”

**Fall, 1991 Discipleship Magazine; "Until Christ is Formed in You" - Andrew Giambarba:** “I have never thought that Phil (Lamb) and I mutually edify each other or that we learn from each other.”

**Sept. 22, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "Discipling: Restated and Restarted" - Al Baird:** “No matter where you are in the relationship, you need to have the spirit, attitude and heart of a learner...We all need to be teaching one another and to obey God whether we are the "teacher" or the "student." When we have a spirit of learning we learn from everyone -even our enemies, so surely we can learn from disciples younger and older in the family of God...You don't change people by ordering them to change. You don't change people by compelling them to do things. You change people by going after their hearts and getting them to fall in love with Jesus Christ.”

\*Today in the movement, you change (repent) or get out.

**January, 1992 Tools for House Church Leaders, San Francisco Church - Preston Shepherd:** “Write down the names of the Bible Talk leaders in your House Church. Use the preceding list to fill out the strengths and weaknesses of the BTL..Use data to evaluate maturity plans for others as well..Write down the name of three Christians who are struggling to remain faithful.”

“What can I do to help someone that has fallen away to be restored?...Find out why they left...After consistent repentance (around 3 weeks), talk to Zone Leader about restoration...Write down up to three recent fall aways in your House Church. Make a plan for them using the preceding advice.”

“How should I deal with sin in my House Church?...Always get advice from your discipler - he has had more experience than you. (Prov. 19:20)”

“How can I make sure that the Personal Bible Studies (PBS) are moving?...Assign conversion calendars. Review planned date of baptism...Make sure decisions are being made after each study...Make sure the three most open people are getting top attention...”

“What should I cover in counting the cost with someone that wants to become a Christian?...See if they understand that there’s only one church...See how many true disciples they think there are in the Bay Area...Check what they have sins they have repented of and what sins they feel will be challenging to overcome. Make sure they are willing to repent and fight to overcome these sins...Make sure they are willing to share faith and have quiet times daily...Ask them if they are ready to sacrifice financially (10% to start)...See if willing to give up their dreams and desires and live for God’s dreams.”

“How do I conduct my Bible Talk Leaders meeting?...Cover special needs, (Ex - weak, struggling members.”

“What should I cover in counting the cost with someone that moves into the church from another multiplying ministry?...Get to know their background...Sometimes it is very helpful to call their old discipler from their last church family.”

**January 19, 1992 Boston Bulletin; “1992: The Year of the Bible/Continuing Restoration” - Randy McKean:** “Discipling is the Biblical tool of restoration and the Bible is the absolute and final authority of restoration. All disciples need to grasp that restoration is what we are doing.”

**“Continuing Restoration” - Wyndham Shaw:** “I praise God we’re moving from one-way direction-giving to two-way friendships in our discipling.”

**Al Baird:** “Let us all become Bereans who examine the Scriptures daily to see if what we are teaching and practicing is true (Acts 17:11)...Don’t assume that you are not mature enough or not in a position to raise questions or share your discoveries. Anyone with a disciple’s heart can discover the truths of God from His Word. We encourage you to call us with your insights that you think will restore more completely our understanding of following God...We need to imitate the Christ-like qualities which we see in others (1 Corinthians 11:1).”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Discipleship: A New Look At Authority" - Al Baird:** “If people do not agree (unless it is a clearly defined biblical matter), we need to leave them room to make mistakes...Both disciples need to be eager to learn from one another; no relationship should ever be totally one-sided...But we are wrong to call someone to obey such things as choice of food, car, clothes, exact amount of giving, etc...We also need to make a distinction between calling for obedience and giving advice. Advice is not a command. It is advice. It can be accepted or rejected without sinning so long as the person receiving the advice is convinced that his decision is the one God wants...A leader has no biblical reason to expect obedience in the area of advice...Blind, unthinking obedience can be very dangerous. It is dangerous to not ask questions if you don't understand or if your heart is not where it needs to be to carry out the action. We need to move out of personal conviction, not blind obedience.”

\*Al brings up Jim Blough's speech in 1987 at the Atlanta Conference. Al goes on to say in his article...

\*Al then brings up Ed Townsend's article "Because You Say So." Al admits that Ed misapplied Proverbs 3:5, when he used it to show the need for trust in one's discipler, since the verse talks about trust in God. Al then talks about the Bereans (Acts 17:11) as an example of how we should be teachable, and he goes on...

"I want people to obey me or accept my advice only if they trust that it is what Jesus wants them to do...Care, however, needs to be taken by the discipler that he only calls the disciple to imitate the Christ-like qualities in him."

\*Al brings up another past article by Robin Deal from 1988:

"What to imitate should be thought out, discussed, agreed upon and prayed about. No one except Jesus is perfect; I will only imitate him in every area and suggest that you do the same."

\*Al makes statements that are not practiced by other leaders within the movement. To make the kind of changes the movement professes, would take everyone acting on the biblical aspects of what Al is saying in this article, but that is just not happening.

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** "In the Crossroads movement, one another Christianity was expressed in a buddy system "prayer partners," where each person chose their own "buddy." With so many new Christians in the Boston Church, I felt this approach was not directive enough. Building upon this concept, I came up with "discipleship partners." In these relationships, the evangelists, elders and women's counselors after discussion and prayer, arranged for an older, stronger Christian to give direction to each of the younger, weaker ones...Obviously, the younger discipleship partner also gives input and advice to the stronger disciple, as in any healthy relationship. (Para. 20)"

\*It's interesting to notice the "unhealthiness" in Phil Lamb's relationship with Andrew Giambarba (see quote Fall, 1991).

"Of all these leaders, my closest brothers are Doug Arthur and Steve Johnson, who are my most experienced and most trusted men. Doug and Steve have always told me what I needed to hear...Like all true disciples, their first allegiance is to Jesus, not a man. (Para. 42)"

\*Kip claims to be accountable to others, but he humiliates a World Sector Leader in a public speech, as well as Gordon Ferguson. See statements in "Super Church" section.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; "The Super Church" - Kip McKean:** "I saw people last night not even taking notes. Let me tell you something bro., let me tell you something sister, that pencil better be moving today."

\*Is taking notes a mandatory requirement in the ICC? Is note taking a matter of opinion? Is Kip threatening his leaders?

"We're all under the authority of our leaders - whoever disciples us in the Lord...I gotta get the people to be spiritual...I had to hammer on people a little bit, but they are learning the Bible."

We have a policy, that hey, you don't move out of LA. What about jobs? You know, we believe in a God, a God that can get jobs...Why do people move for jobs? It's money, it's flat mammon...I might work a hardship on the, move them into another family, they did in Acts 2. I went back after telling the World Sector Leaders that in May, and I go, 'Gee, I hope we are really doing that.' So I went to the Sector Leader's meeting, 'guys did we have any move-outs that we didn't plan to move out?' 'No, brother,' Oh good, I didn't lie, good, I feel good about that."

\*Is Kip mandating policies that he is uncertain are true?

"Every member of our church is in a Bible Talk. They are expected to bring visitors every week. Everybody's expected to bring visitors every week! They don't bring a visitor, we ask why...Secondly, we do the contribution in the discipleship group...Someone doesn't give we ask why. We know who didn't give by the end of discipleship group. Questions are asked. We have almost 100% giving in our church. Someone doesn't give they got some attitudes.

**Reese Neyland:** “There was this one particular staff meeting that I remember, where I was seeing things a little differently than Kip was, well quite honestly I had a bad attitude, and we had to have one of those discipleship groups and it really was great, because Kip really allowed me, he drew me out, we had really just a very frank and honest talk, and I told him how I felt, and you know Kip, he was able to tell me how he felt. I had to repent of things, I had attitudes had to repent of my spirit and not being loyal as I should have been.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Cutting Edge” - Marty Fuqua:** “If you can’t find your way clear to be there, then you won’t be a member of our church. Some of them didn’t come, and they aren’t members...As I looked at the West sector, it was made up of the weak and the weird. I said, ‘listen, if you’re a white collar person, don’t you ever bring in another blue collar person. You reach out to white collar people. If you’re a blue collar person, don’t you come in here with someone who doesn’t have a job. You reach out to blue collar or white collar.’”

\*This is clearly an encouragement from leadership in the ICC to show favoritism in evangelism.

“You’re dragging your little sorry butt around with 5 baptisms a month. You ought to be able to do that by yourself...Listen brother, you’re a man of God. You better get your head up, and you better start being something, and get some competitive fire. Nice guys finish last...You’re a wimp, you’re a sissy.”

“That’s right, the door swings both ways, and don’t let it hit you on the way out...Kip just says, ‘if you don’t like the Los Angeles Church of Christ, leave!’ And I say, ‘amen!’”

“Being on the cutting edge develops within you a sense of a disciple. I want to be under authority. I want to be asked upon to do things that call upon me to be in the position that Jesus was in. Some of you avoid these positions like the plague. These positions define your spiritual life. They develop your spiritual life. How good a disciple are you?”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “You are totally out of touch, if you think you can be even slightly righteous and not have somebody in your life that you’re accountable to...You’ve gotta get the sins out there before a brother, before a sister and you’ve got to get healed. We’re going to hold to the teachings of Jesus. Aren’t you glad?”

**Saturday Message - John ?:** “Ed Townsend and I went for a ride...He goes, ‘Brother, do you think Mary wants to be in the ministry? You are the problem. There’s one problem you wife has, she is an unloved women.’ At that point, I made a connection, sin is the issue, and for another two hours of yelling, I mean. I was supposed to be appointed evangelist a month later. He pulled that out. He said, ‘man, I don’t even feel good about you being appointed evangelist.’”

\*Does Ed treat his disciples the way he once described in quotes from his article, “Because You Say So?”

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “There’s a spirit of compromise that has come into the congregation...You were converted two, three, four, five or maybe more years ago, and now you’re older and wiser. And now you’re going to really know how to disciple people, because you see, you’ve been hurt by discipling. You’ve been damaged. And now you’re going to do it the right way, and what you do is you compromise every single principal of the relationships that God has given us. You don’t speak the truth in love, you turn your back the other way...You keep things on a totally superficial level. I mean, they don’t ever get involved in your life and you don’t get involved in theirs. I mean ‘I’m not my brother’s keeper. It’s not mine to tell anybody what to do. I mean, I’m just going to let everybody do their own thing.’ Yeah you are, and their doing their own thing. And the church has broken faith, and God has said, ‘until you get your faith back on, no more blessings.’ You know, it’s my experience that those who gripe the most about being damaged in discipling relationships, many times are the people who did the most damaging. I mean, they left a trail of bodies all behind them. And, ‘oh I was hurt sooo bad.’ Listen, have a birthday.”

“Many of you, you’ve compromised. You’ve back off unbelievably in your relationships. You say, ‘well, I don’t want anybody telling me what to do.’ Let me tell you something, you need someone telling you what to do.”

“You’re going to have good attitudes, and you’re not going to grumble and complain, and you’re not going to cohort around and be buddy, buddy with people who have left this church and have bad attitudes. You are going to tithe. You’re basically going to be what every person ought to be that’s a disciple.”

**Dave Weger, Evangelist:** “I’m also repenting of just being a lousy disciple to Marty, and I’m ashamed of that...Marty said, ‘You’ve just been a lousy disciple.’ It’s true, I haven’t imitated him 100%, and I believe in imitation. I preach it, but I know Marty is right.”

**George Havins, Elder:** “I want to share with you some insight into the way I think. A few weeks ago, I think I was thinking like some of you. Dave was preaching an awesome sermon...I said, ‘I wouldn’t have used those particular words. I would have chosen to use something different.’ I didn’t have any problem with where he was going with it, but you know what I did? I started to think. That was a mistake. (laughter from the audience)”

\*This statement really reveals the true issue of what discipling in the ICC is all about. The disciple learns not to think for themselves.

**March 17, 1993 Atlanta Bulletin; “A Modern Day Hero in the Faith Comes to Atlanta!”:** “We get the chance to sit at Kip McKean’s feet and learn from a modern day true hero in the faith! Kip and his wife, Elena, have continually risked their lives, literally, for God as they have set the pace in faith, evangelism and dealing with sin...Let us give our utmost respect...Invite lots of non-Christians. This will be a night of IMPACT. People who come hear Kip share his convictions will become Christians.”

\*Is there hero worship in the ICC today?

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “In the kingdom you’ve got to be loyal, amen. And a lot of us have learned how to do that, because we’ve learned how to trust people finally...Our number one loyalty is to Jesus Christ and His word. Hey, the guy that studied the Bible with me, he fell away. Preacher that baptized me, he’s not in the movement, amen. I feel terrible. They’ve make their decisions. I’m a loyal guy.”

\*Note Kip’s heroes in 1995 quote.

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; “Personal Righteousness” - John Porter:** “If someone is not willing to do the will of God, he has no part in God’s church...We are dreadfully sinful...But when we’re confronted with our sin. We’re told what we need to do. If we don’t have a humble response, wanting to change, wanting to do what is right. We don’t have any business being here Because, see, we will pollute, lukewarmness will infiltrate the church. Impurity will infiltrate the church, and we will destroy God’s Kingdom.”

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; “Personal Righteousness” - John Porter:** “Let’s sit around and talk about how great we are, that’s how most churches are. You hear a message of peace, peace, but most people don’t have peace. You hear a message of grace, grace, but you see, without faith there is no grace. And where there is faith, there is obedience!”

“You see, I have a discipler; he lives in Miami. I go down there frequently to talk with him. Just to see his meetings, to see how he deals with people, to see his church, to see his life, because I want to be that way. I can’t do it without the involvement of Phil Lamb in my life.”

“Sometimes we just don’t get around to sitting with our disciple and saying, ‘how’s it going? How’s your marriage? How’s your purity? How’s your evangelism? How can I help you? What’s going on? Why aren’t you being fruitful? And really helping people. I’m not saying just to beat on people. People need help. They need to be disciples...A righteous man likes to be challenged.”

\*Does the ICC “beat on people?” Why does John Porter use this terminology? To disciple someone in a challenging way, as was described above (Ed yelling at John for two hours) routinely happens within the ICC. This would fall under the realm of “beating on people.” or “hammering,” as Kip referred to.

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “One of the things that’s been injured here is the trust issue.”

“So we’ve got to understand it has happened. Some of you, ‘oh, it’s never happened before, it’s never happened before, I can’t believe, I can’t’ Would you shut-up, get your Bible open, it has happened before, but it’s got to be dealt with in a Godly way.”

“Discipling is a perfect institution. It’s made by God, but the people that are in it are not perfect. They are called sinners...The point is this, we’re not going to throw out the perfect institution simply because sinners are in it. Discipling is God’s plan. It’s not a choice. You don’t get to vote on it. You can’t go half way with it, anymore than you can go half way with marriage.”

“Jesus says, ‘ this is the kind of trust that you have to have as a little kid.’ You know, my greatest worry has not been the poison of the false doctrines. It’s been the destruction of trust. You’re trusting God, you’re trusting God’s movement. You’re trusting all the other churches. You’re trusting discipling. You’re trusting people. I’m not saying that people are perfect...When a discipler sins, he needs to ask forgiveness.”

“If you’re in a confused state right now, then you know Satan’s got your heart...Lastly, you need to obey the marking...It is an issue of salvation.”

\*The majority of the Indianapolis Church voted to discontinue certain practices held by the ICC in early 1994.

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “I want you to be secure that I appreciate what you have done. I want you to be secure in God’s love, because you see, when you’re secure, then you can handle any challenge that’s given to you.”

“We would fast as a congregation (Boston). We fasted for world peace. We had brother fast up to 40 days. But today, I look around this auditorium, and there are 50% of you who are significantly overweight, and it’s disgusting!...I’m embarrassed to be around some of you people. I hug you and my hand goes into your sides...let me tell you something, you sisters - and you listen to me good. I have sisters in the LA church come to me and say, ‘Well, I don’t know why this brother doesn’t like this sister. I mean, she’s just a little overweight.’ Yeah, because you’re overweight, and you don’t want to make a big deal in your life. It’s a huge deal. That’s the body, that’s the temple of the Holy Spirit. How you look is how you are. And some of you married women have gotten so grossly overweight, and so you can’t understand your star little intern who is overweight, none of the brothers like. Because it’s flat unspiritual to be overweight. Let’s lay it out - what the Bible calls it - it’s gluttony. And let me tell you something. The primary offenders in this room are not women, but brothers. And there is an incredible double standard. The thing that really scares me, I see some of your children, chubby. ‘Well, they’re just going through a baby-fat stage.’ Oh, so sir. And you are destining your kid to be laughed at, to be mocked. And that kid should be in the Kingdom of God, and people do not laugh at God’s children.”

\*A great deal of emphasis is placed on ones appearance. Thus, the terminology of calling someone “sharp.”

**December 18, 1994 LA Bulletin; “Stand and Deliver” - Al Baird:** “Yes, our teens are disciplined to excel in their school work.”

**January 29, 1995 LA Bulletin; “The Grace of Giving” - Marty Wooten:** “What should our attitude be when our leaders call us to deeper levels of commitment and sacrifice?”

**April 9, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Is Church Hazardous to Student’s Health” - Jack Kenny:** (Reprinted from the Manchester Union Leader, February 8, 1995) “His wife, Kim (Strondak), claims week-night meetings all end by 9:30, well before most college students are ready for a night’s sleep.”

\*Anyone who has been involved in Campus Ministry knows the meeting might be over, but the fellowship has just begun. Bible studies and activities do not end this early in the evening.

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin: “True Christians”** “True Christians are true disciples baptized as the Scriptures teach.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Shepherding the Flock” - Al Baird:** “In LA we have begun to tackle the problem. I’m not standing here as an authority saying, ‘we’ve got all the answers.’...San Diego decided last October they were going to start designating some people to start to help to take care of people in a shepherding way. Not as elders, but just sorta the focus on that particular thing of working with the weak. And we liked that idea when we heard about it, so May of this year we started what we call a shepherding couple program... These couples, we said, ‘Okay, you lead a Bible Talk, but beyond that your ministry is going to be shepherding people.’ Taking care of the weak and getting them strong. Working with people on what we call a weak and concerned list...Is it going to work? I don’t fully know if it’s going to work. I believe it’ll work, but it’s not going to take care of the whole problem...We need to get in a figure out why it is that people leave, and cure that problem, and take care of our people, and shepherd our people...We’ve always solved the problems and the crisis that we’ve had.”

\*Has the ICC always solved it’s problems? The movement has had the problem of people leaving their organization since its inception. There have been at least 60,000 people leave the ICC since 1979, per movement published statistics. See the growth section later in this study.

**“Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “And when we talk about loving God, that we’ve got a family that never quits on us, no matter how we act, what we do, who we offend, let me tell you something, they’re gonna want to join us. Amen.”

\*The ICC does “quit” on people. The way a disciple “acts” determines his status in the group. If one is critical or questions the authority of leadership or even of his discipler, that individual is shunned and chastised. If an individual become undesirable, that person can and will be asked to leave the church.

“And yet, we know from the Bible that Jesus led a life imitable. Now we’re not asked to imitate dying for people’s sins, walking on water, that’s unimitable for us. We are asked to imitate that which every Christian’s suppose to live. So it is with the preacher. Not everybody’s to get up and public speak, but our lives that are most imitable are how we live our everyday lives with our families or how we pray, and how we share our faith. And if you only preach publicly to a large crowd, and you don’t share your faith, there’s nothing to imitate. They imitate you, they don’t share their faith...you need to be rebuked. You’re in sin. Sin of cowardice, sin of unbelief, and the sin of laziness. And you need to talk to someone right after this message. And that’s at least one decision, you need to get up in front of your church and confess. ‘Oh no, brother, that might hurt the churches feeling about me.’ No, it will help the churches feeling about you.”

“You know, another problem that I see as preachers, is that we’ve allowed staff meetings to become just that, meetings. The whole purpose of staff meetings that we had in the early days of Boston was a discipleship group. We’ve got to much business going on and not enough discipling. We had a staff meeting a few months ago in LA; I just went around, and I said, ‘Okay, who’s been personally fruitful this year?’...Most of the group had not. I said, ‘we’ve just got to talk today. Why haven’t you been personally fruitful?’ ‘Well, you know bro., I don’t know, I’m trying.’ ‘When’s the last time you brought visitors?’ ‘Well, I can’t really remember. I think it was last year.’ This was the LA church! He says, ‘well, let me just lay it out Kip. I see evangelism as just being a hassle. It’s a nuisance.’ ‘Listen, people don’t understand. I’m leading hundreds of thousands of people. It’s time consuming.’ ‘Do you think I have a bad heart?’ Those were his words. I said, ‘it’s absolutely that you have a bad heart!’”

“What’s progress? Number one, it’s depth in your preaching. Insight in your preaching. The ability to inspire, even when you’re rebuking the tar out of them.”

“Some of you young guys, your problem is, the reason you’re not growing is you’ve become too critical, and you know your discipler too well, and he’s not your hero anymore. Well, let me tell you something, God’s plan for growth is through the Word of God and through prayer, and through discipleship by imitation...I picked out preachers when I was a young guy that I thought, ‘that guys awesome, and that guys awesome, and that guys awesome, and I’m stealing that story,’ amen. And ah, yeah, John F. Kennedy, yeah I like that stuff. Martin Luther King, okay, so he’s black, amen, we’ll incorporate a little bit of that, a little fire power, amen...You’ve got to pick

out some heroes then you gotta imitate and them, and only then do you need to develop your own style...Discipling has broken down to produce young heroes, but you know where I'm really scared church is discipling has broken down in our congregations. When Al Baird came to me about this issue, I was blown away, and Al will probably speak more about it on Friday, but let me just say this. Most people in our older churches do not have even a two hour block with their discipler set every week. Why? Because those of us in leadership aren't even giving two hours to all of our disciples...You see, we can have the mass evangelism, but we can't let discipling break down to raise up young heroes, and particularly in the fellowship. Everybody needs to be disciplined. You go back to your church, and you call you church back to repentance. Everybody needs discipleship time. Everybody needs daily contact with their discipler. Everybody needs to want to be disciplined. Are you with me. We gotta get this thing in that discipling, being disciplined is negative, being disciplined is good, amen. I want to say something about the women's ministry right here. You sisters, you've gotten comfortable at home. There are less and less sisters classes in the kingdom."

\*Kip does not mention Martin Luther King in 1985 as one of his heroes, but does mention Chuck Lucas and other mainline Church of Christ preachers, including Jerry Jones. Why have Kip's list of heroes changed?

**November 5, 1995 LA Bulletin; "Father of the Bride" - Al Baird:** "A new chapter is being written in our young modern-day Movement of God - an emphasis on shepherding and keeping the saved saved...One thing is already clear from my early research on what keeps people faithful: disciples who are married to disciples have a significantly lower fall away rate than do single disciples."

"Leaders need to give much more attention to disciples who are over thirty years old and still single. Any single disciple who wants to marry should be assisted in creative ways to make his/her dream become reality."

\*The ICC continues to keep those who are deemed "unspiritual" from marrying those who are in positions of leadership. Many couples have been rebuked for staying together against advice, and any marriage that takes place outside of leadership approval is unaccepted as Godly.

**December 17, 1995 LA Bulletin; "Christmas is for Giving" - Al Baird:** "Keep in touch with at least one disciple over the holidays, but don't come across as though you have to 'check-in'. Find a place where you can talk by phone without disturbing your family."

**"Blessed are Those Who Are Persecuted Because of Righteousness" - Maryann Rose & Marcia Lamb:** "She (Griselda Vasquez) attributes her strong convictions to the fact that she had made sure in her walk with God that she had no doubts or quiet reservations about her faith or her life."

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Great Expectations" - Al Baird:** "Gloria and I finally became a part of the Boston Church of Christ in 1983, and I have been disciplined by Kip ever since."

\*Notice that Al does not claim to "disciple" Kip. Even though in the past Kip has claimed that Al is one who "holds him accountable."

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Glory" - Al Baird:** "I am concerned about the number of selfish decisions that are being made in the Church today. Disciples commit to place the Kingdom above personal priorities (Matt. 6:33), but I see people making moves based on better pay rather than Kingdom needs. I see disciples grumbling because they feel they should have a "higher-powered" discipler. Brothers and sisters, God's modern-day Kingdom has grown so phenomenally because we have sought to bring glory to God. For it to continue to grow we must Keep and increase our focus on God and self-denial; he will give us all the glory we need."

"One brother said that a leader being that open with his life was even more proof that we are in the true Kingdom."

**February 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Cry Freedom" - Al Baird:** "Yet, the audience (LA Church) was showing little more enthusiasm to be in an assembly with God and his angels than they would show at a funeral."

**March 31, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Commitment to Excellence" - Al Baird:** "Excellence in marriage, grades or career is just as important to God as excellence in evangelism, preaching or prayer."

\*Why then are members made to feel guilty when they chose to put grades or their job above an ICC activity?

**April, 1996 San Francisco Bulletin; "Light Shinning In a Dark Place" - Dave Weger:** "We were determined for our children to have heroes and role models in the Kingdom and not from the world."

\*Is it okay for Kip McKean to have heroes from the world, but not for other members of the ICC? Does Dave disagree with Kip's choice in heroes?

**June 16, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Thanks Dad" - Al Baird:** "The best example of discipling is the family...The real question is what are you communicating to your parents say in and day out? Do you make them feel that they are special to you? Do they know that you are thankful for all they have done and continue to do for you? You are not succeeding in showing the proper respect and gratitude if they often complain about your not calling, writing or stopping by to spend time with them. This is doubly true if your parents do not approve of your being a disciple; then you must try even harder to show your appreciation for them and keep the lines of communication open. Second, we are not only to care what our parents think about us, but we also need to be the men and women who will make them proud of us."

**June, 1996 San Francisco Bulletin; "Leadership" "They (John and Lauren Degiorgio) were pulled into the Silicon Valley Region under Russ and Gail's leadership...Tom and Connie Schaffernoth at one time were in the ministry in Charlotte Church. They came out of the ministry to move to San Francisco and work full-time secular jobs, but God had another plan. After further training in the Silicon Valley Region, God raised them up and they now lead the great Sacramento Church."**

\*Decisions made by Russ and Gail and the workings of God are used interchangeably.

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Matters of the Heart" - Al Baird:** "Leaders are becoming more and more vulnerable in sharing their own lives, shortcomings, mistakes and sins. And discipling works - as the leaders repent and grow, the people will also."

**December 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; "The Heart of a Servant" - Roger Lamb:** "Recently doctors and nurses from around the Kingdom were challenged to consider moving to Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Kampuchea) to serve in the new hospital that HOPE is staffing. How would you feel about putting your medical practice on hold and moving your family to Cambodia?"

#### **SECTION FOUR: BAPTISM**

**1982 Boston World Mission Seminar; "Go Make Disciples" - Kip McKean:** "And let me just flat lay it out. If people have not had faith in Jesus Christ, if they have not been moved to the point of conviction to repent and to place Jesus Christ as the Lord of their life. If they are not willing to confess. And if they have not been immersed for the forgiveness of sins to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, my Bible teaches me they are outside of Jesus Christ."

**1984 Florida Evangelism Seminar; "Go Make Disciples" - Kip McKean:** "How do we answer the call? By having faith in Jesus Christ, by being cut to the heart about our sins, wanting to repent and then to be baptized to have our sins forgiven....You know, if you've not been baptized, if you've not repented, if you've not had faith, then you're not right with the Lord."

**1984 "The Upward Call: Challenges for Today's Christian Woman" - Pat Gempel:** "A more detailed study of the conversion process reveals five essential concepts to be grasped and implemented if one is to become a disciple...Each person must hear the word, believe it and develop a faith and trust in God; repent by turning to God and making Jesus the Lord of his life; publicly confess Jesus as Lord and the Son of God; and be immersed in water for the forgiveness of his sins. (p.20)

**1984 Campus Journal - Joe Woods:** "The command given by Jesus in Mt. 28:19-20 is to make disciples. Baptizing was a part of this disciple-making process."

**January 20, 1985 Boston Speech; "Our Needs" - Kip McKean:** "We had some one share the gospel with us-- the good news. We were touched in our hearts so much so we wanted to repent of all our sin. We wanted to make him Lord. Then we were willing to confess Jesus before men and then we were baptized... We can never compromise the issue of salvation---what it takes to be saved. You have to have faith, repent, confess and be baptized. That's just how it is."

**June 16, 1985 Boston Bulletin - Kip McKean:** "Since the blood of Christ is contacted at baptism, then let us stand firm on teaching that to become a Christian, according to the Bible, one must have faith in Christ and respond by repentance and baptism for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38)."

\*Up until this point Kip McKean taught and believed something different than what he believes and teaches now. Why did he change his mind?

**Boston Discipleship Study:** "Disciple = Christian = Saved"

**October, 1986** - Gloria Baird was rebaptized in Boston.

**1986 Shandon Church of Christ - Columbia, South Carolina** - Summer McKean was baptized in a public service prior to Randy's move to Boston. She was 7 years old.

\*Summer McKean was rebaptized at the Boston Seminar in 1991.

**Early 1987 "Shining Like Stars" - Doug Arthur, Doug Jacoby & James Lloyd:** "Baptism is for those who want to be disciples. (p.240 - Chapter 14 - Guard the Gospel)

A. Hear the message;

B. Believe;

C. Repent;

D. Confess Jesus as Lord and

E. Be immersed. (p250 - Chapter 6 - False Doctrines Pertaining to Conversion) (VII p.18)

**1987 Boston Women's Retreat; "Perfectly United" - Kip McKean:** "For a long time in the church of Christ and those that were raised in it (I appreciate that background and heritage and you need to) have been taught, dare we say, the five point plan of salvation - hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized. Though I believe in that because I believe in the word of God, I believe an essential element has not been emphasized in the area of repentance... We need to get it on straight, who is a candidate for baptism. It is the individual who is a disciple... There has become an innate doctrinal difference, but they (traditional church) don't recognize it because it looks like a methodology... After a period of weeks and months, maybe even years, in our fellowship they (new move-ins) get hammered around enough they eventually become disciples, but just for the first time have they become disciples."

"No one has been rebaptized around here. Not a single person has been rebaptized around here. I only believe in one baptism."

\*Kip is now teaching that Matthew 28 indicates only disciples are baptized. He is using an English translation to determine a Biblical practice. Matthew 28 teaches, in the original Greek, to make disciples, by baptizing and teaching. See Tom Jones' comments below.

**April, 1987** - Al Baird was rebaptized in Boston (it was not announced publicly for at least 10 months).

\*Al claims his baptism was not hidden on WRKO Radio in 1989.

**May 8, 1987 "Was My Baptism Valid?" - Tom Jones:** "No one should be baptized unless he decides that he or she wants to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ, or a disciple... The grammatical structure of the sentence is not being taken into consideration. In this passage (Matthew 28:18-20) make disciples is the main verb and baptizing them and teaching them are the participles that modify the main verb. In other words baptizing them and teaching describe how to make disciples. It is incorrect to read the passage as if it says first make a disciple, then

baptize him, then teach. There are not three steps in the sentence that came from Jesus...But in defining disciple, let us beware of defining the term in such a way that one cannot become one until one already is one...We like to make the point that a disciple and a Christian are one and the same, but let us be careful lest we say that one cannot become a Christian (through baptism) until he already is a Christian (a disciple).”

\*Tom Jones was rebaptized in Boston in December, 1987. Does he now refute his writings from May of that year?

**1987 Boston World Missions Seminar; "Go Baptize Disciples Only" - Al Baird:** “That means I can't be afraid to examine anything - there is nothing so sacred that I can't question it, including my own baptism.”

\*Al taught this class 4 months after his rebaptism, but he did not mention his own rebaptism in the class.

**September, 1987** - Roger & Marcia Lamb were rebaptized in Boston.

**1987 Chicago Women's Equipping Workshop - Roger Lamb:** “After the Boston Seminar, Marcia and myself both were baptized into Christ. We were both baptized Monday after the seminar. I told Kip, I told Marty and Ben, I said, "Okay, if this means I shouldn't be an elder, okay. Not a recent convert". Kip and Marty actually, independently said exactly the same thing. "You are not a recent convert." You see, about ten years ago - they both were there -when I really died to myself and made Jesus Lord of my life..."No you're not a recent convert. You became a disciple ten years ago. Eleven. But now you're understanding...you're convicted and you've been baptized into Christ.”

\*Was this not a "retroactive understanding?" See Kip's statement in Para. 17 or Revolution Through Restoration in this section.

**Fall, 1987 Chicago Leadership Workshop; "Baptize Disciples" - Roger Lamb:** “That fall, we had a retreat (1976). I think it helped complete my repentance in terms of the initial repentance...That was the point at which I made my lordship decision and became a disciple.”

**November, 1987** -Jim Krause was fired as Evangelist in St. Louis by Marty Fuqua, because he objected (among other things) to Roger's continuing in an elders position as a recent convert.

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman College - Al Baird:** “Basically, I believe we are in agreement on who is a Christian. I mean, we've been teaching it for years...Anyone who does those things (5-point plan, see full quote) is a Christian, anyone who does those things is in the brotherhood of God, is in the church. And I can't selectively say, "This person is, and this person is not. God defines that.”

\*Less than 9 months earlier Kip made a contradictory statement. See quote at Women's Retreat.

**November 22, 1987 Chicago Bulletin; "John Mannel Appointed Shepherd" - Roger Lamb:** John & Nancy Mannel were met in Charleston, Illinois. The article states, "The Mannels began attending worship services and were immediately drawn to the love of Christ in the church. Marcia and I began studying with them and they were incredibly receptive to the gospel”.

\*This article leads the reader to believe the Mannel's were converted 11 years early. Yet John was rebaptized less than 90 days prior to his appointment as elder.

**December 20, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Satan Masquerades As An Angel" - Elena McKean:** “Too few churches call people to make the decision to be disciples at baptism (Mt. 28:19). Jesus says, "if you have not done this, your baptism is invalid." Many people even in the church of Christ are deceived.”

**January 7, 1988 San Diego Conference; "What Kind of Man is This" - Tom Brown:** “They (Profs. in Abilene) were not disciples. They were not Christians! They were not saved according to the Bible...I don't believe they were even instructed right.”

**January 1988 - Phoenix Speech - Jeff Brown:** “It’s an inaccurate statement to say that you can read the book of Acts, and you’ll know what to do to become a Christian...Let’s not over react to the book of Acts. Luke never intended us to understand the book of Acts without internalizing the book of Luke.”

\*In Acts 2:41, 3000 people were baptized who had never internalized the book of Luke... Luke wasn’t written until 30 years later. It is amazing that Jeff Brown knows what Luke intended.

**January, 1988 Boston** - Marty and Cathy Wooten are rebaptized after moving to Boston from Denver.

**May, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Progressive Revelation" - Gordon Ferguson:** “And my personal conviction is that many of those in churches of Christ have never biblically repented, have never become disciples, and are thus not Christians...People in the churches of Christ who have not been disciplined first and then baptized are not saved. Does a person already have to be doing all that a disciple does before he can be baptized? No, but he does have to make the decision to do all that Christ commands. And if he is not putting into practice what he is learning as he learns it, the question of whether he has a disciple’s heart would be raised.”

**May 17, 1989 WRKO Radio Show - Al Baird:** “I was rebaptized in April of 1987...Now you may ask, "Why do we have as many quote 'rebaptisms' as we do." Number one, I don’t think there is any such thing as rebaptism.”

\*There is only one baptism. Al also claimed his baptism was "not hidden."

**August, 1989** - Chicago Membership Information Sheet.

\*Uses term "rebaptism."

**1991 Boston Discipleship Study - Randy McKean:** “Acts 11, the scripture used to justify the formula of Disciple = Christian = Saved is removed from the Boston study series.

\*Why?

**October 20, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "Marty and Cathy Wooten European Sector" - Randy McKean:** “Although Marty was a minister in other churches before being invited to come to Boston; it was here that he became a disciple on January 12, 1988. Cathy was baptized into Christ on January 15, 1988.”

\*Many leaders have been “rebaptized” in their years in the movement. There is a misrepresentation of when certain leaders actually were baptized and became Christians. In other Boston documents, one is led to believe that Marty and Cathy became Christians years ago, Marty in Oklahoma and Cathy through the influence of Parker Henderson. If there is only “one baptism” has Kip has been quoted as saying, why are several baptisms spoke about?

**January, 1992 Tools for House Church Leaders, San Francisco Church - Preston Shepherd:** “What should I cover in counting the cost with someone that wants to become a Christian?...See if they understand that there’s only one church...See how many true disciples they think there are in the Bay Area...Check what they have sins they have repented of an what sins they feel will be challenging to overcome. Make sure they are willing to repent and fight to overcome these sins...Make sure they are willing to share faith and have quiet times daily...Ask them if they are ready to sacrifice financially (10% to start)...See if willing to give up their dreams and desires and live for God’s dreams.”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolutions Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “Early on I developed a series consisting of nine Bible studies...I taught what was clear in Acts 11:26: SAVED = CHRISTIAN = DISCIPLE\*, simply meaning that you cannot be saved and you cannot be a true Christian without being a disciple also...I taught that to be baptized, you must first make the decision to be a disciple and then be baptized. I saw that people in and outside of our fellowship had been baptized without this understanding and then, in time, developed a disciple’s commitment to make Jesus Lord of their entire life. I taught that their baptism was invalid because a retroactive understanding of repentance and baptism was not consistent with Scripture. (Names are mentioned at this point of people who where rebaptized and those who were not.) (Para. 17)”

\*This formula is not consistent with the original.

\*Lisa Johnson has been rebaptized. See Rev. pp. 4-20, also see section on Gempels conversion.

“I have never believed or taught that anyone has to be baptized into the Boston Church of Christ to be saved...I do not know of any other church, group or movement that teaches and practices what we teach as Jesus taught in Mt. 28:18-20: one must make the decision to be a disciple, then be baptized. (Para. 18)”

\*These two sentences contradict one another.

“Many...who came to train to build churches of disciples discovered they had not been baptized as disciples themselves. In the world's eyes--they were rebaptized. In God's eyes, they were baptized into Jesus Christ...Others were not rebaptized, as they felt they had made the decision to be disciples. (Para. 30)”

\*Kip states that Marty Wooten was convicted about his original conversion. Notice p.43 in March, 1992 edition of UpsideDown Mag., it states, "Marty Wooten was converted in Oklahoma, and his wife Cathy, in Gainesville, Florida. See October 20, 1991 Boston Bulletin in this section for contradiction. Marty and Cathy were rebaptized in January, 1988. Kip was quoted to say to Marty, "now you are really Boston." See another recent quote regarding Marty's conversion on the last pages of the Tulsa Reconstruction transcript.

\*Also, Dave Eastman and his wife, Cathy, were rebaptized in 1987.

“During the initial weeks of this changeover each member was called to renew their commitment at baptism to be a disciple of Jesus, to be baptized as a disciple of Jesus, or to leave. Criticism came from outside our churches because, in the mindset of some, since the elders were just baptized, they became novices in the faith. The Bible teaches that a person should not be an elder as a novice so he will not become conceited...Since they were already serving in this capacity, and were now humbling themselves, there seemed little chance for them to now become conceited. Thus, this character requirement was not an issue. (Para. 31)”

\*This was an issue for someone inside the movement, Jim Krause.

“True restorations occurred as first-century Bible doctrines were once more rediscovered: like Jesus, baptizing only people who have made the decision to be disciples. (Para. 46)”

\*There are consistent contradictions on the decision to be a disciple vs. being baptized as a disciple. Notice the quote in September, 1996.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “Jesus didn’t say, ‘go and baptize,’ he said, ‘go and make disciples and baptize them.’”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “If you had a Biblical conversion, you were totally fired up and totally committed and you were zealous in the Lord, and you were sharing your faith with everyone you met. You didn’t have a Biblical conversion, you weren’t doing those things, and so calling you back to your first love is irrelevant, because you’ve never had a first love...Many of you are lost right now, maybe all of you are lost. You’re lost in your lukewarmness, and in your sin...You’re lost in your rebelliousness to God, and some of you are lost because you’ve never even become a Christian.”

“Once you become a disciple, then you can be baptized, but you can not be baptized until you become a disciple and that’s where, as far as I know, the rest of the entire religious world has got it, got it all messed up. I don’t know of any religious group in this world that teaches you’ve got to be a disciple to be baptized...I don’t know of any other religious group that teaches that you’ve got to be a totally committed disciple of Jesus to get baptized into Christ, but that’s what we’re going to teach...You must be a disciple to become a Christian and to be baptized.”

“I’m telling you the truth, people, this church planting is for your salvation. You’re lost, you’re lost. If this church planting hadn’t come, you would have been lost...When you walk away from the movement of God, there is no where to walk to. Walking out of the light into the darkness. There is nobody else, there is nobody else in this country that has the true gospel, that is trying to make disciples of Jesus. There is nobody else in this entire world. This is the movement of God! There is no place to go...You’re the one who needs to be saved, you’re the one who

is going to go to Hell if you don't repent...You were hell bound before this planting got here...This church was on the road to hell."

"He (Mark Harris) was baptized as a teenager in Gainesville, FL...Marty Wooten said, 'Mark, I don't think you're a Christian, in fact, I didn't know beans when I baptized you 10 years ago, and frankly now, since then, I've been baptized myself. I got some serious doubts.'"

**January, 1993 UpsideDown Magazine; "From the Editor" - Steve Johnson:** "A destructive cult is any group that engages in deception as a means to achieve its end. We openly invite people to church services, Bible studies, and in-depth one-on-one Bible instruction...They accuse us of deceiving people to get them into the church, but they know that our doctrine dictates that to be saved a person must first count the cost...and must decide whether or not they are ready to share their faith; pray and read their Bible daily; give money to the church on a weekly, sacrificial and cheerful basis; date only Christians if they are single; come to all the services of the church and continue in discipling relationships with other members of the church—all this before they become a part of the church."

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; "Personal Righteousness" - John Porter:** "If someone is not willing to do the will of God, he has no part in God's church...We are dreadfully sinful...But when we're confronted with our sin. We're told what we need to do. If we don't have a humble response, wanting to change, wanting to do what is right. We don't have any business being here Because, see, we will pollute, lukewarmness will infiltrate the church. Impurity will infiltrate the church, and we will destroy God's Kingdom."

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** "Well, are the people in the ICC the only ones saved? We're the only ones that teach as we teach... then if they (if someone from another church) are really good hearted they are going to join with people that are true disciples. So, I'm not going to be ordering the borders of Israel here, that's for the Lord to do."

\*Kip should simply say 'yes' in response to this question, if he really means this. Most former members will tell you that the issue of salvation existing outside the narrowly-defined borders of the ICC is not so cleverly finessed during the Study Series used by the ICC. In fact, the major point of one of the studies is to systematically remove the possibility of their being salvation in any other group besides the ICC. Why does Kip not just come out and say this?

"My Bible teaches me, according to the Bible, that true Christians are disciples. True churches are filled with only disciples, amen. That just didn't exist anywhere...That reconstruction produced a true church in Indianapolis."

**January 29, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Places in the Heart" - Al Baird:** "Gloria received a great heritage from her mom and dad. They taught her not to put much value in things. As I sorted through the belongings (after Gloria's mom's death), I saw no diamonds, gold, bank accounts or much else of earthly value. They taught Gloria to store up treasures in heaven, and that is the way they lived."

\*Gloria's parents were missionaries in the traditional Church of Christ. Does Al lead the reader to believe that God is pleased with their lives, and that they received their treasure in heaven, even though they were not members of the ICC?

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; "Preach the Word" - Kip McKean:** "I think we've forgotten to preach the radical message of who is saved. When you preach who is really saved: that you gotta have faith, you gotta repent, you gotta become a true disciple of Jesus, and then you gotta be water immersed for the forgiveness of sins received through the Holy Spirit. That excludes all other denominations, and certainly the Buddhists, the Islamics, everybody else that's out there."

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** "But there are such tragedies like...Erica Kim's brother, Hiroshi. He was in a car wreck last year, and was killed instantaneously, you know why?...He never responded to the Gospel...Why did it happen? So that the work of God, the Power of God, and the Glory of God would be revealed in Masayo's (Hiroshi's wife) life. (She later was baptized after studying with the Kim's.)"

\*The ICC speaks of knowing God's will for and individual's life routinely. Does Kip believe he knows the mind of God and why things both good or bad happen?

**June 16, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Thanks Dad” - Al Baird:** “But one thing stands out clearly in my mind: my childhood was a very, very happy time. I’m thankful for my Dad...He taught me that Jesus was the greatest person to ever live. I am a very fortunate son.”

\*It is lamentable that in the late 1980’s Al thought himself not to be a Christian and was hence rebaptized in Boston, years after being taught by his own father, a member of the mainstream Churches of Christ. According to the ICC official doctrines on salvation, Al’s father is not a Christian; and Gloria Baird’s parents aren’t, either. Al simply cannot have it both ways: if his father and in-laws are/were saved, then many other people—millions of them, in fact—are as well. Being Al Baird’s father or Gloria Baird’s parents do not exempt one from the teachings of the ICC. Will Al’s parents and in-laws die and go to hell because they did not receive a proper ICC baptism? For anyone else’s parents or loved ones outside the ICC, the answer would be, literally, ‘hell, yes.’ Yet Al’s family appear to have a special exemption. Al apparently cannot bring himself to embrace the logical conclusion of the doctrines that his own organization practices—that his parents and loved ones will be consigned eternally in hell because they did not undergo an ICC conversion. Here Al is practicing a grievous “sin” in the ICC—he is being “sentimental” with his own family’s conversion. Leaders are routinely taught not to be that way with their own families, nor the families of prospective members. It deeply sickens me that a leader of Al Baird’s stature can “reserve” a place in heaven for his father, but condemn millions of other ICC members’ parents to hell. Further compounding the problem, as will be seen later when we consider the case of Kip McKean’s conversion, is the unsettling fact that Kip McKean himself—based on his own conversion experience in the mainstream Churches of Christ—is not saved by ICC current doctrines, either. Heaven will truly be a lonely place if only those receiving ICC baptisms are allowed inside. There the “saved” or the “remnant” from the ICC may probably be startled to find that their own leader did not make it to the “pearly gates” himself.

**July 21, 1996 LA Bulletin; “All Things Are Possible With God”** “On March 30<sup>th</sup> Masayo was baptized as a disciple!”

\*One must **be a disciple** before they are ready for baptism according to ICC teaching. There is much more involved than a simple decision, action and behavior must accompany the decision to follow Jesus according to ICC doctrine.

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Chariots of Fire” - Roger Lamb:** “God is spreading His Kingdom throughout the earth faster than ever in his modern-day movement. More disciples are being baptized than ever... We are marching to our goal of one church in every nation with a city of at least 100,000 by the year 2,000.”

\*Note who is being baptized, it is a disciple. The ICC is using the term “baptized disciples” at present to distinguish between a disciple who is in the study process, versus a disciple who has been baptized and saved.

## **SECTION FIVE: KIP MCKEAN’S ROLE**

**June, 1987 Atlanta Speech - Jim Blough:** “I believe if I could become exactly like Kip, I’ll be a whole lot more useful to God than I am by myself...Kip says, “Brother, you do this.” I say, “Okay.” I don’t argue, I don’t question; I do it.”

\*See Al’s retraction in Discipleship: A New Look At Authority in the Discipling section.

**Aug. or Sept., 1987 San Francisco Speech - Kip McKean:** “Timothy, when he was young got direction from Paul, but he was still getting direction from Paul as Paul was about to die and Timothy, by this time was in his mid 30’s at least. See, Timothy always got direction. See...You will be directed by the work in Boston just as in the Bible as Paul gave direction to Timothy. As Timothy gave direction to the church at Corinth or Ephesus or wherever he traveled. This is the Bible pattern. We have got to accept it if we are going to have a revolution like Jesus! Amen!”

\*Kip begins to compare the work he is doing with that of Paul.

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman College Forum - Steve Johnson:** “Unity within the congregation is an imperative. It is a must. It is a necessity. This does not mean you are forming churches where everybody is identical, where everybody is cloned, where everybody thinks the same thing.”

\*This is not what Scott Green said in 1988. See Discipling section.

**October 22, 1987 Southeastern Leadership Conference, Atlanta - Wyndham Shaw:** “We don't have any more apostles, but we still have the work that the apostles did and the Timothy's and Titus's are the ones who have got to continue to carry it out. We don't have Paul and Apollos and Peter, but we have got Al Baird's and Kip McKean's.”

**Nov. 29, 1987 Charleston Speech; "Imitate Jesus" - Marty Fuqua:** “I want to be just like him (Kip). I can tell you honestly, there are few times that I bucked Kip. And I can tell you honestly that I did wrong every time. It was not right to be arrogant, to be proud, to be rebellious...I want the guys who I am discipling to want to be like me.”

**June 26, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "McKean Becomes Missions Evangelist" - Kip McKean:** “God made it obvious that we should shift the emphasis of our ministry from Boston to a small number of lead couples and the key pillar churches they serve, thus following the pattern of Paul's role in the first century. In turn, the Elders and I have asked Tom Brown to become the lead evangelist for the Boston church...We will continue to live and make "our home" in Boston. We look forward to continuing to disciple the Browns, the Elders and their wives and grow ever closer as friends...This church is truly the Jerusalem of God's modern day movement.”

**June, 1988 Denver Reconstruction - Kip McKean:** “I believe with all of my heart a few years ago the Lord put that plan upon my heart. And you cannot have qualms about me...But you cannot have any bad attitudes toward me personally or toward the Boston Church.”

\*Kip equates his actions within the movement with God's will, and being opposed to Kip or the Boston Church is equated with being against God's plan.

**Summer, 1988 Discipleship Magazine; "Kip McKean Enters Full-Time Mission Work" – Sam Laing:** “In my judgment in a personal sense, Kip McKean is the greatest living treasure that God has given the kingdom on the face of the earth today.”

**1988 Boston World Missions Seminar - "Discipleship Partners" - Scott Green:** “I want to be able to imitate Kip McKean. I want to preach like him. I want to think like him. I want to talk like him...It would suit me just fine if I could leave this place and say you know—I just want to be exactly like Kip. I just want to be exactly like Kip. That would be enough.”

**1988 Boston World Missions Seminar - Mike Taliaferro:** “How are you ever going to be like Jesus if you don't think you can be like Kip.”

**September 4, 1988 Boston Bulletin - Kip McKean:** “He (Al) always tells me exactly how he feels or views a situation. Al, like Bob, disciples me in my marriage and family, while I give them direction with the ministry.”

\*How can this be true when Al and Kip continually contradict one another?

**Sept. 11, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Al Baird Becomes Editor" - Kip McKean:** “In the past few months, I have been in transition from lead evangelist for Boston to mission evangelist. Given my extensive travel plans and new challenges, I have prayed about whom should assume this incredibly exciting, yet demanding responsibility. The Lord put upon my heart Al Baird.”

\*This decision takes place with Tom Brown as the lead evangelist in Boston. Also, what part do the local elders have in the decision making process in a movement congregation?

**November, 1988 Boston Financial Meeting - Kip McKean:** “I am implementing accountant safeguards. I have asked five of the accountants of different churches... He (Bruce Williams) had relayed some stuff to the elders about

what we wanted them to do...Brother, we were told by Bruce that we were supposed to do such and such and we are going to get this at a Saturday meeting.”

**Spring, 1989 Discipleship Magazine; "A Tribute to the Boston Church" - Steve Johnson:** “And again to those who believe that I, like countless others in a "manmade movement" am blindly following Kip McKean, then know this. With eyes wide open I'm following Kip McKean; Consciously, intentionally; Thankfully...I've found no better help, no better leader, no more righteous a man - no better friend than Kip.”

**May 14, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Al and Gloria Baird to Lead Boston" - Kip McKean:** “As God raised up Moses and then Joshua, so I believe with all my heart he raised up Tom and now Al Baird...Truly our God has raised up a prophet to lead the Boston church into the twenty-first century!”

\*Al Baird was taken out of this lead position in May of 1990. It was not a permanent position as elsewhere stated.

**May 17, 1989 WRKO Radio - Al Baird:** “Question: Is Kip the chief minister?”

Al Baird: No, actually he is not with the Boston Church now. He is actually a traveling evangelist and is no longer directly associated with the Boston Church although obviously he is very dear to us and has a real part in our lives.”

\*This is an outright lie! It was not true then, nor is it true now!

**1989 Boston World Missions Seminar; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** “A year ago I selected the following brothers to focus my energies upon and gave each a charge so the world would be evangelized in this generation. Shortly thereafter, the Lord put on my heart (Nehemiah 2:12) a plan to evangelize the world.”

**August 8, 1989 Boston Meeting w/Buddy Martin (Minister Cape Cod) & Al Baird:**

*Question:* Who assigned the evangelist in Nashville?

Al Baird: I appointed him.

*Question:* Who does he report to?

Al Baird: He does not report to me.

*Question:* Who does he report to?

Al Baird: He reports to Steve Sapp in Atlanta.

*Question:* Who does Steve report to?

Al Baird: To Steve Johnson in New York.

*Question:* Who does Steve Johnson report to?

Al Baird: Steve Johnson is disciplined by Kip?

*Question:* Who does Kip report to?

Al Baird: Kip reports to, to—uh—I don't know --no one...Who does the Pope report to? Who does the Pope report to?...Kip answers to the people he is in relationship with, which is about four or five people...Kip has—uh—definitely—uh--has people in his life. He is accountable to me and some other people in his life. Kip does not make unilateral decisions in any area. I do not believe in giving anybody that authority.

\*See statements from Para. 42, Revolution Through Restoration in Discipling section.

**Spring 1989 Discipleship Magazine - Steve Johnson:** “He is a leader. He's in the circle and he leads. He's the leader...Kip leads all of us and we all have input into his life for accountability sake.”

**Summer 1989 Discipleship Magazine - Marty Wooten:** “The one man God has used above us all, Kip McKean...Kip is leading us...I cannot think of any virtue that Kip is not known for. There is no greater discipler, disciple, brother, husband, father, leader, and friend than Kip McKean...I would hate to think where we would be if Kip had not pointed the way in the movement and in many of our personal lives.”

**January 7, 1990 Boston Bulletin; "McKean to Los Angeles" - Al Baird:** “Kip, Elena, Olivia, Sean and Eric have moved to Los Angeles for the next five months to disciple Marty and Chris Fuqua and to build the foundation of the pillar church there. Just as Paul expressed his conviction in the above passage (Romans 15:23-24a) of when God could best use him, Kip has a keen sense of when his talents are most needed in the Kingdom and is being used powerfully by God around the world in his role as missions evangelist...Kip will continue to disciple the Boston

elders and return to Boston from time to time just as Paul did in Ephesus. He will also remain accountable to us as we maintain our closeness as best friends and brothers in the Kingdom. We praise God that he has raised up Kip to lead the movement in our generation...The quality of a man's work is tested after he leaves it...We give the lion's share of the credit to the McKean's influence in our lives to let God work...We are committed to: Building a New Testament-size church of 10,000 disciples.”

\*The goal of 25,000 set in 1984 was never met, and Kip has set a goal of 80,000 for the L.A. Church. See Kip's statements about not reaching goals set in "Super Church" section. Also, has the "quality" of Kip's work in Boston pasted the test?

**March 10, 1990 Boston Speech - Al Baird:** “That was 1984 and so the church got too large just for Kip to lead and be in touch with that many people and know that many people and you can't do that as the lead evangelist.”

\*It is obvious from Al's statement that Kip lead the church. What position did the elders have at this time as shepherds of the flock?

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** “See in the scriptures, Paul worked with the eldership in Ephesus and yet when you read on in the epistles we find that he eventually appoints Timothy...The last year or so, essentially there has been zero growth in the Boston church...You have failed to do what God's dream for Boston is and that's to get the word of God out to people and multiply disciples in this city...At this hour, without question, it is one of the darkest hours of Boston Church history. The Boston Church is not just any church. It is the Jerusalem of God's modern day movement.”

**May 6, 1990 - Marty Wooten:** “But as he (Kip) talked I began to feel the presence of God in my life.”

**May, 1990 "The Boston Movement As A Revitalization Movement" Marty Wooten:** “Kip McKean who is primarily responsible for the formation of the Boston Church of Christ, and who is considered the primary leader of the movement worldwide, was converted and trained in Gainesville.”

**March, 1991 LA Bulletin; “The Amazing LA Church of Christ” - Tony Chukes:** “The team (Moscow) is currently being formed and will be led by Andy and Tami Fleming, and will be officially planted this summer with Kip and Elena McKean directing its beginnings. This will be a historical event similar to Paul’s starting the church in Rome.”

**June 23, 1991 Boston Bulletin; “Gempels to Lead L.O.V.E. Project” - Al Baird:** “Pat is not only a devoted Christian woman...as well as leading the women in Boston, and in the Kingdom. As God has transformed his movement he has used Kip McKean to lead it, and Pat to lead the women. The long-term desire has been for Elena, Kip’s wife to lead with him. Pat has disciplined and raised up Elena for that role. We all agree that Elena is now ready to assume that role.”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “I write this article not as an apostle inspired by God for I am not. I am simply a Christian who dreams that God's modern day movement will never stop restoring and living out God's Word. (Para. 2)”

\*Neither Kip nor those in the movement believe that he is "simply a Christian" in writing this article. No one else in the ICC has the power, authority, and ability to control the ICC like Kip McKean. He is apparently embarrassed that others want him to have the title of “apostle”, but he himself suggested that he be called “apostle” years before.

“God was testing and humbling me, particularly through the severe scarring on my face. (Para. 5)”

“I believe God was teaching me that life is fragile and brief, like a mist, but our souls are eternal. (Para. 6)”

“God was just guiding our way. (Para. 19)”

“The Lord put on my heart a vision for the world. (Para. 21)”

“After I reconstructed the Denver church in 1988, I asked Marty to move to Boston to train...Later I asked Roger Lamb to become the editor (of *Discipleship Magazine*), as Marty felt that the Lord had called him to lead the evangelization of Germany and Eastern Europe. (Para. 38)”

\*Marty was asked to train in Boston for 4 months with the perception that he would return after that time. The reconstruction was done by Kip and others after Marty had been encouraged to stay in Boston permanently with the promise of becoming the lead evangelist of the Boston Church.

“I came to the conviction that I needed to focus my ministry on a "few men"...I considered...I felt...I had...I selected...I called. (Para. 41)”

“I asked...I asked. (Para. 43)”

\*It is disturbing to notice how often Kip refers to himself.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “We have very clear lines of authority. I’m the Lead Evangelist, Elena is the Lead Women’s Counselor, Marty is the Lead Associate Evangelist, he’s the number 2 guy, Chris is the number 2 woman. Bruce is the number 3 guy as an elder/evangelist...But it’s very clear in our church, the roles, we got the Evangelist, the Lead Evangelist and then we got the leader’s decision-making group.”

\*Kip admits that there is a pyramid structure in the organization of the ICC. One-over-one discipling is the mandated structure with Kip at the top.

“Notice which sector had increased the most, numerically, the Cross and Switchblade. Why is that? Well, I was in there. Cory was the workhorse, he did the lion’s share of the work, I don’t want to take anything away from that. God gave us the increase. Wasn’t Kip, wasn’t Marty; we were just watering and planting, but I was in there. My ministry, things weren’t right, we kicked some bottom, things weren’t growing, we knew it was sin. The lead guy better have a ministry that glitters.”

\*Again, notice how Kip refers to himself. He is setting himself above everyone else as the example to be imitated.

“I’ve got men that have their own independent churches, and I selected those men, because you’ve got to have the right guys on top.”

“I said, ‘Brother, we need you.’ You know the will of God when you’re needed.”

**Bruce Williams:** “I’ll never forget the time when Kip talked to me about moving to LA...and it wasn’t to be the number 1 man in LA. That was Kip, he was in LA. You can’t be number 1 when Kip’s in LA...Now why in the world would I leave a church of 1600, and come to LA, a sector of, at that time, 100 people. I’ll tell you why, because Kip asked me to, that’s why.”

**Steve Lopez:** “So we felt like that (lace of growth) at the end of the first quarter, but then I felt better when Kip mentioned even Prophets have six month allowance to mess up their ministry and learn from it.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Marty Fuqua:** “I look at every aspect of my life, and I just wouldn’t be where I’m at, in any area, if it weren’t for the influence of Kip in my life, and I’m grateful for that.”

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “A few years ago, I was leading the church in Chicago, and Kip came out and said, ‘bro, what we need you to do is leave the church here in Chicago, and move down to Buenos Aires, Argentina.’ Now, my level of enthusiasm for that suggestion, at that time, was very, very low. I didn’t know Spanish...I said, ‘I don’t know, I can’t understand this, it doesn’t make sense to me.’ And finally, he came out with it and said, ‘bro, here’s the thing, that situation down there, I don’t know of anybody else that I can send right now to do it. I need you to do it.’ And I said, ‘bro, why have we been dancing around the Mulberry bush for two hours?’ Why didn’t you just say that, you really need me to do it.’ I moved on down to Argentina...(Kip called Marty at 1:30 a.m. in Argentina only a few months later.) “He said, ‘well bro, the Browns have fallen into

some marriage problems, and we're going to have to take them on back to Boston to help their marriage get together...what I really need, is I need you and Chris to move. Now Chris is over there saying, 'I don't care where it is, we're not moving. I don't care where it is, we're not going.' (uughs and aahs from the audience) Oh, lighten up. Of course, we came on up to LA. We left, even after we had just gotten our apartment all set up."

\*Even one of the World Sector Leaders battled with the idea of moving "for the sake of the Kingdom" upon Kip's request. When the audience reacted to this "independent spirit," they were rebuked.

**November 22, 1992 Boston Bulletin; "The Lord Has Assigned their Task" - Gordon Ferguson/Wyndham Shaw:** "As the most expert builder among us, his (Kip's) help is needed in a more direct way than is presently possible with him living on one side of our country and the Bairds on the other. The need to work more closely together has led Al and Gloria to make the decision to move to Los Angeles."

**March 17, 1993 Atlanta Bulletin; "A Modern Day Hero in the Faith Comes to Atlanta!":** "We get the chance to sit at Kip McKean's feet and learn from a modern day true hero in the faith! Kip and his wife, Elena, have continually risked their lives, literally, for God as they have set the pace in faith, evangelism and dealing with sin...Let us give our utmost respect...Invite lots of non-Christians. This will be a night of IMPACT. People who come hear Kip share his convictions will become Christians."

\*Is there hero worship in the ICC today? Notice the comments made by Kip earlier about one's discipler being one's hero.

**January, 1993 UpsideDown Magazine; "From the Editor" - Steve Johnson:** "Controversy also centers around Kip McKean being the leader of the movement and it is said he has absolute control of all the ministries. We believe in Colossians 1:8 that Jesus is the head of the church and do not have a theology that includes a spiritual head in heaven and a human head on earth...I will follow Kip as he follows Christ and do so out of reverence to Christ, but I strive to be controlled by the Holy Spirit...The early church had its leaders and Paul was certainly the most prolific in planting churches as Kip is for us today...Kip is our leader not because of a puff or smoke from a Vatican balcony or a twisted theology. He's simply further out front than anyone else I know; so we follow and God has blessed us."

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** "I beg you to take down these Scriptures, and if you see that they are used inappropriately or not of the Lord then you forget anything that I would say. I'm of no issue right here. But if these Scriptures truly parallel the situation that we have faced these last few weeks, then this is not some man that is preaching. This is God speaking to us individually and collectively."

\*Kip has equated his words to that of God. This is subtle, but is beginning to be repeated by Kip, to the point that those who hear him begin to believe that Kip, is speaking the Words of God.

"The Lord has his anointed leaders. Not the one's they (Israelites) voted for...that's the difference in the kingdom of God, is that the prophet the leader of God's people has to stand up against the majority for the sake of what is right...To grumble against God's leaders is to grumble against God himself."

"But leaders are not chosen by the people like in a democracy. Leaders are chosen by God...When people start talking bad about the leaders of the movement, you're not grumbling against Moses and Aaron. You're not grumbling against Kip and Marty, Ron and Lavonia. You're grumbling against the Lord. Now that's either in the Scriptures or it's not...What's insolence? When someone under the charge of the Lord's anointed raises up to challenge their authority. That's insolence...There was rebellion among the Israelites against Moses...'It's the whole community that's holy, Moses how come you have set yourself up to be one over the Lord's people? You're not the only holy one amongst us. We're all holy.' Boy, doesn't that sound spiritual?"

\*There are many times in the book of Acts where a vote was taken in choosing leaders to serve in the Church. See Acts 1 and 6.

\*Kip is saying the leaders are holier than the members, and that anyone who has a criticism of them is opposing God. Kip is applying Old Testament law to New Testament freedom.

“Notice right here, Moses was not a wimpy guy, ‘oh well, let’s just make peace, let’s get unified.’ Moses was not a guy to say, ‘let’s have unity at any price.’ He’s going, ‘hold it, I’ve gone to far? No, let’s see who is really holy before the Lord. You’re the ones that have gone to far’”

\*Kip has equated himself with Moses, over and over again. He, therefore, is the most holy, because he leads those in God’s modern day movement.

“Korah opposed the Lord’s anointed. In essence he wasn’t opposing Moses, he was opposing the Lord, God... You see, the Lord literally physically killed those who opposed Moses. No, who opposed him.

\*Kip is using the Old Testament example of Korah in Numbers 16 to teach the church not to rebel against God’s leaders today.

“You know a good prophet from a bad prophet by looking at the fruit of his life.”

“Well you say, ‘you’ve gone too far, by saying you’re the leader of the movement.’ Hold it, I didn’t say I was. But either I am or I’m not...Ed was talking to Marty...Ed says, ‘well I can’t be a part of a system where there is a hierarchy and one guy is in charge.’...Marty says, ‘when you think about it every group has a CEO, every group has a President, every group has a Premier. Somebody’s got to lead.’”

\*Kip says he’s the leader and those who follow him say he is the leader. Why the “cat and mouse?” Now Marty Fuqua has emphasized just how powerful that leadership is.

“I’m not going to be ordering the borders of Israel here, that’s for the Lord to do.”

\*But that is exactly what Kip has done.

“If you oppose the Lord’s servants, then you oppose the Lord. And you see, for American Christians that’s really hard. Cause we want to vote. That’s not how it is in the kingdom. It’s never been like that. It wasn’t in the Old Testament. It isn’t in the New Testament. God picks the leaders and you’ve got to get behind them, amen.”

\*Who holds the leaders accountable? If the general membership can’t object or disagree, there will be authoritarianism. The ICC has the philosophy of getting in line or getting out of the way.

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “I had to pray for boldness. I had to pray to get personally fruitful you know, it would be a real bummer if the leader of the movement comes and can’t be personally fruitful on a mission team...If I’m going to be sending people to places they don’t want to go in their flesh, places they can get diseases, physically hurt or even killed, then I will put myself and my family on the front lines first.”

\*It has only been 5 months since Kip told those in Indianapolis that he never said he was the leader of the movement.

“It’s an interesting book that was assigned me (Malachi). And I’m the one that assigned it to me. So it did fit with what I need to address.”

“I think we somehow think there can only be one great guy in a church, a movement, a nation. There usually is one prominent individual, and we’ve got to get comfortable with that.”

“I was talking to Steve and Lisa (Johnson, World Sector Leader, Lead Evangelist, NYC church) in the room the other day. And Steve, I love Steve so much. He’s the glue of the World Sector Leaders. I got Doug (Arthur, World Sector Leader, Lead Evangelist, DC church) he’s my right-hand cranker. I’ve got Steve as the glue. You know, those two guys, they’re awesome. And Steve’s so open and honest. And you know, he’s not prideful like Doug and myself, you know.”

“I’ll tell you something. I don’t believe that we have prophets that write Scriptures anymore, but I believe that every generation needs prophets. I don’t even want to qualify it. See, we’ve gotten so Church of Christ. We don’t want to say, ‘Well, there are prophets today.’ Might as well break in another tradition. I believe there are prophets today. I’ll be extra bold. I believe I am a prophet today. Now my question for you is do you believe that you’re a prophet? Do you believe that you’re a God-sent prophet, who has been sent as his messenger, to preach his Word, to his people, to make a difference in this generation?”

\*Kip has equated himself to the Apostle Paul, and to the Prophet Moses. He is now calling himself and other leaders in the movement Prophets.

“See, Jesus was a prophet. He laid it out. I am afraid that we have failed to understand the preacher and his reaching is the ceiling of spirituality of a congregation...Esau he hated and Jacob he loved. Leave it at that. He loves you, but you’ve got to be a prophet. And you’ve got to instill the fear of God in your people.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Breaking Away” - Al Baird:** “Throughout history, God has raised up men who have attempted to lead large groups or movements of people onto the narrow road. Great men of the Bible like Moses, David and Paul led such movements. Post-Biblical men such as Luther, Wesley and Campbell did the same. Today the ICC, led by Kip McKean, is a movement of God marching down the narrow road.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “If there’s any human being I most love to spend time with, it’s Elena. It’s just always awesome. Someone I can talk to, someone who talks to me, and makes me think, makes me feel good, and makes me strong. I can let all the barriers down, and I can just be Kip, instead of the leader of the movement.”

“Listen, people don’t understand. I’m leading hundreds of thousands of people. It’s time consuming.”

“You know, another problem that I see as preachers, is that we’ve allowed staff meetings to become just that, meetings...We had a staff meeting a few months ago in LA; I just went around, and I said, ‘Okay, who’s been personally fruitful this year?...That’s the way Jesus ran his staff meetings.’”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Breaking Away”:** Kip aligns himself with other movement leaders through history - Paul in the First Century Church; Martin Luther in the Reformation Movement; John and Charles Wesley in the Wesleyan Movement; Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone in the Restoration Movement.

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Great Expectations” - Al Baird:** “It is clearer than ever that God has raised up Kip and Elena to lead his modern-day movement.”

“Kip and Elena believe in leading by example. They rent a modest three bedroom home and drive a Honda van.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Glory” - Al Baird:** “Kip McKean developed the Second Principles class as an intense either-session course on the Old Testament and taught it to the entire staff in November and December.”

**March 10, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Warp Speed” -** “The LA Church led by Kip and Elena McKean, World Missions Evangelist and Women’s Ministry Leader of the movement.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Like David’s mighty men, World Sector Leaders were appointed in 1988...“As we hear your message (Father), that we will know it is you that is speaking, not some frail man.”

“Have you ever read the Bible and that particular morning it just cuts like a knife? And you know that God is talking to you. I hear the voice of God in this passage.”

“Oh, I had my quiet times. I’ve got a lot of the Phariessie in me, after all, I’m the leader of the movement.”

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Chariots of Fire” - Roger Lamb:** “Churches are being sent out by the Holy Spirit to countries like Croatia, Bulgaria, and Portugal.”

“Kip McKean, Lead Evangelist of the ICC.”

## **LEADERS EQUATED TO GOD AND EQUATED TO OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS AND APOSTLES; THE “MOVEMENT” EQUATED TO GOD**

**August 1987 Boston Bulletin; "The Role Of The Evangelist" - J.P. Tynes:** “One of those anointed of God for special work within the Kingdom is the evangelist. As surely as the Holy Spirit makes men overseers or elders in the church (Acts 20:28), the evangelist is also anointed of God for a particular function (Ephesians 4:11-12)...It is true that all Christians walking in the light are holy and God is indeed with everyone of them. However, it is also true that through His Spirit certain men have been assigned responsibilities to lead in the Kingdom and that to oppose them is to oppose God who anointed them.”

Editor's Note (at close of article): “I would like to personally thank J.P. for this excellent series of articles on the Evangelist. They have been forthright and Scriptural.” Kip McKean

**1987 Denver Conference; "Go Make Disciples" - Kip McKean:** “These evangelists—they are not guys you vote on to be over you. These guys are of God. They are of God like David was of God and Jeremiah was of God and Moses was of God. These guys are of God!”

**June, 1988 Denver Reconstruction - Kip McKean:** “God's people have always been a kingdom and not a democracy. In a democracy you vote, in the kingdom you obey...The only times you don't obey him (Preston, the evangelist) is, if it violates Scripture or your conscience. But other than that, in all opinion areas, you obey...when he assigns you to a House Church, when he assigns you to a Zone, when he assigns you to a Bible Talk, you will go, because that's part of the plan.”

**May 14, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Al and Gloria Baird to Lead Boston" - Kip McKean:** “As God raised up Moses and then Joshua, so I believe with all of my heart he raised up Tom and now Al Baird...Truly our God has raised up a prophet to lead the Boston church into the twenty-first century.”

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** “If you love Boston; if you love the Boston Church, then and only then, can you love God.”

**March, 1991 LA Bulletin; "The Amazing LA Church of Christ" - Tony Chukes:** “The team (Moscow) is currently being formed and will be led by Andy and Tami Fleming, and will be officially planted this summer with Kip and Elena McKean directing its beginnings. This will be a historical event similar to Paul's starting the church in Rome.”

**January 19, 1992 Boston Bulletin; "1992: The Year of the Bible/Continuing Restoration" - Randy McKean:** “God laid upon my heart the incredible need for emphasizing continuing restoration.”

**Spring, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Discipleship: A New Look at Authority" - Al Baird:** “For instance, it has been said that if any evangelist asks you to move to particular zone or Bible Talk, then you need to move. That may need to be the end result unless the two of you come up with a better plan, but it omits the process of persuasion and motivation that leaves the people confident and excited. The end result is the same, but the heart is very different.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; "The Super Church" - Marty Fuqua:** “You are there by the calling God Almighty. You didn't get there by politics, you didn't get there because someone liked you or didn't. You are there because God Almighty, the Lord of Hosts has decided to put you there...If you're on the cutting edge, you believe that you are where God wants you to be, and you will move from that place when the people of God ask you to move some place else, and until then you crank the ever-livin' snot out of that place.

\*Kip's decisions to move leaders from place to place is equated to God's will, and if an individual disagrees they are opposing “God's anointed and God himself.” This is a tremendous Catch-22.

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “I want you to know tonight, that I come tonight to discipline you, I come tonight to rebuke you and call you out of your sin. He says, ‘those whom I love I rebuke and discipline.’”

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “Hey you guys need to get behind your leadership wholeheartedly. I believe this, they are here because God either put them here, or God allowed them to come here...Your leadership is here because it’s within the confines of the will of God, and so you need to say Amen, and be excited about it, and be supportive of their leadership.”

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “Father, as the great leaders of the past have done, there came a time when the people don’t need to take a vote. When the people simply need to decide are they for God or for Baal. Are they for God’s leaders or for those that oppose them?”

“Come be with us in LA...to be able to really see what God is doing around the world in His movement.”

“(Al Baird) one of the original elders of the Boston Church.”

\*Al was not one of the original elders in 1979. There were two elders involved in hiring Kip McKean to come to Boston; Paul McNeil and Russ Hulbert. Al did not become a member in the Boston Church until 1983 (see quotes later in this section). Bob Gempel was not appointed an elder until 1981.

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “(Father) help us to change our lives and become the radical prophets and prophetesses that we need to be in order to win this world in one generation.”

“An ideal that had not yet been seen, that the true church would be composed of only disciples, only those people that are totally committed to Jesus Christ, and those that refuse to heed the call of Jesus would be unwelcome in that fellowship, and not be recognized by God or his human leaders.”

\*Is Kip not “drawing the borders of Israel”, and giving that same authority to the ICC leaders?

“I appreciate Mike Talieferro (Lead Evangelist, Africa), he’s my idea of a modern day prophet. Amen, Church!”

“When you go back home, you be a prophet. And just as Malachi didn’t end his sermons with all these sweet, sentimental hallelujah, amen, for better or for worse, I swear, you go back home and you curse the sin in your congregation. You curse the lack of growth. Now let them know that God hates Esau and loves Jacob. Let them be secure. But you lay it out. You be a prophet. You be radical. You be happy with where you’re at [sic], and let’s evangelize this world in this generation.”

**March 26, 1995 LA Bulletin: “Shining Through” - Gloria Baird:** “Modern-day Esthers and Deborahs like Elena Garcia-McKean and Pat Gempel have led the way in powerfully training women to disciple other women.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Breaking Away” - Al Baird:** “When I shared about the amazing things that God is doing in HIS churches around the world, he (potential convert) was dumbfounded and excited.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “Passion can be soft, but there is an intensity of the heart that the true prophet of God as to communicate when he gets up to preach...Frank (Kim, World Sector Leader) got into the Word...Today this the mightiest prophet of God of all time in Japan.”

“See, John Causey understands that Christ always leads us in triumphal procession. See, he wasn’t really sent by Doug Arthur (to London), he was sent by God.”

“Now if you’re gonna reduplicate what Jesus did and the Apostles, you think you’re going to do it better so you escape going to prison?”

“We have lost the fire of the prophet from our pulpits. The charge that Paul gave to Timothy in his dying breath, the charge we received when we became Evangelists. Not of some local church, but the kingdom of God. The charge was given in the presence of God.”

**September 17, 1995 LA Bulletin - Elena McKean:** “This is not an American movement. This is God’s movement.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Glory” - Al Baird:** “I am concerned about the number of selfish decisions that are being made in the Church today. Disciples commit to place the Kingdom above personal priorities (Matt. 6:33), but I see people making moves based on better pay rather than Kingdom needs. I see disciples grumbling because they feel they should have a “higher-powered” discipler. Brothers and sisters, God’s modern-day Kingdom has grown so phenomenally because we have sought to bring glory to God. For it to continue to grow we must Keep and increase our focus on God and self-denial; he will give us all the glory we need.”

“One brother said that a leader being that open with his life was even more proof that we are in the true Kingdom.”

**“Listening to God” - Doug Jacoby:** “Leaders can be wrong. No one has a monopoly on the truth; we all have things to learn. You may just discover something that will transform the Kingdom of God! And even if leaders are teaching the truth, how they support it may be fallacious.”

\*fallacious-containing or based on fundamental errors in reasoning; misleading; deceptive. Websters, II

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Empower us Father as your modern day movement to evangelize this entire world in this generation.”

## SECTION SIX: KIP MCKEAN'S CONVERSION

**April 11, 1972 - Gainesville:** Kip McKean was baptized at the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Church of Christ by Chuck Lucas.

**1983 Carolina Evangelism Seminar; "The Role of the Evangelist" - Kip McKean:** “My zeal had not been what it needed to be evangelistically, particularly within my own family...I really wasn't that urgent as far as reaching my family.”

**1987 Denver Conference - Kip McKean:** “Now for the next two months I just considered it my church. Then I was informed that it was not my church. I had to do a few things before I could be a part of the church. I had to be baptized into Christ. It took me one day to make that decision and count the cost.”

**April 2, 1989 Boston Bulletin; “Sam Laing Appointed Evangelist” - Al Baird:** “From the earliest days in Gainesville, FL, before anyone had caught a vision of the incredible events that would take place in this generation, Sam was being raised up by God for a key role in his Kingdom...Sam was discipled and trained by Chuck Lucas. He was the ‘Andrew’ for Kip McKean: he invited Kip, a fraternity brother in Sigma Chi, to church, and the rest is history.”

**1990 California Speech - Kip McKean:** “I know when I was a baby Christian, I missed church a few times...When I started going regularly to church, that's when I got my life straightened out.”

\*Is this not a "retroactive understanding?"

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “I was born in Indianapolis on May 31, 1954...we have always been called higher by the courage of one of our ancestors, Thomas McKean. He not only signed the Declaration of Independence, but also was the President of the Congress of Confederation, the highest office in the land, when news arrived from General Washington that the British had surrendered. My father, serving as an admiral in the US Navy, not only became a strong influence, but also my early role model for leadership and excellence...Until the middle of high school, I was not a particularly religious

person. However, at the end of tenth grade, I became very involved in a growing, fundamental Methodist Church in Maitland, Florida...though I remained religious, I was pulled more and more into the world. (Para. 3&4)”

“At the end of my freshman year at the University of Florida, I was invited by Sam Laing, a Sigma Chi fraternity brother, to a devotional of 90 college students. This devotional was sponsored by the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Church of Christ...Here I was taught to give up everything for Christ and be baptized for the remission of my sins to become a Christian. (Para. 5)”

\*Kip was not taught that he must be a disciple before his baptism. This was not taught at Crossroads as it is in the ICC today.

“The seeds of discipling were placed in my life as I saw personally how one man could affect another's daily lifestyle and eternal destiny for God. (Para. 6)”

“I taught what was clear in Acts 11:26: SAVED = CHRISTIAN = DISCIPLE, simply meaning that you cannot be saved and you cannot be a true Christian without being a disciple also...I taught that to be baptized, you must first make the decision to be a disciple and then be baptized. I saw that people in and outside of our fellowship had been baptized without this understanding and then, in time, developed a disciple's commitment to make Jesus Lord of their entire life. I taught that their baptism was invalid, because a "retroactive understanding" of repentance and baptism was not consistent with Scripture. (Para. 17)”

\*Has Kip applied what he is teaching in the movement today to his own conversion? In other words, would a person coming into a Boston Movement group today with Kip's "conversion" story be told he already was a Christian, or would he be told that he/she needed to be rebaptized?

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “Our loyalty cannot be superseded. Our number one loyalty is to Jesus Christ and His word. Hey, the guy that studied the Bible with me, he fell away. Preacher that baptized me, he's not in the movement, amen. I feel terrible. They've made their decisions. I'm a loyal guy. I'm the son of a Naval Admiral. You're taught to be loyal. That's just part of it.”

\*The preacher that baptized Kip is Chuck Lucas from the Crossroads Church of Christ.

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “I just had my 24<sup>th</sup> spiritual birthday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. I can still remember...I can still remember getting baptized. I was baptized at 1:30 in the morning. There were 4 people there at my baptism, and I remember, I was so happy. I was so excited...I just walked all the way back, and I got to my room about 3 in the morning. I just laid in my bed...I was so happy...all my sins were forgiven. I was a true Christian...I had a purpose in my life...I was just so excited...(The next day at lunch) I was getting a peanut butter and jelly sandwich one of the guys came on up and I thought in a rather loud voice goes, ‘Kip, I heard you got baptized.’ It was ‘ssshhh,’ and then he goes, ‘you know, I'm kinda interested in doing that too.’ I go, ‘let me talk to you about that.’ ...And you were fired up to share, you were fired up to get people to church, fired up to see your family members become Christians.”

## SECTION SEVEN: BOB & PAT GEMPEL'S CONVERSION

**1981 Rocky Mountain Seminar--"Lord of the Harvest" - Kip McKean:** “They (Gempels) struggled with many things about God's word and about the woman's role and about several things that seemed hard for them to accept at the time. And, as far as being evangelistic, neither one of them had led anybody to Christ...I remember last August (1980) sitting down talking to Bob about maybe becoming one of the elders of the church. And he said, "Kip, I just couldn't become one of the elders. I am just going to lay it out." He Said, "I have just never really led someone to Christ. I am just not evangelistic.”

**"Building Great Churches" Kip McKean:** “We (Kip/Gempels) had to have a little talk on the inspiration of God's word that it was perfect and inerrant.”

**1986 Campus and Church Leaders Conference; "How to Raise Up Elders" - Kip McKean:** “Bob Gempel was just baptized a few weeks before I arrived in Boston in 1979.”

**May, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "Progressive Revelation" - Gordon Ferguson:** “And my personal conviction is that many of those in churches of Christ have never biblically repented, have never become disciples, and are thus not Christians...People in the churches of Christ who have not been discipled first and then baptized are not saved. Does a person already have to be doing all that a disciple does before he can be baptized? No, but he does have to make the decision to do all that Christ commands. And if he is not putting into practice what he is learning as he learns it, the question of whether he has a disciple's heart would be raised.

\*Did this not apply to the Gempels?”

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** “In the three previous years to that special night, there had been only two baptisms.”

\*One of these baptisms was that of Bob Gempel.

**June 23, 1991 LA Bulletin; “Gempels to Lead L.O.V.E. Project” - Al Baird:** “Bob has served...as an elder in Boston since 1981.”

**October 20, 1991 Boston Bulletin; “Our Field” - Randy McKean:** “Bob became an elder of the Boston church in 1983 and Pat a women’s counselor the same year...Always a woman of conviction and inspiration.”

**December 15, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "The Lord Determines Our Steps" - Bob Gempel:** “Pat and I, by denominational standards, were reasonably committed to the little congregation of the Church of Christ at Lexington. I was not a Christian but did not know it. Pat was a fallen away Christian with a desire to be restored, but at the same time frustrated with the traditional role of women in the church...It (Boston) became a good church. It became a great church, and the center for world evangelism in our generation. In the process, Pat and I became totally committed and part of what evolved into the kingdom leadership group.”

\*Is this "retroactive understanding?"

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “To this very day, our friendship with the Gempels has been nurtured through times of victory and peace as well as misunderstanding and actual conflict. (Para. 15)”

“I taught what was clear in Acts 11:26: SAVED = CHRISTIAN = DISCIPLE, simply meaning that you cannot be saved and you cannot be a true Christian without being a disciple also...I taught that to be baptized, you must first make the decision to be a disciple and then be baptized. I saw that people in and outside of our fellowship had been baptized without this understanding and then, in time, developed a disciple's commitment to make Jesus Lord of their entire life. I taught that their baptism was invalid, because a "retroactive understanding" of repentance and baptism was not consistent with Scripture...Others like Bob and Pat Gempel...were not rebaptized, as they felt after studying the Word, their conversions were true. (Para. 17)”

\*Kip had disagreements with Pat on the subject of her conversion. Again, if a couple wanted to join a Boston Movement church today and shared a conversion experience similar to the Gempels, would they not be commanded to be rebaptized?

## **SECTION EIGHT: INDIVIDUALS OPPOSED AND THE ICC'S VIEW TOWARD THEM**

**1984 - Boston** - Russ Hulbert (one of the original elders with the Lexington church of Christ) left the Boston Church in disagreement with its teachings and practices.

**April, 1985, Boston** - Flavil Yeakley was asked to come to Boston by the leadership of the Boston Church, to conduct a psychological Study. A two day meeting discussing the results of this study were conducted in December of 1985, with the Boston leaders excusing what Flavil Yeakley termed, "a dangerous falsification of type produced

by some kind of group pressure." Flavil Yeakley published a book in 1988 entitled *The Discipling Dilemma* about his research of the Boston Church.

\*Kip does not mention why Flavil is "opposed" to the Boston church when he discusses Flavil Yeakley's book, "Why Churches Grow" in Para. 9 & 10 of "Revolution Through Restoration."

**August 4, 1985 Boston Bulletin:** Jerry Jones becomes an evangelist in the Boston Church. Kip stated in this appointment, "When I first became a Christian...my heroes became—Chuck Lucas, San Laing, Tom Brown, Richard Rogers, Marvin Phillips and Jerry Jones...Jerry and I are now best friends. I have learned much from his qualities of zeal for God, zeal for truth and zeal for integrity -- doing what is right no matter the cost."

**April, 1986** - Jerry Jones becomes an elder in the Boston Church.

**September, 1986 Boston Meeting Calvin Conn & Sheridan Wright** - Calvin Conn and Sheridan Wright were so concerned about what the Boston leaders Elder/Evangelist, Shandon Church taught in a pre-Boston Seminar Leadership of Christ, Columbia, S.C. Conference that they went to Boston and discussed their concerns with the Boston elders and Kip McKean.

\*Calvin Conn died in September, 1987. His wife Joyce is a member of the movement church in New York, as is Sheridan Wright.

**September, 1986** - Jerry Jones leaves Boston in disagreement with the leadership. Jerry becomes a part of the Gateway Church of Christ in St. Louis, Missouri which is a movement church.

**April 1, 1987** - Jerry Jones leaves the movement.

**August, 1987 - Boulder Meeting** - Leaders were brought together from Ft. Collins, Boulder, Denver and Boston to discuss doctrinal differences. These leaders published a statement of concern on March 30, 1988.

\*Marty Wooten and Rick Bauer were present for this meeting.

**November, 1987** - Glenn Redmond (elder-intern in Phoenix) left the Boston Movement.

**November, 1987** - Jim Krause (evangelist in St. Louis) fired by Marty Fuqua. Jim disagreed with unscriptural teachings and practices within the movement. When Roger Lamb was re-baptized, he objected to Roger maintaining his role as an elder of the Chicago Church of Christ because the New Testament teaches that an elder must be a recent convert.

**December, 1987 - Dallas Meeting** - This meeting took place with Kip McKean, Al Baird, Bob Gempel, Richard Rogers, Marvin Phillips and Jerry Jones. The Boston leaders refused to allow the meeting to be taped. A statement of concern was published in *The Christian Chronicle* in January, 1988.

**Early, 1988 - Tampa Meeting** - The elders of the Sunrise Church of Christ in Tampa, Florida talked with the Boston elders and Kip McKean about several doctrinal issues. The elders in Tampa have taken a strong stand against the Boston Movement. A statement of concern was published in the Gospel Advocate in June, 1989.

**March, 1988** - Ronnie Worsham was the evangelist for the East Valley Church of Christ in Phoenix. He left the movement after moving to San Diego, giving the Phoenix church over to the movement for reconstruction.

**June, 1988** - Crossroads Church of Christ repudiated the Boston Church and its practices, three months after Joe Woods (evangelist) left for further training in Boston.

**August, 1988** - Jerome Williams left the movement church in New York.

Monique Antoine, a member of the Cairo Mission Team, left the Boston Church of Christ three weeks before the team left for Cairo.

Dave Cloutier, a member of the German Mission Team, left the Boston Church before leaving for Germany.

**October, 1988** - Flavil Yeakley published *The Discipling Dilemma*.

**October 21, 1988** - Ron Gholston, a House Church leader in Boston leaves the movement and is later "marked."

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** "In late 1986, it was decided to call to repentance both "mainline" and "campus ministry" churches that were willing to pay the price to multiply disciples."

\*During the next 12 months, churches were asked to either line up with Boston or not be considered part of the movement or remnant. There were 13 churches that had elders and were, in some way, in sympathy with Boston prior to September 1986. Some of these 13 churches had evangelists who either had been trained at Crossroads or encouraged attendance at Boston dominated seminars. However, when the smoke cleared, only two churches with elders (San Diego and Chicago) opted to be a part of the Boston movement.

**June 18, 1989 - Huntsville, AL** - The elders of the Central Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama had several meetings with the Boston leaders and they have taken a stand opposing the Boston Movement.

**Sept. 3, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Like Men Who Dreamed" - Kip McKean:** "Jesus teaches us that we must even love our enemies."

**Al Baird:** "We are still in the process of changing...A lot of our critics criticize us about things that happened several years ago, and we aren't here anymore. They are fighting our dust."

\*Things have indeed changed in my mind—they are getting progressively worse. What is missing in this rather evasive statement that "we are in the process of changing" is any clear refutation of a previous ICC practice, a corrective to any leaders or members, and a clear and unambiguous statement of the replacement teaching. This is frustrating to a person who has heard "don't criticize us, we're changing" since Chuck Lucas first said it in 1967.

**Mike Taliaferro:** "We've got so much to learn. I hope all my life I'm a learner. But pride will cause me to be open to learning only from a smaller and smaller group of people. That's wrong. I want to always be a learner and for my disciples to be learners, and if I stop being a learner I pray God will take me out of the way."

\*Note Doug Jacoby's comments in this section dates January 28, 1996.

**January, 1990** - Jim and Sue Condon, evangelist and women's counselor, leave the Boston movement.

It was said on December 13, 1987 in the Boston Bulletin about the Condon's by Al Baird, "This fall, Jim's Zone had led the way, not only in conversions, but in stability. In the last three months over forty have become Christians and only one person has fallen away in a Zone of nearly two hundred. In the past eleven months over one hundred have been baptized!

\*Sue has written a journal of her time in the Boston movement.

**February, 1990** - Ed Burrows, House Church leader and Deacon in Boston leaves the movement.

Rick Pittman, who led mission team to Charleston, S.C. Later, returned to New York to train as a future elder.

**July, 1990 Christian Chronicle Article - Tom Jones:** "The test of any movement as that of any athletic team is not found in whether it has setbacks but how it responds to them. The Boston church is no more immune to the danger of dullness or lukewarmness than her first century counterparts in Revelation 2 and 3. Neither is it immune to mistakes made by leaders. But the true test of a church and its leaders is found in what it does when God makes its condition clear and how it responds to the call to repentance."

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** "You've become reactionary. You are reactionary and you label hard-liness legalism. Garbage! Garbage! I thought we fought that war with the mainline church many years ago. I don't intend to fight it in this church. Where there have been abuses, there needs to simply be repentance and you need to forgive and forget...But we need to be hard-line in this church."

**May, 1990 "The Boston Movement As A Revitalization Movement" Marty Wooten:** "It must not be assumed that tension between a leader to whom authority has been delegated and the follower is primarily a problem with the follower. It must be seriously considered that one of the reasons for the large number of fall aways in a ministry or entire movement might be due to the fact that the congregational goals were clearly in mind, but there was a lack of sensitive direction on the individual level to help people achieve the goal...It would not be realistic or helpful to the future of the Boston Movement to attribute large numbers of fall aways to simply a commitment problem on the part of the fall away...But also the possibility of there being serious deficiencies in ability or training on the part of some leaders, and the consequences of movement ideology such as "delegated authority."

\*People leaving the movement are termed "fall aways." Their leaving is deemed as sin and a spiritual problem.

**October, 1990** - Doug Lightning, co-led original planting to Johannesburg left the Boston movement

\*Doug has returned to the movement because of his children.

Tom and Ann Turnbull leave the Boston movement. They were co-leaders on the Paris team.

**Late 1990 or Early 1991** - Andy and Rita Lindo, evangelist and women's counselor, leave the Boston movement. They led the Atlanta reconstruction.

**Sept. 22, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "Discipleship: Restated & Restarted" - Al Baird:** "When we have a spirit of learning we learn from everyone -- even our enemies."

Steve and Joann Cassidy and several leaders from the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Church leave the movement.

Scott and Robin Deal leave the movement.

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** "From 1983 on through the 80's, many people, especially leaders from the various elements of the Church of Christ, moved to Boston or our plantings to be disciples and to train to build churches...(names of churches throughout the U.S.) The amazing thing is that many of these groups had several philosophical and doctrinal conflicts with each other. However, in Boston, the elders, their wives, Elena and I made every effort to forge a bond of unity between all these leaders from the Scriptures and through our working side-by-side with each other for one purpose...We have always welcomed people from any background who are truly seeking God and we continue to be open to still others joining in our "Revolution through Restoration" of the Scriptures -- today more than ever. (Para. 27)"

\*Kip quotes Milton Jones in Para. 20, as well as using his name in the list of churches in Para. 27. Kip does not mention that Milton Jones is opposed to the teachings and practices of the Boston Movement.

"It was during this period that some of the influential Churches of Christ (Garnett Road and Sunset), as well as the Christian Chronicle, the most prominent Church of Christ publication, stopped considering us a part of the Church of Christ fellowship...I am convinced that jealousy over our growth, which exposed their lack of growth, was a major motivation of this separation...My challenge to all of the critics in the Churches of Christ has been -- where are the souls you are saving and where are the churches you have built? We do believe "by their fruit (or lack of fruit) you will recognize them."

\*In 1991 the Boston Church reported a minus 5% growth. There are actually more former members who have left the Boston Church than there are present members within the Boston group.

"It is exciting to see theologians rise up in our number such as Douglas Jacoby. (Para. 46)"

\*Kip does not mention the fact that more leaders with any formal training at all have left the movement than have stayed a part of it.

“Jerry Jones, who has "shipwrecked the faith" of some...For many people in the different elements of the Churches of Christ, our changing doctrinal positions have been nothing short of heresy. Their unspoken assumption is that the Church of Christ is a restoration movement that has fully restored the Bible. However, our observations and study of the Bible have led us to a different conviction. (Para. 50)”

“As is every restoration from Scripture, it has taken ongoing study from the Word and discussions with many brothers and sisters to even begin trial and error implementation of all these rediscovered truths. At the end of it all, the leaders in the Boston movement have always been willing to change doctrinally and practically when we have seen the truth in the Scriptures. (Para. 52)”

\*It is obvious from the meetings held with others in the past that the Boston leaders are unwilling to change.

“The elders of the Lexington Church of Christ in Mass. contacted me to be their pulpit and campus minister...I told the people in that congregation that in order for me to come, every member must vow to become (in the terminology of that day) "totally committed."...On June 1, 1979, history was made as 30 would-be disciples gathered on a Friday night in the living room of Bob and Pat Gempel. (Para. 14)”

\*What does Kip mean by would-be disciples?

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “Let me just say this, one of the criticisms against us is well, not everything that grows is of God, I mean, there’s McDonald’s, there’s even denominational groups, and that is a point well taken. But let me tell you something, my Bible teaches me that the church grew.”

“They’ve been abused? No, they haven’t forgiven when they’ve been wronged. They’re flat bitter! They’re in sin! They have malice, and they need to be rebuked! I am sick and tired of the way we’ve dealt with these people. People got demons in them and they need to come out, and they will come out with shrieks.”

“Problem is you got injured faith, you’ve got to go to them and ask for forgiveness, they gotta forgive you. See, they can get bitter out there. They got a problem with bitterness, they got a problem. They’re not abused, they’re bitter.”

\*It is ones bitterness that is the problem, not that of an abusive discipler.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Marty Fuqua:** “Some of you have let these people that have gotten out of the ministry, that have grumpy gripy attitudes, stare you down...But you guys have got to start looking those people in the eye and say, ‘listen, if you don’t want to be a disciple, take a hike.’ I don’t need you to build this church, if that’s going to be your attitude, leave.’ Call there cottin-pickin’ bluff.”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “You’re not all the way over there with the enemies of the kingdom who would oppose the very call of which we stand. You’re not over there with that group of fall aways and disloyal people who have fallen away and make it their business to go around in sheep’s clothing and steal off disciples. No, you’re not all the way cold, but you’re not hot either.”

“Some of you have harbored resentment, and you’ve harbored bitterness, and you’ve harbored a grudge, and you’ve been critical. You’re in sin past your eye balls, because of your total pride and self deceit. I don’t care if part of it or even all of it was the fault of somebody else, and that you were a totally innocent victim. You don’t have a right to be critical and have a bad attitude...We can’t have a little grudge, or a little ill-will, or some weird attitude about somebody...You’ve got to be united with the kingdom of God...Every brother and sister who’s going to be a part of this church starts confessing sinful attitudes, starts confessing bitterness, whether it comes from legitimate hurts, or whether it comes from your own sinful nature, and you confess your sins without confessing anybody else’s...No sinful attitudes or divisiveness at all in this church. Are you with me?”

“That’s what happens when a bitter man falls away and becomes disloyal, he hates what he loves with even a greater hatred than he loved. That’s what Satan will do to your heart...They’ll talk to you, and they’ll try to get you not to doubt God, or not doubt what you’ve done, but they’re going to try to discredit your leaders...If there’s any substance to what they say, it’s, it’s (pause) hardly ever there and most of what they talk about is totally made up. Lies, just like Jesus had to deal with lies...Deceitful men can take true statements and turn them into lies...You watch what I’m saying...They’ll take your fruit and they’ll deprogram it, and it’ll break you...You talk about brainwashing, that’s brainwashing, I tell you something, it’s going to happen.”

“That’s also the difference between us and the traditional Church of Christ, because we’re not interested in just keeping orthodoxy.”

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “Some of you guys have relationships with people who have left this church. They were once members of the church...You get together with them, and you think what you’re doing is keeping some kind of umbilical cord there, so you can sorta win them back at the right time, and so you can have an influence on their life. Well, I want to ask you who is influencing who? They fill your mind up with garbage all the time about their little bad attitudes, and the way they were abused, and the way they didn’t get treated fairly, and this and that and everybody else, and the church this and the church that...You say, ‘Bro, well, there’s so many people. Where there’s smoke there must be a fire.’ That’s right, and you better find out who set the fire. You’ve compromised. I don’t have time, in my life to get together with people that have bad attitudes about the church, bad attitudes about the Lord.”

“You’re going to have good attitudes, and you’re not going to grumble and complain, and you’re not going to cohort around and be buddy, buddy with people who have left this church and have bad attitudes...You’re basically going to be what every person ought to be that’s a disciple.”

\*Members are now being told who to associate with and who to avoid. They will obey or not be a part of the ICC.

**July, 1993** A group from the Milan team, including the Lead Evangelist, Alex Presenza leave the movement.

**February, 1994** A majority of the Indianapolis Church (600) along with the staff and the Lead Evangelist, Ed Powers leave the movement.

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “We tried to get a church established there (Lebanon) and we couldn’t because quote the other denominations opposed us,’ so they don’t want any other quote ‘new groups.’”

“As I spoke about before there are so many Church of Christ roots in some of the teachings that Ed Powers has given. And he’s proclaimed them to be ‘new teachings’ when in fact these are just old Church of Christ traditions...There are no votes. That’s Church of Christ business meetings. We did away with those things a loong time ago.”

“Why are so many of the young people just so confused? They don’t know all these Church of Christ idiotic traditions. Because they’ve been baptized recently.”

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; “Personal Righteousness” - John Porter:** “Let’s sit around and talk about how great we are, that’s how most churches are. You hear a message of peace, peace, but most people don’t have peace. You hear a message of grace, grace, but you see, without faith there is no grace. And where there is faith, there is obedience!”

“We’re not in on studies, we’re not discipling people, we’re not making people be more like Jesus, and yet we somehow think that we’re better off than the rest of the religious world. How can we be better off, if there’s no fruit? The Bible says that there should be much fruit, and that that fruit should last. We ought to be people of impact. We ought to be people that make a difference. Not mere religious people. We get faked out because we live in such a religious world. There is a danger of us becoming like them.”

**March 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Nothing to Hide, But Something to Show” - Elena Garcia-McKean:** “I remember going as a young minister’s wife to my first “Ladies Inspiration Day” in a traditional, mainline church. It was shocking and sickening to see the weak, insecure women who were teaching. For the most part, these gatherings of “Christian” women lacked warmth, joy, and love - especially towards newcomers. It was also sad to see that the group, made up predominantly of older white women, seemed content to keep their teachings “so spiritual” that they were not only boring but also lacking in practicality when they used the Bible. These dismal circumstances motivated me to want to “change” Women’s Days.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Breaking Away” - Al Baird:** “The need for breaking away from the denominational world is abundantly clear...They are not even getting their members to church, much less getting visitors there. These churches are dying...The religious world is a spiritual desert.”  
 “While we appreciate our heritage from the traditional churches, the ICC is clearly distinct in conviction, lifestyle and impact. After nearly 200 years of existence as a movement, the mainline churches of Christ are mostly a southern US church that is not growing. Their largest church outside the US is in Nairobi, Kenya and has only 500 members.”

\*Comments made above do not appear to show “appreciation.”

**“Why Movements Fail”** “All movements have failed to repeat the early Christians’ success because of: Failure to hold to the Scriptures; Failure to sacrifice self and renounce sin; Failure to love each other deeply; Failure to remain unified; Failure to keep their purpose clear. When any movement for God fails in these ways, it becomes just a Monument.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Shepherding the Flock” - Al Baird:** “John Vaughn, this past year, did a study on denominational churches, and their fall away rate. Evangelical churches around the United States. You know what they found out? In Evangelical churches, for a year, their stats were for about every 3 people that come in the front door, two people go out the back door. Some of you think, ‘Well, at least we’re doing as well as some of the denominational churches.’ Since when do we compare ourselves with denominational churches?”

\*Al compared the ICC to denominational churches in the quote from the August 13<sup>th</sup> bulletin above.

“When someone turns away from God, he’s worse off then when he even came to the Lord. These people are going to hell. And I don’t understand hell, but I know that they’re worse off than if they had never even heard the good news...These people become our worse enemies. You check it out. The people that leave the kingdom of God become our worst enemies.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “I think we’ve forgotten to preach the radical message of who is saved. When you preach who is really saved: that you gotta have faith, you gotta repent, you gotta become a true disciple of Jesus, and then you gotta be water immersed for the forgiveness of sins received through the Holy Spirit. That excludes all other denominations, and certainly the Buddhists, the Islamics, everybody else that’s out there.”

“When you say, we’re the only true church, we’re made up only of disciples, that’s gonna tick the religious people off. Those were the greatest enemies of Jesus.”

“You know, I think it should shock us. That the greatest Protestant movement was the Reformation Movement led by Calvin, Luther, and Zwengli. It’s very divided, very fractured, it was very politically motivated because a lot of these men were supported by German princes that wanted to get out of the auspices and power of the Pope. And so let us just say their conversions were questionable. But the scope of the Reformation Movement in the lifetime of their founders was just Europe.”

“I think the kind of radical goals that we need to lay before our churches are number one: To be the largest church in the city. I think it’s a sin to let any denomination church be bigger than us. How can someone be preaching false doctrine, and be bigger than us? We preach the truth. Amen, church! Number two: We need to make sure on the foreign field that we are the biggest church in that nation.”

“You let them know that we’re really doing HOPE work over here, not like so many denominations that fake it. You let them know that it changed your life...I believe the cross needs to be preached in every sermon. You get away from the cross, and you get into denominationalism.”

“You see, back in the early days, we didn’t even say amen, in the early days. It was the cottin-pickin dead mainline Church of Christ.”

“The history book, Mother Teresa, yeah she’s great, but we’ve got Mother Pat, amen. And, because of the way the Catholic Church does stuff, they don’t have a Father anything. We’ve got Father Bob, amen.”

“You know I was so proud of the US churches, going through the MTV persecution. We went through that better than any other persecution show.”

**November 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Arabian Nights”** “After the first century, a time came when people no longer tolerated the truth. They gave into the lust of the flesh, the love of money and the pursuit of worldly power. False doctrines and new religions found a fertile land, and claimed many followers. Over the years utter darkness prevailed and Satan ruled freely in the hearts of millions, even in what was called Christianity.

**December 17, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Christmas is for Giving” - Al Baird:** “Many negative things have been said and written about the Church today, and it is likely that your family has heard some of them. A small number of you have family members who believe you are in a cult and are so concerned that they might attempt to have you deprogrammed...If you should find yourself in a deprogramming situation where outsiders have been brought in, run for your life! (Good advice for anytime someone tries to hold you against your will or force their ideas on you.) Do not think that you are strong enough to take on these professional faith-breakers alone. They are trained and experienced in ways to destroy your convictions. You are not equipped to take them on by yourself.”

\*The ICC teaches their members many false views regarding exit counseling.

**“Blessed are Those Who are Persecuted Because of Righteousness” - Maryann Rose and Marcia Lamb:** “The methods of ‘discussion’ these men used involved deceit and manipulation...On the third day, the men allowed Curtis (Kan) to go outside the house to read his Bible and pray...Curtis has no animosity towards his parents; he knows they meant well when they wanted him to be deprogrammed because they had no understanding of the commitment of a true disciple of Jesus Christ.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Listening to God” - Doug Jacoby:** “Leaders can be wrong. No one has a monopoly on the truth; we all have things to learn. You may just discover something that will transform the Kingdom of God! And even if leaders are teaching the truth, how they support it may be fallacious.”

\*fallacious-containing or based on fundamental errors in reasoning; misleading; deceptive. Webster’s, II

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “With St. Basil’s at the other end...Seemingly a monument to false religion preached through the ages in the name of Orthodoxy...God unleashed a historic movement...all the denominational weak-faithed people, that’s very kind terminology for them, they just got out of Russia. And I was happy about it, because it just left the true church right there.”

**SECTION NINE: MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS****ONLY MEMBERS OF THE ICC ARE SAVED; THE ICC IS THE “TRUE CHURCH”**

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; “Revolution Through Restoration” - Kip McKean:** “Out of these convictions from the Scriptures came one of the crucial characteristics unique to our movement - a true church is composed only of disciples. (Para. 17)”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Cutting Edge” - Marty Fuqua:** “That’s right the door swings both ways, and don’t let it hit you on the way out...Kip just says, “if you don’t like the LA Church leave...You can’t run off disciples...This is the movement of God. I said, ‘the movement of God.’”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Friday Evening Message - Nick Young:** “When you walk away from the movement of God, there is no where to walk to. Walking out of the light into the darkness. There is nobody else, there is nobody else in this country that has the true gospel, that is trying to make disciples of Jesus. There is nobody else in this entire world. This is the movement of God! There is no place to go...You’re the one who needs to be saved, you’re the one who is going to go to Hell if you don’t repent...You were hell bound before this planting got here...This church was on the road to hell.”

“This is not just a church among churches. This is not just the best thing going in Tulsa. This is the movement of God, and we’re calling all who will be true disciples to align themselves with this movement of God. You think this is a church among churches, you can’t be a disciple. If you think there’s other churches out there you can go and be a part of and be just as good and just as saved as you are a part of a church of disciples, you can’t be a disciple...There is nobody, there is nobody on the cutting edge of what’s happening right now, except the movement of God...We love you, the door will always be open for you to come and be a disciple...Nobody is forcing you to stay...This is the only kind of person that can make an impact for God. This is the only kind of person, I believe, that can be saved.”

“Everybody that’s going to be a member of the church will be a Christian. That’s a good standard. We’re not going to have any non-Christians in the church.”

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; “Personal Righteousness” - John Porter:** “If someone is not willing to do the will of God, he has no part in God’s church...When we’re confronted with our sin. We’re told what we need to do. If we don’t have a humble response, wanting to change, wanting to do what is right. We don’t have any business being here...Impurity will infiltrate the church, and we will destroy God’s Kingdom.”

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “Well, are the people in the ICC the only ones saved? We’re the only ones that teach as we teach... then if they (if someone from another church) are really good hearted they are going to join with people that are true disciples. So, I’m not going to be ordering the borders of Israel here, that’s for the Lord to do...My Bible teaches me, according to the Bible, that true Christians are disciples. True churches are filled with only disciples, amen. That just didn’t exist anywhere...That reconstruction produced a true church in Indianapolis.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “An ideal that had not yet been seen, that the true church would be composed of only disciples, only those people that are totally committed to Jesus Christ, and those that refuse to heed the call of Jesus would be unwelcome in that fellowship, and not be recognized by God or his human leaders.”

**October 30, 1994 LA Bulletin; “Clear and Present Danger” - Al Baird:** “The events of the past 15 years are not accidental or coincidental; they have been orchestrated by God...We are a part of God’s advancing Kingdom.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “The True Church”** “The true church is composed of only disciples. Jesus taught only one standard of discipleship...No other church is as mixed racially, socially, and economically in membership and in leadership.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “When you say, we’re the only true church, we’re made up only of disciples, that’s gonna tick the religious people off. Those were the greatest enemies of Jesus.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Glory” - Al Baird:** “One brother said that a leader being that open with his life was even more proof that we are in the true Kingdom.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Praise God for the 30 would-be disciples in Boston in 1979...we are so personally appreciative of those 30 that gathered in Boston that fateful June 1<sup>st</sup> night in the Gempel’s living room...we see that 30 would-be disciples have multiplied into 130,000 people worshipping every Sunday morning, amen - in 250 different churches, in 90 different countries. Truly, it has to be God.”

“Why is there so much evil? Why is the darkness around the world closing tighter and tighter around us, even as we call ourselves the true church?”

“They don’t know who you really are at work, because you got the veil up and the Glory is fading because you’re afraid to be identifies as a member of the Lord’s church, the true Church of Christ in Sydney.”

“I’m fired up about getting the true church back in Jerusalem. What do you think about that?...I’m fired up about Henry Kramer leading the team there...and reestablish the true Church of Christ.”

“All the denominational weak-faithed people, that’s very kind terminology for them, they just got out of Russia. And I was happy about it, because it just left the true church right there.”

## ICC MAKING HISTORY/DEFINING CHRISTIANITY

**January 26, 1986 Boston Bulletin; “The Boston Church in Historical Perspective” - George Gurganus:** “The Crossroads church in Gainesville, FL also concentrated on campus evangelism and trained campus ministers to serve other congregations meeting adjacent to colleges and universities.”

**July 27, 1986 Boston Bulletin:** “the entire congregation gathered in the Gempel’s living room.”

**March 19, 1989 Boston Bulletin; “History of the Boston Church of Christ” - Bob Gempel:** “In 1956, desiring to minister to the town of Lexington, a small group of Christians planted the Lexington Church of Christ...As the ministry of the church spread far beyond the borders of Lexington, the name of the church was changed to the Boston Church of Christ...Early in 1982, the leadership targeted 16 of the world’s leading cities for church plantings. Such “pillar” churches, once established, would then spread the gospel throughout their regions of influence.”

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; “Ten-Year Report” - Kip McKean:** “That night the 30 disciples in the church gathered in the Gempel’s living room.”

\*At this time, Kip does not refer to the 30 original members of the Lexington Church as “would-be disciples.”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; “Revolution Through Restoration” - Kip McKean:** “On June 1, 1979, history was made as 30 would-be disciples gathered on a Friday night in the living room of bob and Pat Gempel. (Para. 14)”

“Upon conviction by the Scriptures, most people in the Lexington (Boston) Church were rebaptized: Doug Arthur, Joyce (Crosby) Arthur, Lynne (Hembree) Green, the Morehead family, the Foss family, the Crosby family, and just before he arrived, Steve Johnson. Others like Bob and Pat Gempel, Paul and Helen McNiel, Lisa Johnson, Chris (Timmis) Fuqua, Jim Lloyd, Don Lee and Doug Blough were not rebaptized, as they felt after studying the Word, their conversions were true. (Para. 17)”

\*This is an incomplete listing of the original 30 members of the Lexington Church of Christ.

**January, 1993 UpsideDown Magazine; “From the Editor” - Steve Johnson:** “We’ve been accused of being ‘revisionists,’ changing history to suit our needs, because in at least two previous articles in this magazine, slight credit, if any, was given to the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, for its input in our movement. The Crossroads church was both influential and controversial in the ‘70’s for its active campus ministry. That’s where the Methodist Kip McKean was converted to the church as a college freshman. But over the years, we’ve parted company, either by our initiation or theirs, with numerous groups including the Crossroads Church. And of the 10 married couples who serve as would sector leaders in our movement, only Kip and his wife Elena, and his brother Randy and his wife Kay were ever members of the Gainesville church. Every other one of these couples came into the Boston movement from the ‘Restorations’ or, as commonly referred to, ‘mainline Church of Christ,’ except for Frank and Erica Kim of Tokyo, who were converted in Boston.”

\*The 10 world sector leaders - Doug Arthur, son of Bob and Pat Gempel, was a member of the Lexington Church when Kip arrived in 1979. He was later rebaptized. Remember, Kip was trained at Crossroads, which influenced the decision of the Lexington elders to hire Kip McKean. Steve Johnson grew up in the mainline Church of Christ, his father was a mainline preacher. Steve and his wife Lisa visited Crossroads many times in the late ‘70’s, and was influenced by the Crossroads Church. Randy McKean, as stated was baptized in Gainesville. Phil Lamb, Scott Green and Bob Gempel are from a mainline Church of Christ background. Al Baird is also from the mainline Church and was rebaptized in Boston. Cory Blackwell was baptized in the LA Church. It is the opinion of the author that all of these men and their wives were influenced by the Crossroads Church. Not only these 10, but scores of other leaders within the ICC were either baptized at the Crossroads or influenced by a Crossroads ministry church.

**August 1, 1994 Media & Law Public Relations Portfolio; “A Church Big Enough to Hold Us All!”** “In the beginning, we were 30 members of a dying denominational Church of Christ in Lexington. Together we resolved to commit our lives to restoring the church that Jesus established in the New Testament.”

**August, 1994 UpsideDown Magazine; “Revolution Through Restoration, pt. 2” - Kip McKean:** “began in June, 1979 with 30 would-be disciples in a little Boston-area church.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “A group of 30 ‘would-be’ disciples gathered (Boston-June, 1979) and committed themselves to an ideal that had not yet been seen; that the true church would be composed of only disciples, only those people that are totally committed to Jesus Christ, and those that refuse to heed the call of Jesus would be unwelcome in that fellowship, and not be recognized by God or his human leaders.”

**October 30, 1994 LA Bulletin; “Clear and Present Danger” - Al Baird:** “The events of the past 15 years are not accidental or coincidental; they have been orchestrated by God... We are a part of God’s advancing Kingdom.”

**March 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Nothing to Hide, But Something to Show” - Elena Garcia-McKean:** “When God’s work was initiated in Boston in 1979.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Defining Christianity”** “Our churches are defining Christianity in nations like Russia and the Ukraine, Thailand, Japan South Africa, China, the Middle East and even the US.”

**“Why Movements Fail”** “All movements have failed to repeat the early Christians’ success because of: Failure to hold to the Scriptures; Failure to sacrifice self and renounce sin; Failure to love each other deeply; Failure to remain unified; Failure to keep their purpose clear. When any movement for God fails in these ways, it becomes just a Monument.”

\* In **“Breaking Away”**: Kip aligns himself with other movement leaders through history - Paul in the First Century Church; Martin Luther in the Reformation Movement; John and Charles Wesley in the Wesleyan Movement; Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone in the Restoration Movement.

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “At this very hour, Christianity is being defined in mainland China. At this very hour it is being defined in outer Mongolia. At this very hour, Christianity is being defined in Russia. Religious history is being made...Well, we’ll define Christianity in Russia, we’ll define Christianity in Thailand and Bangkok, and a Buddhist nation. We’ll define Christianity in Japan and a Shinto nation. But I’ve come to believe that we are defining Christianity in America...We’re impacting the world. We’re making religious history... Do you realize that the scope of not, quote, “our movement, but God’s movement has gone beyond the Restoration Movement, beyond the Methodist Movement, beyond the Reformation Movement in the lifetime of its found, amen, let’s keep it going right here! We have made religious history. And as we enter into the brink of a new millennium it’s time to start thinking about making history in every nation of the world...the Holy Spirit has led us from one church of 30 would-be disciple.”

“We’re defining Christianity. But I say to you today, it’s time to define the X in Generation X. I’m telling you that it’s going to be our young men and our young women that define the X. Jesus was known as a prophet. That’s why more than any other man who ever walked. He didn’t just change religious history. He changed history...This is the time, not to make religious history, but to change the course of human events for all history and for eternity, amen...The history book, Mother Teresa, yeah she’s great, but we’ve got Mother Pat, amen. And, because of the way the Catholic church does stuff, they don’t have a Father anything. We’ve got Father Bob, amen...We’re going to make history, we’re going to shake this thing on up...Let me tell you something, we have made religious history. The sweeping efforts of the kingdom of God have gone beyond the Reformation Movement, beyond the Methodist Movement, beyond the Restoration Movement. We have done that, now it’s time to change the course of human events. It’s time to change all history, and all eternity.”

**November 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Arabian Nights”** “These disciples [in the Middle East] through their faith, zeal and love, are rewriting Christian history.”

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin:** “In June of 1979, God’s modern-day movement began when Kip and Elena McKean gathered 30 disciples in the Gempel’s living room in Boston, Massachusetts.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Give thanks to the people of the 1500’s of the Reformation Movement...Give thanks to the people of the 1800’s of the Restoration Movement...Praise God for the 30 would-be disciples in Boston in 1979...Praise their uncompromising faith in the resurrection of the Bible.”

“In 1986 God smashed apartheid by sending a multi-racial team of disciples from Boston to Johannesburg.”

\*This is an example of how Kip views the importance of the movement he leads.

With St. Basil’s at the other end...Seemingly a monument to false religion preached through the ages in the name of Orthodoxy...God unleashed a historic movement...”

“Praise God for the 30 would-be disciples in Boston in 1979...we are so personally appreciative of those 30 that gathered in Boston that fateful June 1<sup>st</sup> night in the Gempel’s living room...we see that 30 would-be disciples have multiplied into 130,000 people worshipping every Sunday morning, amen - in 250 different churches, in 90 different countries. Truly, it has to be God.”

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Matters of the Heart” - Al Baird:** “The disciples we are now raising in our homes will be the ones to finish the job of taking the gospel to the world in our generation.”

**November 17, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Multiplying into 100 Nations” - Roger Lamb:** “Kip challenged the group [30 ‘would-be disciples’] that night with the revolutionary concept that the Lexington Church...should be made up entirely of disciples of Jesus Christ.”

\*Kip did not teach this concept until 1987. Did not Jesus preach radical commitment to himself as Savior and Lord some time previous? Does Roger Lamb really infer that no one else has preached love and obedience to Christ since that time. Lamb’s assertion belies an ignorance of church history and an arrogance that is unfathomable.

## GROWTH/RETENTION OF MEMBERS

**June 17, 1984 Boston Bulletin; "House Churches" - Jim Blough:** “The establishment of house churches also marks one more step toward our goal of restoring the spirituality, discipleship and evangelistic impact of the New Testament Church...The beauty of God's plan of church leadership is that a church of 1,000 members can remain united under one eldership...We eagerly expect, then, that in June 1988 the membership of the Boston Church will exceed 25,000, with a Sunday morning contribution of over \$400,000. This is by sight, simply reproducing what has already been done. Just imagine what can be done by faith!”

**January 26, 1986 Boston Bulletin; “The Boston Church in Historical Perspective” - George Gurganus:** “Where is a church in which more than 700 people have been baptized in one year? Where is a church that, in just over three years, has established five other churches which together baptized a total of 725 people in one year?...The more than 16,000 churches of Christ in the US must seek to duplicate this growth...If this type of multiplication of disciples here in Boston and in the other church plantings begun from here continues at the same rate, as it has for the past six years, the world will be evangelized by the Boston Church and its resulting church plantings by the year 2020.”

**October 10, 1987 Freed-Hardeman College Forum - Steve Johnson:** “Number one pertaining to growth and the approval of God, I agree from the speeches mentioned earlier that to say that where there is growth you have God's approval is not only erroneous, it is dangerous. I don't believe that growth ever indicates as an absolute that God is with this particular group of people. Otherwise, you have to give credence to everything from Nazi Germany to the Moonies. I do, however, believe that those who have God's approval are going to grow.

**Al Baird:** “Our long range retention in Boston is 75%.”

**October 25, 1987 Boston Bulletin; "Remnant Theology" - Bob Gempel:** “Not even Moses himself was part of this remnant, for he had failed to trust enough in God (Numbers 20:12)...Dare we call ourselves the Lord's church in the face of no growth? The quality of the work is at issue...At this time, as a group, only the multiplying ministries can point to growth rates that can fulfill God's vision for the worldwide mission and are thus reflective of expert building...Note that we are not saying that only those who are part of the remnant will be saved. We fully expect to see Moses in Heaven.”

\*How does Boston "square-up" with zero growth. See quote from Kip May 6, 1990 this section.

**Summer, 1988 Denver Reconstruction - Kip McKean:** “But you know I think we need to understand that last year in '87 you had 135 people baptized, 43 have already fallen away. That is terrible.”

\*The above is a 68% retention rate.

“In Boston, after one year, we always have over 90% retention. For the entire length of our ministry (nine years) we have a 70% retention which is better than you have after one year.”

**September 4, 1988 Boston Bulletin; “Boston” - Kip McKean:** “The Boston Church is so much stronger and vibrant since Tom became the lead evangelist. Already over 1000 have been baptized in 1988!”

**May 17, 1989 WRKO Radio - Al Baird:** “And percentage-wise long-term, we have a very low percentage to leave—people do leave, but a low percentage does leave.”

**1989 Boston World Missions Seminar - Al Baird:** “Large churches right now have slowed down in their growth. Boston has slowed down in its growth. New York has slowed down in its growth. Chicago has slowed down in its growth. San Diego has slowed down in its growth...We've got to start facing up to reality, that we are not retaining as many people as we need to. There are too many people falling away and we have got to do something about it.”

\*The statement made at the WMS contradicts Al's earlier statement on WRKO Radio.

**January 7, 1990 Boston Bulletin; "McKean to Los Angeles" - Al Baird:** “We are committed to building a New Testament-size church of 10,000 disciples.”

**March 10, 1990 Boston Speech - Al Baird:** “We are not doing a very good job of keeping people faithful.”

**March 25, 1990 Boston Bulletin - Al Baird:** “There are symptoms that indicate we have wandered off the path. In 1989 we grew very little numerically. Although many disciples were made, we did not do a good job of keeping people faithful.”

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** “Over the last few months, in fact the last year or so, essentially there has been zero growth in the Boston Church.”

**May, 1990 "The Boston Movement As A Revitalization Movement" - Marty Wooten:** “It would not be realistic or helpful to the future of the Boston Movement to attribute large numbers of fall aways to simply a commitment problem on the part of the fall away.”

**August, 1990 California Speech; "We Band of Brothers" - Kip McKean:** “I really believe that we are at a critical point in the Movement. We are at a time when many in our congregations have a frustration inside of their soul because they remain fruitless. Many churches have leveled out and have failed to grow numerically.”

**Fall, 1990 Discipleship Magazine** “...facing the truth that New York experienced little more than zero growth since the beginning of 1990.”

**December 16, 1990 Boston Bulletin** “(we will) plant at least one church in each of the 200 nations by 2,000.”

\*This is one of the first statements made by the movement in regard to their goal of “evangelizing the world in this generation.” You will notice that the statement continues to receive qualification.

**Spring, 1991 Discipleship Magazine** “New York experienced a painfully stagnant time.”

**April 7, 1991 Boston Bulletin** “The Boston Church has grown to largest membership ever, and it continues to consistently increase in numbers...The Boston Church is listed in the *Almanac of Christian World* as the 12<sup>th</sup> fastest growing church in attendance in America from July, 1989 through June, 1990.”

“The NY Church is listed in the Almanac as the 17<sup>th</sup> fastest growing church in attendance in America from July, 1989 through June, 1990.”

**June 23, 1991 Boston Bulletin** “One independent source listed us as the fastest growing Bible-based religious movement in the world.”

**July 14, 1991 Boston Bulletin** “Since our goal is to see churches of 1,000 and 10,000 all over the world, the Kingdom need the Boston Church to be the model church...with this in mind the Randy McKean were sent back to get Boston back on the cutting edge.”

**September 1, 1991 "That the World May Believe You Sent Me" - Gordon Ferguson:** “Now there are 100 churches in the discipling movement right now growing at a rate of 45 to 50%.”

**November 24, 1991 Boston Bulletin** “...to plant a church in every nation by the year 2,000.”

**January 19, 1992 Boston Bulletin** “We did take in disciples from Providence and Springfield, which represents almost the same number of disciples that moved away from the Boston area in 1991.”

“Fall away rate lowered by 35% from '90 to '91 in Boston.”

“...every country having a church planting by 2,000.”

**“1992: The Year of the Bible/Continuing Restoration” - Randy McKean:** “The Boston Church has never been 13 years old before with 3600 disciples, how do we do it?”

**“Continuing Restoration” - Wyndham Shaw:** “Results do not always mean we’re right.”

**January 22, 1992 Boston Bulletin:** “31% growth rate claimed”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “Perhaps also unappreciated by the casual observer was the challenge to meet the needs and keep faithful the unprecedented number of new Christians—over 2,000 in the first six years in Boston!...The retention rate through all these years of all the years of all the baptisms has been about 50%, which is over five times as high as the rate in the various elements in the Churches of Christ. (Para. 20)”

“During the ten years that God allowed my family to serve the Boston church, unprecedented growth occurred. (Para. 44)”

\*Note the numbers given in Para. 44.

“Not only is the multiplication of disciples exciting, but unique to the Boston Movement is the multiplication of churches. (Para. 55)”

\*Recent statistics for growth during 1992, made available only to upper-echelon leaders, states that the Boston Movement added 23,000 members last year, yet saw 20,000 leave the group worldwide. Is this retention rate approaching 50%? Is this retention rate any better than the mainline Churches of Christ? Why won't the Boston leadership (or those in L.A.) release detailed statistics on their growth. These statistics are available from former Boston elder (now in Los Angeles) Al Baird or former Boston elder (now in Philadelphia) Bob Gempel.

**April 26, 1992 Boston Bulletin:** “great strides were made...35% decrease in fall away from the previous year in Boston.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “There are no excuses, excuses are inexcusable for not growing...my Bible teaches me that the church grew...Granted, not everything that grows is of God, but if it's of God it will grow, and if it ain't growing, then the Spirit has departed...The Bible says, that it will grow through the Holy Spirit as long as you remain righteous...How did people know that God was with us in Boston? It was the number of people that were coming to Christ here in Boston.”

“My goal has always been to have the biggest church wherever I've been. In Boston, do you realize the Boston Church is still the largest church in the history of all of New England? It's the biggest that's ever been. The problem is we stopped growing here, that disgusting, it needs to change...So many of your churches have set goals and failed so many times to make it, you've injured the faith of your people. You need to repent of that, set goals that you can make, blow out and build their faith.”

“My goal is not 13,000...My goal is a church of 80,000 in Los Angeles.”

“We haven't been getting the job done...Some of your churches are so pathetic, they make Jesus nauseous...When things went bad last fall for six months, I was feeling it, and I understood, because I'd been through battles before...The problems was with me, number one, and number two, the church had a spiritual problem. It's called sin...I've got to get myself right. I repented before the church, but I got strong with the Lord. I redevoted myself to the Lord...If your church isn't growing, it's not because they don't know enough ministry, it's because there is sin in the camp.”

“My ministry (The Cross & Switchblade), things weren't right, we kicked some bottom, things weren't growing, we knew it was sin...The unfruitful Christian is the one who falls away.”

“We'll kinda share about the LA Church, warts and all right here. Their sector (West) that they (Fuquas) took over had a quote membership of 450 in June, after we went through and did the life talk it was down to 200. Now most

of those people aren't there any more. Marty is a hardline guy...Here is another guy. I say, 'are the numbers tight?' 'Yeah, yeah.' It was sheer garbage. He didn't want to face the fall away issue. He didn't want to face his failure. He was totally numbed out. They (Fuquas) took over a totally devastated ministry."

"The church was doing lousy. I wasn't happy, and nobody was happy. I was frustrated."

**Reese Neyland:** "Kip mentioned that during last year there was a very rough period for the whole church, he wasn't happy and consequently we weren't either."

**Chris Fuqua:** "Our numbers have not increased, our numbers have dwindled in many cases down to nothing in our campuses."

**Marty Fuqua:** "Now we aren't asking how many baptisms are you expecting to have. This is how many are you actually increasing, this involves baptisms, it involves restorations, it involves fall aways, it involves move-ins and it means move-outs as well. What are you predicting to increase?...So far this year they've (West Sector) had a growth of 4, wow! Obviously in need of doing some things there, need to spruce that sector up a bit. Growth of 2%, lousy...Notice the church has grown by 476, that's fantastic, that's an average of all the sectors of 33%. Notice none of them are under 20%, that's fantastic, even our sectors that aren't keeping up with the others are doing fantastic."

**Tom McCurry:** "I kept reading the world stats and watching the big churches kind of bubble up and sink back, and bubble up and sink back, and it just seemed to me to be a spiritual issue, there is some barrier we've put on ourselves that has stopped our growth in these large churches."

**Steve Lopez:** "You know when it's going bad, is when your net growth is larger than the kids you have, and besides, we felt like that, given the fact that we don't have any kids."

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** "In 1991, the church here baptized 959 people, and grew by 128. January through September of 1992, you've baptized 413, not even on last year's pace. Supposedly, a bigger church, but not even baptizing as many people as you did last year, with a net growth of 75. Hey, there's a lot of you, you're not sharing your faith. I mean let's just be flat honest."

"You know tonight, if the whole church is here, there is about 1700 members...Basically, on Sunday, in my opinion, and what we're going at this with as the leaders is that the membership in the San Diego Church of Christ is zero. And we're going to put together the real membership...Guys, we're going to come up with what the real membership is. We're going to get the sin out of the camp, and I'm telling you, this church is going to crank like you've never seen before."

\*What Kip does not mention is the new procedure where hundreds and thousands of members are coerced or otherwise influenced (on a quota system) from other ICC locations (particularly in the Midwest) to be members in the Los Angeles Church of Christ, the ICC headquarters and "Mother Church." McKean's listing numbers of members rather than numbers of retained new converts leads one to assume that the LA Church of Christ's growth came from recruiting new non-members, where in fact much of this "new growth" is merely "stacking the deck" in Los Angeles. The ICC is not being honest with its statistics.

**January, 1993 UpsideDown Magazine; "From the Editor" - Steve Johnson:** "So we have our problems, and we've made our share of mistakes - maybe more than our share. Yes, we've had a tremendous number of fall aways over the past three years, but we've had a staggering number of converts...we're still the only churches of Christ who have evolved from the Restoration Movement to have churches with regular attendance's of over 5,000...we've been successful at doing what so many people have been preaching for years."

\*How can a "tremendous number of fall aways" and "a staggering number of converts" go hand-in-hand?

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; "Personal Righteousness" - John Porter:** "We're not in on studies, we're not discipling people, we're not making people be more like Jesus, and yet we somehow think that we're better off than the rest of the religious world. How can we be better off, if there's no fruit? The Bible

says that there should be much fruit, and that that fruit should last. We ought to be people of impact. We ought to be people that make a difference. Not mere religious people. We get faked out because we live in such a religious world. There is a danger of us becoming like them.”

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “Jesus says, ‘you’ll know a prophet by his fruit.’”

**August 1, 1994 Media & Law Package; “A Church Big Enough to Hold Us All!” - John Vaughn** “The ICC...represents one of the most aggressive and rapidly growing worldwide movements of this decade. The national and global focus makes it a movement that even its critics cannot ignore.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “We’ve got to get through here in Manila, is that the easy part of the world evangelism has been done - getting the big cities. Now begins the hard part.”

“We went to Bombay, and for four months we didn’t see but one person baptized, and that person fell away...It was an attack of Satan. People wanted to quit and turn back. We said, ‘you will not do that, you’re not allowed to quit on God.’ And that was radical...We (Boston) sent out 7 churches, 120 Bible Talk Leaders (1989), because we wanted to evangelize the world. And we understood it was going to wreck our church.”

“A lot of times we feel that f things aren’t cranking, why is God not with me. I don’t see Him. Well, He’s with you. As long as you’re making disciples. He’s with you. That’s what the good book says.”

“And so Steve (Johnson), you know, volunteers his weaknesses very openly. And I always get convicted being around Steve. He says, ‘You know, Kip, I can see what’s happened to me. I appreciate your helping me and Lisa last year in NY, and things are cranking. But I think what happened was, you know, a few years ago, I used to be one of the most evangelistic guys. I carried six, seven, eight studies. Then I took on a few jobs. None of them were bad. All of them were good kingdom jobs. But then it crept down to six, five, four. Then I took a few more jobs, and it got to be four, two, three, four, three, two. And then pretty soon, I wasn’t studying with anybody.’”

“Because I think we’ve got a lot of people that aren’t personally fruitful here. Let’s just ask the question - how many of you, we’ll make it since last September 1, have met somebody personally, not a contact through somebody, but have met somebody, studies with them, and baptized them? Let’s raise our hands. Now I want you to look around. I want you to look around. Now, all the people that haven’t done it, you raise your hands. I want you to look, and you ask me if we have a radical movement. No, keep your hands up. If you know those people, I want you talking to them after this session, and I want you finding out what’s going on.”

“We need to have a conviction. If our churches are not growing, it’s sin. Let me run that by again. If the church is not growing, it’s sin. And you may say, ‘well, this particular young man doesn’t have the gifts to be able to lead it.’ Yes, then what’s happened is because he doesn’t have the gifts to lead it, there’s sin in the church. There’s lukewarmness, there’s immorality, there are all sorts of things going on, cause he’s just not up to the task. I’m not saying it’s always the leader that has the sin. That’s the first place you better look. But our problem is, we’re trying to figure out what methodology, what set of mechanics, which church to model ourselves after, when we’re not growing. Let me tell you something. If you’re not growing, you know an easy place to start. You’ve got sin in your church. It’s cursed! And you’ve got to do something about it. Are you with me right here?”

“Earlier this Spring, the LA Church was just not cranking. When it’s not cranking, I get ticked off...The LA Church had cranked to about 3500 and started to slow on down. 3500 disciples.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference - Gordon Ferguson:** “One of the scariest things about the movement in the older churches right now is the lack of discipleship...There is too much wimpiness.”

**November, 1994 Kingdom News Network Video - Pat Gempel:** “God’s spirit worked to bring so many leaders into Boston...the Boston Church is thriving.”

“Evangelize 164 countries with cities over 100,000 by 2,000”

**January, 1995 Congregational Meeting Handout:** Boston incorporates other local churches into their total membership count, Providence; Nashua/Manchester, NH; Worcester; Portsmouth, NH and Groton/New London, CT.

**March 12, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Taming the Dragon” - Al Baird:** “God has used Scott and Lynne Green to build the fastest growing church in Hong Kong in only seven years.”

**March 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Nothing to Hide, But Something to Show” - Elena Garcia-McKean:** “In June of 1991, we held our first Women’s Day in LA...2,000 women were in attendance (our second Women’s Day in 1992)...In 1993, our total attendance was 3,000 and in 1994 our attendance was 4,164...In 1995, the number of women disciples number 2,360 in the LA Church...the greatest Women’s Day yet - 6,012 women listening to the Word of God.”

**April 9, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Current Releases”** “Dr. John Vaughan, President of the American Society of Church Growth recently released the results of his 1993 survey which listed the LA Church of Christ as the second fastest growing church of any kind in the US. Results for 1994 are imminent.”

**April 23, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Turning it Around in San Diego” - Guillermo Adame:** “The San Diego Church (is the) Pillar church of the southwestern US. The year 1994 resulted in a disappointing growth of only 47 for the San Diego Church...We began as revivals always do, with prayer, repentance, and preaching the Word of God (in the new year)...The church repented and went to work immediately with a renewed commitment to walk with God and to share their faith with someone new each day...In the first three months of the year the church has grown by over 140 disciples. Now with over 1500 disciples...Sunday morning attendance has steadily increased, averaging 2885 in March...They (Jordan’s/Bentleys) take great care of all the disciples by raising up strong couples to aid in their work and have greatly reduced our fall away rate...The San Diego Church has indeed turned around.”

**“The Indy 1200” - Jim Fulcher:** “An all-time record attendance of over 1200 people attended the harvest service...quite a comeback for a church that faced a devastating challenge one year ago...In 1994 the Indianapolis Church suffered a division in which many were lost, confused and discouraged and only 200 disciples remained”

**“Alive in ’95 (London) - John Causey:** “In 1994 the London Church shrank in membership by 5%. Already this year we have grown by 150 disciples, over 17%, representing our best ever start to a new year!”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Breaking Away” - Al Baird:** “The momentum after only 16 years is amazing - nearly 70,000 disciples in 72 nations! We know of no other movement since the first-century church that has grown so rapidly both numerically and geographically. Dr. John Vaughan, respected authority on church growth, states that according to available information, the LA Church of Christ is the fastest growing church of any kind in the US. At the present rate of growth, ICC churches will be the largest churches of any kind in most of the biggest cities of the world by the year 2000.”

**“Devoted to the Fellowship”** “In just 16 years God has blessed the ICC to grow the largest churches in several of the largest cities of the world...Every twenty minutes somewhere in the world, a new disciple is baptized. The ICC has grown 26% in the last year.”

**“Make Disciples of All Nations”** “New Delhi Church is the largest non-catholic church in that city...London is the largest church of any kind in the British Isles...New York is the largest church of any kind in the city...New York is the third fastest growing of any kind in the US, according to current information, and the second fastest growing church in the Movement...Tokyo is the largest Japanese Church in ‘Mt. Everest of mission work.’...Boston is the largest church ever in New England...Paris is the largest church in France and perhaps all continental Europe.”

“We have 94 countries yet to reach by the year 2000...willing to go anywhere, do anything and give up everything to accomplish this Great Commission.”

**August 23, 1995 LA Bulletin** “according to available information, LA is the fastest growing church of any kind in the US.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Shepherding the Flock” - Al Baird:** “The kingdom has a shepherding crisis. I picked those words very carefully. I thought about saying the kingdom has a shepherding problem. Brothers and sisters, we are far beyond the problem stage. We are in the crisis stage! How many of you look at the kingdom stats every month? Some of you are liars. We can’t wait to see where we stack up in the kingdom stats. You look at 1994, there were 30,000 baptisms in the kingdom of God. I praise God for 30,000 baptisms, it’s the most in modern day times in the kingdom of God, but I also look below that, in addition to 30,000 baptisms, there were almost 20,000 fall aways. You heard it right, 30,000 baptisms, 20,000 fall aways...I’ll tell you this, when we’re at a point in time when every 3 sheep you bring into the sheep pen, 2 of them get eaten by wolves. We’ve got a crisis. Amen! How would you like to stand up before your church on Sunday morning, and say, ‘Brothers and sister, I want you to look to your left and to your right, because on the day of judgment, you’re not going to make it. Two out of three of you are not going to make it.’ We’ve got a shepherding crisis. Are you with me church?”

“John Vaughn, this past year, did a study on denominational churches, and their fall away rate - Evangelical churches around the United States. You know what they found out? In Evangelical churches, for a year, their stats were for about every 3 people that come in the front door, two people go out the back door. Some of you think, ‘Well, at least we’re doing as well as some of the denominational churches.’ Since when do we compare ourselves with denominational churches?”

“You say, ‘Well, I mean in LA, they have about 1 out of 2 fall away, I mean, we can’t be better than LA can we?’ And then some of you work around it. You don’t fix it you just work around it. You say, ‘Well, we’ll just have to have more baptisms.’ Now, I’m all in favor of more baptism, amen! But that’s not going to get the job done in this crisis.”

“Well, what does God think about it? Do you think God is happy with 2 out of 3 people falling away?...Is God happy with 2 out of 3 people leaving? (No’s from the audience) I don’t think He’s only sad, I think He’s terribly upset. And I think He’s upset with you and me to whatever extent this describes us, and I’m afraid it describes us more than we’d like to think that it does...You’ve accepted 2 out of 3... You see, we’ve so numbed ourselves out that we have compromised on a standard, on an expectation of God and Jesus, and Brothers and Sisters, we do not have the heart of Jesus on this matter (Matthew 18:10-13), but we are going to change, Amen!”

“What are the answers? ...Most of you know how to keep people faithful in your Bible Talk situation. You see, we haven’t learned how to transfer that to a whole large church situation, but we know how to take care of people. We know how to shepherd people that we can lay our hands on, but we haven’t figured out how to transfer that to a whole church yet.”

“In LA we have begun to tackle the problem...The San Diego Church, of course as everyone knows, had a terrible year last year. And everyone know about the turn around situation this year...San Diego decided last October they were going to start designating some people to start to help to take care of people in a shepherding way...We liked that idea when we heard about it, and so in May of this year we started what we call a shepherding couple program...Taking care of the weak and getting them strong.”

“You know, one of the things that we’ve done, and we’ve always done to the glory of God, and with His help. We’ve always solved the problems and the crisis that we’ve had. You see, when good hearts and good minds go to work on a problem and a crisis it always gets solved.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “They (London Church of Christ) had plateaued out, as a matter of fact they had gone down from the heroic mark that Doug and Joyce(Arthur, World Sector Leaders) had set in the early days...We need to get a conviction, that when the church is not growing, the first person we need to look at is the preacher, and the second is his wife. They’ve lacked faith, and they’re in sin. Because of their lack of faith, and they’re in sin, the second conviction we just need to have. We may not know the facts, but we can be sure of it:- that there is sin in the church, and until it repents - it’s not going to grow because it’s God that gives the increase, and God cannot work where there is sin. Light has no fellowship with darkness.”

“I don’t know about you brothers, but I’m very tired of the preacher stereotypes of exaggeration...He (Paul, in 2 Timothy 4:2) says be careful with your words. You know too many of us are given to exaggeration. I’m tired of that stereotype. I think far more of us are given to downplaying the bad. I put before you as a preacher, we don’t need to kind of hit the target. We need to hit bulls eyes in our preaching. When we say an attendance, that’s what it is. When we say a membership, that’s what it is. When we say a problem, that’s what it is. I don’t want people kind of extrapolating out how good or how bad. What I’m really saying, ‘my word needs to be truth.’”

“I remember going down to San Diego in January. And I was even cautioned by a brother, ‘Now bro, they’ve just not been doing very good for a year.’ And I said, ‘Well, why are you saying that to me?’ ‘Well, bro, I mean you’re really awesome preaching. You know I just want you to be careful. Just, just know the history down there.’ I said, ‘Bro, I’m fully aware of the history down there. They haven’t grown for a year, and they’re in sin.’...I went down. I told the church about their lack of growth. I laid out the stats, the church. We’re so afraid to tell the church the stats. Let me tell you something, let the people know the problem. Lay it out, good or bad, indifferent.”

“I want you to take up the challenge we did in Boston when we stalled out in the mid-80’s and that’s what we called the “one a day plus challenge.” Every Christian, everyday, has to lead one person to church....You know, there was a revival in the church because of it. And I think the evangelism in so many of our churches just flat stinks. It’s not a matter of just expecting our members to be evangelistic, they need to be evangelistic. It’s not an ideal, it’s a standard that Jesus expects now, preach it!...And you know today, the San Diego church is one of the fastest growing churches in all of the movement.”

“Last fall the LA church hit a plateau, and you know, guys every church goes through their plateaus and sometimes their valleys. Get a grip! Last year we went through one of our plateaus, now when you start seeing a plateau, how long is a plateau? One month. When you see a plateau. It’s time to preach radically and specifically...I think the kind of radical goals that we need to lay before our churches are number one: To be the largest church in the city. I think it’s a sin to let any denomination church be bigger than us. How can someone be preaching false doctrine, and be bigger than us? We preach the truth. Amen, church! Number two: We need to make sure on the foreign field that we are the biggest church in that nation.”

“You know, it was exciting. We just heard from the world wide church expert in church growth that the LA church was the fastest growing church in all of the US of America, of any kind, of any denomination in 1994. That’s the way it needs to be.”

. We had a staff meeting a few months ago in LA; I just went around, and I said, ‘Okay, who’s been personally fruitful this year?’...Most of the group had not. I said, ‘we’ve just got to talk today. Why haven’t you been personally fruitful?’ ‘Well, you know bro., I don’t know, I’m trying.’ ‘When’s the last time you brought visitors?’ ‘Well, I can’t really remember. I think it was last year.’ This was the LA church! He says, ‘well, let me just lay it out Kip. I see evangelism as just being a hassle. It’s a nuisance.’ ‘Listen, people don’t understand. I’m leading hundreds of thousands of people. It’s time consuming.’ ‘Do you think I have a bad heart?’ Those were his words. I said, ‘it’s absolutely that you have a bad heart!’”

“I want to ask this crowd this year, as I’ve done the past several years, and as I will continue to do. Have you been personally fruitful, and let me define it for you. Someone you met, someone you studied with, and someone you personally baptized. Who’s been personally fruitful since last year? Raise your hand. Well, it’s better, but I want you to look around. These people with their hands raised are not to be commended, they’ve simply done their duty, but you that don’t, you need to be rebuked. You’re in sin.”

“Why haven’t you been personally fruitful?’ ‘Well, you know bro., I don’t know, I’m trying.’ ‘When’s the last time you brought visitors?’ ‘Well, I can’t really remember. I think it was last year.’ This was the LA church! He says, ‘well, let me just lay it out Kip. I see evangelism as just being a hassle. It’s a nuisance.’ ‘Listen, people don’t understand. I’m leading hundreds of thousands of people. It’s time consuming.’ ‘Do you think I have a bad heart?’ Those were his words. I said, ‘it’s absolutely that you have a bad heart!’ You know, I’ve been so proud of this brother. He repented from that day. And in the last 6 weeks, he’s averaged 10 to 12 visitors every week. Is that flat awesome?”

“You know, I think the reason there are a lot of our congregations not growing, they’re not healthy. You’re not spiritually feeding them good foods. I think some things need to go back to some old days. I think it’s time to give some altar calls in our church.”

“You know, it’s exciting to me that in the last two years, we were growing at a rate of 24% in our church. So a couple of years we grew at 24% that year. Then last year we grew at 24%. That’s incredible, cause we grew so much. This year, this is incredible, we grew so much last year, but this year we’re growing at 26.3%. I mean, more disciples, but we’re growing faster. Does that fire you up or not? But you know something? In the first (not understandable) we’ve grown about 20% this year, but our contribution has only grown 10. In the end, what that means is that it’s going to slow down in growth, because you see, the purpose of the contribution increases, it’s not to put pressure on your people, but it’s to hire more people to sustain the growth...If you understand that the growth is going to stop unless you increase the giving at the same rate you increase the membership then you’re not going to push, because you think it’s a burden to the people.”

“See some of you young guys, your problem is, the reason you’re not growing is you’ve become too critical, and you know your discipler too well, and he’s not your hero anymore.”

**September 17, 1995 LA Bulletin - Doug Arthur:** “Nothing has changed our ministry more than my repentance about being personally fruitful.”

**“Then the World Will Know” - Steve Johnson:** “In New York, when the evangelists and elders don’t bring visitors, our attendance drops by a thousand. Faithlessness is produced by fruitlessness.”

“2000 leaders (attend Johannesburg Conference).”

**November 5, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Father of the Bride” - Al Baird:** “A new chapter is being written in our young modern-day Movement of God - an emphasis on shepherding and keeping the saved saved...One thing is already clear from my early research on what keeps people faithful: disciples who are married to disciples have a significantly lower fall away rate than do single disciples.”

\*What does Al mean by “early research?” The movement has had a problem “keeping the saved” since its inception. There was also a problem with this in Gainesville at the Crossroads Church of Christ.

**November 26, 1995 LA Bulletin; “The Highway of Blessing” - Al Baird:** “We are working hard to keep the saved, and to learn how to do that more effectively. Recently the LA Church held a church-wide Bible Talk Leaders meeting at the Shrine Auditorium. Nearly 2,000 were challenged by our Lead Evangelist, Kip McKean, to develop a shepherd’s heart toward our people. Kip suggested that we no longer call ourselves Bible Talk Leaders, but rather Bible Talk Shepherds.”

**“Arabian Nights”** “The first century witnessed the birth of churches unparalleled since that time. In spite of tremendous cruelty, severe persecution and extreme poverty, these churches boasted numbers exceeding 20,000 disciples per church.”

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Great Expectations” - Al Baird:** “The LA Church has great expectations to meet in the Rose Bowl one day. The Kingdom is rapidly planting churches in every nation with a city over 100,000.”

“Goal: By the year 2,000 one church of disciples in every nation with a city over 100,000 population.”

**“1995 Firsts”** “LA is the fastest growing church of any kind in North America.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Talking to God” - Tom Jones:** “I decided recently to pray every day for the gospel to be spread into all nations by year 2000.” (Reprinted from *The Mission*)

**“KNN Frontline News”** “The Tokyo Church is now the largest Japanese church of any kind in history in this country where less than 1% of the population professes any kind of Christian faith.”

**February 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Cry Freedom” - Al Baird:** “Last year was the best yet in the short 16-year history of God’s modern-day movement. Overall our membership grew by more than 15,000 disciples, or 26%. The previous year, 1994, had been our best ever with a 24% growth rate, but 1995 even surpassed that. For the first time, Sunday attendance broke the 100,000 barrier early in the year and continues to grow at the same rate as our membership. This is a good indicator that this phenomenal growth rate will continue.”

“Keeping momentum in large churches is very difficult. In fact, for several years our large Churches lagged behind in their growth, and some even stagnated. But Kip McKean turned the LA Church into a model for growing big churches. Since 1994, LA has been the largest and fastest growing Church in the Kingdom. Now it is approaching a Sunday attendance of 10,000. With LA leading the way, the 1,000 member Churches have about the same growth rate averaging as the Kingdom overall.”

“Membership grew by 15,000 disciples, or 26% in 1995. The previous year, 1994, had been our best ever with 24% growth rate, but 1995 even surpassed that.”

“Keeping momentum in large churches is very difficult. In fact, for several years our large churches lagged behind in their growth, and some even stagnated.”

**“Largest & Fastest Growing ICC in Each Region of the World”** “LA Church’s Sunday attendance, 9,386; New York’s Sunday attendance, 7,453; Boston’s Sunday attendance, 6,032.”

**March 10, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Warp Speed”** “It (LA Church) is not only the largest congregation in the ICC, but also the fastest growing church of any kind in North America.”

**March, 1996 ICC Home Page - The Mission Section** “Our prayer and goal is to plant a church in every nation on earth that has a city of at least 100,000 population by the year 2,000. From these churches, the remaining smaller nations will be evangelized in the next few years. We took on this challenge in early 1994. At that time, we had started churches in 53 nations. Now two years later, churches exist in 89 nations with 77 nations remaining...The LAICC recognized as the fastest growing church of any kind in the US in 1994.”

**May 5, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Up Close & Personal” - Gloria Baird:** “I remember the first annual Women’s Inspiration Day in 1980 in Boston. There were only 60 women in the church and it was a great victory to have over 200 women participating...By 1991 we had expanded to a weekend Women’s Discipleship Conference of 6,000 sisters from around the world coming to Boston.”

**“True Power & Freedom for Women” - Elena Garcia-McKean:** “With a record attendance of 8,000 women at our LA Women’s Day on March 2, 1996, God more than answered the fervent prayers of the 2,800 women disciples in LA.”

**“Women’s Ministries”** “(Boston) God blessed the faith of 2,100 Christian women who brought 2,800 of their friends to Women’s Day.”

**May 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Praise God for the 30 would-be disciples in Boston in 1979...Give thanks to God for Jesus’ plan of multiplying disciples and multiplying churches...we are so personally appreciative of those 30 that gathered in Boston that fateful June 1<sup>st</sup> night in the Gempel’s living room...we see that 30 would-be disciples have multiplied into 130,000 people worshipping every Sunday morning, amen - in 250 different churches, in 90 different countries. Truly, it has to be God.”

“Empower us Father as your modern day movement to evangelize the entire world in this generation.

“Let Australia be the first evangelized continent in our generation...Empower us Father as your modern day movement to evangelize this entire world in this generation.”

“And we are inspired by the grandiose scenes, and grandiose numbers, like 85 people baptized in 1 day in Manila.”

“Have you been personally fruitful this year?...Let’s just have a show of hands, let’s just get right down to it, how many of us have met someone, studies with someone and baptized someone this year? Let’s raise our hands. I commend you in the Lord, but look how few of us. See your excuse, your lack of faith is the only thing separating you from evangelistic glory and glorifying God.”

“You know very interesting last fall was horrific for the LA Church, 4 straight months we didn’t grow at all. As many people as we baptized seemingly fell away. So discouraging...It’s tough being a church that isn’t cranking, isn’t it?...well we can let it out, certainly all of our churches are facing a very common problem, aging. We’re all getting older...that youthful zeal has now given way to a sophistication...You know bro, we got so many awesome people baptized 5, 6, 7 years ago, awesome ones! But we just don’t...not a lot of real awesome ones...I was sitting there in the fall in LA, and I was so frustrated. Why isn’t this church moving? Why aren’t people like Marty and Corey and Bruce cranking? And then I remembered a principle that I’d taught a few times. That when a church isn’t really moving you gotta look at the head guy.”

**August, 1996 Oceania Missions Conference - Reese Neyland:** “In the Oceania churches, in the first seven months of this year - in the church in Oahu, we’ve had 121 people fall away. In the church in Maui, 10 people have fallen away. In the church in Anchorage, 7 people have fallen away. In the church in Guam, 3 people have fallen away, and in the Church in Hilo, 3 people have fallen away... ‘Are you saying Reese, that we, in our group of churches, we have a fall away problem? ... I don’t know. I don’t know if we’ve got a problem...Those numbers are actually very low compared to a lot of the other churches, maybe even most of the churches in our kingdom around the world.”

“In the ministry that we lead back in LA, we took on a new ministry there in January, and unfortunately, that group had struggled last year spiritually (95). We had, in our group, about 290 disciples that we started the year with, and the year before they’d had 175 people fall away. Now in the first 7 months of this year, we’ve had 42 people fall away...At this point we have not figured out how to lead any ministry of any size and not have somebody fall away. It’s been a reality.”

**August 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Takin’ It Higher” - Al Baird:** “With over 82,000 disciples in the Kingdom worldwide.”

**September 8, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Clean Slate” - Al Baird:** “We have many churches over 1,000 in attendance, and we have the fastest growing church in the US and many other countries in the world.”

\*Is the ICC growing or not? Is there a “shepherding crisis?” Has the problem be overcome?”

“...six year plan to establish a church in every nation with a city of over 100,000 population by the year 2,000.”

\*The first published quotes making the statement about “planting churches in each nation” were begun as early as 1990. The “6-year plan” was established in 1993. Will there be future statements made qualifying the goal established in 1993?

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Chariots of Fire” - Roger Lamb:** “God is spreading His Kingdom throughout the earth faster than ever in his modern-day movement. More disciples are being baptized than ever...We are marching to our goal of one church in every nation with a city of at least 100,000 by the year 2,000.”

**“Matters of the Heart” - Al Baird:** “The disciples we are now raising in our homes will be the ones to finish the job of taking the gospel to the world in our generation.”

\*From the many statistics that have been published, it is obvious that the ICC is having problems admitting on a consistent basis that they are not multiplying, which is their goal. Thus the term “multiplying ministries.”

**November 17, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Time Line”** “LA Women’s Day draws over 8,000.”

**“Current Releases”** “The LA Church is experiencing the amazing effect of the Shepherding Ministry led by Al and Gloria Baird. In the first half of 1996 alone, the retention rate is 50% better than last year and better than each of the last four years. God’s plan always works.”

## KIP ADMITS HIS SINS

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; “Revolution Through Restoration” - Kip McKean:** “Not that we have always initially been correct ourselves. For example, I was wrong on some of my initial thoughts about biblical authority. I had felt that church leaders could call people to obey and follow them in all areas of opinion. This was incorrect. I feel very badly for people who were hurt by this wrong stance. Hebrews 13:17 teaches Christians are to obey their leaders in the work of the church as they lead in what the Bible teaches, so as not to make their work a burden. However, the leaders are not to lord it over the church and not to bind it with burdens it cannot bear (Matthew 23). (Para. 51)”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “We haven’t been getting the job done...Some of your churches are so pathetic, they make Jesus nauseous...When things went bad last fall for six months, I was feeling it, and I understood, because I’d been through battles before...The problems was with me, number one, and number two, the church had a spiritual problem. It’s called sin...I’ve got to get myself right. I repented before the church, but I got strong with the Lord. I redevoted myself to the Lord.”

“Another mistake I made last fall was, last fall I thought we’d get \$40,000 for our budget, that’s where my faith was at, it really was. Only problem is, the church wasn’t there and we missed it, we missed week after week after week. I injured the faith of the LA Church. I really blew it. I wasn’t able to put my faith and my heart in there. Even by January we came up with a budget of \$37,100, I was a little disappointed, but I knew that’s just where the faith was, and we called upon the people to give their hearts, everybody tithe. We started making it, and every month we got it...We figure when you get baptized you start paying. So the budget should go up...Our budget is now almost \$48,000...Everybody better tithe.”

“The church was doing lousy. I wasn’t happy, and nobody was happy. I was frustrated, and when I got frustrated as the lead guy, I just like pushed hard, pushed hard, I was impatient, and a sinful side of me came on out...Honestly, I had a bad attitude towards myself, had a bad attitude toward the ministry going lousy, and it’s a spiritual problem...I was wrong to be oppressive, we got it all fixed up.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “Earlier this Spring, the LA church was just not cranking. When it’s not cranking, I get ticked off. A lot of you guys don’t get mad enough. And what I found was very simply this, the amount of energy and spirituality and work that it took to lead a church of 1,000 I had mastered. The LA church had cranked to about 3500 and started to slow on down. 3,500 disciples. And what had happened was I had built up sentimentality in my leadership group. I mean, I love the guys I work with. Marty Fuqua, Cory Blackwell, Bruce Williams, Al Baird, they’re top guys. And what happened was I just didn’t want to really have discipling relationships with them. Finally, enough was enough was enough. And we started having some discipling times. I mean Marty used to joke, ‘Uh, oh it’s Friday. It’s time for me to get disciplined.’”

“You know, I turned 40 a couple of months ago. And I was thinking about my life. I was trying to think now what are the great temptations of my life? I still get tempted with pride and arrogance and lust, but what is the greatest temptation?...I believe that my greatest temptation as a disciple is the temptation of the normal life. To be, quote, ‘just like everybody else.’ You know, I look at our movement, and I see the radicalness ebbing away into normalcy.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “I’m sitting there in the fall in LA, and I was so frustrated...when a church isn’t really moving you gotta look at the head guy... “Oh, I had my quiet times. I’ve got a lot of the Phariessie in me, after all, I’m the leader of the movement. Gotta read my Bible and go to church. I’m ashamed to tell you, I just didn’t want to go to church...I saw myself getting critical of the young ministers. And they were young ministers in my church...I began to lose my temper, I got short with people, short with Elena my wife, I saw, just our marriage, just not being really healthy. I was getting short with my co-workers, wow, I’ve lost my first love...I had to go and talk to my discipleship group, all my top brothers, all the top sisters, and you know what Satan always tells you? Oh, they’re going to be critical. They’re going to look down on you”

“When you repent in the Kingdom of God brothers and sisters support you. They refresh you...The next few months, it was a battle...some of the challenges that were going on in my kids life, and some tough things would happen in the church with one of the ministers...I mean all the struggles of getting the church going...it was a fight...“I can honestly say there has been a radical change in my heart in the last four months. I haven’t arrived, but you know something? I don’t think you ever arrive.”

“2 Corinthians 4 - (Paul) challenges the disciples saying, ‘Hold it, it shouldn’t be kind of an up and down ride.’”

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Matters of the Heart” - Al Baird:** “Leaders are becoming more and more vulnerable in sharing their own lives, shortcomings, mistakes and sins. And discipling works - as the leaders repent and grow, the people will also.”

## FINANCES

**June 17, 1984 Boston Bulletin; "House Churches" - Jim Blough:** “We eagerly expect, then, that in June 1988 the membership of the Boston Church will exceed 25,000, with a Sunday morning contribution of over \$400,000. This is by sight, simply reproducing what has already been done. Just imagine what can be done by faith!”

\*These goals were not met in 1988, nor have they been met by any movement church to this day.

**Spring, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Discipleship: A New Look at Authority" - Al Baird:** “Leaders should be able to call meetings of the body, call for greater sacrifices, call for specified evangelistic outreach efforts or prayer times, etc., but are wrong to call someone to obey such things as choice of food, car, clothes, exact amount of giving.”

\*The ICC does determine exact amount of giving for their membership. Members have had goals for special contribution set for them based on their gross income earnings.

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “The financial books and how we spend our money are open to any member at any time. (Para. 43)”

Articles of Incorporation, Boston Church of Christ - By Laws (no date) Books and Records “The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees at the registered or principal office of the Corporation. All books and records of the Corporation may be inspected by a Trustee for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.”

\*The books in Boston, New York and L.A. are closed to everyone except Trustees of the Board (the trustees are generally the elders or the lead evangelist of the congregation). Issues about the salary and compensation of the ministry leaders remain a secret, as well as alleged misdirections of funds collected for missions work and for benevolence. Several cases of misappropriation and unethical use of funds are known to the authors, but the church leadership will not respond to repeated request for information in regard to these areas.

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; “The Super Church” - Kip McKean:** “We do the contribution in the discipleship group. You say, ‘well, won’t everybody see what’s happening?’ Mmhmm, mmhhmm, and we make sure they give their tithe, you say, ‘why do you do that?’ Because the Bible says in Malachi 3, that if you don’t tithe, you’re robbing God, and we don’t want anybody to go to Hell because they didn’t tithe. That’s awful hard line. You bet your booties it’s hard line. Someone doesn’t give we ask why. We know who didn’t give by the end of discipleship group. Questions are asked. We have almost 100% giving in our church. Someone doesn’t give they got some attitudes.”

“We have a policy, that hey, you don’t move out of LA. What about jobs? You know, we believe in a God, a God that can get jobs...Why do people move for jobs? It’s money, it’s flat mammon...I might work a hardship on the, move them into another family, they did in Acts 2. I went back after telling the World Sector Leaders that in May,

and I go, ‘Gee, I hope we are really doing that.’ So I went to the Sector Leader’s meeting, ‘guys did we have any move-outs that we didn’t plan to move out?’ ‘No, brother,’ Oh good, I didn’t lie, good, I feel good about that.”

“John and Frances just recently moved to LA from Chicago. John’s family sold their business, and it was John who gave the 2 million dollar gift to all the churches, and I appreciate that kind of sacrifice for giving to the church. Let me detail something, when I come before my Sector Leaders, they are the ones that control their money. I do not. I have a central accounting that they pay a small amount every month to, to pay off little things at the office, but that’s it.”

“Another mistake I made last fall was, last fall I thought we’d get \$40,000 for our budget. That’s where my faith was at...Only problem is, the church wasn’t there and we missed it, week after week after week. I injured the faith of the LA Church...We called upon the people to give their hearts, everybody tithe...we figure when you get baptized you start paying. So the budget should go up...Our budget is now almost \$48,000...There are churches in here that haven’t changed their budget for two years...So you better change. Everybody’s accountable, that’s a spiritual principle. Everybody better tithe, that’s a spiritual principle.”

\*Earlier in the Boston Church records show that contributions were consistently below budget. Yet, the budget was consistently raised during the year.

**Tom McCurry, Administrator:** “Now, have we had to change out some deacons, yeap. Some administrators, some of them can’t do it, some of them freak out, to be honest with you. You just have to go through those kind of things. But it can be done.”

\*It is uncertain why these people “freak out.” What is it they just “can’t do?”

**September, 1992 Tulsa Reconstruction Saturday Message - Nick Young:** “What’s the goal \$12,000, that was 15-times your budget...I want to challenge you, if you go home and you don’t feel like you’ve sacrificed enough, you’ve still got time to change that thing...You pledged 15-times, 3 months ago, don’t back up on it...We need to sacrifice because that is the test of our hearts.”

\*It is the leadership that sets the 15-times contribution amount. If an individual has a problem with the amount that is set for them to give, they are challenged about their heart and the need to sacrifice.

**September, 1992 San Diego Church Revival - Marty Fuqua:** “Many of your church aren’t even tithing in your regular contribution. I mean, basic bottom line, what every young Christian should be challenged to give is a tithe, a tenth of all they make. And many of you in this church today aren’t even doing that.”

“You’re going to have good attitudes, and you’re not going to grumble and complain...You’re going to tithe. You’re basically going to be what every person ought to be that’s a disciple.”

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “We found the money to replace the mission fund that ordinarily the Indianapolis Church would supply, which is about \$240,000. That’s going to be supplied by another church...We want you to use the money that you would have used for the mission fund to save it, buy that airplane ticket and come on out and be with us in LA for that special weekend...We’ve been doing a lot of work in LA. We’ve also found about \$150,000 to give the Chicago Church, because that’s what all this has cost...I want you to know what’s being done in the kingdom for your sake. I don’t want you to feel bad about it, but I do want you humbled by it. Saying, ‘wow, you guys are sacrificing \$250,000 for the missions contribution and \$150,000.”

\*This is an example of how money collected specifically for one purpose is comingled for another within the ICC. Where did Kip find this money? Was there a ear-marking of any of this money for the poor?

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “Moscow, everybody said, ‘well, I think we need to evangelize it. Bro, someone needs to go. You’d do a good job. By the way, we don’t want to give any money to you. It’s all spent.’ I said, ‘okay, we’ll take care of it out at LA.’”

“I believe that my greatest temptation as a disciple is the temptation of the normal life. To be, quote, ‘just like everybody else.’ You know, I look at our movement, and I see the radicalness ebbing away into normalcy. I remember Al Baird coming to Boston - how radical. When the first special contribution came Al wanting God to know his heart and with the need for world missions, sold his house. Just like in the Bible - Acts 2, Acts 4. But today we’re not selling houses, we’re buying them. Now if you’re buying a house, how are you going to ask someone to sell theirs for a special missions contribution?... I’m telling you. We’re losing it. We’re looking like everybody else. We’re sounding like everybody else... Back in the early days of the ministry, I used to pay our young interns \$700 a month. And Bob and I thought we were being very generous. That’s about \$8,000 a year. And they were thrilled. They sacrificed. We had 10 to 15 brothers living together in Boston Towers. To go in the ministry was incredible. Just give me a few crumbs. Now we’ve got evangelists making \$80,000, and you are not grateful for helping, for what you have. You don’t have enough?”

\*According to Kip there are evangelists that made \$80,000 a year. According to documents obtained by this author, the top-level leaders in the ICC make much more than this amount when including benefits and other perks. McKean himself makes well over this figure himself. One would presume that he would himself take a cut in pay and demonstrate some badly-needed leadership in this area.

“(Malachi 3:2ff) I want to talk a bit here about two concepts. Number one, we gotta talk about this business of tithing. A few years ago, we started to institute in our churches the challenge to tithe when someone gets baptized. I think that’s great. Jesus even referred to tithing in MT. 23. He says, ‘Don’t neglect tithing,’ to the Pharisees. So, Jesus himself, he’s behind tithing. Amen!... But I think tithing, we’ve missed the whole point. Tithing was a way to support the Levites and the work of God there in the temple. As disciples under the new covenant, our challenge on the day we’re baptized is to give up everything we have.”

\*Kip is using Matthew 23 to support the ICC’s requirement of a tithe, yet Jesus came to do away with the old requirements of the law. Note Kip’s comments about “tithing becoming a law” in ICC churches later in this same speech.

“Now I think a few years ago, the call for everybody to tithe was an upward call of sacrifice. But here’s what’s happened. Over time, in a lot of our churches, tithing has become people’s excuse for not sacrificing. It has capped the giving. People aren’t being like Don Lee was back in the early days of Boston. We had a budget of \$600 a week when we started the Boston church on out. And if we didn’t make it, I’d go, ‘Don, brother, we need some extra money right here, amen?’ He was our biggest giver of 100 bucks... See, but we don’t have the spirit, because we’ve made it a law in our church. And the law kills at the end of it. And we’ve killed our giving. We’ve killed our sacrifice. We’ve killed our joy. I still think tithing is where people need to start off at. I’m not going to back off on that. But we’ve got to go back to our churches and kind of unteach the law right here and say, ‘Hold it man, that’s just where you begin. We want to tell you about sacrifice right now, because we’ve got a world to evangelize. You with me here, church?’”

“You’ve got to get back to sacrificial living. And that comes, then sacrificial giving. But giving is just something that comes out of the heart. See, I really believe we have so capped off our movement by just trying to do what’s asked from us. No one asked us to come here to the Philippines and have daily baptisms. Why? Because it had never been done before. But everybody was fired up when we did it, amen! We went to Moscow. We didn’t have any money. I appreciated the Flemings so much. Not only were Andy and Tammy selected, I believe by the Holy Spirit, but Andy comes from a very wealthy family. Andy gave several, over \$100,000 personally, to get the church started. You don’t think that God blessed that? God goes, ‘I like that guy. He’s sacrificial. I’m going to open the floodgates of heaven on Moscow right there.’”

\*Kip claims there was no money to begin the Moscow Church, yet the LA Church was encouraged to collect going from door-to-door “to feed the poor in Russia.” It has been reported that some \$3 million was collected for Russian benevolence.

“In LA, January with 154 disciples I had to go to the church and say, ‘let’s give a 25-times contribution.’ We wanted to start a Latin ministry that May. We had to give a three-times contribution. That Fall we had to give a 20-times contribution to Manila. The people that were there January 1, of 1990 - that year in special contributions

alone had to give a 48-times contribution. And our church grew by 700 disciples from 154. Why? Because God loves radicals who sacrifice, and He threw open the floodgates of heaven.”

**January 29, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Places in the Heart” - Al Baird:** “Our subject is not money, but the heart and sacrifice and heaven. However, money needs to be talked about, because it is connected to heart and sacrifice and heaven...With the new year we have new budgets in our churches. Everyone is encouraged to give more money, to sacrifice...In June the LA Church will take a special missions contribution at which time over \$2 million will be given to plant new churches to make God’s treasure available to everyone. Warning bells sound inside of me when I hear someone say, ‘Do I have to tithe?’ or ‘Do I have to give a certain amount to special contribution?’

\*Did Al not say it was “wrong” for leaders to “call someone to obey...exact amount of giving?”

**“The Grace of Giving” - Marty Wooten:** “What should our attitude be when our leaders call us to deeper levels of commitment and sacrifice?”

**June 25, 1995 LA Bulletin; “The Right Stuff” - Al Baird:** “Special contribution given the first week of June, a total of \$3.3 million was given to expand the borders of God’s Kingdom around the world (by the LA Church). This is the largest one-time missions contribution given by any church of which we are aware, anytime, anywhere.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “But how can you say you love the ministry? How can you dare say you love God, if you’re not spending hours, and hours, and hours with him every week. I put before you that you’re either deceived, or you’re a liar. That you’re either into preaching for the prestige, or the power, or simply to collect the paycheck, and that scares me.”

“We’re having about 6,000 at church (LA) right now (fall, ’94). Contribution was about \$130,000 a week. By the end of next year, I want the LA Church to have, every Sunday morning, 10,000 at church. I want our contribution to be \$200,000 every week. I mean, people were excited. Our people love radical preaching.”

“I’m telling you in the movement, we have got a fear of prison. Now I appreciate all the administrators that want to keep us out for reasons that are wrong. Jesus went to prison on trumped up charges of tax evasion and subversion to a nation. The Apostles all went to prison. Now if you’re gonna reduplicate what Jesus did and the Apostles, you think you’re going to do better so you escape going to prison?”

\*Is Kip preparing the leaders to be in prison on “trumped up charges of tax evasion.” Or is he setting in their minds that if any leader is imprisoned it would be under false charges?

“But you know something? I’ve heard some murmuring about our spending a little too much money on the HOPE Teen Corps. Can you put a price on changing people’s lives?”

“Preaching takes money. 1 Corinthians 9, some of you have failed to appreciate this one, verse 9. ‘For it is written in the Law of Moses: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain. Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?’ The Bible teaches it’s right and fine to be a full time paid preacher, Amen. And as Roman 10 says, ‘how can they believe unless a preacher is sent.’ And sending takes money...In the first (not understandable) we’ve grown about 20% this year, but our contribution has only grown 10. In the end, what that means is that it’s going to slow down in growth, because you see, the purpose of the contribution increases, it’s not to put pressure on your people, but it’s to hire more people to sustain the growth. See, you gotta understand that, and you gotta teach that to the church. You gotta say, ‘Listen, I gotta teach you to go beyond tithing, and we gotta go to sacrifice. Sacrifice so other preachers can be hired, young interns. So that preachers can be sent. So we can evangelize every nation. Are you with me here church? The people need to know why we’re asking to increase, and you see, a lot of times you preachers don’t even know yourself. If you understand that the growth is going to stop unless you increase the giving at the same rate you increase the membership then you’re not going to push, because you think it’s a burden to the people. Giving should be a joy, Amen!”

\*So is Kip advocating “pushing” people to give sacrificially? Is tithing not enough anymore? Again, it appears that the ICC leadership is increasing the requirements of salvation. Individual leaders are not able to determine what their congregation is able to handle. This is one of the reasons Ed Powers had issue with the LA leadership mandating what would be sent to the LA Church for the missions contribution. It was a burden to the church in Indianapolis, and Ed, as Lead Evangelist, disagreed with top-level leadership. This was unacceptable, and Ed and many staff members in Indianapolis were marked for their disagreements.

“I want to talk for a moment about some things that have concerned me in the movement, and that’s, what we’ve got to do is guard against the personal love of money, greed. I’m very concerned about some of the life styles that I’ve seen. And if you feel a twinge of guilt, that’s not me that’s the Holy Spirit. I think some of our rents have become exorbitant. I think that buying homes, one needs to think long and hard about. I think we need to look at how many clothes and how many suits we have. Let me tell you something, a brother comes to church about every other week with a different suit, a different set of clothes, or a sister. I’m concerned. That’s not a matter of look sharp, that’s a matter of greed. I’ve heard people being discontent about their pay, and it may be that in some cases you’re paid to low, but the Bible says in Hebrews 13, ‘you be content with what you’re paid, and you be grateful.’ When I started preaching, when I was right out of school. I made \$8,000 a year, and that was for everything. Then about a year later, I got this hugmongsous raise, and that was to about \$13,000. I thought I was really cranking. I was grateful, that I just got to preach, and somebody gave me some money to do what I loved best...If you weren’t paid to be the preacher, would you be the preacher? Why do you do it? For the love of money, or for the love of God? Our Middle East brothers are doing it for the love of God.”

\*Kip’s rent is \$2,500 per month. He lives only 3 blocks from the ocean. Yet, Al states that he lives “modestly.” See the section in this document on Kip’s family.

**September 17, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Nelson Mandela Receives First Annual Hope Unity Award”**

“Accompanying the award is a two-year \$50,000 graduate scholarship to the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania...President Mandela will select a South African student as recipient of the scholarship...The Gempels secured the scholarship and Steve (Johnson) raised the money to fund it...Dr. Mark Ottenweller, Director of HOPE for the Poor in South Africa, diligently coordinated the arrangements with Mr. Mandela’s office.” This award was presented on August 10, 1995.

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; “1995 Firsts”** “Special Missions Contribution over \$3 million.”

**January 28, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Glory” - Al Baird:** “I am concerned about the number of selfish decisions that are being made in the Church today. Disciples commit to place the Kingdom above personal priorities (Matt. 6:33), but I see people making moves based on better pay rather than Kingdom needs. I see disciples grumbling because they feel they should have a “higher-powered” discipler. Brothers and sisters, God’s modern-day Kingdom has grown so phenomenally because we have sought to bring glory to God. For it to continue to grow we must keep and increase our focus on God and self-denial; he will give us all the glory we need.”

\*Some disciples must be breaking the policy that Kip spoke about in 1992, “that no one moves out of LA.” The Kingdom needs have to do with doing what one is told by their discipler.

**March, 1996 ICC Home Page** “Donations from members support the work of the church. Each member, except when financially unable, is expected to give sacrificially - generally at least 10% of his/her income. In addition, most churches have a special once-a-year contribution for world missions in which members are asked to give an additional amount, about 3% of their income. All churches with more than 500 members are expected to be audited periodically by outside and respected accounting firms.”

“HOPE Worldwide is supported in part by the volunteer manpower and financial donations of the ICC...As a result of their unselfish giving, HOPE has grown from three projects and a \$600,000 budget in 1991, to 75 projects and an \$8 million budget today. HOPE’s projects span six continents and 30 nations and are as diverse as the people we help.”

\*This is the ICC’s public spin on a certain portion of their finances. Is what they communicate to the outside different than what they communicate on the inside?

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “When we took the team on over there (Moscow), there were 17 of us. There was no money in the Kingdom. The LA Church just scrimped and saved and yes, we have a Kingdom kind of collection every year, but there was not any money that year. So the Lord put upon our hearts in Moscow, we just gotta do it.”

\*Kip claims, “there was not money that year.” According to Boston’s reports there was \$1.4 million collected in special contributions, from the Boston members alone. Each movement church had separate special contributions, New York, Chicago, San Diego, Atlanta, and other. There would have been millions collected in 1991. As well, the amount collected from LA’s door knocking efforts.

“I’ve been around the church for a while, you give contribution every week. Then you’ve got the HOPE collection every Sunday. And then you’ve got the special. I mean it’s really special. And I’m told that the Sydney Church like most of the churches has a 16-times multiple for the Kingdom, in other words, you put the 16-times into the Kingdom pot, that helps us evangelize everything. And divide between the World Sectors. And there is a 4-times multiple for the Sydney Church...And you know if you’ve been around a while, you go, ‘well, here’s another contribution...What does the money do? The money that’s collected on Sunday for HOPE, the weekly collection, the special? Well, you saw HOPE Worldwide, you saw the smiles of those little kids eating ice cream right there...What are we talking about with HOPE? Souls, people going to heaven for eternity.”

“You know what it took to build a church in London? People like the Bairds, who sold their house. You know what it took to build a church in places like New Delhi, India? Sisters giving up their engagement rings. You know what it took to build a church...the largest in the history of the nation of Japan? It took little kids, yes I’m saying little kids, that were fired up because their mom and Dad were fired up about the Missions Contribution...I still remember the first time we got the kids involved. I said, ‘Olivia, what are you going to do?’ She says, ‘well, the most important thing to me is my doll collection. I’m gonna sell half of it.’...But you know the special contribution is fun...Getting rid of junk if fun.”

\*Does Kip believe that his daughter’s sacrifice was nothing but junk? He and Al “push” their members to sacrifice their most prized possessions, and then belittle the sacrifice.

“I told the church in LA, we have about the same multiple you do, I’m fired up this year especially because of Jerusalem. And all of us are giving, and I said, ‘ask your evangelist, I pledge to give 5-times over, the asked multiple.’ It’s so ridiculous if we think, ‘what’s the bare minimum I can get by with...I want to challenge you. challenge you with the example of LA, challenge you with the example of Russia, challenge you with the example from my life and say, ‘listen, I’m not gonna give this minimum 20-times. I’m going to go way beyond the minimum and make sure that Canberra hears the Word of God. Make sure Jerusalem hears the Word of God.”

\*Kip uses his giving as an example, but he gives what he is paid by the member’s sacrificial giving. Is that not a paradox?

**June, 1996 San Francisco Bulletin; “Specialty Ministries”** “Since 1993, the San Francisco Church has continually grown in its sacrifice. Our weekly contribution has gone from \$43,442 to \$68,703 and a per member giving of \$32 to \$38...In 1995 we blew away our \$850 thousand goal by raising over \$1.3 million, and in 1996 we exceeded our \$946 thousand goal by raising \$1.6 million. Some of the money from these Special Missions Contributions were used to plant new churches like Fresno and the Monterey Bay Sector.”

\*Only some of the money was used, what was the rest of the money used for?

**August 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Specialized Ministries”** “Through the generosity of a disciple, the young LA Church was able to buy the Upside Down Club in Hollywood to reach out to the entertainment capital of the world.”

\*There has been controversy about the purchase of this club, which is deeded at \$1.3 million.

**September 8, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Clean Slate” - Al Baird:** “To this day, we remain as *TIME Magazine* wrote about us on May 18, 1992, ‘unbesmirched by financial or sexual scandals.’”

“In the early years of the movement, teams were sent to countries with little knowledge of the laws of those countries. Innocent mistakes were made. When we discovered this, we went to the proper agencies of those governments and corrected mistakes with no problems...Under the guidance of Cecil Wooten, the control of the finances in each church was put under qualified, trained administrators who are disciples. In larger churches, annual financial audits are performed by independent auditing firms ...Our salary structure has been reviewed by independent firms as to whether salaries paid are ‘fair and reasonable’ compared to other non-profit organizations.”

\*The London Church neglected to pay payroll taxes for 7 years. The Inland Revenue raided their facilities and took their financial books. The London Church was then required to pay penalties of 291,000 pounds.

\*Why are those salaries not made public knowledge, even to the members of the ICC?

“We asked John Bringardner to become General Counsel for the ICC...John does an excellent job in helping the ICC remain in compliance with the laws in force where each church is located.”

**“Integrity in Administration” - Cecil Wooten:** “In the early days of the growth of the modern-day Kingdom and our first church planting, our unsophisticated administrators failed to recognize that we were not in conformance with our charters in some parts of the world. When we became aware of this, we worked with the authorities to right every situation, and we have corrected every unintentional error to their satisfaction. Realizing that many religious men and groups have been found guilty of misusing money, we are making every effort to ensure that all contributions are collected and used appropriately. For example, outside auditors are engaged to audit the financial records of our larger congregations. In LA, a complete 1995 audit report from Arthur Andersen LLP is being distributed to the members of LAICC with this copy of LA Story. The outside auditors for the larger congregations have found that our financial statements are in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. It is interesting to not that even our media critics have stated that there have never been any financial improprieties demonstrated in the church.

\*Information brought to us asserts that the Paris Church was also penalized \$40,000 for not paying employment taxes during the entire period of time Randy McKean was leading the church there, and that the Central London Church of Christ also was penalized for failure to pay taxes as well.

**October 6, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Matter of the Heart” - Al Baird:** “The HOPE Youth Corps chose nearly 200 committed teens to work this summer in HOPE projects in India, Jamaica, Romania, Mexico, Ivory Coast and Hong Kong.”

**“HOPE Youth Corps: Lives Changed Through Service”** “This summer, 186 committed teens were selected from the ICC to participate in the 1996 HOPE Youth Corps. They served for two weeks...Bangalore; Kingston; Bucharest; Mexico City; Abidjan; and Hong Kong.”

“Following the huge success of the 1996 HOPE Youth Corps, next year 100 teen disciples will be selected from around the world through the World Sector Leaders of the ICC to participate in the 1997 HOPE Youth Corps...The first HOPE Campus Corps will be formed in 1997.”

**December 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; “The Heart of a Servant, Cross Examination” - Maryann Rose:** “In a continuing effort to do what is right in the eyes of God and men, the ICC consulted our outside legal counsel, attorney George “Chip” GrangeII of the Gammon & Grange Law Firm in Washington, DC, a leading authority on legal matters involving churches.”

\*How many “outside” legal advisors does the ICC retain? As well, they employ their own legal staff; John Bringardner is General Counsel for the ICC.

## THE MOTHER CHURCH

**October 22, 1987 Southeastern Leadership Conference, Atlanta - Wyndham Shaw:** “I do believe it (Boston) has become the Jerusalem or Antioch of the 20th century in world evangelism.”

**June 26, 1988 Boston Bulletin; "McKean Becomes Missions Evangelist" - Kip McKean:** “God made it obvious that we should shift the emphasis of our ministry from Boston to a small number of lead couples and the key pillar churches they serve, thus following the pattern of Paul's role in the first century. In turn, the Elders and I have asked Tom Brown to become the lead evangelist for the Boston church...We will continue to live and make "our home" in Boston. We look forward to continuing to disciple the Browns, the Elders and their wives and grow ever closer as friends...This church is truly the Jerusalem of God's modern day movement.”

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** “Though there can be no single "greatest" church, for we are all one body, the Boston Church is the Jerusalem of God's modern-day movement.”

**Sept. 24, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Like Men Sent From God" - Nick Young:** “Boston is the Jerusalem of the movement.”

**May 6, 1990 Boston Speech - Kip McKean:** “The Boston Church is not just any church. It is the Jerusalem of God's modern day movement.”

**Spring/Summer 1991 Discipleship Magazine; News Section:** “God has started another Jerusalem for another generation.”

**July 14, 1991 Boston Bulletin:** “Since our goal is to see churches of 1,000 and 10,000 all over the world, the Kingdom need the Boston Church to be the model church...with this in mind the Randy McKean's were sent back to get Boston back on the cutting edge.”

**October 20, 1991 Boston Bulletin; "Our Field" - Randy McKean:** “Pat, along with Elena McKean, pioneered and led the great women's ministry which became a model for the whole world.”

**August, 1992 Boston Leadership Conference; "The Super Church" - Kip McKean:** “The Super Church was a part of the New Testament mindset...But the thing that happened in Rome is there were little groups, dare we say sectors, that had their own independent leaderships. They were not autonomous, by any ways or means. We're all in the Lord, we're all under the authority of the Lord, we're all under the authority of the Lord, and we're all under the authority of our leaders, whoever disciples us in the Lord.”

\*The new model is now the LA Church.

**March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech - Kip McKean:** “We've been praying for the Lord to open up the right doors so we could have an incredible work in the Middle East. Particularly a work that can be our, if you will, our kinda mother church there, our Antioch for the entire Middle East.”

“Come be with us in LA...to be able to really see what God is doing around the world in His movement.”

**February 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Cry Freedom" - Al Baird:** “But Kip McKean turned the LA Church into a model for growing big churches. Since 1994, LA has been the largest and fastest growing Church in the Kingdom. Now it is approaching a Sunday attendance of 10,000. With LA leading the way, the 1,000 member Churches have about the same growth rate averaging as the Kingdom overall.”

**September 8, 1996 LA Bulletin; "The Moscow Church" - Tammy Fleming:** “With the example of the LA Church out in front of us, and the invaluable encouragement and discipling of the McKean's.”

## MARRIAGE/DIVORCE

**Sept. 4, 1988 Boston Bulletin - Kip McKean:** “There has never been a divorce in all the years of the Boston church.”

**May 14, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Al and Gloria Baird to Lead Boston" - Kip McKean:** “From time to time people ask me the reasons that there have been no divorces in the one hundred marriages in the Boston Church since its inception ten years ago.”

**June 11, 1989 Boston Bulletin; "Ten-Year Report" - Kip McKean:** “There has never been a divorce from a marriage in the Boston church!”

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “With the hundreds of weddings in our churches around the world, we have never had a divorce with couples who have remained faithful to God and his church in any of our congregations. The Bible teaches that a Christian cannot initiate a divorce except in the case of adultery or being deserted (Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 7:15).”

\*This is an extremely tortured and qualified statement. There have been divorces in marriages within the Boston movement.

**January, 1993 UpsideDown Magazine; “Who’s Brainwashing Who?” - Roger Lamb, Tom Jones, Declan Joyce:** “Divorce among members is so rare there is really no way to talk about a divorce rate.”

\*Is this an admission of divorce taking place? Divorce being rare but true.

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “It is appalling to me how much time is spent counseling leader’s marriages. I’m all for helping people. I met Gordon (Ferguson, Elder/Teacher, Boston church) last night. There’s not enough discipling going on. But I think there’s too much talking going on. There’s not enough breaking out the bible and saying to a woman that has emotionally quit on her husband. Listen, God hates divorce. Whether you want to officially get separated or not, you’re breaking your covenant with God, lady! And brother, if you’re treating your wife this way, you are messing up with God. This is the wife of your youth. This is the person you have loved more than any other person in your whole life. And now look what Satan’s done to your heart.”

“I’ve just gotten to the point with marriage problems, I’ll listen. Listen to one side, listen to the other. And basically I go, ‘now would you two cut it out?’ I mean, same thing is true of my young children, Shawn and Eric, they get into a little bit of a rumble now and then. ‘Eric did this,’ and ‘Shawn’s annoying me.’ ‘Nope, he’s annoying me.’ No, you’re annoying me right now. I said, ‘So guys would you shut up. I’ve had it. Now hug each other.’”

“Some of you just gotta get ticked off like God and the prophets and say I hate divorce. These marriage problems are bemoaning us. Stop acting like children and love one another. It’s just that simple...There’s going to be some sin. Now stop being so doggone surprised about it. And you repent of your sin; he repents of his sin. You forgive him; he forgives you, and now let’s go to bed and have a good time. Amen! Now, let’s go.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Frontier Ministries”** “In 16 years in God’s modern-day movement, there has never been a divorce between disciples who remain faithful to God.”

\*The ICC has had to qualify their statement, because there have been divorces among members of the ICC. When a couple is divorced, at least one of the partners ends up leaving or being asked to leave the ICC. Anyone who is not a member of the ICC is not “faithful to God” and is no longer considered a “disciple.”

**November 5, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Father of the Bride” - Al Baird:** “One of the great miracles is that of the hundreds of disciples who have married other disciples, none have divorced so long as both remained faithful to the Father.”

**November 5, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Father of the Bride” - Al Baird:** “A new chapter is being written in our young modern-day Movement of God - an emphasis on shepherding and keeping the saved saved...One thing is already clear from my early research on what keeps people faithful: disciples who are married to disciples have a significantly lower fall away rate than do single disciples.”

“Leaders need to give much more attention to disciples who are over thirty years old and still single. Any single disciple who wants to marry should be assisted in creative ways to make his/her dream become reality.”

\*The ICC continues to keep those who are deemed “unspiritual” from marrying those who are in positions of leadership. Many couples have been rebuked for staying together against advice, and any marriage that takes place outside of leadership approval is unaccepted as Godly.

**“How Disciples Stay Married” - Roger Lamb:** “Happy Anniversary to the first couple married in the Movement - Marty and Christ Fuqua... We have never had a divorce between two disciples who met and were married in the church and remained faithful to God.”

\*There have been hundreds of couples married within the movement prior to the Fuqua wedding which took place on October 12, 1981 in Boston. This is a revision of history. What about the wedding of Kip and Elena McKean, which took place on December 11, 1976?

**March, 1996 ICC Home Page/WWW; F.A.Q. Section:** “Incredibly, there have been no divorces among those married in the ICC, when both spouses have remained faithful members of the church.

**Only You Section - Al Baird:** “One of the greatest miracles is that of the hundreds of disciples who have married other disciples, none have divorced so long as both remained faithful to the Father.

## MINISTRY AS THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE CAREER CHOICE

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “We’re afraid to call our young people into the ministry. ‘Well, whatever you want to do, you know this is a kind of personnel...’ Jesus didn’t do that to Peter and the gang. He said, ‘listen, would you bag the boats, would you leave your nets?’ He didn’t say please. And they went immediately. See, our problem is we’re trying to sweet talk people into the ministry. What you gotta say is, ‘Bro, you’re the most talented guy I’ve got. You know, you’ve got a lousy heart at the moment, but that we can deal with. You need to repent. You’re talented. You’ve given up everything to God, now let’s get going. Let’s start training for the ministry... Why do people wrestle with going into the ministry? I mean, how you live your life is not an issue, what role you have...(tape ends)...’

\*What does an individual who is “talented,” but not interested in ministry have to repent of? Kip is comparing his pressuring people to go into the ministry to that of Jesus calling the twelve disciples.

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “Let me tell you something, if you don’t love the ministry, repent! Or get out of the ministry, because you’re not representing Jesus Christ...But how can you say you love the ministry? How can you dare say you love God, if you’re not spending hours, and hours, and hours with him every week. I put before you that you’re either deceived, or you’re a liar. That you’re either into preaching for the prestige, or the power, or simply to collect the paycheck, and that scares me.”

“We need to revive awesome women’s ministry, amen. So the challenge is we need some women heroes, but women heroes will not come unless they see women publicly speaking, and then the five talent women will say, ‘I want to be a women’s ministry leader.’”

**October 8, 1995 LA Bulletin; “The Family Grows” - Al Baird:** “I remember well the day in Boston when I encouraged Javier to give up his successful career with IBM to enter the full-time ministry.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “Thank you Father for the incredible Worldwide Women’s Ministry.”

“You know, there isn’t even a lot of people wanting to go into the ministry. Some people go in the ministry, and they quit...We would have some tough things happen in the church with one of our ministers.”

“We’re trying to help some of those young people be adopted like little Nathaniel, so they can grow up in Christian homes. You know what happens when you grow up in a Christian home like Doug and Joyce (Arthur’s)?...You not only become a disciple, you become a trained evangelist in the Kingdom of God...I guarantee you Nathaniel is absolutely going to be an evangelist.”

\*June 16, 1996 LA Bulletin quotes “God led them (Arthurs) to Nanthanael, an eight year old boy who had grown up on the streets of India.”

“You get so fired up that the most exciting opportunity ever possible offered to you, would be to go into the full time ministries, so you can help with the completion of the evangelism of Australia.”

\*Kip is very concerned that more people enter full-time ministry, or it will effect the reaching of his goal to “evangelize the world in this generation.” The goal is a very noble one, yet men and women who are not certain that ministry is for them should not be pressured into such a decision by a leader who claims to know God’s will for their life.

## ACADEMICS/JOB PERFORMANCE

**April, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; "Revolution Through Restoration" - Kip McKean:** “Contrary to what our critics have said, we have always stressed excellence in the life of a disciple including academics and job performance. (Para. 45)”

\*There is a marked decrease in high school and university graduates in the Boston Church in proportion to the increase in attendance. Evidence observed by leaders of the campus ministries in Boston shows a noted decrease in academic performance, with studies often being de-emphasized for the sake of church activities. In many cases it takes students 5 and 6 years to graduate instead of the usual four. Evidence to bolster McKean’s assertions has been requested several times, but has not been forthcoming.

**December 18, 1994 LA Bulletin; “Stand and Deliver” - Al Baird:** “Yes, our teens are disciplined to excel in their school work.”

## ICC VIEW OF DEATH

**January, 1992 UpsideDown Magazine; “Lose Your Life to Gain It” - Ron Drabot:** “Two brothers died shortly after they fell away because of relationships and career involvement’s. Like those who rejected the Kingdom because of their oxen and their honeymoon plans (Luke 14:19-20), these brothers walked away from the Kingdom.”

\*The ICC teaches that God punishes those who walk away from the ICC.

**July 3, 1994 Central Florida Church (Orlando) Speech; “Personal Righteousness” - John Porter:** “We don’t understand sometimes that sin is serious...Asa, he wasn’t prejudice either. The Bible says in verse 13, ‘all who would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel were put to death, whether small or great, man or woman. Hey, maybe you don’t agree with his method, but you’ve got to appreciate his conviction. He knew what was right. He knew the seriousness of doing what was right. You know, we need to have that standard for each other. Not of death, but bottom-line is this, if someone is not willing to do the will of God, he has no part in God’s church...We are dreadfully sinful...But when we’re confronted with our sin. We’re told what we need to do. If we don’t have a humble response, wanting to change, wanting to do what is right. We don’t have any business being here Because, see, we will pollute, lukewarmness will infiltrate the church. Impurity will infiltrate the church, and we will destroy God’s Kingdom.”

\*Is John saying such an individual would be better off dead?

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “If I’m going to be sending people to places they don’t want to go in their flesh, places they can get diseases, physically hurt or even killed, then I will put myself and my family on the front lines first.”

“You’ve got to talk about heaven and you’ve got to talk about Hell. Let me tell you something, when you start talking about heaven and Hell and where people are going to spend eternity, it’s going to shake up, but it’s going to inspire the good-hearted in your congregation.”

**August, 1995 Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “The Apostles all went to prison. Now if you’re gonna reduplicate what Jesus did and the Apostles, you think you’re going to do it better so you escape going to prison?...I think there is a fear in our fellowship of radicalness, to the point that leads to prison and death.”

**August 13, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Frontier Ministries”** “In the first century, world evangelism cost the tears and the lives of the disciples. They freely shed the tears of sacrifice, rejection and persecution. Today the cost is the same.”

**December 17, 1995 LA Bulletin; “Doing Great Things for God Meets Opposition” - Doug Jacoby:** “In our own century, religious persecution has continued. In many places in the world, including Uganda, the Philippines and China, denominational leaders and missionaries have been brutally treated or killed. As the discipling churches have uncompromisingly preached the radical message of Jesus, more and more controversy has developed and disciples around the world are now experiencing various forms of oppression.”

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** “We are willing to die for you and your Son in His mission.”

\*Kip believes that members of the ICC will eventually see death for their cause. It is disconcerting to watch Kip prepare his followers, in imitation of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christian, to face this form of persecution at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

“In Tashkent, two of our evangelists have been jailed. That’s in the old Soviet Union...I want to tell you something, the commitment of true disciples is frightening to the lost world. Our brothers and sisters around the world are not just ready to spend their lives, but to give their lives. Why? Because their eyes are not fixed on what is seen, but what is unseen.”

“But there are such tragedies like...Erica Kim’s brother, Hiroshi. He was in a car wreck last year, and was killed instantaneously, you know why?...He never responded to the Gospel...Why did it happen? So that the work of God, the Power of God, and the Glory of God would be revealed in Masayo’s (Hiroshi’s wife) life. (She later was baptized after studying with the Kim’s.)”

## KIP’S FAMILY

**October 10, 1991 Boston Bulletin - Kay McKean:** “Elena became a disciple August 8, 1973, as a freshman at the University of Florida. This is where Kip and Elena met, fell in love and were married.”

**August, 1994 Manila World Leadership Conference; “Malachi: God’s Radical Demand for Remaining Radical” - Kip McKean:** “One of my sons, my youngest Eric, has gotten into tennis a little bit. By the way, he played the number two Filipino in his age group, beat him this week and everything. One of the most important tennis matches of the sectionals, this is where the kids largely receive their rankings. In the first round, Eric won—huge match. Second round, he was up against an incredible kid, and he was getting demolished. I mean, he just got blown away. I’ll never forget, Eric came on up to me, and he’s a very simple child. He just came on up and he says, ‘Dad, did you leave me because I was losing so badly?’ I said, ‘What do you mean?’ I said, ‘I was sitting in the chair.’ He said, ‘No, I looked over and you were not there.’ And I go, ‘uh, yeah, I got up, son, because someone else came, and I wanted them to watch you. I was standing over at the side, but they never took the chair. And I just

decided to keep on standing. No, I didn't leave you because you were doing so badly. No, I was there all the time.”

\*Does this comment from Eric indicate his understanding of how important it is for him to perform well to receive his father's acceptance?

“You know, I'm real thrilled about my three kids. Olivia is 13, Shawn is 11, and Eric is 9. There in here today, so you know I won't lie up here, you know, I can't slide anything by. But I appreciate so much the Bairds and the Gempels always having been in our lives. You know, if Al notices something, he'll say something to me. I appreciate that. Not often at the time, but I appreciate it later. You know, Olivia and Shawn have always done great in school - straight A's. Eric struggled. He liked sports better than school - happens. Well, couple years ago, not only did he like sports better than school, but he didn't want to do school at all, and he got to be deceitful, and not even bringing his homework home. It even got so bad, he had even lied to his teacher. Teacher caught him. Called me. Remember that son? (laughs from the audience) Let's just say we had a good talk in the upper bedroom. I said, 'we've got to do something radical.' We got a tutor for Eric every week. He had gotten to the point where he taught he was not smart. I said, 'son, you're smart. You're my son, you're smart.' (laughs from the audience) He worked with the tutor the last year and a half. This past year, Olivia all A's, no B's. Shawn all A's, no B's. Eric all A's, and no B's. (clapping) See, I believe excellence is something you build inside of them.”

“We think spirituality happens. It doesn't. Worldliness happens. I remember a couple of years ago, Olivia didn't want to run for student council president. I said, 'honey, you can run.' 'Well, but my friends are running.' And I said, 'honey, they decided to run against you. You need to run. It's a great opportunity, because if you're the student council president, then you can influence other people. And you know, honey, you're a little too much of a follower. You've got to become more of a leader.' She ran, and she won...This past year, we moved down to a new place. And Shawn said, 'Dad, I've only lived here a year, I don't think I can run. People don't know me. I'm kind of new.' I said, 'Son, I thought that was what you wanted to be is student council president.' 'Well, I did, but I don't think I can win.'...He tried, and he won student council president...I said, 'Olivia, isn't that great? You're a student council president. Shawn's a student council president. Eric, what do you think about it? In a couple years it's going to be your turn.' He goes, 'no problem, Dad. No problem.’”

“They're involved in tennis right now. Is tennis so they can be stars? No. Is tennis so they can have a college scholarship? No. The purpose of tennis is so they can reach out to other people. When they get to junior high, and they get to high school, I want to have kids that, to the degree they can be, they can be cool kids in the eyes of the world. That way, they can bring more people to Bible Talk. And they can win more souls for Jesus. You know, I'm really proud of the kids. They've just gotten into tennis in the last several months, and they've done some spectacular things. All three of them have won tournaments. But you see what really was awesome is this past June the guy that coaches them, who was number 88 in the world, Dan Soles was baptized into Christ. Is that not flat awesome? (clapping) Danny's here, I'm going to have Danny stand up again. Danny you want to stand up? (clapping)”

“Generation X - is it going to be extravagant, materialism, trying to clothe your kid with all the clothes you can buy for them? Or are they going to define it with extraordinary sacrifices? Now they may learn the sacrifices in athletics, or they may learn the sacrifices in school. But they learn to sacrifice, and the rewards of radicalness...Are our kids when they become leaders, and evangelists and women's counselors in the kingdom. Are they going to define Generation X as excuse making about why it can't be done. Are they going to define it by expending every breath for Jesus? I want my kids and your kids to define Generation X as Generation excellence.”

**August 1995, Johannesburg Leadership Conference; “Preach the Word” - Kip McKean:** “We're defining Christianity. But I say to you today, it's time to define the X in Generation X. I'm telling you that it's going to be our young men and our young women that define the X.”

“In tennis, all the kids are ranked in Southern California. Eric made the zonals, which means he one of the best kids his age in all the Western US. They're looking at him next year to be able to go the Nationals. Olivia, well she also made Varsity Cheerleader, has someone going into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. And you say, 'Well, that's great your family does that. I guess it's a McKean thing.' It's not a McKean thing, it's a Jesus thing. You say, 'Well, I wasn't one who

excelled.' Well, praise God, we caught you so you don't influence your children. That's discipling. Are we excelling for the sake of excelling? No."

**September 17, 1995 LA Bulletin; "Hope Youth Corps - House of love"** "Impressed with her (Olivia's) desire for excellence, a relative offered financial assistance to enable her to attend The Brentwood School, a prestigious preparatory school in LA. Olivia immediately earned a spot on the varsity cheerleading squad and the varsity tennis team as an incoming freshman."

\*Sean is also now attending the Brentwood School.

**January 1, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Great Expectations" - Al Baird:** "So many positives can be listed about the McKean's, but the character of the children perhaps says the most about the parents. They have Olivia, 14, Sean, 13 and Eric, 11. Olivia is a beautiful young Christian woman. She was baptized a year ago in the Pacific Ocean. Last year she was the 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up for the Miss Pre-Teen Pageant of Southern California and was also voted "Most Likely to Succeed" by her 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. Now in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, she is the only freshman to be selected as Varsity Cheerleader."

"Sean is a 7<sup>th</sup> grader. Last year he was student Council President and the all-star point guard on the city basketball team. This year he is the leadership board president at his school. The most exciting thing in Sean's life right now is that he is studying to become a Christian."

"Eric, like both Olivia and Sean before him, is student council President. Last year he starred on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade city basketball team as a 4<sup>th</sup> grader! He, like his brother and sister, makes straight A's."

"Eric, Sean and Olivia are all ranked tennis players in Southern California and have won a number of trophies. Eric is ranked 29<sup>th</sup> in the 12 year olds in Southern CA. Olivia plays on her high school Varsity team that just won their league and state championships. She was the number three singles player in her entire league with a record of 19-2."

"The McKean's consider their children their most important disciples...Kip and Elena believe in leading by example. They rent a modest three bedroom home and drive a Honda van. Since they teach personal fruitfulness, they nearly always have visitors with them on Sundays. Through the kid's tennis they have converted."

\*The McKean's rent a small house in Manhattan Beach, California. They live 3 blocks from the ocean, and their rent for this "modest home" is \$2,500 per month.

**February 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; "Cry Freedom" - Al Baird:** "He (Kip) has just baptized Bruce, whom he met through his son Eric's tennis...Congratulations to Sean McKean. Kip and Elena's 13 year old son. His parents baptized him in the Pacific Ocean on January 21<sup>st</sup>...and Olivia McKean just baptized her best friend from Junior High."

**May 5, 1996 LA Bulletin; True Power & Freedom for Women" - Elena Garcia-McKean:** "I am deeply grateful for the women that God has used to help me unlock my heart, especially my older sister, Carmen, Women's Ministry Leader and Elder's wife in the San Diego Church. This new-found level of intimacy began when Carmen studied the Bible with me and I was baptized at age seventeen."

\*Carmen and Elena were both baptized in the early days at Crossroads (a mainline Church of Christ). Was the "new-found intimacy" prevalent at Crossroads when Elena was 17? I believe so.

"It was refreshing to study the Bible with Patti Aiken, a high-powered business woman who is married and a mother of three. (The wife of Bruce.)

\*Bruce and Patti Aiken have since left the ICC.

**May, 1996 Conference, Sydney - Kip McKean:** "About 11 years ago we went to the Boston Children's Hospital with our son Sean. And the doctor's examined him, and they said he has a very severe birth defect...He's going to have to have a major operation, a whole body cast...Years passed, and Sean became a young man, and he was told

by the doctors, you can't play contact sports... (This is why he chose tennis.) Well, Lord would have it, we bounced around from coach to coach; and finally in 1994 we found a coach. His name is Danny Saltze. He was well known in the tennis world, ranked number 88 in the world at one time. He won the New Zealand Open in the Late '80's...Before you know it, we were in a Bible study, and 6 months later Danny was baptized into Christ...I'm beginning to see right now why God allowed Sean to have that deformity...It was so the Glory of God could be revealed in his life, and that Danny would become a Christian. A few months later Danny reached out, along with us to a woman tennis pro, she was ranked very highly in the tennis pro tour and Abigail Belaina was baptized into Christ. Last year another man who was a tennis pro, 2 time all American on the pro tour; he was baptized, Terry Davis became a Christian”

“The kids have gotten quite good all of them are ranked...Eric's ranked in the top 10 in Southern California...So a lot of times we take him to seminars, and what we try to do is we have Danny go with us, cause he's in the ministry right now. And he takes the kids along particularly Eric...(Playing in Johannesburg influenced a family to become Christians.) “

\*Kip is flying his children and their tennis coach from place to place with him all over the world. Is this modest living?

“Just about 3 months ago...this family was watching Eric play...Three weeks later Bruce was baptized into Christ, and at the Women's Day, Elena baptized Patty into Christ.”

“If Sean with his congenital defect can influence so many people directly and indirectly, what's your excuse?”

**August 18, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Excellence in Everything - McKean Family Workshop”** “Olivia (15), Sean (13) and Eric (11)...Sean, president of his student body and currently ranked 50 in Southern California boys 14 singles tennis...Eric ranked national tennis player for the 10 to 12 age group in Southern California...Olivia has excelled in tennis, ranking 50 regionally in girls 14 singles by the end of 1995, is an outstanding leader in her class and she has been personally fruitful on several occasions.”

**November 11, 1996 LA Bulletin; “Time Line”** “1994, Olivia Garcia-McKean baptized - first of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of the Movement.”

\*Summer McKean, Randy McKean's daughter and Olivia's cousin was baptized when she was 8 years old in S.C. in 1986, and was rebaptized in Boston after the Summer Conference in 1991. Olivia was not the first, Summer McKean appears to have been. It is telling that Kip places he and his family first, even when it goes against documented history.

# Chapter VI

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## In Their Own Words: Statements from ICC Leaders

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## In Their Own Words: Excerpts from ICC Speeches

**August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Kip McKean**

**Compiler's Note:** bold text and emphasis is attributed to the compilers. The cassette tapes by which these transcripts were generated are available upon request and/or for verification.)

Super Churches are of God... We are not a movement of men, we are **the** movement of God. There are no excuses, **excuses are inexcusable for not growing.** Let me just say this, one of the criticisms against us is well, not everything that grows is of God, I mean, there's McDonald's, there's even denominational groups, and that is a point well taken. But let me tell you something, my Bible teaches me that the church grew... Granted, not everything that grows is of God, but if it's of God it will grow, and **if it ain't growing, then the Spirit has departed.** For too long we've slipped into a bus ministry mind set of just baptize, baptize, baptize... **go in the front door, leave out the back door and you discourage people, and injure people.** Jesus didn't say go and baptize, he said, "go and make disciples and baptize them."

You can tell the spirit of a church the moment you walk in. I walk into a church, I know all I need to know about that minister. I walk into that church, and I know this is either a total reflection of this man's life, or he has lived such an atrocious life before the Lord, that this is a rejection of his life. Let me tell you something, your church is going to be just like you. If you're not evangelistic, they're not evangelistic. On the other hand, maybe you're harsh, then they will be just the opposite. They don't want to have any part of you. But if you're not godly, it will show. **You've got to take total responsibility for your church.** The Bible teaches right here, that it will grow through the Holy Spirit as long as you remain righteous.

How did people know that God was with us in Boston? It was the number of people that were coming to Christ here in Boston. The church will never rise above the spirituality of her leadership. The preacher's job is to inspire. The preacher's job is to convict! He can flat take them all on, and there's almost a glory in it, he says, "ok, come on... come on... we'll go for it, you are going to be evangelistic! Come on, come on, **I'll take anyone of you [sic] bad attitudes." I tell you when the preacher gets up like, I mean there is respect.** See, I believe that biblical preaching is like Jesus, he disturbed the comfortable and comforted the disturbed, he flat took them on.

**My goal has always been to have the biggest church wherever I've been. In Boston, do you realize the Boston Church is still the largest church in the history of all of New England?** It's the biggest that's ever been. **The problem is we stopped growing here, that's disgusting, it needs to change.** (Attendances of local L.A. churches) Say well, brother, your goal is to be the biggest in L.A. You betcha, we will glorify the name of the Lord... **So many of**

### Compiler's Notes

McKean firmly believes that the Boston Movement/ICC is not one church among many, or even several, that are saved, but "The Church, The Movement" of God, without any alternative on earth. Just about any abusive practice of the ICC flows out of this fundamental assumption of divine exclusivity. By McKean's own words, the "Spirit has departed" the ICC at the present time, due to the unimpressive growth statistics. McKean reveals his rather crude and mechanical presuppositions about the dynamics of spirituality: Growing Numerically=Blessing of God, Not Growing Numerically=Cursing of God. We wonder how he would rate the biblical figure of Jonah (whose preaching, flowing from the wrong motivation and with the wrong attitudes, resulted in the conversion of an entire city) versus that of Jeremiah (whose faithful preaching each day seemed to result in *fewer* followers). Faithfulness to God validates ministry, not mere numbers of adherents. The church should not be a spiritual pyramid-sales organization, as the ICC has been described. In secret statistics released only to World Sector Leaders, the ICC worldwide in 1992 saw 23,000 new members join, but 20,000 present members leave the ICC in the same year. This religious turnstile is reflected by the observation that the ICC chapters usually recycle themselves every 4 to 5 years. Generally, only ICC leaders stay in the organization for any long period of time. Al Baird admitted in 1995 that 2 out of every 3 new members leave the ICC in one year. If they are "the fastest-growing religious group in the world/nation/country", etc., then their claim is absolutely false—there is always a faster-growing group—the former members of the ICC.

What McKean does not mention in this speech is the manner in which he learns who of the membership has "bad attitudes." The minister is generally given information about specific members sins and "bad attitudes" and leaders routinely address member's faults and perceived shortcomings in public forums, a violation of ministerial ethics and legal confidentiality standards.

**you churches have set goals and failed so many times to make it, you've injured the faith of your people. You need to repent of that, set goals that you can make, blow out and build their faith. My goal is not 13,000...My goal is a church of 80,000 in Los Angeles.**

The Super Church was a part of the New Testament mindset. We need to have some convictions here, **we haven't been getting the job done.** The Bible says they did it, they did it by the Holy Spirit. We have that same Spirit, and we shall overcome...Some of your churches are so pathetic, they make Jesus nauseous. Now I backed off a little bit in my sermon right there. I didn't want to come on too strong just then. That's the kind of guy I am. Rev. 3...**I saw people last night not even taking notes. Let me tell you something bro., let me tell you something sister, that pencil better be moving today.** The Super Church was obvious...Revelation 2 and 3, Jesus spoke to, by sending his angels, to the seven churches of Asia. Now Asia was a just a little province in what we call Turkey today. Paul went to Ephesus, Chapters 18, 19 Acts, preached the word in Ephesus got into the lecture hall of Tyrannus, and in two to three years the word of God had spread to the whole of Asia, so Ephesus was the Pillar church for all the churches of Asia. How many churches of Asia did Paul have? Well, there were 7 key cities and there were 7 churches. Now lets theologially figure out here, how many churches should there be in a city?...You only need one church in one city like the Bible.

Romans Chapter 16...There was one church in Rome. There was a collective, overall leadership in the church. But the thing that happened in Rome is there were little groups, **dare we say sectors, that had their own independent leaderships. They were not autonomous, by any ways or means. We're all in the Lord, we're all under the authority of the Lord, and we're all under the authority of our leaders—whoever disciples us in the Lord.**

**When things went bad last fall for six months, I was feeling it, and I understood, because I'd been through battles before. The problem was not technique or nuts and bolts. The problem was with me, number one, and number two, the church had a spiritual problem. It's called sin...They've been abused? No they haven't forgiven when they've been wronged. They're flat bitter! They're in sin! They have malice, and they need to be rebuked! I am sick and tired of the way we've dealt with these people. People got demons in them and they need to come out, and they will come out with shrieks...I've got to get myself right. I repented before the church, but I got strong with the Lord. I redevoted myself to the Lord...I prayed a prayer I rarely pray, "Humble me, Lord", that is scary...I'm not stupid, so I try to stay humble. When I got sick, I'd been pushing myself in the flesh. **You getting sick all the time? You got a spiritual problem.** When I was sick I was on my back, God was saying, "Kip, here's your wake up call, get right with me."**

Secondly, I said, "I gotta get the people to be spiritual."... **I had to hammer on people a little bit, but they are learning the Bible.** See, there is a spiritual problem. Sometimes, even if you don't know all the ins and outs, just rebuke the sin you can figure out. The rest will work itself out. But if your church isn't growing, it's not because they don't know enough ministry, it's because there is sin in the camp. Mark my words. **I've got men that have their own independent churches, and I selected those men, because you've got to have the right guys on top...** We select a lot of people to be up front in our church services...And they know, you only get used up front if you are flat blowing it out spiritually, and if a minister ain't blowing it out spiritually, he ain't up front. Spiritual people! That's a ceiling to your ministry. We have too much inbreeding, you've got to get outside speakers. Let someone say something that you don't quite agree with. AMEN! That's a little gut check for you. You got so much inbreeding, that your faith is getting reduced and reduced and reduced. You've so convinced yourself you're right, because you've just got yourself telling you that. Paul says, "you compare yourself with yourself what point is that?" **I want Mike to come on in and kick our butts. "Mike, have at it!"**

**We have a policy, that hey, you don't move out of L.A.** What about jobs? You know, we believe in a God, a God that can get jobs...Why do people move for jobs? It's money, it's flat mammon. You are teaching your people it's ok to move for mammon. It isn't ok to move for mammon. It might work a hardship on them, move them into another family, they did in Acts 2. **I went back after telling the World Sector leaders that in May, and I go, "Gee, I hope we are really doing that." So I went to the Sector Leaders Meeting, "guys did we have any move-outs that we didn't plan to move out?" "No brother," "Oh good, I didn't lie, good, I feel good about that."** My family lived in Orlando; I could have left Boston, just left everybody kinda stranded up there and didn't get the Movement cranked. Go down and convert my family. No, I believe in a God that can get to Orlando, Florida.

**Let me just say something about reconstruction. Some of you guys, let me just lay it out, you flat didn't have a church of disciples till we did the cotton-picking' reconstruction.** Now remember that and flat get grateful. You got people from mainline, you got people from campus ministry, remember what was done. "Now, we had this church in here for 8 years"; no you didn't, **you had a group of some disciples, and some "yo-yo's" that you let in that you couldn't tell the difference between the rest of you.** Everybody wants to move back south, everybody wants to move out west, everybody wants to move ya ya ya, garbage! **God put you there in Boston, He put there in New York, He put your there in Charlotte, he put you there in Atlanta, he put you there in L.A., now crank! And you better get happy at the church he put you in.**

**We have a vertical authority. We do have a hierarchy. I'm sick and tired** [of ICC leader's saying], **"we don't have a hierarchy, we don't . . ."** **We do!** And so does every other religious group that I know of. Say, well how about the church of Christ, the independent Christian church, well you're right they don't, but **their largest church is about 100.** **We have lines of authority. I don't apologize for that,** now this is the final authority folks. When I wrote that *UpsideDown* article, I laid out what I felt about the Bible. Church of Christ background that a lot of you guys have said, and I don't have it by the way, **I'm not one of those people caught up in sentimentality toward church of Christ, Gordon.** The Church of Christ has said, "Oh, no creed but Christ, no book but the Bible," and their favorite is, "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent." In other words, **you must have authority, you must have it exactly in print to do what they do.** I thought about that for a long time, where does it say that in the Bible, it doesn't even say the word "Bible." I think I believe very different than that, **I believe that you should be silent where the Bible speaks, 'cause God's made it clear, and speak where the Bible's silent. In areas of opinion you're allowed to do anything.** One brother called me up and said, "bro, I don't know if you should put that into the article, cause that might open Pandora's Box." I've done that all my life! I said, "you know though—and it was a World Sector Leader—I said, bro, it needs to be in there because you know in the Bible it doesn't say world sector leader, but I believe it's fine to have a world sector leader, because there's nothing in the Bible that refutes it and a lot of principles that back it up." He goes, "good, well let's put it on in then." You say well that's, that would then mean that instrumental music would, oh no, bro. Oh bro, you've opened it up, the sacred cow. Just the kind of guy I am. **We have very clear lines of authority. I'm the Lead Evangelist, Elena is the Lead Women's Counselor, Marty is the Lead Associate Evangelist, he's the number 2 guy, Chris is the number 2 woman. Bruce is the number 3 guy as an elder/evangelist...But it's very clear in our church, the roles, we got the Evangelist, the Lead Evangelist and then we got the elder's decision-making group. Too many places have just elders in there now that have too much of a shepherding influence, we need elders. Too many places don't have elders yet, neither is good. We need**

### Compiler's Notes

Here, in McKean's own words, is the recommended pastoral approach for the ICC hierarchy. "Rebuke", "hammering on people", "kick our butts and "yo-yo's" are the inner terminology used by leaders to cynically describe both their treatment of and valuation of rank-and-file members. These words reveal the crude and mechanistic self-description of purported ministers of Christ Jesus, and they reveal far more than we could note the rather low regard the ICC leadership has for its own members.

McKean's comments about members not being able or allowed to move out of Los Angeles is manipulative, outside the realm of the Bible, and hypocritical, since thousands of ICC members have been relocated from other cities in the United States to artificially swell the ranks of the Los Angeles ICC membership. His comments about speaking before ascertaining the facts in this matter is not surprising for those who know Kip McKean's penchant for playing fast and loose with the truth.

For anyone who has ever been told that the ICC is "just a group of churches" or that "we don't have a hierarchy here", McKean admits (although only to leaders) the all-too-obvious: that the ICC is a pyramid-style structure with himself at the top.

elders. Bob and Pat, Al and Gloria, mean the world to me, that's why they're in the world sector leading group, to be my elders. I need 'em. You need them in your church.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"—Marty Fuqua**

Are we going to build a super church wherever you are? This would be the sheet that we would take the statistics on, everyone would have a copy of this, and Kip would read out the following 3 numbers. The first number that you would call out would be the members...The next column there is the actual growth for that week. And the next column would be the predicted increase, in other words, what are you predicting to increase the next week. Now we aren't saying how many baptisms are you expecting to have. This is how many are you actually increasing, **this involves baptisms, it involves restorations, it involves fall-aways, it involves move-ins and it means move-outs as well.** What are you predicting to increase?...Notice there in the actual column there, the Central Sector, Bruce and Robin have predicted an increase of 5, that's flat outstanding for a church of 181, and that ought to be a challenge for a lot of you that are relatively that size...Notice here the West Sector, really doing a great job aren't they? So far this year they've had a growth of 4, wow! Obviously in need of doing some things there, need to spruce that Sector up a bit. Growth of 2%, lousy...Notice the church has grown by 476, that's fantastic, that's an average of all the sectors of 33%, notice none of them are under 20%, that's fantastic, even our sectors that aren't keeping up with the others are doing fantastic

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"—Kip McKean**

The Bible teaches you need to boast in the Lord. Cory and I started the Cross and the Switchblade in October. I let him give you the details, but we got involved and through the time I was in Cross and Switchblade up until about May, look at the May statistics. We started with 88, we had 154 baptized disciples. Notice which sector had increased the most, numerically—Cross and Switchblade. Why is that? Well, **I was in there.** Cory was the workhorse, he did the lion's share of the work, I don't want to take anything away from that. God gave us the increase. Wasn't Kip, wasn't Marty; we were just watering and planting, but **I was in there. My ministry, things weren't right, we kicked some bottom, things weren't growing, we knew it was sin.** The lead guy better have a ministry that glitters...Which one grew the most percentage wise, 75%, pretty good when you're leading in both columns. You say, why is that? Cause **I was in there.** I'm not afraid to say that...Hey, the hottest ministry for the last 3 months has been Marty's. He's the one who got in the West and changed it. In 3 months time it's grown 25%, why, because Marty got in there...**There is no ungodly competition, we check our hearts.** I don't get down when somebody does better...I do think if you are the lead evangelist or the lead women's counselor, you better have the hottest show in town. And if you don't, how can your people respect you. No wonder you've got Absalom's on your staff.

From 8:30 to about a 9:15 we are in discipleship groups. Every member of our church is in a Bible Talk. They are expected to bring visitors every week. Everybody's expected to bring visitors every week! **They don't bring a visitor, we ask why.** Not pressure, I'm concerned about the soul, you're not fruitful, you're going to be sawed off the vine. The unfruitful Christian is the one that falls away...**Secondly, we do the contribution in the discipleship group.** You say, "well, won't everybody see what's happening?" Mhmm, hmm, mhmm, hmm, and we make sure they give their tithe, you say, "why do you do that?" Because the Bible says in Malachi 3, that if you don't tithe, you're robbing God, and we don't want anybody to go to Hell because they didn't, they robbed God. Say, that's awful hard line. You bet your booties its hard line. Someone doesn't give we ask why. **We know who didn't give by the end of discipleship group. Questions are asked. We have almost 100% giving in our church. Someone doesn't give they got some attitudes.** That discipleship group is what really knits us together.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"—Chris Fuqua**

**Our numbers have not increased, our numbers have dwindled in many cases down to nothing in our campuses.** And we need to go back with faith and with conviction that, that is where our young leaders are going to come from...We can't just direct it, we can't just put a good intern out there, but we've got to get personally involved to raise up these young leaders to replenish our churches.

**August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH" –Tom McCurry, Keith Rose, John Thorn**

(Tom) I kept reading the world stats and watching the big churches kind of bubble up and sink back, and bubble up and sink back, and it just seemed to me to be a spiritual issue, there is some barrier we've put on ourselves that has stopped our growth in these large churches...Companies do this all over the world, it's not a control issue, it's not a financial issue. It can be done, in fact it has been very smoothly. **Now, have we had to change out some deacons, yup. Some administrators, some of 'em can't do it, some of 'em freak out, to be honest with you. You just have to go through those kind of things. But it can be done.**

**August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Kip McKean**

John and Frances just recently moved to L.A. from Chicago. John's family sold their business, and it was John who gave the 2 million dollar gift to all the churches, and I appreciate that kind of sacrifice for giving to the church. Let me detail something, when I come before my sector leaders, they are the ones that control their money. **I do not. I have a central accounting that they pay a small amount every month to, to pay off little things at the office, but that's it.**

**They did not want to do it my way, and I did not put my will on them. Another mistake I made last fall was, last fall I thought we'd get \$40,000.00 for our budget, that's where my faith was at, it really was. Only problem is, the church wasn't there and we missed it, we missed week after week after week. I injured the faith of the L.A. Church. I really blew. I wasn't able to put my faith and my heart in there. Even in by January we came up with a budget of \$37,100, I was a little disappointed, but I knew that's just where the faith was, and we called upon the people to give their hearts, everybody tithe. We started making it, and every month we got it, so that each one of our sectors goes up a planned amount of increased disciples. It's moderate, about 8 disciples a month, and we figure when you get baptized you start paying. So the budget should go up. Every month it goes up in all of our sectors...Our budget is now almost \$48,000.00...There are churches in here that haven't changed their budget for two years. Not a problem of logistics or how we collect it. **So you better change. Everybody's accountable, that's a spiritual principle. Everybody better tithe, that's a spiritual principle. Problem is you got injured faith, you've got to go to them and ask for forgiveness, they gotta forgive you. See, they can get bitter out there. They got a problem with bitterness, they got a problem. They're not abused, they're bitter!** That guy, you gotta go to him and say, "Hey, I blew it, sorry." Let's all go back and we're going to flat make it.**

**Compiler's Notes**

For those who maintain that the ICC does not use fear, intimidation, coercion, and other pressure tactics to achieve its spiritual and financial goals, McKean's comments are illustrative (hence the inability of the average ICC member to either attend the meeting or acquire the information on this tape). McKean's reference to the biblical Absalom (who led a familial rebellion during the Old Testament Israelite monarchy under King David) demonstrates the almost paranoiac interpretation of any constructive opposing views (note his singling out Gordon [Ferguson, elder of the Boston ICC affiliate] as "being sentimental", that is, accommodating to other church viewpoints. Anyone who would think that there is really any constructive input made by lower-level leaders in reforming the abuses at the top of the ICC organization has never sat through one of Kip McKean's staff meetings.

Financing the far-flung operations of this international organization is a cash-intensive operation, and without the weekly contributions of its members, the ICC would fall apart. Hence the necessity for a continual pressure on the rank-and-file to give money. The stories told by many former ICC members about being repeatedly harangued, cajoled, and "hammered on" about their financial giving are not simply anecdotal, but from this message represent the standard operating policy of the entire ICC. The biblical imperatives about giving in secret without guilt or pressure from without advocated in several places by Jesus in the gospels, and followed faithfully and ethically by the early New Testament churches, has been replaced by a revenue-extraction agency that rivals the IRS in its attention to detail and capacity for inflicting retribution, to the most picayune detail. In several documented cases, members were "billed" for their contribution when they were out of town. One member in LA who decided to leave the ICC was told that she still "owed her contribution" to the group! When someone cannot give, he or she is told to borrow money from another member and owe it to the member, not the ICC. The insistence that a member tithe (which referred to the Old Testament practice of the Israelites giving 10% for the entire national maintenance and upkeep of Israel—roads, military, and the priesthood) is not found in the entire New Testament, and certainly should never be used as a prerequisite for membership in a church or for the salvation of an individual.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Bruce and Robin Williams**

(Bruce) I'll never forget the time when Kip talked to me about moving to L.A., and it wasn't to be the number 1 man in L.A. That was Kip, he was in L.A. You can't be the number 1 man when he's in L.A. And it wasn't to be the number 2 man in L.A. Marty was there, he's the world sector leader, he's the number 2 man. He wanted me to be the number 3 man in L.A. Now why in the world would I leave a church of 1600, and come to L.A. a sector of, at that time, 100 people. I'll tell you why, because Kip asked me to, that's why. But in doing so, he gave me a vision for what could happen in Los Angeles. He gave me a vision of the super church, and at that time it was just a thought, it was just an idea, and yet now brothers and sisters, it is becoming a reality... You know there are going to be some of us who are going to have make the same kind of decisions that Robin and I made, and that is to give up maybe a bigger ministry, to move to some of these major cities, to build a super church in that particular area. We've got to have that kind of spirit, we've got to have that kind of attitude, and God has blessed us tremendously... We would not to be anywhere else.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Kip McKean**

We'll kinda share about the L.A. church, warts and all right here. Their sector that they took over had a quote "membership" of 450 in June, after we went through and did the life talk it was down to 200. Now most of those people aren't there any more. Marty is a hard-line guy. Okay, I want the numbers to jive. We hit that in staff over and over again, but here is this guy, he says, "are the numbers tight?" Yeah, yeah. It was sheer garbage. He didn't want to face the fall away issue, he didn't want to face his failure. He was totally numbed out. They took over a totally devastated ministry... You can change it fast when you call people to repent. Secondly, with Bruce and Gregg, they gave up their kingdom. Bruce has a little kingdom out there in Chicago, Gregg has a little Rocky Mountain "doo-dah" thing. I said, "brothers, we need you." You know the will of God when you're needed. They have sacrificed a lot. It's been a struggle for them to really get in there, but they've got the hearts to really do that. But brothers and sisters, some of you may even be called in the next few days to give up your kingdom. But we are disciples first. Go anywhere, do anything, give up everything, even our kingdom, and we can have great attitudes.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Steve and Jennifer Lopez**

(Steve) I know the first three months was tough for us. I know when Steve Johnson was speaking last night and he mentioned, "you know when your numbers are," ugh well he talked about David Letterman, the top ten reasons when you know your ministry is going down. You know when it's going bad, is when your net growth is larger than the kids you have, and besides we felt like that, given the fact that we don't have any kids. So we felt like that at the end of the first quarter, but then I felt better when Kip mentioned even Prophets have six months allowance to mess up their ministry and learn from it. But after the end of the quarter, Marty and Chris Fuqua came in with their UCLA ministry, and gave something that Jennifer and I were truly grateful to witness was that of revival. We were allowed to imitate what they did. We learned so many great things... Marty said, "you can't run off disciples. Secondly, the door swings both ways. Don't let it hit you on the way out." But ultimately, we realized what we did and that was call people to a standard and expect them to live by it.

### **August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Reese and MaryKay Neyland**

(MaryKay) And sisters we can't make or accept any excuses for our ministry. We've got to use as opportunities. (Reese) We have a goal that in ten years we're going to have 10,000 disciples. That's the way we're thinking... Kip mentioned that during last year there was a very rough period for the whole church, he wasn't happy and consequently we weren't either. There was this one particular staff meeting that I remember, where I was seeing things a little differently than Kip was, well quite honestly I had a bad attitude, and, we had to have one of those discipleship groups and it really was great, because Kip really allowed me, he drew me out, we had really just a very frank and honest talk, and I told him how I felt, and you know Kip, he was able to tell me how he felt, and, we just a little back and forth there, but it really was great. I think I appreciated him really being interested, listening very sincerely, I had to repent of things, I had attitudes. I think a lot of us on

our staff, we have a superficial union that is not really unity, because you're not honest, you're not frank, you don't let things come out and then when, you know I had to repent, **I had to repent of my spirit and not being loyal as I should have been**, but it was great, Kip and I are great buddies, and you've got to work on it and forge that unity.

**August, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE SUPER CHURCH"-- Kip McKean**

Reese was kind there. I love Reese and MaryKay with all my heart. Yeah, **the church was doing lousy, I wasn't happy. And nobody was happy. I was frustrated, and when I got frustrated as the lead guy, I just like pushed hard, pushed hard, I was impatient, and a sinful side of me came on out.** I think as the lead guy that's what you got to avoid. You've got to know how to inspire...You've got to take a gut check, have you gotten negative. Now some of you have gotten so positive you're not saying anything. But honestly, I had a bad attitude towards myself, had a bad attitude toward the ministry going lousy, and it's a spiritual problem. Reese is a sensitive man, and you gotta have those men on your side. I heard him. That was the thing, we had it out at the staff meeting, but we have "D." groups, and you've got to have "D." groups for your top people and leadership is forged...Reese had gotten bitter because of it, which is wrong. I was wrong to be oppressive, we got it all fixed up. God gives the increase, you may be working your bottom off, and you're not increasing you got a spiritual problem, there is sin in the camp.

--Tape Ends--

**AUGUST, 1992: BOSTON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, "THE CUTTING EDGE" -- Marty Fuqua**

**I look at every aspect of my life, and I just wouldn't be where I'm at, in any area, if it weren't for the influence for Kip** in my life, and I'm so grateful for that.

If you're gonna have the "cutting edge attitude," you must have the attitude of a calling. You must believe that wherever you are, whatever church and whatever sector, whatever zone, and whatever continent, whatever area, that **you are there by the calling of God Almighty. You didn't get there by politics, you didn't get there because someone liked you or didn't. You are there because God Almighty the Lord of Hosts has decided to put you there...If you're on the cutting edge, you believe that you are where God wants you to be, and you will move from that place when the people of God ask you to move some place else, and until then you crank the ever-living' snot out of that place.**

Some of you guys who are single out there you are "doodah-ing" around; you are living a married-adult-with-three-kids-lifestyle. When you ought to be getting on that campus and working, and working, and working, and **falling asleep in the back seat of your car and getting up and wash your teeth in the wash basin at the dormitory and go to work again.** You don't have a family to go home to, you don't have kids, you don't have anything to do but work for the Lord.

Kip gave me a charge a few months ago to take over the West sector of the Los Angeles church. And this sector of the church was unquestionably the weakest sector of Los Angeles Church. They started off the year with 191 members, and after 2 months had 192. They were missing the budget frequently. They were uninspired, unhappy, for the most part. Seeing other sectors around them in the Los Angeles Church experiencing tremendous victories and excitements, and they were left out. They were just sorta the other group...I said, "we're gonna have a revival weekend next Friday night and Saturday, and I expect you all to be there. **If you can't find your way clear to be there, then you won't be a member of our church.**" Some of 'em didn't come and they aren't members...**As I looked at the west sector, it was made up of the weak and the weird. I said, "listen, listen, if you're a white collar person, don't you ever bring in another blue collar person. You reach out to white collar people. If you blue collar person, don't you come in here with someone who doesn't have a job. You reach out to blue collar or white collar. If you don't have a job, you get your hind end out and get a job. And then you can evangelize, and you can make a contribution...I did this specifically as an example, as a model, for all of you guys that aren't on the cutting edge. I said, "listen, I'm gonna take this thing over, and I will make these people be awesome Christians or it will cost me my life."** I will do it I will not accept "no" from them, or from me, or from my wife, or from anybody else. It will be done. God has called me to do it.

Some of you have lost your competitiveness...I don't want anybody's Bible Talk to out baptize me...I went out into the ministry as a young, young disciple. Kip trained me, and sent me on out. By the standards of that day I was fully trained, by the standards of today, I was probably a little under trained...Some of you have so little competitive ambition. You're willing to go 3 and 5 all your life. Some of you young guys out there in those young church

plantings in America, ought to hang your head in shame. You ought to be cranking like wild men out there. You ought to be so glad you got your shot, you got your church. It's your time, and **you're dragging your little sorry butt around with 5 baptisms a month.** You ought to be able to do that by yourself, if no one else was there. You go, "I don't want to be competitive, I'm afraid I'll be prideful." I don't know anybody that's worth anything in anything, that isn't prideful, that doesn't have a sense of dignity about who they are. Listen brother, you're a man of God. You better get your head up, and you better start being something, and get some competitive fire. Nice guys finish last...**You're a wimp, you're a sissy.**

Psalm 42...David is on the cutting edge. He's just that kind of guy..."As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants...The cutting edge attitude is a needy attitude...Why is the deer panting? Because he's been running. He didn't walk up panting...Now, should you go home and pray? You better. Should you come home and fast? You maybe need to, but you've got to get an attitude of I'm cranking, I'm running, I'm going after it for God, and I need God in my life. The attitude that David expresses is an attitude of total need for God, total love for God, total desire for God. But you're never gonna have that until you get out there and start doing something for God, and then you'll pant, and then you'll need God...People have misunderstood a sense of "cutting edge-ness" and hardness and they've become harsh. "Okay, I'm going to go home and whoop the fire out of my people, I'm going pound on 'em." You've totally missed it...You don't develop a harsh fellowship. If you have a drive and an ambition and a calling from God, mixed with a sensitivity that you're a man of God, and that God is empowering you and you're giving God the glory, the people feel great about it.

Psalm 18:29...It's a power attitude...You're not afraid of anybody, and you're not afraid of anything. Some of you have gone and you've preached (not understandable) to explain the scriptures, and I want to encourage you tonight, and I want to be intellectual. Listen, you ought to have the sense to know that you weren't an intellectual and you aren't now...**Some of you have let these people that have gotten out of the ministry, that have grumpy gripey attitudes, stare you down. That's what happened. You're so afraid of what they think, that they may not like something. Let me tell you something, I didn't go into the West sector wondering whether anybody was going to like it, or caring whether they liked it. I wasn't asking for their permission...That's right, the door swings both ways, and don't let it hit you on the way out. It has always been my conviction. I said it in Chicago time and time again, "if you don't like the Chicago Church of Christ, then leave." ..Kip just says, "if you don't like the Los Angeles Church of Christ, leave!" And I say, "Amen!"...But you guys have got to start looking those people in the eye and say, "listen if you don't want to be a disciple, take a hike." I don't need you to build this church, if that's going to be your attitude. Leave, call their cotton-picking' bluff, and if they leave, they were never really there anyway. You can not run off disciples...You can't run off disciples. Like John 6, Peter says, "Lord where are we going to go?" That's right where are you going to go? This is the movement of God. I said, "the movement of God." If they get weak on that, they either need to repent and get back in it, or get out. But if you're being the man of God you need to be, you're gonna say, "listen, I don't need anybody in particular to do this work."...Listen, you had better have the attitude about your work, your zone, your church, listen, you could take the whole bunch of 'em, because as long as I'm there, it's going to crank, and I'll just raise up the next bunch to be better than the ones you took...Look over in Matthew Chapter 26...Jesus had that cutting edge attitude that we're talking about tonight...The cutting edge attitude is a humble attitude...Being on the cutting edge is not a license for independence and arrogance toward God, or towards God's people. **Being on the cutting edge develops within you a sense of a disciple. I want to be under authority. I want to be asked upon to do things that call upon me to be in the position that Jesus was in. Some of you avoid these positions like the plague. These positions define your spiritual life. They develop your spiritual life. How good a disciple are you?** Some of you guys have been told, instructed for in some cases a year, a year and a half, or in some cases two years to get your statistics in line. You've been asked to go through and put down every member on a piece of paper. How many members do you have? How difficult can this be? If this is beyond your intellectual capacity, then you are in the wrong position of leadership. Some of you are desperately terrible disciples in this area of your life. All you got to do is say, "how many committed disciples do I have." And write their name on a piece of paper and write their name beside them...Some of you still do not have this down. You say, "well, I don't want to look bad." Let me tell you something, you look so-o-o bad. You cannot imagine how bad you look. You would have been better off taking your medicine a year and a half ago...I want to commend Ron Drabot, going into Chicago and making a very hard cut, but it looks awful good now, doesn't it, because he got down to business. You've gotta have a great humble disciples attitude to be on the cutting edge.**

John 2...Jesus was in the zone, man. He had this attitude in spades. He was going after it big time. Look at this, verse 13...**What is Jesus here? He is angry. He is indignant. He is upset at the unrighteousness, the disrespectfulness that is being exhibited before him. How dare you?...Some of you don't get angry enough when people in your ministry sin. You allow yourself, and you allow everybody else to be mediocre...You pat them on the back and try to encourage them into commitments. The cutting edge attitude is an attitude sometimes of anger. It's an indignation, "I've had it with this." "I'm sick of myself, and I'm sick of you."**

—Tape Ends—

### **September, 1992: TULSA RECONSTRUCTION WEEKEND, Friday Evening Message—Nick Young**

**This is a time, this is an event that God has been waiting for, for a long time...Great things are happening in the movement of God.** The gospel is spreading all around the world...The church in Los Angeles was planted just about 3 years ago, and already in this year alone, I think there has been close to 1,000 people baptized...A year ago the Los Angeles Church sent out the mission team to Moscow, and the church in Moscow concludes its first year in the ministry this week. There have been 850 disciples baptized...There will be 4 churches in Russia by the time we start the month of October...It's a great, it's a good thing that the mission team is here, because it's very obvious that **the gospel would not have gone out to Tulsa, and this city would not have gotten evangelized had a mission team not come.**

I just want to give you a little history, the first time a reconstruction occurred within the modern day movement of God, occurred in Kingston, Jamaica in 1987, and there were 86 people in that church. It was a church that gave some lip service to discipling, and to being a discipling church, but it was a church that was very steeped in man's traditions. The evangelist that was there moved into the states to get more training...Kip preached the message. When he had finished he made an invitation. He told everybody that if they, now they have heard what it means to be a disciple, and it's contrary to way that most of them had been living their lives. He told them simply that if they wanted to be a part of the Kingston Church of Christ, that they need to come forward and repent, everyone of them needed to come forward and repent, that wanted to be a part of that church. At the end of that meeting that night 43 of that 86 people came forward and repented, and with that group of 43 the Kingston Church was begun...We began the church in Dallas just like we began the church in (not understandable). It was a small group, a remnant group of disciples that had collected and was waiting on a planting to come from Boston...We called the group to repent, the group that repented became a part of the church...**We are here to reconstruct everyone that is in this Tulsa congregation, so that you also can become a part, if you are going to be a disciple of Christ, of the Tulsa Church of Christ Jesus, and this is the way that the church will begin...Jesus had to reconstruct some churches in the first century too.** Revelation Chapter 2, in Chapter 2 and 3...They need to be called back to repentance, called back to God, and every member in those churches needed to respond with humility and devotion to God and humility and devotion to the word of God, so they could be what God wanted them to be...**If you had a Biblical conversion, you were totally fired up and totally committed and you were zealous in the Lord, and you were sharing your faith with everyone you met. You didn't have a Biblical conversion, you weren't doing those things, and so calling you back to your first love is irrelevant, because you've never had a first love, but if you've had a Biblical conversion, if you truly are a Christian, than you need to see tonight the height from which you've fallen, because you as a congregation have left your first love...We're here tonight, not just to save the other people in this city, we're here tonight to save you. Frankly, I am totally convinced had the mission team not come here, the group that's waiting here would all be lost, and many of you are lost right now, maybe all of you are lost. You're lost in your lukewarmness, and in your sin, and in your fear, and in your unbelief, you're lost in your lack of love for God, you're lost in your rebelliousness to God, and some of you are lost because you've never even become a Christian, and this mission planting, first of all, is to help you get saved, and once we get you saved, then we can save this city...**There are very few of you, if any, that's truly walking in the spirit, if any...Brothers and sisters, the reason you are ineffective at saving the lost is because many of you are lost yourselves, and this reconstruction is for you to get not just on the cutting edge, but for you to get saved. You're lost in your pride, you're lost in your self-righteousness, you're lost in your self deceit, you're lost in your self conceit, and you're lost in your sin...I think there have been 4 people baptized this entire year. Brothers and sisters, brothers and sisters, that's incredible to me! You have lost your first love, you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. Absolutely...Tonight the real call is for you to get in touch, for you to see really what God sees...He says, "I know your deeds that you're neither cold or hot...You're not all the way over there with the enemies of the kingdom who would oppose the very call of which we stand. You're not over there with that group of fall aways and disloyal people who have fallen away and make it their business to go around in

**sheep's clothing and steal off disciples.** No, you're not all the way cold, but you're not hot either. **There's not a one of you in this church hot.** If there was, if there was even one of you hot, there'd be some fruit...There is lukewarmness in this church...Brothers and sisters and friends, it is time tonight to see where you stand before God...**I want you to know tonight, that I come tonight to discipline you, I come tonight to rebuke you and call you out of your sin. He says, "those whom I love I rebuke and discipline."...He (Jesus) still loves you and he's still giving you a chance...God is giving not Tulsa a chance to be saved, God is giving you a chance to be saved. Of all the people in Tulsa, you are among, you are the most favored in this city, because you are the ones to whom the gospel is coming first...**This will be a church that counts the cost with every person who becomes a disciple, and we are starting this church tonight, counting the cost of what it means to be a disciple. I'm going to lay it out tonight what Jesus said it takes to be a disciple. I'm going to lay it out for two reasons. Number one, to let you know what kind of person is going to be in this church, and the points I'm about to make are not up for negotiation...I'm going to lay it out just like Jesus laid it out...Now I want to tell you something, if there is anyone here that is not going to be a disciple we'll help you find another congregation to worship with, but you won't be a part of the church here. That's the way it's going to be. This is going to be a church of disciples, a people that are totally 100% committed to Jesus Christ, and there will be no exceptions to that, there will be no fringe element in this church. You couldn't find a fringe element in this church, cause you're all on the fringe, and that's what's going to change...There will be nobody just barely holding in, everybody in this church is going to be a totally committed disciple of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28 and verse 18...We're here to make disciples. We're not here to make church members, we're not here to make religious people, we're not here certainly to make Pharisees. We're here to make humble, totally committed disciples of Jesus Christ...**Once you become a disciple, then you can be baptized, but you can not be baptized until you become a disciple and that's where, as far as I know, the rest of the entire religious world has got it, got it all messed up. I don't know of any religious group in this world that teaches you got to be a disciple to be baptized, and yet that is what Jesus said two-thousand years ago, and it's as clear as any verse in the Bible. That's as clear as John 3:16, that's as clear as Acts 2:38, that's as clear as any verse you're going to read, and yet I don't know of any other religious group that teaches that you've got to be a totally committed disciple of Jesus to get baptized into Christ, but that's what we're going to teach, that's what we're going to do, because that's what Jesus taught and that's what Jesus want's us to do, and we're going to do that because discipleship is the standard...You must be a disciple to become a Christian and to be baptized.**

Acts 11:26 - Disciples are what Jesus made...They were already disciples though, and eventually were simply called Christians. You've got to be a disciple to be a Christian. You can not be a Christian if you're not a disciple, and you can not be saved if you're not a Christian...You've got to be a disciple to be a Christian, and you've got to be a Christian to be saved, and if your not a Christian you're not saved, and if you're not a disciple you're not a Christian. That's what Jesus said, that's what Paul said, that's what the Bible lays out. What does it mean to be a disciple? John Chapter 8, John 8:31...Will you change anything in your life to be right with God...Is there any area in your life that you consider off limits to the word of God?...Frankly, that is why there are "Benedict Arnold's" in our movement, that's why there are people who fall away, that's why there are people who do not become Christians. It is because they have an area of their lives that is off limits to the word of God, and they will not bring that area of their life under the authority and into submission of Jesus Christ and His word, and there may be a myriad of excuses, and there may have been mistakes done by others in their lives, but the bottom line every time is, they would not submit themselves to the word of God...You can not hold onto God's word if you're holding on to some traditions...Do you want to be set free from your sins?...I don't care if you come from a discipling church. I don't care if you come from Dallas, or Chicago, or Kansas City, or Boston, or New York, or L.A., or wherever you come from. I don't care if you got a great grandfather that's a preacher in some traditional church or some denomination. I don't care about that, Jesus doesn't care about that. I want to know, do you want to be set free from your sins? Don't throw your pedigrees out at me, don't try to impress me with what you've done in your life time. I'm not impressed, and neither is Jesus. The ground at the foot of the cross, brother, is level...**You know what, there's a lot of pride in this room. There's a lot of pride in this room. There's a lot of rebellion in this room...There's a lot of fear. You're self-focused, you're fearful. There's a lot of unbelief in this room. A lot of unbelief. You know what, during, after the weekend is over, we're going to sit down and have a life talk with everyone in this church that want to be a part of the Tulsa Church of Christ...We're going to just talk through your life, just have a good little life talk, take 2 or 3 hours, and just talk through your life. One of the things we're going to do in that time, we're going to talk about your conversion.** I don't care where you got converted at either, we're going to talk about your conversion. Does that bother you? If that bothers you, better do a little heart check. If it bothers you to talk about

your conversion, you got some pride to deal with. If you won't deal with it, there's a good chance you won't make it through...The goal of this reconstruction is to get everybody as a disciple of Christ...We're not going to drive you off, we're going to try to make a disciple out of you...Only those of you that become disciples will be a part of the church. Take a heart check, does that bother you...We're just going to get open tonight...The time has come to get open with it, to get your heart out there and get disciplined and to repent...You've got negative attitudes, it's time to come out...You need to deal with you attitude by confessing it as sin...We're going to be patient with you, because we love you...We're going to be open with our sins and our bad attitudes...Some of you come out of the Church of Christ, the mainline traditional Church of Christ. You know, if you come out of the mainline Church of Christ you already have, probably, a strong critical nature depending on how long you were in that church, because being in the traditional Church of Christ makes you critical, and I can talk about it cause I was one. I grew up in the traditional Church of Christ and was in the traditional Church of Christ for 35 years. I preached for 20 years in traditional churches. My grandfather was an elder in Oklahoma City...The longer the pedigree the more you've got to overcome to be a disciple, that's what it usually means. That's why it took God years to humble me enough to make a disciple out of me...**You are totally out of touch, if you think you can be even slightly righteous and not have somebody in your life that you're accountable to...You've gotta get the sins out there before a brother, before a sister and you've got to get healed. We're going to hold to the teachings of Jesus. Aren't you glad?**

John 13:34...We're talking about a love that the people of Tulsa, Oklahoma have never seen before...You see, this is not an organization, this is a family...As a family we don't get these little weird attitudes toward one another...Quit being weird...We get open with our sins, because we're a family...I remember when I was in the traditional church, that you never were really sure who was with you and who wasn't, because they all acted the same. Oh, they all acted the same, and those that were with you, you didn't really ever know if they really were totally with you, and those that weren't with you, you didn't really ever know that they weren't with you...That's not the kingdom of God. That is a tradition of men...We're not going to have competitiveness or disloyalty or divisiveness, we're not going to tolerate criticalness, we're not going to tolerate criticalness with this ministry or any other ministry. You know, if you got a problem with what is going on in Dallas, you got a problem with God...You won't be a part of this church, till you get your critical attitudes worked out...If you've got a bad attitude about anything. I don't care if some of your problem is from a legitimate hurt that somebody did wrong to you. You don't have a right to have a bad attitude. You don't have a right to hold a grudge, or be bitter about anything in your life, and if you think you do, take a look at Jesus Christ dying on the cross...You talk about being abused and mistreated, you don't know the meaning of it, I don't know the meaning of it, because Jesus knows the meaning of it, and yet Jesus made sure there was not an attitude in his heart about anybody that was in his life. He said, "God forgive them." **And some of you have harbored resentment, and you've harbored bitterness, and you've harbored a grudge, and you've been critical. You're in sin past your eye balls, because of your total pride and self deceit. I don't care if part of it or even all of it was the fault of somebody else, and that you were a totally innocent victim. You don't have a right to be critical and have a bad attitude. This is the movement of God, and if you're going to be a part of the movement of God, you've got to be heart and soul with the whole movement of God. We can't have a little grudge, or a little ill-will, or some weird attitude about somebody...You've got to be united with the kingdom of God...Every brother and sister who's going to be a part of this church starts confessing sinful attitudes, starts confessing bitterness, whether it comes from legitimate hurts, or whether it comes from your own sinful nature, and you confess your sins without confessing anybody else's...No sinful attitudes or divisiveness at all in this church. Are you with me?**

John 15 in verse 1...Who can you point to that is now a Christian because you shared your faith. You're not a disciple if you're not a Christian. I don't care how many religious things you do, you're not a Christian. You're not a disciple, you're not saved. **I'm telling you the truth, people, this church planting is for your salvation. You're lost, you're lost. If this church planting hadn't come, you would have been lost [unintelligible]. Frankly, some of you, your salvation is still hanging in the balance, because your heart is still not good. You're still looking at me with a critical eye, thinking, "Well, who does this guy think he is? Where does he get off at?" Your salvation is hanging in the balance. You're about to walk away from the movement of God. When you walk away from the movement of God, there is no where to walk to. Walking out of the light into the darkness. There is nobody else, there is nobody else in this country that has the true gospel, that is trying to make disciples of Jesus. There is nobody else in this entire world. This is the movement of God! There is no place to go.** Always kinda makes me sick when somebody does not want to be a disciple, they have so much sin, there's so much pride, so much self deceit, so they're going to leave the movement of God and then go find another church. If I'm going to leave the movement of God, I'm just going to fallacy completely...I'm not going to be a disciple, listen,

I'm just going to go ahead and fall completely away, because I'm just as lost either way. I'm just as lost either way. There is no other way, but to be a totally committed disciple in a church of disciples. You're not in a church of disciples, we call people to move from one state to another...I tell you, it ticks me off good, when traditional churches who don't even have the true gospel out baptize (not understandable)...I'm ashamed for you, I'm ashamed for you. There are traditional churches, that don't even have the true gospel, that are out baptizing you. They might not be making a disciple, they might be making him twice a son of hell as he was before, but at least they're doing something. They're at least putting people in their church...They're (newspapers) going to try to dress me up as a cult leader at Tulsa University. I'm going to tell you something, I think Paul (Tulsa evangelist) can lead a church, but I don't think he knows the first thing about leading a cult, and if he ever does, I'm going to deprogram him...I mean we are flat going to make an impact, because the people in this church are going to be disciples. You're going to go out and spread the gospel of Jesus, and they're not going to have a problem with inviting 30 people a day...I've heard that some of you have actually had an attitude with having to share with 30 people a day. That makes me sick, and you know, it makes God sicker...You can't even take a simple challenge like sharing with 30 people a day and not get all bent out of shape about it...**You're the one who needs to be saved, you're the one who is going to go to Hell if you don't repent...You were hell bound before this planting got here...This church was on the road to hell...**We're going to do our very best not to make stupid mistakes. I have one rule in my life, don't be stupid. I'm not a rule man, (not understandable) don't be stupid.

I tell you what, some of you or some of the people you convert, are going to be subject to deprogramming...I'll tell you what happens, people you love and trust come a get you, and they take you off to a private place...And they'll have two or three guys there, maybe four in some cases. One or two of 'em will be an ex-member (not understandable), be a guy who at one time was probably a leader in the church, just didn't have the heart (not understandable) and now he's fallen away and in his bitterness he cannot just stand by, so he's got to persecute...He is truly an Amnon...And that's what happens when a bitter man falls away and becomes disloyal, he hates what he loves with even a greater hatred than he loved. That's what Satan will do to your heart...**They'll talk to you, and they'll try to get you, not to doubt God, or not doubt what you've done, but they're going to try to discredit your leaders...If there's any substance to what they say, it's, it's (pause) hardly ever there and most of what they talk about it totally made up. Lies, just like Jesus had to deal with, lies...Deceitful men can take true statements and turn them into lies...You watch what I'm saying...They'll take your fruit and they'll deprogram it, and it'll break you...You talk about brainwashing, that's brainwashing. I tell you something, it's going to happen...But even you own family will turn against you...**I'm talking about the definition of a disciple, he is a person who is persecuted.

Luke 14:25...That's what wrong in traditionalism, because you've got a non-disciple being baptized, and they become twice the son of Hell, because now, not only have they some religious credentials, but they're prideful and Pharisaical about it...I realized I wasn't a disciple...You say, "well, I got baptized and now I'm a disciple, now." Well, it doesn't work that way. It doesn't work retroactive, if it did then every Methodist when he was sprinkled as a baby, when he becomes a disciple you know, or baptized as a baby, if he got baptized by immersion than eventually he's ok. No, No, it's not retroactive. You've got to be a disciple when you go in that water. You gotta count the cost to do it...You know who sets the standard in the traditional church? The weakest, most rebellious, most sinful member that is tolerated. That's who set the standards...That why we've got a standard, and it's what Jesus said (not understandable). That's our standard. You see there's no cost to count, I mean, denominational churches and traditional churches don't count the cost, because if you want to come on Sunday, every Sunday, wonderful. If you want to come on Wednesday nights, hey, we'd really like to have you...Come when you can...If you want to give a tenth of your income, that would be wonderful, we'll take your money...We'll just take what we can get...If you don't want to be evangelistic, well don't worry about it, because I'm sure that we'll find your gift or talent somewhere...There's no cost to count...Now let me say this also, cults don't count the cost either. You know what a cult does? A cult will conceal the cost. A cult conceals the cost, and then once you're in then they'll dump all this other stuff on you. That is not the way Jesus does things, that's not the way we do things.

There's no fine print after you get in, here's what it means up front. That there's nobody that even comes close to the love you have for God. That's what it means to be a disciple. That's what Jesus expects you to be. That's the cost...Even if your husband or wife goes against you. Even if there's turmoil, or persecution in the home. That you love Jesus more than you love yourself...**Even if your mother or father comes and tries to deprogram you.** That you love Jesus more than anyone. "Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple." Not your job, it can't be more important than God, it can't even be close. Can you image going to Hell for a job?...Can you imagine going to Hell over your career? I mean, when you put it in that light, it puts it in the right perspective.

Can you imagine going to Hell over a hobby?...You're in sin...You're in trouble. He said, "there can't even be anything in second place." **We're talking here about the cost of being a disciple...I want to just say, "this is the movement of God." You need to have deep convictions about that. This is not just a church among churches. This is not just the best thing going in Tulsa. This is the movement of God, and we're calling all who will be true disciples to align themselves with this movement of God. You think this is a church among churches, you can't be a disciple. If you think there's other churches out there you can go and be a part of and be just as good and just as saved as you are a part of church of disciples, you can't be a disciple. This is a church of disciples. It's the movement of God.** And the goal of this movement is the goal that the movement of God had in the very first century, and that is to make disciples of every creature, and we're not going to stop. We're not going to slow up, we're not going to pack up. If there is something from the word we think we need to change, we're going to change it. We have no problem changing it. That's also the difference between us and the traditional Church of Christ, because we're not interested in just keeping orthodoxy. If we're wrong, we want to see, and we want to change it, and we will change it. The movement of God has changed, it's always changing. In fact, one of the opening lines in one of the books of one of the "so-called" experts against the Boston Movement is that, "you can't really know what you're fighting, because they're always changing." In the movement we are changing. If we're wrong, we're going to change, and if you want to fight our dust of 15 years ago (not understand). We're not even there anymore, we've changed. I mean, they're fighting the dust of where they were at either when they left the movement or where the movement was at 5 years before they got in it.

I've got a goal for each one of you individually, and it's found in Colossians chapter one and verse 24...What he says though is that, "Christ in you is the hope of glory." You see, you've got to fit in here brothers, you've got to get involved in this thing. The hope of glory only can become a reality when Jesus is in you. When you are like Jesus. When you are following Jesus...Look at verse 28 now...It is a struggle to get Christ into people. It's been a struggle to get Christ in you. A major struggle. I've come to believe, if we can get Christ into you, we can get Christ into anybody. You've been about as hard hearted as anybody I've seen in my life. I love you, but it breaks my heart that you've been so hard hearted, that you've been so slow to change.

If you have one slight doubt in your mind that this is the movement of God, you need to take a look at what God's done...Brothers and sisters, wake up, get rid of your humanism, this is the movement of God. **There is nobody, there is nobody on the cutting edge of what's happening right now, except the movement of God.** It's time for Jesus Christ to get in your life.

**Tonight is a night of repentance. Tonight is a night of public confession. All who want to be a part of this church and will open their hearts and deal with their sins and become disciples will have the chance to (not understandable)...If you don't want to confess you sins, you can go home. We'll say good bye to you now, and I hope somewhere down the road God changes your heart, but those of us that stay, it's time to confess sin...it's time to get serious, it's time to mean business. If you don't want to stay, it's your choice. We love you, the door will always be open for you to come and be a disciple...Nobody is forcing you to stay, but if you want to be a part of the church (not understandable), because this is the only kind of person that can make an impact for God. This is the only kind of person, I believe, that can be saved.** We love you, we're going to work with you, we're going to persevere with you, we'll teach you, correct you, rebuke you, instruct you, do anything we can to help you...We just won't wink at your sin, we just won't compromise with sin.

#### **AUGUST, 1992: TULSA RECONSTRUCTION WEEKEND, SATURDAY MESSAGE**

(John) I tell you what, I saw, **I mean, last night there was so much unconfessed sin...When sin goes unidentified, man, that's the worst of all, and it scared me last night, because so many people that I love, you know, I just, I'm so confused here, I'm just not broken, I don't really see the issues.**

Mary was wanting to get out of the ministry; she was not happy in the ministry, and I looked at Mary, and I looked at her as, well she's just weaker, well, you know, she's just not as strong as me, and she just doesn't have as much talent, and she even looked at herself that way. She was kinda going through a questioning time, wasn't really doing that well. Ed Townsend and I went for a ride...He goes, "Brother" he said, "do you think Mary wants to be in the ministry?"...He said, "you are the problem." He said, "there's one problem your wife has, she is an unloved woman."...**At that point, I made a connection, sin is the issue, and for another two hours of yelling, I mean.** I was supposed to be appointed evangelist a month later. He pulled that out. He said, "man, I don't even feel good about you being appointed evangelist."...From that point our marriage has been different.

(Mary) I think most of the women in here, from our sharing last night. I think you know your husband's sin better than you know your sin. **There was so much self righteousness that came out last night. You are a Pharisee. The Bible says, "take the plank out of your own eye, so then you can help your brother."...Sister, you need to repent.** It is a disrespect, and a lack of submission.

(John) **I tell you brothers, the way you have not been convicted about your sin, I could see it last night. I mean, it was horrible, the lack of conviction. Your hearts have gotten so hard.** You know, the only problem was the only brokenness was the broken record, "I'm not convicted enough, I'm not convicted enough, I'm not convicted enough, I'm not convicted enough," over and over. I guarantee your lives (not understandable) no hope.

(Mary) I just really want to lift up Debbie as a woman that obliterates excuses. You know, she is sick. You know, she shared that last night when we got with the women, about being sick a lot, and you know, it's never, ever an excuse for her. She pushes herself, she pushes through. I respect her so much. There is so much self-righteousness in this group of women. You know, you think you're more spiritual...You need to see your sin. You need to humble up...I think for the women, there needs to be some serious study of Ephesians 5, for the women in this room. The Bible says there that you must respect your husband, and I heard so little of that last night. I see so little of that in this room, even with the way you interact with your spouse here...We need to repent, Amen.

(John) If you think that to be on the same team it means you cover the other person's sin, I want you to know that, you're wrong. **See, I know that there were sins that came out last night that the other spouse knows about, and you haven't gotten help. That is not a team at all, that is the opposite of a team. Again, that is Ananias and Sapphira. God killed them, he just killed them. I saw that happen with a guy a while back in leadership in a different church. I mean, sin going on, and they just kinda confessed it to each other. I mean, they never got the help they needed, and I mean, it wiped them out. I mean, it wiped them out, and cost people their souls...You guys have an agreement, and they gave the challenge last night, you guys have an agreement. When something is unresolved, when you can't do it together. Then use the bigger team of the church, the license is there, everybody from right now, it is there that on any issue you can call up the brother, women you can call up the brother discipling him, or call up Paul, or brothers you can call up the women discipling them, call up Judy. I mean, you can call up those people and say, "listen here is the issue how should we do it?" I tell you, sometimes it's just the fear of a call...Do I need to talk to Nick?...You see, the Bible says, "a cord of three strands is not easily broken," maybe that third one is Uncle Nick.** You get that discipler right here in the middle of you, that's part of the team... It may mean conflict, it may mean putting some trust on the line, but in the end it will mean an awesome marriage.

## **SATURDAY RECONSTRUCTION MESSAGE: NICK YOUNG**

**God is forging a new group out of this group...**Our prayer is that every heart will change radically.

I want to talk about the concept of sacrifice...I tell you people there has been a lot of pride in this church. I mean, honestly I feel like demons have been casting out the last 24 hours here of just the pride, and arrogance, and criticalness, and deceitfulness...It's been at home in your hearts...Guys, if you're going to make it as a disciple, we've got to sacrifice our pride... Psalm 51:17...**Last night there were a couple of the brothers, I felt that really had a broken heart, but most of the brothers were striving just to get in touch with their sins...**You can also shed tears that have nothing to do with a broken heart...She maybe crying because she's got a bad heart...She feels such a victim mentality over the things that she thinks have been done to her that have been unfair...I had a brother who shed some tears in our last hour. I asked him, "why are you crying?" He said, "because of frustration," not a broken heart...**I told the guys they'd been swimming around in vomit.**

I want to talk about conversion a little bit...Basically you have been a traditional church,...trying to do what you believe is right, but not there yet...Everybody that's going to be a member of the church will be a Christian. That's a good standard. We're not going to have any non-Christians in the church...They will not be considered members of the church...My parents tried to be good Christians...We had a pretty good Christian home, with a pretty good environment there...I didn't want anybody talking with me about my conversion...A lot of people had come from old campus ministry churches, a lot of them had come in from the traditional churches, at that time they were just kind of coming on in to the discipling churches, and nobody was questioning anybody about their conversions (not understandable) They kind of assumed that if they got baptized in a church of Christ, they were ok...Both (Debbie) of us on our own came to the conviction that we were not baptized disciples, that we were not Christians...I really

thank God, you know, that I am now a Christian. There's no doubt in my mind, now, that I'm a Christian. There's not any new article going to be written in *UpsideDown* that's going to convince me that I'm not a Christian. There's not any verse going to pop out in the book of John that is going to convince me. I know I'm a Christian now... We became baptized disciples.

Now here is the goal for everybody in this church. How many of you have heard from somebody that, "when the church planting comes, they're going to require all of you people in this church to be baptized again?"... We're only going to require you to be baptized if you're not a Christian. If you're Christian, we're not going to require you to be baptized again, because Jesus wouldn't require you to be baptized again... I don't care how many times you've been baptized. It doesn't matter to me. If you don't have a genuine conversion, then you need to become a Christian... Some of you, if you don't turn in here closely, some of you are going, are not going to get God's will done in your life... "I'm not going to be baptized again!"... I told the guys about a guy on our staff... he's been on our staff since we planted the church. He became a Christian about 3 weeks ago. I think it's a good thing for the full-time preachers to be Christians. I think that's a good thing to do... If we expect everybody else to, certainly the guys in the full-time ministry. But you know why this guy wasn't a Christian? He was baptized as a teenager in Gainesville, Florida... It's Mark Harris, you all know Mark, he's been here to preach, but before they left (Gainesville to move to Boston), Mark's mother came and said, who's a member of the Gainesville church, she said, "**Mark, don't you know they're going to try to get you up there, and they're going to try to convince you you're not a Christian.**" "**Don't move to Boston, they'll try to convince you you're not a Christian, and try to get you to be baptized.**" He said, "**they're not going to convince me.**" So he went up there, and you know what, to prove his mother wrong, when he had his reconstruction talk with Marty Wooten, and Marty said "**Mark, I don't think you're a Christian, in fact, I didn't know beans when I baptized you 10 years ago, and frankly now, since then, I've been baptized myself. I got some serious doubts.**" Even though Marty told him that, Mark would not be baptized, would not even consider where he was at, because he didn't want to prove his mother right. See, some of you are going to deal with your pride here... If you need to become a Christian, hey become a Christian. Don't worry about it, if it adds fuel to the fire of your critic, who cares. You get righteous! Don't let your judgement be altered because of some naive, illiterate critic. All he or she wants to do is keep you out of the kingdom. Sacrifice your pride.

Question #1: Were you cut to the heart by the cross before you were baptized? Acts 2:36-38

Question #2: Did you confess and repent of all sin in your life? Matthew 3:1-6

Question #3: Were you a committed disciple before you were baptized? Matthew 28:19, John 4:1, Luke 14:25-35 (Did you count the cost before you were baptized?)

Question #4: Did you respond to Christ, or merely flee from God's wrath? Matthew 3:7-12, Acts 8:26-40

Question #5: Were you converted to Jesus Christ or merely converted to the right church, the right doctrine, the right baptism? Acts 2:37-37

Question #6: Did you understand and crucify your sinful nature before baptism? Galatians 5:16-24

Question #7: Did you understand that you were being saved, forgiven at the point of baptism? Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21

Don't worry about what anyone else is going to think... What you want to do is find the truth... Basically, your soul is in your hands, it's a matter of how honest are you going to be. We have nothing to gain by baptizing you any more than we would if you were restored as a Christian... We do want you to do one or the other... If you don't have deep convictions about your conversion, you're not going to be able to save anybody. You've got to know man, that you're a Christian and there's no doubt about it... You've got to know absolutely that you're not a Christian. Now is that hard-line, it sure is. **You're not** going to find any Christians ever getting baptized in the first-century, they only baptized non-Christians. They baptized people that were disciples, who wanted to be in the family of God... You've got a strong element of mainline Christianity up here... You better know where you became a Christian... I'm not asking you to be baptized because you don't feel like your Christians. What I'm saying is, "you've got to have a biblical reason why you're not a Christian." **We're trying to find a biblical reason why you're not a Christian... I'm talking about a genuine conviction.**

**Sacrifice your life... Luke 9:23... Here's the standard, this is the standard for all... If you want to crucify your pride and not get bitter over a correction or rebuke, then you must take up your cross daily... I am really fired up about the fact that you are coming tomorrow ready to sacrifice out of your own pocketbooks, out of your own budgets, to get this ministry started. What's the goal \$12,000, that was 15 times your budget. Paul says that he thinks that all the money is there... That's what he's been told... I want to challenge you, if you go home**

**and you don't feel like you've sacrificed enough, you've still got time to change that thing...You pledged 15 times, 3 months ago, don't back up on it...The ministry might go on the same without it, but what's going to be missed is your heart. We need to sacrifice because that is the test of our hearts...You have the opportunity to show where your heart is by giving of your treasure tomorrow.**

—Tape Ends—

### **September, 18, 1992 San Diego Church Revival –Marty Fuqua**

(\*\*\* material on tape not transcribed)

... notice here that because Achan broke faith, God is speaking now to the whole Israelite people, and saying, 'You have acted unfaithfully.' 'You have broken faith.' **I believe that this church has broken faith. I believe a lot of you, if not all of you in the San Diego church have broken faith.** Well, what did Achan do? Achan took some of the devoted things. He took some of the special little things. We'll read about it in a few minutes. It was because of his sin, Israel was no longer powerful.

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I want to talk for a few minutes here about the sins of the San Diego church, and what has broken faith and what has stopped the victory in the San Diego church. Number 1, materialism. **You say, 'well bro., how do you know we've been materialistic?' Because you live in San Diego.** You know even driving from LA down to San Diego, it is a phenomenal little transference. You know, you sorta drive and you go through S. LA there, and Long Beach, and things aren't much there, and then you know it gets nice in Orange County. And then you sorta hit Camp Pendelyn there, and you know it gets a little bear in there, and then all of the sudden you start coming into San Diego, and it gets nice and nice and nicer. It's unbelievable, and not only that you can see it. **Many of you have fallen prey to the Yuppie lifestyle. You live in comfortable homes, you have a comfortable lifestyle, and the bottom line is you are more concerned about your creature comforts** than you are about the world being lost. You're more concerned about your money and your things than you are about the condition of your soul and the souls of those around you. You love your things. **Many of you in this church aren't even tithing in your regular contribution. I mean basic, bottom line what every young Christian should be challenged to give is a tithe, a tenth of all they make. And many of you in this church today aren't even doing that. You say, 'well, how do you know that bro.?' Listen, I may not be brain surgeon, but I can look at numbers.** You've fallen prey to materials. You love the world.

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Let me read you some statistics that you turned in to me. I didn't make these up. This is what you guys turned in to me, through the leadership. **In 1991, the church here baptized 959 people, and grew by 128. January through September of 1992, you've baptized 413, not even on last years pace. Supposedly, a bigger church, but not even baptizing as many people as you did last year, with a net growth of 75.** Hey there's a lot of you, you're not sharing your faith. I mean let's just be flat honest. You're not out sharing your faith. You don't see as your job in life, your mission as a child of God to seek and to save the lost. You haven't had a visitor to church in weeks, or months, or years. There is a laziness and a lack of spirit toward the purpose of the church. It is disgusting how lazy the church here has become. **Once again, I think that's part of being in San Diego.** You're just not motivated. You're just not fired up to get the job done.

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There's a spirit of compromise that has come into the congregation. A lot of you have been around for a few years. You're more or less my age, I'm 37. You were converted two, three, four, five or maybe more years ago, and **now you're older and wiser. And now you're going to really know how to disciple people, because you see, you've been hurt by discipling. You've been damaged. And now you're going to do it the right way, and what you do is you compromise every single principal of the relationships that God has given us.** You don't speak the truth in love. You turn your back the other way. You don't rebuke and correct and encourage. You keep things on a totally superficial level. I mean, they don't ever get involved in your life and you don't get involved in theirs. I mean, I'm not by brothers keeper. **It's not mine to tell anybody what to do. I mean, I'm just going to let everybody do their own thing.** Yeah you are, and their doing their own thing. And the church has broken faith, and God has said, 'until you get your faith back on, no more blessings. **You know, it's my experience that those who gripe the most about being damaged in discipling relationships, many times are the people who did the most damaging. I mean, they left a trail of bodies all behind them. And, 'Oh I was hurt sooo bad.'** Listen, have a birthday. You know, it is not a matter of if you're going to get hurt by another Christian, if you're a Christian, it is a matter of when. It may be minutes after your baptism. It may be days, it may be weeks, if

**you're really fortunate, and the Lord just really feels like you can't take it, it may be months.** But guys, you're going to get hurt. That's why the Bible tells us what to do when we do get hurt... You take authority out of discipling relationships, and you have nothing. You have a palsy-walsy non-Christian relationship is what you have. You have a directionalless relationship, because it directionally goes no where.

You know sometimes in my family we have to sorta have a role explanation. We have a little family devotional in the living room, we sorta line out again that I am the Dad, and Chris is the Mom. **And we are the boss, and Ben and Maria are the children, and they are not the boss. Cause sometimes they can sorta get the feeling, you know, that they can get what they want.** Many of you you've compromised. You've backed off unbelievably in your relationship. You say, **'well, I don't want anybody telling me what to do.'** **Let me tell you something, you need someone telling you what to do.**

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Some of you guys have relationships with people who have left this church. They were once members of the church, and now they aren't members of the church any more. And you get together with them, and **you think what you're doing is keeping some kind of umbilical cord there, so you can sorta win them back at the right time, and so you can have an influence on their life.** Well, I want to ask you who is influencing who? **They fill your mind up with garbage all the time about their little bad attitudes, and the way they were abused, and the way they didn't get treated fairly, and this and that and everybody else, and the church this and the church that.** And you sit there, and you let it come right on in your ears, and you don't say anything, or very little to defend the truth, and to defend your brothers and sisters. Compromise, compromise, compromise, compromise. You say, 'bro. **Well, there's so many people. Where there's smoke there must be a fire.'** That's right, and you better find out who set the fire. You've compromised. I don't have time, in my life, to get together with people that have bad attitudes about the church, bad attitudes about the Lord. A lot of these people you guys have talked palsy-walsy with have really very little religious convictions anymore about anything. And you're getting together with them as if they were totally committed Christians. **Compromise, compromise, compromise, compromise.**

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You know the Bible tells us to respect those who work hard among us, to make their leadership of us a joy and not a burden. I know for myself, there is nothing more frustrating, more irritating than someone bad-mouthing me behind my back. It's discouraging, it's frustrating. It doesn't make me feel like, 'hey I really love leading this person right here, he's got a bad attitude about me. Or who has may be a low grade bad attitude... **Hey you guys need to get behind your leadership wholeheartedly. I believe this, they are here because God either put them here, or God allowed them to come here...Your leadership is here because it's within the confines of the will of God, and so you need to say Amen, and be excited about it, and be supportive of their leadership.**

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A few years ago, I was leading the church in Chicago, and Kip came out and said, 'bro., what we need you to do is leave the church here in Chicago, and move down to Buenos Aires, Argentina.' **Now, my level of enthusiasm for that suggestion, at that time, was very, very low. I didn't know Spanish.....I said, 'I don't know I can't understand this, it doesn't make any sense to me.'** And finally, he came out with and said, 'bro., here's the thing, that situation down there, I don't know of anybody else that I can send right now to do. I need you to do it.' And I said, 'bro., why we been dancing around the Mulberry bush for two hours for?' **Why didn't you just say that, you really need me to do it.'** I moved on down to Argentina.

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About 1:30 (a.m.) the phone rings. Now they don't have answering machines, so when the phone rings, either it just ring, ring, ring, ring, or someone gets up and gets the phone. So, I said, 'Chris go get the phone.' And she goes in, and she comes back in, and she says, 'it's Kip.' My first thought was, oh no what have they found in Chicago. I thought, oh no, was there a wife swapping ring, and I didn't know about it. I mean, it's like no, for him to call me this late, it must be bad... He said, 'well bro., **the Browns have fallen into some marriage problems, and we're going to have to take them on back to Boston to help their marriage get together...what I really need, is I need you and Chris to move. Now Chris over there saying, 'I don't care where it is, we're not moving. I don't care where it is, we're not going.'** (uuughs and aaahs from the audience.) **Oh, lighten up. Of course, we came on up to LA. We left, even after we had just gotten our apartment all set up.**

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I believe it's God's will for there to be a Super church in this place. A church of thousands and thousands. You know tonight, **if the whole church is here, there is about 1700 members.** On Sunday you're going to meet down

at the Convention Center. I'm told that it holds four or five thousand people. Listen, you ought to be filling that thing up, and then you need to move on.

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We're all going to break into discipleship groups all around the room, and you're going to have an opportunity to be open about your life, about what's been going on in your life. And then this next week, we'll have a meeting tomorrow and Sunday church, obviously. But then this next week every single one of you are going to seat down and go through a talk, and it's going to be a challenging talk about **whether you really want to be a disciple, or whether you really want to be committed or not. Now, if you really want to be committed it's going to be an awesome little talk, you're going to enjoy it, it'll be challenging, but it's basically going to be, 'Amen, I can't wait to get this done, let's just get it done.'** Cause basically on Sunday, in my opinion, and what we're going at this with as the leaders is that **the membership in the San Diego church of Christ is zero. And we're going to put together the real membership.** Cause I've been told by Dave and the elders, that there are many of you, tens may be even hundreds of you that don't even come to all the services of the church. You don't share your faith. You don't have good attitudes. You don't tithe. But just let me be abundantly clear. **If you're going to be a member of the San Diego church of Christ, you are going to be totally committed to Christ. You are going to be totally committed to His church...You're going to have good attitudes, and you're not going to grumble and complain, and you're not going to cohort around and be buddy, buddy with people who have left this church and have bad attitudes. You're going to tithe. You're basically going to be what every person ought to be that's a disciple.** Now if that's your heart then AMEN, but if that's not your heart then find another church, because you're not going to be happy here. Let me promise you, **and if it's your time to leave now, I mean, you just realize, 'OK, I realize, hey San Diego church, may be I didn't totally understand everything.'** Well, I've tried to be very clear tonight...But guys we're going to come up with what the real membership is. **We're going to get the sin out of the camp, and I'm telling you, this church is going to crank like you've never seen before.**

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**Dave Weger, Evangelist**

I'm also repenting of just being a **lousy disciple to Marty**, and I'm ashamed of that. I think there are times when I really, I was out of touch with where I was as a disciple. A lot of us are that way. We think we're alright. I didn't want to hear that. It just wasn't good news to my ears, and **Marty said, 'You've just been a lousy disciple.'** **It's true, I haven't imitated him 100%, and I believe in imitation. I preach it, but I know Marty is right.** Marty I apologize to you before the church, and brother, I will be a great disciple to you.

I also want to repent of just not dealing with the whininess and the gripiness and the crouchie, ouchies of this group, quickly. I have not dealt with those groups. I know where those pockets are, and I've done too much delegating. And I'm flat going to get in there myself and call these groups to repentance.

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**George Havins, Elder**

I want to share with you some insight into the way I **think**. A few weeks ago, I **think** I was **thinking** like some of you. Dave was preaching an awesome sermon. I was saying, 'Amen, this thing is going in the right direction. We are getting on track. This is right from the Word, and **then he choose to use a phrase that Jesus didn't use.** Something about a swinging door. Remember? And **I said, 'I wouldn't have used those particular words. I would have chosen to use something different.'** I didn't have any problem with where he was going with it, **but you know what I did? I started to think. That was a mistake...**(laughter from the audience)

### **March 17, 1994 Indianapolis Speech –Kip McKean**

\*\*\* = material on tape not transcribed

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I don't know if you've read anything about what's been going on in the Middle East, and of course as you well know we've had our challenges there. First, in the work there in Cairo, Egypt, as well as the work in Amman Jordan. It's been really challenging persecution wise, but we've been praying for the Lord to open up the right doors so we

could have an incredible work in the Middle East. Particularly a work that can be our, if you will, our **kinda mother church there, our Antioch for the entire Middle East.**

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We've been really praying for the Lord to open up a door. Well, here's what happened. We tried to get a church established there (Lebanon) and we couldn't because, "the other denominations opposed us," so they don't want any other "new groups." So through relationships and through special people that were converted in the church in Boston. We got to have relationships with some of the upper people in the government there. To make a long story short, instead of getting a church, **we've simply gotten an agreement to be able to have, if you will, an association, a fellowship there.** The only thing we can't do is marry people, we can't do that in the other Middle East nations anyway, and so **this association will have obviously a benevolent element to it in reaching out and helping the poor, which is something we want to do already,** amen. But they're going to allow us as the church to meet there and to "preach what we believe," amen.

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We're really looking forward to having all the Indianapolis church come visit with us in June. And if you don't know, we've invited the entire Indianapolis church to be with us June 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, which is Saturday, we've invited all the churches in California, and in that far western part of the US to come to LA, and we're all going to be going to an amusement park there, Knox Berry Farms. And so, there will probably be somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 disciples.

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I've kept all the promises I made to you two weeks ago. Number one, I'm back, amen. Number two, **we found the money to replace the mission fund that ordinarily the Indianapolis church would supply, which is about \$240,000.** That's going to be supplied by another church. Isn't that incredible, how the kingdom. And **we want you to use the money that you would have used for the mission fund to save it, buy that airplane ticket and come on out and be with us in LA for that special weekend.** The 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> of June. To be able to really see what God is doing around the **world in His movement,** amen. Secondly, along the financial lines, I don't know if you realize how much time and energy, but money, particularly the Chicago church has spent to fly everybody in, to have everybody stay, get these meeting rooms. I first of all want to commend the Mannels for an incredible job that they have done, amen.

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We've been doing a lot of work in LA. **We've also found about \$150,000 to give the Chicago church, because that's what all this has cost.** And so, we're going to be giving that money to the Chicago church to make sure that the Lord's work isn't hindered there. I want you to know in Indianapolis how much other people are sacrificing for you. But I appreciate the great Chicago church, amen.

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I want you to know what's being done in the kingdom for your sake. I don't want you to feel bad about it, but I do want you humbled by it. Saying, "wow, you guys are **sacrificing \$250,000 for the missions contribution and \$150,000.** You're sacrificing 10 Bible Talk leaders. The kinda group you'd send to a new nation to start a new church. The Chicago church is sacrificing the Weagers, and **they're personally willing to put on the line the welfare of their children.**" Yeah, and the Chicago church is also going to be sending 30 other disciples. That's incredible guys. I don't want you to feel down about it. I want you to feel humbled, and I want you to feel inspired. Because you see, it's not like we're giving it away to another church. **We are one church, one kingdom, one brotherhood, amen.**

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One of the things that's been **injured here is the trust issue.** And I totally trust the 10 disciples from LA, that you're going to take care of them. I know the Chicago brothers totally trust that you're going to take care of the 30 from Chicago... On the other hand I want you to have some of your friends out there in Chicago and LA after this incident to verify, hey it really is awesome. A lot of rumors have been circulating. **A lot of things have supposedly been said, seen and heard, it's garbage.**

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We're going to ask at this time, Dr. Al Baird, we know him as Al. **He was one of the original elders of the Boston church.** He's now an elder in the LA church. He's also the World Sector Leader, formerly of the Middle East, and now of the Media/Law Sector of our whole worldwide ministry. Al's going to come at this time, and share the letter that's going to be sent out to all **149 churches in the movement** around the world about what's happened in Indianapolis, and that will pave the way for me to come and to share with you from the Scriptures the parallel of what's happened here and what's happened in the Bible. Al Baird.

Okay, listen carefully. To all the disciples in the International Churches of Christ around the world, from Kip McKean, Al Baird, Marty Fuqua, Ron Drabot, and the elders of the Chicago Church of Christ. This announcement is to inform you of the actions of Ed Powers, Evangelist of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, which have resulted in part of that congregation being led astray from God's movement. On Sunday night, February 27, 1994. Ed called a meeting of the Indianapolis church in which he asked for and received a majority vote of confidence from the congregation in a move **to separate itself from the International Churches of Christ**. This meeting followed his having convinced the staff of the congregation to support the move. It is clear from subsequent conversations with several members that the congregation in general did not understand the implications of the vote. Ed called Marty Fuqua, World Sector Leader responsible for the western US after the vote was taken to inform Marty of his actions. At no time previous to the vote did Ed let any of **those over him in the Lord** know of his intent nor of his discontent with the movement. This is especially surprising in light of the fact that Ed attended a two day meeting of the US west Evangelist and Ministry Leaders in LA just two weeks before these actions to occur. After Ed refused to allow Marty to speak to the Indianapolis church, and even refused to meet with Marty, and because the staff fully supported Ed's actions, both Ed and the staff were marked for the grievous sin of creating division in the Lord's church (Romans 16:17). We call on everyone to keep away from them, except for those leaders who continue to call them to repentance. We praise God that already 3 of the staff have repented and joined us. A special meeting was held in Indianapolis on Thursday night, March the 3<sup>rd</sup>, just two weeks ago, to announce the forming of the new Indianapolis International Church of Christ. To address the issues and answer questions. Friends and relatives who are disciples in other places were encouraged to go to Indianapolis for this session and to invite as many members of the Indianapolis church as they could. The session was highly successful with about **250 attendees, 70 of them were out of town disciples**, including Kip McKean, the World Sector Leaders, Doug Arthur, Al Baird, Marty Fuqua, and Bob Gempel, as well as the Evangelists, elders and wives from the great Chicago Church of Christ. Ron Drabot disciples the work in the Midwest of which Indianapolis is a part, as **Titus did Crete** (Titus 1:5). John and Nancy Mannel are temporarily leading the new church. Dave and Judy Weager will lead as soon as they can move there from Chicago. A growing number, **200 so far, from the former congregation have indicated that they want to be a part**. We are confident that in spite of this sad event echoing Korah and his rebellion God is triumphing and the church is being strengthened even as LA is sending 10 Bible Talk leaders, and Chicago is sending 30 disciples. Pray for the new Indianapolis International Church of Christ and it's leadership. Pray that Ed and his staff will repent. Upon the repentance we would be willing and eager to welcome them back with open arms. Pray that the good hearted, but mislead members of the former congregation will see the truth and unite with us. If you know people in Indianapolis, or members of the Indianapolis Church of Christ, as Jude taught, "let us snatch them from the fire." Let us encourage them to come and visit and join us in the new Indianapolis International Church of Christ. And to God be the Glory.

\*\*\* Kip prays

I pray that were there is blindness, were there is sentimentality, were there is hard heartedness that the Holy Spirit will intercede, and they will see what the Scriptures teach. Father, as the great leaders of the past have done, there comes a time when the people don't need to take a vote. When the people simply need to decide are they for God or for Baal. **Are they for God's leaders or for those that oppose them?** Father, tonight I pray that the line is clear, as clear as it was and is in your word. Be with me at this time. Father, help me to say it as if Jesus himself were saying it. Help me to be able to use the right Scriptures. To say it in exactly the right way so people can hear what you want to hear.

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Tonight is a call to a decision. I realize that some may be here for the first time...So I beg you to take down these Scriptures, and **if you see that they are used inappropriately or not of the Lord then you forget anything that I would say. I'm of no issue right here**. But if these Scriptures truly parallel the situation that we have faced these last few weeks, then this is not some man that is preaching. This is God speaking to us individually and collectively.

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Tonight we've got to lay out from the Scriptures what God teaches about what's been done. Now I want to start in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 with a Scripture that I want you to see validates, parallels not just from the New Testament of the Bible, but from the Old Testament. As I spoke about before there are so many Church of Christ roots in some of the teachings that Ed Powers has given. And he's proclaimed to be "new teachings" when in fact these are just old Church of Christ traditions. One of the main things in the old line Church of Christ as well, "we're just focusing in on the New Testament, we're just a New Testament church." I don't believe that for a moment. I believe that we are a Bible church. And there's a reason for some extent why the New Testament is so small, it's because all of **the principles in the Old Testament, all the stories, all the principles of God still hold**. Now, there are some things,

some covenants that have passed. We understand that from the book of Hebrews, but the essence of God has not changed. When the New Covenant began on the day of Pentecost, not when Jesus began his ministry, when the New Covenant began on the day of Pentecost, it wasn't like God repented and then became a Christian, and changed His personality or His character. My Bible teaches me that God is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, and on that have I stacked my life.

Let's start in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10, notice how Paul starts to a disunified Corinthian church. (verses 1-13)

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**Grumbling will cause you to fall.** Now we need to understand what he said right here. Did he rank any one of these things as worse than the others? See my Bible teaches me, hey in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even in God's church now, we have it clear in our mind, immorality, prostitution, homosexuality, adultery, these things are evil, and many of us participate in those things. And we know the evil it brings, and we've got deep convictions. But he's saying, "hey that was terrible, but so was idolatry, and so was grumbling." He's not ranking sexual immorality. He's saying, "listen sexual immorality causes people to lose their salvation as much as grumbling causes them to lose their salvation. Are you with me right here church? You say, "but aren't there a lot of people who have innocent hearts?"

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There has been and will continue to be a way out provided by God. I believe one of the first things we've got to understand is that, number one, grumbling is as bad as immorality in the eyes of God. We don't think grumbling is that bad of a sin. Number two, in the Bible there is not a victim mentality. He says, "there's no temptation that's come your way, that there isn't a way out on." And what was feed to the Indianapolis Church over and over again is how bad things, oh woe is you, woe is me, here's our problem, here's what going on. And many things that the disciples actually thought were healed in their lives got reopened. And a victim mentality began to grow individually and collectively. Now we must remember this God does not judge a church collectively. He judges individually.

Let's go to Exodus, Chapter 16. **We have now validated that the things in the Old Testament happen as an example for us under the New Testament.** We are living under the New Testament, amen. **But we're living with the same God as the Old Testament.** He didn't change, didn't get baptized. You know, He's the same guy. Amen.

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We in America believe in the concept of democracy as "being the highest form of government." I think that it's great that as disciples in the 20<sup>th</sup> century we live in America. I like the freedom of religion, amen. On the other hand, that has been kinda taken a step to far when we say well, "the form of government in the kingdom of God must be a democracy." In the kingdom of God, it is a kingdom. **There are no votes.** That's Church of Christ business meetings. We did away with those things a loong time ago.

Secondly, we don't elect a president were 46% of the people like him, 42% hate him, and the other people can't decide. That's not how we have it in the Lord. **The Lord has his anointed leaders. Not the one's they voted for.** You know if there had been a vote going for Moses at the beginning of the Red Sea, it wouldn't have been a strong showing. See, **that's the difference in the kingdom of God, is that the prophet the leader of God's people has to stand up against the majority for the sake of what is right.** We know that principle collectively, because we know that Jesus said, "straight and narrow's the road that goes to heaven, but brother, wide is the road that leads to destruction." We understand as a people of God. We're always going to be in the minority, but we've got to keep our convictions strong. Right here is the principle that will shake the Americanized Christian. **To grumble against God's leaders is to grumble against God himself.** That's a very serious thing. Are we saying that Moses was perfect? No Moses wasn't perfect.

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I believe Peter messed up a few times. Three to be exact right there at the crucial point. Paul had some low moments. He gave a little back talk to the High Priest. Remember that, Acts 23. Still an Apostle though. Even Apostles messed up. That blows our mind, we think Apostles were perfect. No they weren't. Matter of fact one of them even fellaway, Judas. We have these ideas that some how have been put into us that if you're a leader, then you've got to be perfect. Well, no they're going to be judged. They're even going to be judged more severely. **But leaders are not chosen by the people like in a democracy. Leaders are chosen by God. Those of you in the audience that are leaders, I mean there should be a pit in your stomach going, "ah, gee you mean it wasn't the**

**Evangelist that picked me out to go into, no, no it was the Lord.** You are not an employee of the church, you are a servant of the living God. And right here guys, **when people start talking bad about the Evangelist, when people start talking bad about the leaders of the movement, you're not grumbling against Moses and Aaron. You're not grumbling against Kip and Marty, Ron and Lavonia. You're grumbling against the Lord. Now that's either in the Scriptures or it is not.**

Turn to Numbers, Chapter 16

(versus 1-3)

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This is a very serious chapter...Right here, the Bible says, "there was insolence." **What's insolence? When someone under the charge of the Lord's anointed raises up to challenge their authority. That's insolence.** If you are a parent you understand that. Secondly, these weren't just some jokers in the Israelite community. These were leaders. You see, in order for there to be a group uprising, it's got to be led. A lot of people are going, "you mean leaders can fallaway?" Yeah. Thirdly, the charge, you have gone too far. You are expecting too much. Boy doesn't that tickle the ears of the people? Yeah, you're doing too much. Yeah, I'd like it easier. Fourthly, **this is incredible, a twisting of Scripture. It's the whole community that's holy. Moses, how come you have set yourself up to be the one over the Lord's people? You're not the only holy one amongst us. We're all holy.** Boy, doesn't that sound spiritual? Right here when we read this, our 20<sup>th</sup> century American Christianity we go, "I can't believe this happened. There was rebellion among the Israelites against Moses? You know, we have got to get our Pollyanna thinking dealt with. We are in the business of evangelizing the world, and it's not going to be easy.

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Let me tell you something, what has happened here. You go, "I can't believe it's happened." It's happened. But it's not the first time it's happened, and if we really are God's people this challenge will come to us again. Now, in essence this was the last time something like this happened, because the Israelites dealt with it so firmly, and you'll find that the Lord had a hand in it. He was very persuasive near the end of the chapter. So we've got to understand it has happened. Some of you, "oh, it's never happened before, it's never happened before, I can't believe, I can't." **Would you shut-up, get your Bible open, it has happened before, but it's got to be dealt with in a Godly way.**

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**Autonomy is unbiblical. It's not a word found in the Bible.** Turn to Titus 1, in verse 5. He said, "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you." Right here we find that one evangelist, Titus, is given the charge by Paul. Now Titus isn't an Apostle or anything, but **he's given a charge to be over all the churches in Crete.** There was not an autonomous church in each of the separate towns. As a matter of fact, the evangelist was to appoint elders in each one of the churches that were in each town. The Bible clearly teaches that in one church in one city, amen. It doesn't teach in autonomy. We find here that the evangelist was given the power and the charge to straighten things out. Was he a member of that church? No, but he was given the charge.

Look a little bit later, we find in verse 15 (chapter 2) "These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you." A little bit later, verse 9 (chapter 3). "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned."

Somebody has said, "**well why don't we have a debate?**" See, this has been the problem, Ed did not bring to my attention or to Marty's attention, and as the letter says, he was in LA just two weeks before all this happened. He had more than enough time, two days to talk to us. Not a word. I mean, we were hugged. "Well, everything is going great, bro." He had the opportunity.

Secondly, it's clear right here. At least in my Bible. It says, "that the evangelist," it's written to Titus, "Don't, don't get involved in foolish arguments and controversies." What just blew away all the young disciples in the Indianapolis church? Why are so many of the young people just so confused? They don't know **all these Church of Christ idiotic traditions.** Because they've been baptized recently, and so in that sense they've had all these things drop on them, and it's confused them. Ed himself said, "hey, listen, I have shielded you from the harshness of the movement." No, what he's done is he's shielded the people of Indianapolis from the good of the movement.

You know something, I've had people hating me that have never even met me. Now go figure. How did that happen? How did that happen? You know someone by their heart.

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**You know a good prophet from a bad prophet by looking at the fruit of their life.** Now how in the world did people in my home city who I had never met come to hate my guts? Someone put it there. Now if someone puts hate in somebody, that's not of God. See, I think we've got to be wise right here. Get your eyes open. **The Bible teaches right here that Titus had the charge over several churches. He was to straighten things out.** He was to deal with them with all authority, and to rebuke accordingly. And he was not to get involved in controversies, not to get involved in a debate. Debate would just continue to injure peoples hearts and lives. That's why the Church of Christ, the old movement dissipated. They wanted to debate the denominations. Well, lets debate on baptism. The issue isn't baptism. The issue is Jesus Christ and being disciplined, and evangelizing the world, amen.

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As an evangelist I've got to obey the word of God. **To get involved in a debate would be sinful, wrong, and injurious.** In my flesh, I go, "oh yeah, I'd like to debate." But that's inside of me.

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**I'm telling you according to the Bible, I'm not allowed to debate. I'm not going to debate. I'll study the Scriptures, one-on-one with anybody. Autonomy it's not in the Bible as a word.** You can not have an evangelist that has a charge over your church like Marty Fuqua not come in your church, and then say you're in the movement. No, you left the movement. But he said to us, "that we didn't leave the movement." Listen, you've been deceived.

Secondly, the issue of why was Ed and the staff marked? Why didn't you go through Matthew 18? Verses 15 through 17 where you have the four steps. One on one, two or three on one, the church on one, and then finally disfellowshipment. **You can only disfellowship somebody that's in fellowship. If they don't want to meet with you, they're not in fellowship anymore.** That's not the proper Scripture. The Scripture of issue then become Romans 16, let's turn there. I want you to mark these Scriptures down.

Verse 17, "I urge you, brother, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the mind of naïve people." "Oh, we have the fastest growing church in the Midwest." I had no choice, Matthew 18 was not an issue. **When he will not meet with us. When he will not allow us into the assembly. He has removed this church from the fellowship of God's movement. He has become divisive.** He is putting obstacles in the faith of young disciples. How has he done it? By smooth talk and flattery. The marking, Matthew 18 is not the issue, Romans 16 is. Well you say, **"you've gone too far." By saying, "you're the leader of the movement." I said, "hold it, I didn't say I was." But I either am or I'm not.** It's kind of interesting Ed was talking to Marty, and Marty just reiterated the conversation to me the other day.

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Ed says, "well I can't be a part of a system where there is a hierarchy and one guy is in charge." Marty goes, "well Ed, you know, when you pull out of our movement aren't you the one guy in charge of Indianapolis? Except you just have a smaller hierarchy?" Ed, **"when you think about it every group has a CEO, every group has a President, every group has a Premier. Somebody's got to lead.** Even God in a tiny nuclear family has a hierarchy, it's called, "dad."

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**Well, are the people in the International Churches of Christ the only ones saved? We're the only ones that teach as we teach,** but if someone in another group, another Church of Christ or even a Baptist group or whatever picks up the Bible, and they see the way of salvation, which you've got to have faith in Jesus the Son of God, you've got to repent of all the sins, you've got to come to a conviction Jesus died on the cross, you've got to Jesus as the Lord of your life, you've got to become a disciple of Jesus, and then you've got to be water immersed, water baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. If they have done that, then they are a son or daughter of God. **Cause we don't take a vote in our churches.** On the other hand, if they're in some isolated group like that. This is what I spent the last time I spoke to you telling you about. If they want to be a part of a movement, then they've got to be a part of a church that is moving. If they are the only one that's come to that truth in their little fellowship, **then if they are really good hearted they are going to join with people that are true disciples. So, I'm not going to be ordering the borders of Israel here, that's for the Lord to do.** Now, I'm

going to be hard-line about what it takes to become a true disciple. **But I spent all the '80s trying to bring in the remnant from these little churches.**

You say well, "okay, but what happens if then they start opposing the movement?" Now you've brought up a whole different issue. Let's turn to 2 Timothy 3. You know, I'm in no rush tonight, it's only 6 in the evening. This is actually the sermon. I'm done with my introduction and everything. Verse 10, this is Paul writing to Timothy. "You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings-what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured." I spent two hours sharing with you all the persecutions I endured in Philadelphia, Charleston, Boston, Manila, Cairo, LA. You know um, cause you've read about um in your cotten-pickin papers. They're not exactly secret. What I believe is not a secret. What I preach is not a secret. And there a number in this auditorium that know me personally. They know my way of life, they know my purpose, they know my wife, and they know my 3 kids. I realize many don't, but many do.

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You know, a while back I was going, "how come these **guys like Rick Bauer, Jerry Jones** are so cotten-pickin convincing?" I said, "man, they can persuade these people." And you know, finally it hit me, **they themselves were deceived.** Therefore, if they took a lie detector test, and they asked, "is Kip McKean evil, is the movement evil." They would say, "this guy's telling the truth." That's why they're so convincing. Their minds have been deceived, and they are about the work of deceiving. Look, verse 14, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy...(Kip reads through verse 5, chapter 4)

Why are you so surprised. It's in the book. We need to understand that the issue we see in Numbers 16, as well as what we see in the New Testament is this - there were men that were "baptized right." Guys like Demis and Judas. They were baptized right, that left the Lord and opposed God's work. The issue is there hearts and their lives. **If you oppose the Lord's servants, then you oppose the Lord.** And you see, for American Christians that's really hard. Cause we want to vote. **That's not how it is in the kingdom. It's never been like that. It wasn't in the Old Testament. It isn't in the New Testament. God picks the leaders and you've got to get behind them, amen.** That's the teaching of the word.

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"What do you mean you've got to date only Christians?" Let's turn to Nehemiah, chapter 13. You're going to meet a man right here, that honestly I haven't worked up to be as hard-line as of yet. (Verse 23-27) Dating is an American cultural thing. **It's not in the Bible.**

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The principle of God's word is simply this. In opposite sex relationships you are always commanded by God to be "yoked with believers." This business, I don't even understand why you would want to date a non-Christian. What would attract you to a non-Christian? There beautiful face, their beautiful body? His awesome muscles? I mean, let's think about it? Why are we marrying? What's most important? It's gotta be someone's spirituality. **The person you marry is going to determine where you spend eternity.** What's wrong with you! Why do we even get sucked in? "Well, I think we should have the freedom to date who we want." It's not a matter of freedom. It's the flat word of God! How easily we're deceived.

Sixthly, it was stated to you that **the Indianapolis Church was the fastest growing church in the Midwest.** I read to you the stats that Ed Powers himself turned in, and essentially they started with 950 in attendance of January, 1993. Never went over 1,000 average all of 1993, and ended at 950 attendance in 1993 in December. That's the fastest growing church? I think not. What's sadder...is this Ed also reported that you had 750 members. He also reported that you had 200 to 250 children. Now let's see if we can get our addition going here - 750, now let's be minimal here, 750 plus 200 equals what? 950 - Are you saying you had no visitors at church. **Now what you have is at least 100 to 200 fringe people on your membership list that don't even come to your church.** They're either fall away or they're people that never really were bonded into the body. I'm not hung up on statistics, please don't get me wrong. Each of the people, each of those statistics represents a face, a person, a life, a soul.

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That's why I challenge, specifically teach and have taught in the Bible Talk leaders meeting don't use numbers use names, because then it's, did you get with Sally, did you get with Sue, did you get with James, did you get with Ron, did you get with Dave, you know. And then you go, "oh yeah, **we gotta crank the studies. We gotta get them in the water.** We gotta get them to be a brother, amen." **But see the twisting right here comes. You only didn't**

**have a non-growing church. You had a church that was going negative in growth, and if your church was so strong how come even in the world's eyes, you have divided.** If he had produced this super, strong, awesome church, how come it's in shambles?

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**Jesus says, "you'll know a prophet by his fruit."** Was the Indianapolis church the fastest growing church in the Midwest? No, you were deceived. The idea, you were flattered, saying, "well, we're growing, we're awesome, we're so liberal here, cottin-pickin, we're not bogged down with this legalism, and all this stuff they're telling us to do." Smooth talk and flattery. **Not only were you not the fastest growing, you weren't growing period.** And if you're going to be a part of the Indianapolis International Church of Christ, the purpose of this church is to seek and save the lost. And secondly, to join hand in hand and arm and arm with all of your sister churches and to evangelize the world in this generation, amen.

Let's get back to the book of Numbers right here. Remember what we read in the first 3 verses we've got Korah and some other leaders that have become insolent, amen. They rise up against Moses, they come as a group against Moses, and they say, "you've flat gone too far. The whole community is holy Moses, and you've set yourself as the hierarchy guy. Verse 4 (chapter 16)

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Moses didn't fly off the handle. You know, it blew my mind just to show you how distorted a picture you had of me. I had some of you people come up and say, "Bro, you were so nice when you came, and you were so forgiving." Well, what's a Christian suppose to be? I didn't feel like I did anything great. I came, I spoke like I thought. I tried to preach the word the best I could. I forgave those who had hurt me. And amen, let's get on with the Lord's work. It's amazing, "I'm so blown away." You shouldn't have been. I've been praying for the Indianapolis church everyday. My kids pray for you guys.

(Kip reads verse 5-7)

Paul says in 1 Corinthians, verse 11, he says, "you know, there are divisions among you, this has to be so to show which of you has God's approval."

Notice right here, Moses was not a wimpy guy, "oh well let's just make peace, let's get unified." Moses was not a guy to say, "let's have unity at any price." He's going, "hold it, I've gone to far? No, **let's see who is really holy before the Lord.** You're the ones that have gone to far."

(verse 8-13)

Two issues, twisting of the past. The embitterment of people, it is true, that under Moses' leadership the people went through hard times. I mean, I don't know about you, but when you got the cottin-pickin greatest army in the history of the world coming after you, that's hard times.

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"That reconstruction was horrendous." You should have seen the things they said to me. Oh, they challenged me. Let's talk about what you had before the reconstruction. There was not a true church as the Bible defines a true church in Indianapolis. **My Bible teaches me, according to the Bible, that true Christians are disciples. True churches a filled with only disciples, amen. That just didn't exist anywhere.** It was a visionary mode to be in. **That reconstruction produced a true church in Indianapolis.** Now, was everything done perfectly between the leaders and the followers and all that? Oh, I'm not even going to attempt that. That's like saying, "well, in marriage, now marriage is of God, right? And you think it's a good thing right?"

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The issue is you don't get rid of marriage. Marriage is a perfect institution. It's the people that are in that are imperfect.

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**Discipling is a perfect institution.** It's made by God, but the people that are in it are not perfect. They are called sinners. And they are going to do what they do best, sin. Now, honestly I just feel like we've got to get rid of the Pollyanna feeling that if they are a leader and they're discipling me, they've got to be perfect. That's not going to happen.

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The point is this, we're not going to throw out the perfect institution simply because sinners are in it. Discipling is God's plan. It's not a choice. You don't get to vote on it. You can't go half way with it, anymore than you can go half way with marriage.

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You see, right here in the Bible he distorts the past. Ed has distorted the past. **That reconstruction was of God.** Building a church that was built of only disciples, what a marvel, what a vision, what a dream become reality. That is flat phenomenal church. But it's almost like, "well, that's when the horrors began to occur. It was milk and honey before that. When we were in the mainline church." Ah, geez scary. The twisting of the past.

(Verse 14-15)

You know, I read this thing and I go, you know I feel a lot better about the decision I made not to take the missions offering from you. In other words, you just get to the point where you just go, hold it I don't want you to have any sense of having done something for me. I want you to see how little you have done, not in a put down sense. But God and His kingdom will advance whether you're in it or not. You say, "how come." Because God is leading it!

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Secondly, I want you to notice that there comes a time when the leaders need to get angry. Anger is not a sin in and of itself. You can go over the edge in your anger, and we're going to see the heart of Moses come on out.

(Verse 16-35)

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See Korah opposed the Lord's anointed. In essence he wasn't opposing Moses, he was opposing the Lord, God. When these people were taken in by the deception and the smooth talk and the flattery, they too became guilty of the sin of divisiveness and grumbling. Look at this.

(Verse 36-41)

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This is where we stand tonight. You see, **the Lord literally physically killed those who opposed Moses. No, who opposed Him.** And now these people that stood at a distance who were kinda of on the fence going, "I can't believe what they've done. They are so hard line. They've drawn a line." See, they let sentimentality creep on in there. And now they become embittered and they fall into the sin because their sentimental. Their loyalty is stronger to a man than to God. I believe in being loyal. I mean, you've got, **in the kingdom you've got to be loyal, amen.** And a lot of us have learned how to do that, **because we've learned how to trust people finally.** It feels good to trust people doesn't it. On the other hand, our loyalty cannot be superseded. **Our number one loyalty is to Jesus Christ and His word.** Hey, **the guy that studied the Bible with me, he fell away. Preacher that baptized me, he's not in the movement.** Amen! I feel terrible. They've made their decisions. I'm a loyal guy. I'm the son of a Naval Admiral. You're taught to be loyal. That's just part of it.

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I can see some of you get sentimental. Well you're being so hard on Ed, so hard on the staff, so hard on those people. Well, no, this is what God teaches. See, what's going to be really hard for some of you is you've got friends. Some of you got family "on the other side."

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(Verse 42-50)

That's shocking. That many souls were lost not with the initial grumbling of Korah, but with the backlash of sentimentality, because they abhorred how hard-line God is. We've got to be careful of our American Christianity right here.

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God is hard-line, and **He will always win, and He will always get his way.** (not understandable) sentimentality for the discipline of God to stand in the way of your clear thinking and keep your heart strong and hard-line about what the Bible teaches, amen.

What is the need of the hour? Well, this is very interesting to me. Turn to Matthew chapter 18, beginning in verse 1. (Kip reads through verse 4) You know, kids are really cool. And when they are small, I mean, you can toss them up in the air, you know five feet.

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Jesus says, **"this is the kind of trust that you gotta have a little kid."** You know, **my greatest worry has not been the poison of the false doctrines. It's been the destruction of trust. You're trusting God, you're trusting God's movement. You're trusting all the other churches. You're trusting discipling. You're trusting people.** I'm not saying that people are perfect. I tried to explained that to you. Discipling is a perfect institution like marriage, because discipling is made by God. And everything God makes is perfect, amen. But we're sinners in that perfect institution. There are going to be some problems. **When a discipler sins, he needs to ask forgiveness.**

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(Verse 5-7)

I will never forget two weeks ago, walking into that assembly and being treated the way I was treated. I have no bitterness, no bad attitudes. I was shocked. That brothers and sisters would receive someone they didn't even know in such a horrendous bad attitude way. I've never been treated that bad by non-Christians. And I thought about this passage.

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Well, what's the issue? Let's go on. (Verse 21-35)

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Under the guise of preaching love and freedom is conjuring up the records of wrong (not understandable). That's not the gospel. The gospel is forgiveness. The gospel is peace (not understandable). And **so this bitterness then gets you to the point of opposing the Lord's leaders, and opposing the Lord himself**. What is the need of the hour? You've got to recognize the level of destruction that's been rote in your life. You know, when Ed and the staff say things like, "this is my church, this is my people, this is my campus ministry." I'm going, "no, it's God's church, it's God's people and it's God's campus ministry. You don't own them. Now, we've got to understand right here. You've been sucked into a level of bitterness and rage.

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**If you're in a confused state right now then you know Satan's got your heart.**

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Turn to the book of Jude. You know, it's amazing to me as we go further and further into God's movement how the Scriptures become alive.

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(Verse 3-23)

That's what some of you were doing too. You don't understand the missions contribution, but you were speaking against it. Oh we explained it to you, **and we're always happy to explain things**. But you didn't understand it, and you were speaking against it, because you rejected authority.

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Where do we go from here?

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See, that will clean the whole thing up. Just repent and forgive. That's all there is to it. It's not really a complicated issue here guys.

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Lastly, you need to **obey the marking**. You are to have no contact with Ed Powers or his staff, or with anybody that has decided to be at that other church in opposition to this church. If you disobey the marking then we'll be forced to warn you if you stay in our fellowship, and if you leave then you will be marked. You are divisive. I'm very serious. **It is an issue of salvation.**

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**Don't get self-righteous. You're not better than them. It's just that the grace of God covers you**, amen. But let's understand, this is an issue of salvation, amen. There are not two churches of God in this town. There is just one, and there will always be but one, amen.

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Thank you. God bless you. Let's make the right decision.

—Tape Ends—

### July 3, 1994: Central Florida Church (Orlando), "Personal Righteousness" —John Porter

\*\*\* = material on tape not transcribed

You see, when we are really doing God's work and really righteous and stuff. People take note. They see that there is something different about our lives, and they are drawn to that. I believe people are sick of fakey, superficial religious people that don't have anything to offer but a doctrine and a pretty church building. See, they saw that there was something different about Asa. You see, people that we work with, they should be able to tell that there's something different about us. We're not merely religious, we're not merely a member of a church, but there is something deeply different about our character, about our conviction, about the peace we have in our hearts, about

our **joy level**, about our happiness, about our marriages, about our children. It's gotta be different. That's what draws people to us.

The Bible says here that he assembled them in Jerusalem. He got them all together. You see, things weren't going well. He said, 'Let's get together.' Sometimes you've got to do that with your Bible Talk. Sometimes you've got to do that with the whole church. You've got to say, 'Let's get together.' Somebody has got to stand up and say, 'this isn't right.' You know why the church doesn't grow more than it does? I'm thankful we've grown already this year by about 110 disciples. Praise God for that. Let me tell you, the reason it doesn't grow more, and it ought to, is because we don't have enough men like Asa to stand up and say, 'something is wrong here, and what's going on.' And you see, it's hard for the leaders that are like that to get around to every group.

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We don't understand sometimes that sin is serious...Asa, he wasn't prejudiced either. The Bible says in verse 13, 'all who would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel were put to death, whether small or great, man or woman.' Hey, **maybe you don't agree with his method, but you've got to appreciate his conviction.** He knew what was right. **He knew the seriousness of doing what was right. You know, we need to have that standard for each other. Not of death, but bottom-line is this, if someone is not willing to do the will of God, he has no part in God's church.** We all are dreadfully sinful. But when we're confronted with our sin. **We're told what we need to do. If we don't have a humble response, wanting to change, wanting to do what is right. We don't have any business being here. Because, see, we will pollute, lukewarmness will infiltrate the church. Impurity will infiltrate the church, and we will destroy God's kingdom.**

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You know I was, I saw an interview with Mickey Mantle, or part of an interview with Mickey Mantle last night on television. And he was talking about his recent, or his historical problems with alcohol abuse. But you know, I've really got to give him credit. He's come out of it. He's about 62 years old, and recently just hit rock bottom a few of months ago. He checked into a rehabilitation center for alcoholics, and he was talking about it, and I just heard bits and pieces. But evidently, it was a place that he checked into for several weeks. Six weeks, ten weeks, I'm not sure exactly how long it was. He said in that place you could only watch TV for two hours on Sunday. He said, 'the only time you could make phone calls to outside places is if you had two phone calls you could make on Saturday, and you had two phone calls that you could make on Sunday.' Larry King was the guy interviewing him, and he said, 'Well, what did you do the rest of the time?' He said, 'we sat around and we talked about all of the destruction that alcoholism had caused in our lives.' And I was thinking about it. I said, 'Wow there's some application.' I mean, the guy changed. They had him write a letter to people that were already dead, expressing his sorrow for what he had done to them. Even though they were already dead, they had him write a letter. What is this? **They were breaking him of how horrible alcoholism was for him,** for all the destruction that it has caused in his life, for how it had hurt his children. Some who were struggling with the same thing, for how it had hurt his wife, for how it had hurt his parents, for how it had hurt his friends, and how it had hurt his career. You see, it is so hard for us to take our sin seriously. I thought, man **if we did that people would say we were a cult. Wouldn't they?** I mean, when we study the Bible with people, we ask them about their sin. A lot of people don't like that. 'Why do I need to tell you my sin?' Hey, because **you need to see how gross it is,** and if you don't get it out and talk about it, you'll hide it, and it will be way down in there. You won't get cured. See, you don't go to an alcohol rehabilitation center and just sit in there and say, 'Well, we're just in here to have a good time. Ha, yeah, I've got a few problems. Let's watch TV. Let's sit around and talk about how great we are.' **That's how most churches are.** You hear a message of peace, peace, but most people don't have peace. You hear a message of grace, grace, but you see, without faith there is no grace. And where there is **faith, there is obedience!**

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How is your discipleship going? How is your relationships with your discipler? You see, that's what keeps you on the edge. I was talking about living a life, you know, where you're really on fire for God, and being on the cutting edge. And one of the brothers asked me, 'How do you maintain that?' I said, 'I maintain that through my relationships.' **It's the only way that we maintain it.** You see, I have a discipler; he lives in Miami. I go down there frequently to talk with him. Just to see his meetings, to see how he deals with people, to see his church, to see his life, because **I want to be that way. I can't do it without the involvement of Phil Lamb in my life.**

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The Bible says if you don't have fruit, you are not connected to God. That's John, chapter 15. **I fear for some of us. We're not in on studies, we're not discipling people, we're not making people be more like Jesus, and yet we somehow think that we're better off than the rest of the religious world. How can we be better off, if there's no fruit? The Bible says that there should be much fruit, and that that fruit should last. We ought to**

**be people of impact. We ought to be people that make a difference. Not mere religious people. We get faked out because we live in such a religious world. There is a danger of us becoming like them.**

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Sometimes we just don't get around to sitting with our disciple and saying, 'how's it going? How's your marriage? How's your purity? How's your evangelism? How can I help you? What's going on? Why aren't you being fruitful? And really helping people. I'm not saying just to **beat on people**. People need help. They need to be disciplined...A righteous man likes to be challenged.

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Are you discipling people? What is the name of your disciples? What is the name of the person who disciples you? If that is not defined in your mind, if that's not a daily relationship, you don't have discipleship, and you don't know what NT Christianity is all about. That's what different about us. We disciple each other, and when we cease to do that, we cease to be different.

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### **1994 Manila World Leadership Conference: "Malachi: God's Radical Demand for Remaining Radical"--Kip McKean**

\*\*\* = material on tape not transcribed

Let's pray together...Heavenly Father, we realize that this **indeed is the place that your angels and you are most focused at this hour. No other meeting on the face of the earth can compare with the magnitude and the importance of this hour.** Heavenly Father, we pray that you'll shield us from all of Satan's darts and arrows and all of his demons. Heavenly Father, that can get into our mind and our heart and stop us from hearing your Word to change our lives and become the **radical prophets and prophetesses that we need to be in order to win this world in one generation..**

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Father, I am concerned about so many in the audience today. **I am concerned that, though we are leaders in your modern day movement, we are not your men and your women.** Father, if there is any message that we've got to get through here in Manila, is that the easy part of world evangelism has been done - **getting the big cities.** Now begins the hard part. And for the hard part, Father, we've got to have not just a sense of radicalness, **but a sense of radicalness that goes far beyond anything else we've ever been or thought or ever seen before.** And yet, Father, we know that we have the guide to radicalness in your Word. Father, let us be sober this hour. Let us make decisions yet this morning, concrete, **hard-line** decisions that will change our lives, our families, our eternal destinies, our congregations and, indeed, the **whole history of this generation.** We offer up this time to you. It's in the name of Jesus that we pray. Amen.

Let's turn to the book of Malachi.

**Boston, 1979 - a group of 30 "would be" disciples** gathered in the living room and **commit** themselves to, at that time, an ideal that had not yet been seen: that **the true church would be composed of only disciples, only those people that are totally committed to Jesus Christ, and those that refuse to heed the call of Jesus would be unwelcome in that fellowship, and not be recognized by God or his human leaders.** That was radical. In '82, we said, 'We're not going to send our young men and our young women that we train into existing congregations. **We have to go to build churches where we can preach the Word of God free of all tradition.'** And so we went to Chicago. An that was radical.

We said, 'We're not going to stay here in the United States where the church of Christ as (not understandable) way to long in the rural communities wishing someday to get into the cities. **We're going to go to London,** and build our second church planting on foreign soil.' That, my brother and my sister, was radical.

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**We believe that only one church was necessary - one** small group of disciples led by spiritual people that knew God. That would be all that would be necessary...Because that is God's plan: that disciples make disciples that make disciples. **We didn't need 45 different, autonomous churches. There's only one church in one city,** and that, my friend, was radical.

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We went to Bombay. **And for four months we didn't see but one person baptized - and that person fell away.** And we had a team that was stunned, in the eyes of the world, culture shock. We knew what it was. It was an **attack of Satan. People wanted to quit and turn back. We said, 'you will not do that. You're not allowed to quit on God.'** And that was radical.

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We (Boston) sent out 7 churches, 120 Bible Talk Leaders (1989), because **we wanted to evangelize the world. And we understood it was going to wreck our church.** But let me tell you something, we realized that the souls of the world were on the line, and we had enough disciples in Boston to get the job. Now that is radical.

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I had to pray for boldness. I had to pray to get personally fruitful. You know, it would be a real bummer if **the leader of the movement** comes and can't be personally fruitful on a mission team.

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Mo Bishara's worst nightmare had come true. Eight people had been sent from Boston to Cairo. Seven were Americans, and they were kicked out, and it was only him. And see when you're the only guy in the church you've got to be the leader. I said, 'Well, Mo, I'm committed to Manila.' I said, 'After that, I've got to go plant Bangkok, but I'll bring my family there to Cairo. **If I'm going to be sending people to places they don't want to go in their flesh, places they can get diseases, physically hurt or even killed, then I will put myself and my family on the front lines first.** Mo, mark it down. We'll be there. I had so many people try to stop me, 'Brother, you're not bringing your wife there, are you? **Why did all the Americans get kicked out?** What! You're bringing your three kids there?' I said, 'Well, yeah.' See, I want them to be radical. **And you can't be radical wishing you would be.** Only way you become radical is by doing it. You know what I mean?

Moscow. Everybody said, 'Well, I think we need to evangelize it.' It's a strong consensus. 'Bro, I think someone needs to go. You do a good job. By the way, we don't want to **give any money to you. It's all spent.**' I said, 'Okay, **we'll take care of it out at LA.**' We went. And God used the radical spirits of those people.

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My greatest concern at this hour is where we are at **collectively as a leadership.** So aren't you **concerned about the people?** Oh yeah, I'm **real concerned about the people.** But where the **leaders lead, and the people follow,** praise the Lord. It's only without vision that the people perish. **If the leadership is radical, no matter how many, no matter how few that follow or quit, the job will be done.** It's an interesting book that was assigned me. **And I'm the one that assigned it to me.** So it did fit with what I need to address.

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You see, Nehemiah had come in about 445 BC, and the great story about building the wall in 52 days. Was that radical or not? And he kind of gets **all the headlines in this time period.** But actually just a few years later, Malachi comes on the scene. See a lot of time, **I think we somehow think there can only be one great guy in a church, a movement, a nation. There usually is one prominent individual and we've got to get comfortable with that.** But these guys were buddies - Nehemiah, Malachi. They'd be able to say hello to each other. 'Nehemiah,' 'Malachi,' cause, see they're in the **same city** and everything.

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One of my sons, my youngest Eric, has gotten into tennis a little bit. By the way, he played the number two Filipino in his age group, beat him this week and everything. One of the most important tennis matches of the sectionals, this is where the kids largely receive their rankings. In the first round, Eric won - huge match. Second round, he was up against an incredible kid, and he was getting demolished. I mean, he just got blown away. I'll never forget, Eric came on up to me, and he's a very simple child. He just came on up and he says, 'Dad, did you leave me because I was losing so badly?' I said, 'What do you mean?' I said, 'I was sitting in the chair.' He said, 'No, I looked over and you were not there.' And I go, 'uh, yeah, I got up, son, because someone else came, and I wanted them to watch you. I was standing over at the side, but they never took the chair. And I just decided to keep on standing. No, I didn't leave you because you were doing so badly. No, I was there all the time.'

You know, a lot of times we feel that if **things aren't cranking, why is God not with me. I don't see him.** Well, He's with you. **As long as you're making disciples. He's with you. That's what the good book says.**

And so the very first thing that Malachi does right here, which is very important that **we've got to do with our people,** and I want to try to establish with you this morning, is that Malachi wanted the people of Israel **to be secure in God's love. I want you to be secure that I appreciate what you have done. I want you to be secure in God's love,** because you see, when **you're secure, then you can handle any challenge that's given to you.**

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Right here he challenges the priests, the leaders. And he says, **'listen the kind of sacrifices that you're bringing to me, I'm not pleased with.'** He says, 'you're bringing to me animals that are cripple, that are lame. You're not giving me your best. You're giving me leftovers. You're giving me your left over time, your left over energy, your left over money.' **And the reason that the Lord was so infuriated at the leaders, yes he was upset with them personally, but as the leadership goes, so goes the people. And if the leaders didn't have high expectations of themselves, then the people would not be help accountable.**

He goes on to say, he says, 'It's become a burden for you to serve me.' You know, I can classify everyone in this room as a **full time person into categories: one, the individual that loves the ministry; and the second is the individual that considers it a burden.**

You say, 'well now hold it, bro. There are a lot of things I love about the ministry. I like this, I like that. Now this things a burden and that thing's a burden.' **It's like James said, 'can salt water and fresh water come from the same spring?' If you consider any part of the ministry a burden, then indeed the ministry is a burden to you.** And when something is a constant burden to you, eventually you are going to become embittered, and treat it with contemptuousness. 'Why do I have to do this? Why me? Why that phone call? Why this person? Why this problem?' And we well up with self-pity. Now **outwardly we may be real friendly as we work the crowds when we come to the seminars. But we have become embittered by self-pity, the most destructive of all sins, the most insidious of all sins.**

You know, I turned 40 a couple of months ago. And I was thinking about my life. I was trying to think now what are the great temptations of my life? I still get tempted with pride and arrogance and lust, but what is the greatest temptation?...**I believe that my greatest temptation as a disciple is the temptation of the normal life.** To be, quote, **'just like everybody else.'** You know, I look at **our movement, and I see the radicalness ebbing away into normalcy.** I remember Al Baird coming to Boston - how radical. When the first special contribution came Al wanting God to know his heart and with the need for world missions, sold his house. Just like in the Bible - Acts 2, Acts 4. But **today we're not selling houses, we're buying them. Now if you're buying a house, how are you going to ask someone to sell theirs for a special missions contribution.?**

Back in the early days of Boston, young interns under my charge, they'd always be borrowing cars. Right, Frank? **Now we own two and sometimes three cars. In the early days of Boston, we didn't know what we were doing. And we knew we were unspiritual people, we knew we needed to learn how to pray. And with that, we learned about fasting. And we would fast as a congregation. We fasted for world peace. We had brothers fast up to 40 days. But today, I look around this auditorium, and there are 50 percent of you who are significantly overweight, and it's disgusting!**

A year ago, I turned 39. I said, 'You know, next year I turn 40. It's time to clear out the arteries. I said, 'I've got to drop some poundage right here.' I didn't think it was that much. I thought I'd drop about **10 pounds.** I was weighing about 185. When I got down there, I go, 'huh, it's not as much as I thought, really. Got to crank on down.' **See you deceive yourself.**

Say aren't you afraid of a lot of people becoming anorexic and bulimic? No. I don't want anybody to sin. Most of you are not in severe dangers of those. I got down at the end of last summer to 160. It's now been a year. I'm still 160. Had to be radical...A couple weeks ago someone came over my house. I forget who it was, and I saw one of my old pictures, and I go, 'that one needs to be ripped up. It's from a bad angle. It caught all of me.' I said, 'No, not going to rip it up. **I need to have that thing as a painful reminder. I want to stay embarrassed.'** I'll be honest. **I'm embarrassed to be around some of you people. I hug you and my hand goes into your sides.** See, we've all learned to hug up high instead of down low, because you know, **let me tell you something, you sisters—and you listen to me good.** I have sisters in the LA church come to me and say, 'Well, I don't know why this brother doesn't like this sister. I mean, she's **just a little overweight.'** **Yeah, because you're overweight, and you don't want to make a big deal in your life. It's a huge deal. That's the body, that's the temple of the Holy Spirit. How you look is how you are. And some of you married women have gotten so grossly overweight, and so you can't understand your star little intern who is overweight, none of the brothers like. Because it's flat unspiritual to be overweight. Let's lay it out—what the Bible calls it—it's gluttony.**

**And let me tell you something. The primary offenders in this room are not women, but brothers. And there is an incredible double standard. The thing that really scares me, I see some of your children, chubby. ‘Well, they’re just going through a baby-fat stage.’ Oh, no sir. And you are destining your kid to be laughed at, to be mocked. And that kid should be in the Kingdom of God, and people do not laugh at God’s children.**

**I’m telling you. We’re losing it. We’re looking like everybody else. We’re sounding like everybody else...** Back in the early days of the ministry, I used to pay our **young interns \$700 a month.** And Bob and I thought we were being very generous. That’s about \$8,000 a year. And they were thrilled. **They sacrificed.** We had **10 to 15 brothers living together in Boston Towers.** To go in the ministry was incredible. Just give me a few crumbs. **Now we’ve got evangelists making \$80,000, and you are not grateful for helping, for what you have. You don’t have enough!**

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**I am disgusted by the attitudes of some of you who worry about what your role is in the kingdom.** You say, ‘Well, I want to be the **lead evangelist** in a small church rather than the **second leader in a big church.**’ **Hey, news flash. We’re one church, Amen!** Well, I’ve got some nationals in my church. But they’re some of my best people. And there are very few that are sinless in this area. **You are standing in the way of Jehovah God. You are a stumbling block to the evangelization of the world, because you are selfish.** All you can say about is **making your name great, your stats great.** I am **absolutely appalled at the lack of help that Cory has had in evangelizing the Middle East.** Here we’ve got the roughest and toughest of the world sectors. **And we got nobody offering up people.**

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We’re afraid to call our young people into the ministry. ‘Well, **whatever you want to do, you know this is a kind of personnel...**’ Jesus didn’t do that to Peter and the gang. He said, ‘listen, would you bag the boats, would you leave your nets?’ **He didn’t say please.** And they went immediately. See, our problem is we’re **trying to sweet talk people into the ministry.** What you gotta say is, ‘**Bro, you’re the most talented guy I’ve got. You know, you’ve got a lousy heart at the moment, but that we can deal with. You need to repent. You’re talented. You’ve given up everything to God, now let’s get going. Let’s start training for the ministry.**’ Why do people **wrestle with going into the ministry? I mean, how you live your life is not an issue, what role you have...**

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(Malachi 2:13) - ‘Do not break faith with the wife of your youth. I hate divorce, says the Lord God Almighty. And I hate a man covering himself with violence, as well as with his garments, says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself and your spirit and do not break faith.’

**It is appalling to me how much time is spent counseling leader’s marriages.** I’m all for helping people. I met Gordon (Ferguson, Elder/Teacher, Boston church) last night. There’s not enough discipling going on. But I think there’s **too much talking going on.** There’s not enough breaking out the bible and saying to a **woman that has emotionally quit on her husband. Listen, God hates divorce. Whether you want to officially get separated or not, you’re breaking your covenant with God, lady! And brother, if you’re treating your wife this way, you are messing up with God.** This is the wife of your youth. This is the person you have loved more than any other person in your whole life. And now look what **Satan’s done to your heart.**

I’ve just gotten to the point with **marriage problems, I’ll listen.** Listen to one side, listen to the other. And basically I go, ‘now would you two cut it out?’ I mean, same thing is true of my young children, Shawn and Eric, they get into a little bit of a rumble now and then. ‘Eric did this,’ and ‘Shawn’s annoying me.’ ‘Nope, he’s annoying me.’ No, you’re annoying me right now. I said, ‘So guys would you **shut up. I’ve had it. Now hug each other.** Some of you just gotta **get ticked off like God and the prophets and say I hate divorce. These marriage problems are bemoaning us.** Stop acting like children and love one another. It’s just that simple.

**Do you pray every night with your wife?** I do. Have for years. **Cause if you’re a true Christian, you can’t pray if you got a problem there.** Now, I have to admit there have been some nights that I go, ‘I don’t really want to pray right now.’ And I haven’t decided with road I’m going to take: the hardhearted road to make her beg me a little bit, or the mean road, just kind of freeze her on out. Depends on what night it is, you know. **But I know at the end of it, I’m going to have to pray.** Have you been there?

You know, **some of you women, you’re crying all the time about your marriage.** I think right here you flood the Lord’s altar with tears. **Stop it!** You’re a sinner who is married to a sinner, and when two sinners get together,

there's going to be some sin. Now stop being so doggone surprised about it. And you repent of your sin; he repents of his sin. You forgive him; he forgives you, and now let's go to bed and have a good time. Amen! Now, let's go.

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Godly offspring don't happen when they turn 12, 13, 14, and then get baptized. Godly offspring happen when you live your life as a Godly father and a Godly mom, and work with them spiritually every day. And say, 'Hey, how's the quite time coming.' Yeah, at 4 or 5 it's time. Family devotionals - oh, when you're a young family you probably do them every week night. When you get a little older, do them a couple nights a week. That's great. You know, I'm real thrilled about my three kids. Olivia is 13, Shawn is 11, and Eric is 9. There in here today, **so you know I won't lie up here, you know, I can't slide anything by.** But I appreciate so much the Bairds and the Gempels always having been in our lives. You know, if Al notices something, he'll say something to me. I appreciate that. Not often **at the time, but I appreciate it later.** You know, Olivia and Shawn have always done great in school - straight A's. **Eric struggled.** He liked sports better than school - happens. Well, couple years ago, not only did he like sports better than school, but he didn't want to do school at all, and **he got to be deceitful, and not even bringing his homework home. It even got so bad, he had even lied to his teacher. Teacher caught him. Called me. Remember that son? (laughs from the audience) Let's just say we had a good talk in the upper bedroom.** I said, 'we've got to do something radical.' We got a tutor for Eric every week. He had gotten to the point where he taught he was not smart. I said, 'son, you're smart. You're my son, you're smart.' (laughs from the audience) He worked with the tutor the last year and a half. This past year, Olivia all A's, no B's. Shawn all A's, no B's. Eric all A's, and no B's. (clapping) See, I believe excellence is something you build inside of them.

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**We think spirituality happens. It doesn't. Worldliness happens.** I remember a couple of years ago, Olivia didn't want to run for student council president. I said, 'honey, you can run.' 'Well, but my friends are running.' And I said, 'honey, they decided to run against you. You need to run. It's a great opportunity, because if you're the student council president, **then you can influence other people. And you know, honey, you're a little too much of a follower. You've got to become more of a leader.**' **She ran, and she won.**

This past year, we moved down to a new place. And Shawn said, 'Dad, I've only lived here a year, I don't think I can run. People don't know me. I'm kind of new.' I said, 'Son, I thought that was what you wanted to be is student council president.' 'Well, I did, but I don't think I can win.'...He tried, and he won student council president...I said, 'Olivia, isn't that great? You're a student council president. Shawn's a student council president. Eric, what do you think about it? In a couple years it's going to be your turn.' He goes, 'no problem, Dad. No problem.'

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They're involved in tennis right now. Is tennis so they can be stars? No. Is tennis so they can have a college scholarship? No. **The purpose of tennis is so they can reach out to other people.** When they get to junior high, and they get to high school, **I want to have kids that, to the degree they can be, they can be cool kids in the eyes of the world. That way, they can bring more people to Bible Talk. And they can win more souls for Jesus.** You know, I'm really proud of the kids. They've just gotten into tennis in the last several months, and they've done some spectacular things. All three of them have won tournaments. But you see what really was awesome is this past June the guy that coaches them, who was number 88 in the world, Dan Soles was baptized into Christ. Is that not flat awesome? (clapping) Danny's here, I'm going to have Danny stand up again. Danny you want to stand up? (clapping)

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Generation X—is it going to be extravagant, materialism, trying to clothe your kid with all the clothes you can buy for them? Or are they going to define it with extraordinary sacrifices? Now they may learn the sacrifices in athletics, or they may learn the sacrifices in school. But they learn to sacrifice, and the rewards of radicalness...**Are our kids when they become leaders, and evangelists and women's counselors in the kingdom. Are they going to define Generation X as excuse making about why it can't be done. Are they going to define it by expending every breath for Jesus? I want my kids and your kids to define Generation X as Generation excellence.**

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Hey, you know, **every year it's gut check time.** I was talking to Steve and Lisa (Johnson, World Sector Leader, Lead Evangelist, NYC church) in the room the other day. And Steve, I love Steve so much. **He's the glue of the World Sector Leaders. I got Doug** (Arthur, World Sector Leader, Lead Evangelist, DC church) he's **my right-hand cranker. I've got Steve as the glue. You know, those two guys, they're awesome.** And Steve's so open and honest. And you know, he's **not prideful like Doug and myself,** you know. And so Steve, you know, volunteers his weaknesses very openly. And I always get convicted being around Steve. He says, 'You know, Kip, I can see what's happened to me. I appreciate your helping me and Lisa last year in NY, and things are cranking.

But I think what happened was, you know, a few years ago, I used to be one of the most evangelistic guys. I carried six, seven, eight studies. Then I took on a few jobs. None of them were bad. All of them were good kingdom jobs. But then it crept down to six, five, for. Then I took a few more jobs, and it got to be four, two, three, four, three, two. And then pretty soon, I wasn't studying with anybody.'

**See, you don't go from being radical to being numb like that (snap of fingers). It takes time. And I put before you, we've got a lot of people that are numb.** You say, 'Why do you say that?' Because I think we've got a lot of people that aren't personally fruitful here. Let's just ask the question - how many of you, we'll make it since **last September 1, have met somebody personally, not a contact through somebody, but have met somebody, studies with them, and baptized them? Let's raise our hands. Now I want you to look around. I want you to look around. Now, all the people that haven't done it, you raise your hands. I want you to look, and you ask me if we have a radical movement. No, keep your hands up.** If you know those people, I want you talking to them after this session, and I want you **finding out what's going on.** We've got to have undying fire for physical family, and for our spiritual family. Amen!

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(Malachi 3:2ff) I want to talk a bit here about two concepts. Number one, **we gotta talk about this business of tithing.** A few years ago, we started **to institute in our churches the challenge to tithe when someone gets baptized.** I think that's great. Jesus even referred to tithing in Matthew 23. He says, 'Don't neglect tithing,' to the Pharisees. So, Jesus himself, he's behind tithing. Amen! But I think tithing, we've missed the whole point. Tithing was a way to support the Levites and the work of God there in the temple. **As disciples under the new covenant, our challenge on the day we're baptized is to give up everything we have.**

Now I think a few years ago, the **call for everybody to tithe** was an upward call of sacrifice. But here's what's happened. **Over time, in a lot of our churches, tithing has become people's excuse for not sacrificing. It has capped the giving. People aren't being like** Don Lee was back in the early days of Boston. We had a budget of \$600 a week when we started the Boston church on out. And if we didn't make it, I'd go, 'Don, brother, **we need some extra money right here, amen?**' He was our biggest giver of 100 bucks.

See, but we don't have the spirit, **because we've made it a law in our church.** And the law kills at the end of it. And **we've killed our giving. We've killed our sacrifice. We've killed our joy. I still think tithing is where people need to start off at. I'm not going to back off on that.** But we've got to go back to our churches and kind of **unteach the law right here** and say, '**Hold it man, that's just where you begin.** We want to tell you about sacrifice right now, because we've got a world to evangelize. You with me here, church?

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We need to have a conviction. If our churches are not growing, it's sin. Let me run that by again. **If the church is not growing, it's sin.** And you may say, 'well, this particular young man doesn't have the gifts to be able to lead it.' Yes, then what's happened is **because he doesn't have the gifts to lead it, there's sin in the church. There's lukewarmness, there's immorality, there are all sorts of things going on, cause he's just not up to the task. I'm not saying it's always the leader that has the sin. That's the first place you better look. But our problem is, we're trying to figure out what methodology, what set of mechanics, which church to model ourselves after, when we're not growing. Let me tell you something.** If you're not growing, you know an easy place to start. **You've got sin in your church. It's cursed!** And you've got to do something about it. Are you with me right here?

What you've got to get your people back to, and you got to start as a leader. You've got **to get back to sacrificial living. And that comes, then sacrificial giving. But giving is just something that comes out of the heart. See, I really believe we have so capped off our movement by just trying to do what's asked from us.** No one asked us to come here to the Philippines and have daily baptisms. Why? Because it had never been done before. But everybody was fired up when we did it, amen! We went to Moscow. We didn't have any money. I appreciated the Flemings so much. Not only were Andy and Tammy selected, I believe **by the Holy Spirit,** but Andy comes from a very wealthy family. **Andy gave several, over \$100,000 personally, to get the church started.** You don't think that God blessed that? God goes, 'I like that guy. **He's sacrificial.** I'm going to pen the floodgates of heaven on Moscow right there.'

You know, I appreciate Mike Talieffer (Lead Evangelist, Africa), he's my **idea of a modern day prophet.** Amen, church! (Mike said) What happens in July (in Africa) is a lot of people **go on vacation.** And I went up to the

church, and I said, ‘OK if you want to go on **vacation, fine. Those of us that really want to, we’re going to give up our vacation and be full time for the Lord** here in Johannesburg.’ He had most of the church that was going to go on vacation be full time. His staff meetings had 150 people at staff meetings...They increased by 88 disciples in Johannesburg, S. Africa, cause Mike said, **‘it’s time to sacrifice, it’s time to get radical, it’s not to accept things as they are.**

In LA, January with 154 disciples I had to go to the church and say, ‘let’s give a **25-times contribution.**’ We wanted to start a Latin ministry that May. We had to give a **three-times contribution.** That Fall we had to give a **20-times contribution** to Manila. The people that were there January 1, of 1990 - that year in special contributions alone had to give a **48-times contribution.** And our church grew by 700 disciples from 154. Why? Because God loves radicals who sacrifice, and He threw open the floodgates of heaven.

Our problem is—we don’t want to demand it of ourselves, and so we don’t want to demand it of the people. Earlier this Spring, the LA church was just **not cranking. When it’s not cranking, I get ticked off. A lot of you guys don’t get mad enough.** And what I found was very simply this, the amount of energy and spirituality and work that it took to lead a church of 1,000 I had mastered. **The LA church had cranked to about 3500 and started to slow on down.** 3,500 disciples. And what had happened was I had built up sentimentality in my leadership group. I mean, I love the guys I work with. Marty Fuqua, Cory Blackwell, Bruce Williams, Al Baird, **they’re top guys.** And what happened was **I just didn’t want to really have discipling relationships with them.** Finally, enough was enough. **And we started having some discipling times.** I mean Marty used to joke, ‘Uh, oh it’s Friday. It’s time for me to get disciplined.’

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You know, this is the very last chapter here of the whole Old Testament...How does God end it? Look at the very last word. ‘And if you don’t do this, I will come and smite the land with a curse.’ That’s how God ended the OT. That’s how his **prophet Malachi** ended the OT. He say, ‘unless you **obey God you will be cursed. This is a warning.**

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I’ll tell you something. I don’t believe that we have **prophets** that write Scriptures anymore, but **I believe that every generation needs prophets. I don’t even want to qualify it. See, we’ve gotten so Church of Christ. We don’t want to say, ‘Well, there are prophets today.’ Might as well break in another tradition. I believe there are prophets today. I’ll be extra bold. I believe I am a prophet today. Now my question for you is do you believe that you’re a prophet? Do you believe that you’re a God-sent prophet, who has been sent as his messenger, to preach his Word, to his people, to make a difference in this generation?**

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See, Jesus was a **prophet.** He laid it out. I am afraid that we have failed to understand **the preacher and his reaching is the ceiling of spirituality of a congregation.**

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You’ve got to talk about life and you’ve got to talk about death. You’ve got to talk about heaven and you’ve got to talk about Hell. Let me tell you something, **when you start talking about heaven and Hell and where people are going to spend eternity, it’s going to shake up,** but it’s going to inspire the good-hearted in your congregation.

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What have we lost? We’ve lost - this is going to blow you away - we’ve lost our fear for the Lord. Our God is an awesome, consuming fire. He’s got a heart that loves us, and we just need to be secure in that. Esau he hated and Jacob he loved. Leave it at that. He loves you, but **you’ve got to be a prophet. And you’ve got to instill the fear of God in your people.**

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Now turning 40 is a great thing. In LA, then you get to play in the maters’ league. See, we have two leagues in LA, one is for the young boys. And if you’re 35 or older, you get to play in the masters’ league. I had a secret goal. I wanted to be an all star in the maters’ league. I got to be him. **The sweet thing is I made the three point shot that won the game for my side.** See, there’s nothing wrong with becoming a master. There’s nothing wrong with turning 40. But I tell you something, you start thinking about the fact that you’ve lived over half of your life.

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**Let me tell you something, I believe in heaven, and I believe in Hell. I don’t want to go to Hell. I don’t want my wife going to Hell. I don’t want my kids going to Hell. I don’t want anybody else going to Hell.** And so as **God’s preacher** who is **sure of these truths,** I’m going to preach about heaven and Hell, and let people get the chance to decide. I’m going to make sure my wife makes it to heaven. I’m going to make sure my daughter makes it

to heaven. I'm going to make sure my sons make it to heaven. I'm going to make sure my brothers make it to heaven, my church makes it to heaven, and as many people around the world make it to heaven. That's what life is all about.

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**When you go back home, you be a prophet. And just as Malachi didn't end his sermons with all these sweet, sentimental hallelujah, amen, for better or for worse, I swear, you go back home and you curse the sin in your congregation. You curse the lack of growth.** Now let them know that God hates Esau and loves Jacob. Let them be secure. **But you lay it out. You be a prophet. You be radical. You be happy with where you're at,** and let's evangelize this world in this generation. God bless us all. Amen.

—Tape Ends—

### **August, 1995: Johannesburg World Leadership Conference, "Preach the Word" –Kip McKean**

\*\*\* = material on tape not transcribed

Today, **we the leaders in the modern day movement of God** gather in this historic land where we can inhale, with every breath, this invigorating spirit of revolution against overwhelming darkness. I call upon each and every one of us in these five days of Jubilee that ends Sunday in Soweto, to make at least three decisions that will radically change your life. Upon returning home, humbly share these convictions, and **preach your church to revolution.** Then united and refreshed by repentance, God's pillar of fire, the Holy Spirit, will lead us through the darkest of hours in our galactic struggle, not simply **to change the laws of a country, but to literally change the course of human events in every nation,** and because of Jesus, **eternity.**

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Father, our prayer is simple: **break us, melt us, mold us into your prophets and prophetesses.** Change us, so we can change our churches, so we can change our world in this generation. It's in the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

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If there's any human being I most love to spend time with, it's Elena. It's just always awesome. Someone I can talk to, someone who talks to me, and makes me think, makes me feel good, and makes me strong. And someone I can let all the barriers down, and I can just be Kip, instead of **the leader of the movement.**

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Let me tell you something, if **you don't love the ministry, repent!** Or get out of the ministry, because you're not representing Jesus Christ. But there are a lot of you that say, 'I love the ministry.' Well, if you love the ministry, then the whole concept of loving the ministry is that you love God more than any other thing in your life. And if you love God, you're going to want to spend time with Him. And the way that God speaks to you is through His Word; the way you speak to Him is through prayer. But how can you say you love the ministry? How can you dare say you love God, if you're not spending hours, and hours, and hours with him every week. I put before you **that you're either deceived, or you're a liar. That you're either into preaching for the prestige, or the power, or simply to collect the paycheck, and that scares me.**

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Now passion doesn't have to be loud. Passion can be soft, but there is an **intensity of the heart that the true prophet of God** has to communicate when he gets up to preach, in season or out, whether he feels like it or whether he doesn't. Whether there are a lot of non-Christians or whether there aren't. Whether **disciples are cranking or whether they aren't.** There's gotta be passion.

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At this **very hour, Christianity is being defined** in mainland China. At the very hour **it is being defined** in outer Mongolia. At this very hour, **Christianity is being defined** in Russia. **Religious history is being made.**

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But you know something, Frank (Kim, World Sector Leader) got into the Word. He got with brothers that gave him faith, and that's another place you can get faith. Just borrow some faith from somebody. **And today this is the mightiest prophet of God of all time in Japan.** Not, because of his wise and persuasive words, but the Spirit's power.

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They (London church of Christ) **had plateaued out, as a matter of fact they had gone down from the heroic mark that Doug and Joyce** (Arthur, World Sector Leaders) **had set in the early days.** Talented brothers had led the church, and yet persecution seemed to overcome. When in actuality it was Satan and sin. I appreciate Doug Arthur's courageous leadership, giving up his number two guy, John Causey, to go over and spear head the revival

of the London church. John went over in January with Doug Jacoby, and their wives. And they in just 7 months time have turned around a church that wasn't growing at all to a church that is one of the fastest growing in the movement. They have grown 31% in the first 7 months of this year. Is that flat awesome? See, John Causey understands that Christ always leads us in triumphal procession. See, **he wasn't really sent by Doug Arthur, he was sent by God... We need to get a conviction, that when the church is not growing, the first person we need to look at is the preacher, and the second is his wife. They've lacked faith, and they're in sin.** Because of their lack of faith, and they're in sin, the second conviction we just need to have. We may not know the facts, but we can be sure of it: **that there is sin in the church, and until it repents - it's not going to grow because it's God that gives the increase, and God cannot work where there is sin.** Light has no fellowship with darkness.

You know I was so proud of the US churches, going through the **MTV persecution. We went through that better than any other persecution show.**

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For a long time I thought, 'Well, **we'll define Christianity in Russia, we'll define Christianity in Thailand and Bangkok, and a Buddhist nation. We'll define Christianity in Japan and a Shinto nation. But I've come to believe that we are defining Christianity in America.** In sixteen years, the Holy Spirit has led us from **one church of thirty "would-be" disciples in one nation, to become 210 churches in 71 nations** with one hundred and seventeen thousand worshipping every Sunday morning. **We're impacting the world. We're making religious history.**

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You know, I think it should shock us. That the greatest Protestant movement was the Reformation Movement led by Calvin, Luther, and Zwengli. It's very divided, very **fractured**, it was very politically motivated because a lot of these men were supported by German princes that wanted to get out of the auspices and power of the Pope. And so **let us just say their conversions were questionable.** But the scope of the Reformation Movement in the lifetime of their founders was just Europe.

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Do you realize that the scope of not, quote, "**our movement, but God's movement** has gone beyond the Restoration Movement, beyond the Methodist Movement, beyond the Reformation Movement in the lifetime of its **found, amen, let's keep it going right here! We have made religious history. And as we enter into the brink of a new millennium it's time to start thinking about making history in every nation of the world.** Are you with me church?

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**I don't know about you brothers, but I'm very tired of the preacher stereotypes of exaggeration...He** (Paul, in 2 Timothy 4:2) says **be careful with your words. You know too many of us are given to exaggeration. I'm tired of that stereotype.** I think far more of us are **given to downplaying the bad.** I put before you as a preacher, we don't need to **kind of hit the target. We need to hit bulls eyes in our preaching. When we say an attendance, that's what it is. When we say a membership, that's what it is. When we say a problem, that's what it is. I don't want people kind of extrapolating out how good or how bad. What I'm really saying, 'my word needs to be truth.'** I remember going down to San Diego in January. And I was even cautioned by a brother, 'Now bro, they've just not been doing very good for a year.' And I said, 'Well, why are you saying that to me?' 'Well, bro, I mean you're really awesome preaching. You know I just want you to be careful. Just, just know the history down there.' I said, 'Bro, I'm fully **aware of the history down there. They haven't grown for a year, and they're in sin.**'

I went down. I told the church about **their lack of growth. I laid out the stats, the church. We're so afraid to tell the church the stats.** Let me tell you something, **let the people know the problem. Lay it out, good or bad, indifferent.** We're family. Let's just lay it out on the kitchen table right there, and once it's out, then you can deal with it.

You see, once they knew the problem, then I gave a specific instruction, and here it was - My challenge for the San Diego church—I want you to take up the challenge we did in Boston when we **stalled out in the mid-80's** and that's what we called the "one a day plus challenge." Every Christian, everyday, **has to lead** one person to church.... You know, there was a revival in the church because of it. **And I think the evangelism in so many of our churches just flat stinks. It's not a matter of just expecting our members to be evangelistic, they need to be evangelistic.** It's not an ideal, it's a **standard** that Jesus expects now, preach it!

And you know today, the San Diego church is **one of the fastest growing churches in all of the movement.**

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**Last fall the LA church hit a plateau**, and you know, guys every church goes through their plateaus and sometimes their valleys. **Get a grip!** Last year we went through one of our plateaus, now when you start seeing a plateau, how long is a plateau? One month. When you see a plateau. **It's time to preach radically and specifically.** I got with all the Bible Talk leaders, October 1 of last year. And I said, 'Listen, guys I want to put before you a goal. This is going to blow you out. We're having about 6,000 at church right now. Contribution was about \$130,000 a week. By the end of next year, I want the LA church to have, every Sunday morning, 10,000 at church. I want our contribution to be \$200,000 every week. I mean, people were excited. Our people love radical preaching.

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I think the kind of **radical goals** that we need to lay before our churches are number one: **To be the largest church in the city. I think it's a sin to let any denominational church be bigger than us. How can someone be preaching false doctrine, and be bigger than us?** We preach the truth. Amen, church! Number two: **We need to make sure on the foreign field that we are the biggest church in that nation.**

You know, it was exciting. We just heard from the **world wide church expert in church growth that the LA church was the fastest growing church in all of the US of America, of any kind, of any denomination in 1994. That's the way it needs to be.** Amen, church.

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From the defiance campaign onward, going to prison became a badge of honor among Africans. I'm telling you **in the movement, we have got a fear of prison. Now I appreciate all the administrators that want to keep us out for the reasons that are wrong.** Jesus went to prison on **trumped up charges of tax evasion and subversion** to a nation. The Apostles all went to prison. **Now if you're gonna reduplicate what Jesus did and the Apostles, you think you're going to do it better so you escape going to prison? I think there is a fear in our fellowship, of radicalness, to the point that leads to prison and death.**

I think we've forgotten to preach the radical message of who is saved. When you preach who is really saved: **that you gotta have faith, you gotta repent, you gotta become a true disciple of Jesus, and then you gotta be water immersed for the forgiveness of sins received through the Holy Spirit. That excludes all other denominations, and certainly the Buddhists, the Islamics, everybody else that's out there.**

**When you say, we're the only true church, we're made up only of disciples,** that's gonna tick the religious people off. **Those were the greatest enemies of Jesus.**

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You're gonna make some enemies. When you tell people that they're to **love God and the church** more than their **physical family,** you're gonna make some enemies.

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And when we talk about loving God, **that we've got a family that never quits on us, no matter how we act, what we do, who we offend, let me tell you something, they're gonna want to join us. Amen!**

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We are servants and **prophets** of the living God.

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I want you to go back and leaven all the churches, and you tell them what you've seen in Johannesburg. You let them know what the Johannesburg Church of Christ is all about. You let them know that we're really doing HOPE work over here, **not like so many denominations that fake it.** You let them know that it changed your life. And then you go back and **you challenge the tar** out of the other people in your teen group.

But you know something? I've heard **some murmurings, that we spent a little too much money on the HOPE Teen Corp.** Can you put a price on changing people's lives?

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We're defining Christianity. But I say to you today, it's time to **define the X in Generation X.** I'm telling you that it's gotta be our young men and our young women that **define the X,** but it's going to be our attitude toward the youth ministry, and towards our families that ultimately **define what the X stand for.** Is the X going to stand for excessive complainers, or expressive complimenters? Is the X going to stand for experimenters with drugs and sex, or exposers of evil? Is the X going to stand for exploited introverts, or exploring extroverts? Is the X going to

stand for explosive tempers, or examples of control? Is the X going to stand for expanding waist lines, or expanding the kingdom? Is the X going to stand for an exaggeration of self-importance, or an exaltation of God? Is the X going to stand for exclusive of race, or exerting influence against prejudice? Is the X going to stand for extinguishing God's movement in the second generation, or exceeding all expectations? I'll tell you what the X needs to stand for in the kingdom of God, excellence.

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In tennis, all the kids are ranked in Southern California. Eric made the zonals, which means he one of the best kids his age in all the Western US. They're looking at him next year to be able to go the Nationals. Olivia, well she also made Varsity Cheerleader, has someone going into the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. And you say, 'Well, that's great your family does that. I guess **it's a McKean thing.** **It's not a McKean thing, it's a Jesus thing.** You say, 'Well, I wasn't one who excelled.' Well, praise God, **we caught you** so you don't influence your children. That's discipling. Are we excelling for the sake of excelling? No.

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And yet, we know from the Bible that Jesus led a life imitable. Now we're not asked to imitate dying for people's sins, walking on water, that's unimitable for us. **We are asked to imitate that which every Christian's suppose to live.** So it is with the preacher. Not everybody's to get up and public speak, but our lives that are most imitable are how we live our everyday lives with our families or how we pray, and how we share our faith. **And if you only preach publicly to a large crowd, and you don't share your faith, there's nothing to imitate. They imitate you, they don't share their faith.** I want to ask this crowd this year, as I've done the past several years, and as I will continue to do. Have you been personally fruitful, **and let me define it for you. Someone you met, someone you studied with, and someone you personally baptized.** Who's been personally fruitful since last year? Raise your hand. Well, it's better, but I want you to look around. These people with their hands raised are not to be commended, they've simply done their duty, but you that don't, **you need to be rebuked. You're in sin. Sin of cowardice, sin of unbelief, and the sin of laziness. And you need to talk to someone right after this message. And that's at least one decision, you need to get up in front of your church and confess.** 'Oh no, brother, that might hurt the churches feeling about me.' No, it will help the churches feeling about you.

You know, another problem that I see as preachers, is that we've allowed staff meetings to become just that, meetings. The whole purpose of staff meetings that we had in the early days of Boston was a discipleship group. **We've got too much business going on and not enough discipling.** We had a staff meeting a few months ago in LA; I just went around, and I said, 'Okay, who's been personally fruitful this year?' ...Most of the group had not. I said, 'we've just got to talk today. Why haven't you been personally fruitful?' 'Well, you know bro., I don't know, I'm trying.' 'When's the last time you brought visitors?' 'Well, I can't really remember. I think it was last year.' **This was the LA church!** He says, 'well, let me just lay it out Kip. I see evangelism as just being a hassle. It's a nuisance.' **'Listen, people don't understand. I'm leading hundreds of thousands of people. It's time consuming.'** 'Do you think I have a bad heart?' Those were his words. I said, 'it's **absolutely that you have a bad heart!**' You know, I've been so proud of this brother. He repented from that day. And in the last 6 weeks, he's averaged 10 to 12 visitors every week. Is that flat awesome? You see, that's staff meeting. That's discipleship group. **That's the way Jesus ran his staff meetings.**

You know, I'm so proud of Doug and Steve and the way **they've just really gotten personally fruitful,** and I've seen a change in their radiance, and their joy, and just confidence. I mean, it's just fun being fruitful. **I'd just like to convince you guys of that.** It's awesome to be fruitful.

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What's progress. Number one, it's depth in your preaching. Insight in your preaching. The ability to inspire, even **when you're rebuking the tar out of them.**

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When's the last time you passionately preached the cross of Jesus Christ? I believe the cross needs to be preached in every sermon. You **get away from the cross, and you get into denominationalism.**

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**You know, I think the reason there are a lot of our congregations not growing, they're not healthy. You're not spiritually feeding them good foods.**

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I think some things need to go back to some old days. I think it's time to give some altar calls in our church. I think a lot of us quit doing altar calls, because nobody came. You give a sermon that you've ministered on for days,

hours, and then you give an altar call, the people will come. **They may not know why they're coming, but they will come. Because they can smell good food, and they want it, Amen.**

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**Preaching takes money.** 1 Corinthians 9, some of you have failed to appreciate this one, verse 9. 'For it is written in the Law of Moses: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain. Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?' The Bible teaches it's right and fine to be a full time paid preacher, Amen. And as Roman 10 says, 'how can they believe unless a preacher is sent.' And sending takes money. **You know, it's exciting to me that in the last two years, we were growing at a rate of 24% in our church. So a couple of years we grew at 24% that year. Then last year we grew at 24%. That's incredible, cause we grew so much. This year, this is incredible, we grew so much last year, but this year we're growing at 26.3%.** I mean, more disciples, but we're growing faster. Does that fire you up or not? But you know something? In the first (not understandable) **we've grown about 20% this year, but our contribution has only grown 10.** In the end, what that means is that **it's going to slow down in growth, because you see, the purpose of the contribution increases,** it's not to put pressure on your people, but it's to hire more people to sustain the growth. See, you gotta understand that, and you gotta teach that to the church. You gotta say, 'Listen, **I gotta teach you to go beyond tithing, and we gotta go to sacrifice.** Sacrifice so other preachers can be hired, young interns. So that preachers can be sent. So we can evangelize every nation. Are you with me here church? The people need to know why we're asking to increase, and you see, a lot of times you preachers don't even know yourself. **If you understand that the growth is going to stop unless you increase the giving at the same rate you increase the membership then you're not going to push, because you think it's a burden to the people.** Giving should be a joy, Amen!

I want to talk for a moment thought about some things that have concerned me in the movement, and that's, what we've got to do is guard against the personal love of money, greed. **I'm very concerned about some of the life styles that I've seen.** And if you feel a twinge of guilt, that's not me that's the Holy Spirit. **I think some of our rents have become exorbitant. I think that buying homes, one needs to think long and hard about. I think we need to look at how many clothes and how many suits we have.** Let me tell you something, a brother comes to church about every other week with a different suit, a different set of clothes, or a sister. I'm concerned. That's not a matter of look sharp, that's a matter of greed. **I've heard people being discontent about their pay, and it may be that in some cases you're paid too low, but the Bible says in Hebrews 13, 'you be content with what you're paid, and you be grateful.'** When I started preaching, when I was right out of school. I made \$8,000 a year, and that was for everything. Then about a year later, I got this humungous raise, and that was to about \$13,000. I thought I was really cranking. I was grateful, that I just got to preach, and somebody gave me some money to do what I loved best.

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**If you weren't paid to be the preacher, would you be the preacher? Why do you do it? For the love of money, or for the love of God?** Our Middle East brothers are doing it for the love of God.

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Heroes make heroes, who make heroes. See some of you **young guys, your problem is, the reason you're not growing is you've become too critical, and you know your discipler too well, and he's not your hero anymore.** Well, let me tell you something, God's plan for growth is through the Word of God and through prayer, and through **discipleship by imitation.** And yes, none of us are perfect, we're sinners, and we're not guaranteed to be saved at the end of it all, but you've got to have a hero. The reason we don't have more awesome young preachers is because we don't have the young guys in this fellowship, and the young girls in this fellowship that have picked out some heroes. Both secular and in the church. Say, 'I want to be like him; I want to be like her. You know, **I picked out preachers when I was a young guy that I thought, that guys awesome, and that guys awesome, and that guys awesome,** and I'm stealing that story, Amen. And, ah yeah, John F. Kennedy, yeah I like that stuff. Martin Luther King, okay, so he's black, amen, we'll incorporate a little bit of that, a little fire power, amen. And we'll start saying amen in our church. You see, **back in the early days, we didn't even say 'Amen', in the early days. It was the cotton-picking' dead mainline church of Christ.** I appreciate Martin Luther King's impact on me. **You gotta pick out some heroes, then you gotta imitate and then, and only then do you need to develop your own style.** You see, my main concern at this hour, is we don't have preachers and women's ministry leaders that are heroes. **Discipling has broken down** to produce young heroes, but you know where **I'm really scared church is discipling has broken down in our congregations.** When Al Baird came to me about this issue, I was blown away, and Al

will probably speak more about it on Friday, but let me just say this. **Most people in our older churches do not have even a two hour block with their discipler set every week. Why? Because those of us in leadership aren't even giving two hours to all of our disciples.**

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You see, we can have the mass evangelism, but we can't let discipling break down to raise up young heroes, and particularly in the fellowship. **Everybody needs to be disciplined. You go back to your church, and you call you church back to repentance. Everybody needs discipleship time. Everybody needs daily contact with their discipler. Everybody needs to want to be disciplined. Are you with me. We gotta get this thing in that discipling, being disciplined is negative, being disciplined is good, amen.** I want to say something about the women's ministry right here. You sisters, **you've gotten comfortable at home.** There are less and less sisters classes in the kingdom.

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We should be having sisters teaching sisters publicly. Now I don't believe that a woman has authority over a man, but I do believe the women have been given charge to teach the women. And I think this is why we aren't getting as many **sharp** ladies in our church is they love it when they see the women teaching the women, and not the men bossing them around.

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**We need to revive awesome women's ministry,** amen. So the challenge is we need some women heroes, but women heroes will not come unless they see women publicly speaking, and then the five talent women will say, 'I want to be a women's ministry leader.'

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**We have lost the fire of the prophet from our pulpits.** The charge that Paul gave to Timothy in his dying breath, the charge we received when we became Evangelists. Not of some local church, but the kingdom of God. The charge was given in the presence of God.

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Jesus was known as a prophet. That's why more than any other man who ever walked. He didn't just change religious history. He changed history.

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This is the time, not to make religious history, but to change the course of human events for all history and for eternity, amen.

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The history book, Mother Teresa, yeah she's great, but we've got Mother Pat, amen. And, because of the way the Catholic church does stuff, they don't have a Father anything. We've got Father Bob, amen.

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We're going to make history, we're going to shake this thing on up.

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Let me tell you something, we have made religious history. The sweeping efforts of the kingdom of God have gone beyond the Reformation Movement, beyond the Methodist Movement, beyond the Restoration Movement. We have done that, now **it's time to change the course of human events. It's time to change all history, and all eternity.**

—Tape Ends—

### **August, 1995: Johannesburg Leadership Conference, "Shepherding the Flock" —Al Baird**

\*\*\* = material on tape not transcribed

The title this morning is "Shepherding the Flock." First thing I've got to say is - I've got to get your attitude right about this title. Because I know what a lot of you think when you see that - 'Oh, this is a class about elders.' Well, you know what? If it was a class about elders, you ought to be fired up about it...But this is not a speech about elders. This is a speech about shepherds. When I read my Bible, when I read John, chapter 10, Jesus says, 'I am the good shepherd.' And my understanding of being a disciple means being like Jesus. And if Jesus was a shepherd, and if He was a good shepherd, what had you better be? You better be a shepherd, and you better be a good shepherd!

I've got two points this morning. The first point is - **the kingdom has a shepherding crisis. I picked those words very carefully. I thought about saying the kingdom has a shepherding problem. Brothers and sisters, we are far beyond the problem stage. We are in the crisis stage!** How many of you look at the kingdom stats every

month? Some of you are **liars**. We can't wait to see where we stack up in the kingdom stats. You look at 1994, there were 30,000 baptisms in the kingdom of God. I praise God for 30,000 baptisms, it's the most in modern day times in the kingdom of God, but I also look below that, **in addition to 30,000 baptisms, there were almost 20,000 fall aways. You heard it right, 30,000 baptisms, 20,000 fall aways. Now you're a shepherd right? A shepherd brings as many sheep as possible into the sheep pen, right? And I think we're doing a pretty good job of that. But I'll tell you this, when we're at a point in time when every 3 sheep you bring into the sheep pen, 2 of them get eaten by wolves. We've got a crisis. Amen!** How would you like to stand up before your church on Sunday morning, and say, 'Brothers and sister, I want you to look to your left and to your right, because on the day of judgment, you're not going to make it. Two out of three of you are not going to make it.' **We've got a shepherding crisis. Are you with me church?**

Now, what's our response to this? Well, I think there's several. And I think almost all of you will find yourself in one of these 4 categories. The first category, and I think this includes most of you - **is you ignore it. You don't want to deal with it. You'd rather not know it. You'd rather bury your head in the sand, and concentrate on 30,000 baptisms, and just hope that the fall aways will just go away. The problem is, they do go away.**

Secondly, some of **you rationalize it**. John Vaughn, this past year, did a study on denominational churches, and their fall away rate - Evangelical churches around the United States. You know what they found out? **In Evangelical churches, for a year, their stats were for about every 3 people that come in the front door, two people go out the back door. Some of you think, 'Well, at least we're doing as well as some of the denominational churches.'** Since when do we compare ourselves with denominational churches? Then some of **you just accept it**. You say, 'Well, I mean in LA, they have about 1 out of 2 fallaway, I mean, we can't be better than LA can we?' And then some of **you work around it. You don't fix it you just work around it. You say, 'Well, we'll just have to have more baptisms.'** Now, I'm all in favor of more baptism, amen! **But that's not going to get the job done in this crisis.** You see, because when people fallaway, three things happen, and they're all bad.

Number one, I read in my Bible in 2 Peter, chapter two in verses 20 and 21 that **when someone turns away from God he's worse off then when he even came to the Lord. These people are going to hell. And I don't understand hell, but I know that they're worse off than if they had never even heard the good news.**

Secondly, **these people become our worst enemies.** You check it out. **The people that leave the kingdom of God become our worst enemies.**

And thirdly, **it terribly effects our people. It effects idealism.** Don't you love the idealism of new Christians? Their enthusiasm, their belief that they're going to win everybody in the world, and they see how it changes when they do bring someone to the Lord, and that person fall aways. And you see the idealism fade away. **Some people become cynical and hard and say, 'I just can't give my heart anymore, it hurts too much.'** All these bad things happen with fall aways.

Well, what does God think about it? **Do you think God is happy with 2 out of 3 people falling away? You think that fires God up?** Ezekiel, chapter 34, verse 1, 'The Word of the Lord came to me. Son of Man prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them; 'This is what the Sovereign Lords says, Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals.' Verse 10, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says, 'I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock.' **Is God happy with 2 out of 3 people leaving? (No's from the audience) I don't think He's only sad, I think He's terribly upset. And I think He's upset with you and me to whatever extent this describes us, and I'm afraid it describes us more than we'd like to think that it does.**

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You've accepted 2 out of 3... You see, we've so **numbed ourselves out** that we have **compromised on a standard**, on an expectation of God and Jesus, and Brothers and Sisters, we do not have the heart of Jesus on this matter (Matthew 18:10-13), but we are going to change, Amen!

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**What are the answers?** I think the answer starts with a decision today that it's going to be different in your church from now on. You know, if I understand what Jesus says, 'according to your faith it will be done.' Can you cut the fall aways in your church? 'According to you faith it will be done.' That's where it's gotta start. But you know, when you really look at the problem itself, figuring out fall aways is not that difficult of a problem to figure out. You know, the Bible Talk that Gloria and I have led in S. Central (LA), the last 12 months that we have led that particular Bible Talk situation, we doubled in size, and we had zero fall aways. **I don't think that's so unusual. I think that most of you know how to do that. Most of you know how to keep people faithful in your Bible Talk situation. You see, we haven't learned how to transfer that to a whole large church situation, but we know how to take care of people. We know how to shepherd people that we can lay our hands on, but we haven't figured out how to transfer that to a whole church yet.** The answers are there, and I'm convinced they're not all that complicated. In LA we have begun to tackle the problem. **I'm not standing here as an authority saying, 'we've got all the answers.'** But we have begun to tackle the problem, which is what I want you to walk away with today. I want you to begin to tackle the problem in your situation.

**The San Diego church, of course as everyone knows, had a terrible year last year. And everyone knows about the turn-around situation this year.** Well, one of the things that has been talked about that contributed to that turn-around situation is the elders in San Diego decided last October they were going to start designating some people to start to help to take care of people in a shepherding way. Not as elders, but just sorta **the focus on that particular thing of working with the weak.** And, we liked that idea when we heard about it, and so in May of this year we started what we call a shepherding couple program.

Now, these people that are generally married couples in our situation, not in every situation are not elders. They don't meet the qualification necessarily of elders, but they do have the focus of shepherding in a focused ministry way on people that have been designated to them. Now one of the first requirements that we make and we put before these people is - you will be fruitful personally. Amen! See, you've got to hear what we're talking about here. **We're not talking about, 'Well, we gotta back off the baptisms, cause so many people are falling away.'** **Hey, we are not yet to the New Testament standard of baptisms. And we're not going to back off of that, but in the process we're going to take care of our people. Amen! And that's the expectation that we have of these shepherding couples.**

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These couples, we said, 'Okay, you lead a Bible Talk, but beyond that your ministry is going to be shepherding people.' **Taking care of the weak and getting them strong.** Working with people on **what we call a weak and concerned list**, to help them get strong and grow up in the Lord. But also to focus on people who have already fallen away, and to try and bring them back and **restore them.** Now, we are only a couple of months into this program, but the initial results are very encouraging. I really believe that we're going to see some amazing things happen with programs like this. **Is it going to work? I don't fully know if it's going to work. I believe it'll work, but it's not going to take care of the whole problem.** You see, you're not going to cure the problem with a program. You're going to cure the problem with a mind-set. You're going to cure the problem with a heart. **And it's gotta be your heart, because the people are going to take your heart. You can not delegate a shepherding responsibility to someone else.**

The real question, how far can we go with this? Two out of three people fallaway right now - last year. **How much can we improve this? Well, I don't really know.** I do know this - God expects a lot more of us than what we've done so far. **Can we bring it down to 1 out of 3? I firmly believe that we can. It's going to take a lot of work.**

Well brothers and sisters, do you realize what it would do if we cut the fallaway rate from 2 out of 3 to 1 out of 3? It would mean, last year, rather than 20,000 people falling away that number would have been cut to 10,000 falling away. **And do you know what that would have done to our growth rate last year? Last year, Praise God, we grew by almost 25% in the kingdom of God. It would have increased our growth rate to 50%.** It would have doubled our growth rate in the church, just by cutting the fallaway rate in half. (clapping in the audience) I tell you what, there is nothing much more exciting than seeing someone return to the Lord. I love to see people baptized, but Jesus knew what he was talking about when that one person came back to the 99. There is a great time of rejoicing, and we need to give our people that experience. **But I tell you what, there is even more joy if people don't leave at all. That's what we need to do is - we don't need to just bring people back, we need to stop people from**

**leaving. We need to get in and figure out why it is that people leave, and cure that problem, and take care of our people, and shepherd our people.**

You know, one of the things that we've done, and we've always done to the glory of God, and with His help. **We've always solved the problems and the crisis that we've had.** You see, when good hearts and good minds go to work on a problem and a crisis it always gets solved. I'm firmly convinced this is going to get solved, but **you've got to turn around your thinking today. You've got to turn around your heart today.**

—Tape Ends—

## **May 5, 1996: Oceania Conference, "Glory" –Kip McKean**

Audio Tape Transcript

Sydney, Australia Church of Christ

transcribed by Martin Hinves

comments in (parentheses) added by the transcriber

comments in [brackets], formatting and bold type added by Dave Anderson

(Much yelling and screaming)

Are you fired up church?

(More yelling and screaming in the affirmative).

Please go ahead and sit down. What an incredible day ... Amen! (More yelling and screaming). Now we're going to have some more fun right here. I want you to turn your bibles open to Psalm 136. And Psalm 136, is what they call a call and response Song. And the Song Leader, of which I'm not going to be, sings something and then the people respond on back, but we've going to say the words because they are so powerful. And yet in keeping, with really the, the theme of the hour, which is the Glory of God... Amen. We are going to give a response back to the words in the scripture, and some other things that I am going to bring before you.

Here in Psalm 136 the Song Leader would go..give thanks to the Lord for he is good and the people would respond .. his love endure forever. We're going to change it up a little bit, and in keeping with the song we just sang we're going to say ...Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah.

you think you can do that? (Cries of Yes from the audience)

Lets practice it a little bit here. Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....(sigh of disgust).. Now I know we've seen two videos, and the GHL appointments, and you're sagging a little bit in the energy right here a little bit.

(Cries of No from the audience)

Well let's try it again. Glory, Glory... Hallelujah I think you got it right there... lets go.

[This call-and-response exercise resembles Ericksonian Hypnosis. Ericksonian hypnosis doesn't rely on trance induction, but on pacing and leading the subject. As a result, information is assimilated by the subject without critical assessment. Kip's exercise starts out by reading short passages from a Psalm, and then having the audience respond by affirming it ("Glory, Glory Hallelujah"). This creates a "Yes Set". Once the "Yes Set" is established, and the audience is agreeing to each statement, other ideas can be introduced which will also be affirmed by the yes set. ("Amens" can also be used to create a yes set) As the exercise proceeds, Kip makes a transition from Psalm 136, to general Christian concepts ("Praise God for Jesus and the Cross"), and finally almost entirely to statements about the group (e.g. "Empower us Father as YOUR modern day movement to evangelize this entire world in this generation.") If the audience is influenced by the "yes set", these more controversial concepts will be absorbed without critical assessment. Note: Someone can utilize a yes set, or other Ericksonian techniques without being consciously aware of them; Kip may not be employing these techniques intentionally.]

(Kip) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good...

(Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give thanks to the God of God's  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give thanks to the Lord of Lords  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) To him alone does great wonders  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Who by his understanding made the heavens  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Who spread out the earth amongst the waters  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Who made the great lights  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) The sun to govern the day  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) The moon and stars to govern the night  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) To him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) And brought Israel out from amongst them  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) With a mighty hand and outstretched arm  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) To him who divided the Red Sea asunder  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) And brought Israel through the midst of it  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) But swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) To him who led his people through the desert  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Who struck down great kings  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) And gave his people the promised land  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give Thanks to the God of Heaven  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise God for Jesus and the Cross  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise God for the example of the early church and the apostles  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Who evangelized their world in THEIR generation  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give thanks to the people of the 1500's of the Reformation movement (Audience)  
 Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give thanks to the people of the 1800's of the Restoration movement in America  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 [From here on, the NEXT TWENTY LINES are all references to the Movement. The audience continues to affirm  
 each statement with "Glory, Glory Hallelujah".. ]  
 (Kip) Praise God for the 30 would be disciples in Boston in 1979  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise their uncompromising faith in the resurrection in the bible  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Never forget their vision and passion for world evangelism  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Give thanks to God for Jesus's plan of multiplying disciples and multiplying churches.

(Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) remember the first church plantings from Boston to Chicago and London in 1982  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) New York planted in 83 is now 8000 on Sundays.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) In 1986 God smashed apartheid by sending a multi-racial team of disciples from Boston to Johannesburg.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Our brothers scarified everything to plant Bombay, Hong Kong, and Mexico City in 1987.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Thank you for the humble hearts of the people in Sydney and Tokyo whose churches were reconstructed in 1987.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Like David's mighty men World Sector Leaders were appointed in 1988.  
 [Note: the World Sector Leaders were appointed by Kip.]  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise ye Father for Boston sending out 7 churches in 1989. Seattle, DC, Miami, Honolulu, Bangkok, Manila and LA.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) In 1991 the Holy spirit planted Moscow and Red China.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise God for H.O.P.E. ... Helping Other People Everywhere  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Thank you Father for the incredible World Wide Women's Ministry.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Praise God for last year's Middle East plantings in Casablanca, Baghdad and Istanbul.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Thank you Father, last week we had our first 3 baptisms in Baghdad Iraq!  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) God remember the Jerusalem and Canberra plantings this year.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Let Australia be the first evangelized continent in our generation.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Empower us Father as YOUR modern day movement to evangelize this entire world in this generation.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) Father let us love our persecutors and begetters (?) and help them become disciples  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) We are willing to die for you and your son in his mission.  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip) To God be the Glory  
 (Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Kip and Audience) Glory,... Glory,... Hallelujah ....  
 (Much screaming occurs)

Are you fired up that God is here with you (words lost in screaming and cheering) (Much clapping and cheering)

Our main text for the day will be taken from II Corinthians, Chapters 2, 3 and 4. I have three simple points. Evangelistic Glory, Ever Increasing Glory and Eternal Glory.

Let us pray together. Our Father in heaven it is so amazing to see the way that your hand has moved through this church. How you formed your people from 1 man, Abraham and then multiplied him like the stars in the heavens. As those stars shone brightly, so did your people. Thank you Father that through his seed you brought Jesus, and the Christian movement to this lost and dark world. Thank you for those early followers, who gave up everything, yeah even their lives, to see others hear the good news. Father thank you, through the centuries, the men and women that have grappled with your word in trying to restore true New Testament Christianity. Father we thank you for those

humble hearts, in Europe, in the Reformation years. Father we thank you for the people in the Restoration movements in America in the 1800's. And Father we are so personally appreciative of those 30 that gathered in Boston, that fateful June 1st night in the Gempels' living room (knowing chuckle). Father you've always started small and ended big; And heavenly Father I pray that, as we hear your message, that we will know it is you that is speaking, not some frail man. But we are giving (quick change into the next word) hearing the living testimony of your spirit. That testifies to your eternal truth. Father I pray that we don't listen as ..(pause) a church; but we listen as individuals. And that today we walk out of here with decisions, to be part of your glory, forever and ever. Change us Father. In the name of Jesus we pray ... Amen.

Lets turn to II Corinthians, .. you know I do want to thank Fred and Emma, and your incredible elders and their wives, you are so blessed in the leadership in the Sydney Church, Amen. I stand in awe (next words drowned out in crowd roaring and cheering) What an incredible program, what an incredible place, what an incredible time, it's great to be a disciple of Jesus. But you know, sometimes we need to be reminded that it's great to be a disciple of Jesus. And that's what Paul was doing right here in Chapter 2 verse 14 he said "But thanks be to God , who always leads us in triumphal procession to Christ and through us spreads everywhere, the fragrance of the knowledge of Him". You know it seems so incredible that just 17 short years ago there were 30 disciples in the Gempels' living room. One city... One nation... One church...and now by the power of the Holy Spirit, we look around and we see that those 30 would be disciples have multiplied into 130 people worshipping every Sunday morning. Amen. In 250 different churches, in 90 different countries. Truly it has to be God. You see I know who those 30 people were in that living room (knowing chuckle), and you know, you gotta admit it, it is very very exciting, to see God paint the big picture, in Christ. And we are inspired by the grandiose scenes, and grandiose numbers, like 85 people baptized in one day in Manila.... does that fire you on up? And yet I feel a need, that we, come on down and we focus in on the individual here, yes God is concerned about the nations, God is concerned about the masses of humanity, but the amazing thing about our God is that he is concerned about the individual. And right here it tells the disciples that thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession, you don't always understand that. Perhaps we can glean a better insight by turning, to the very words of Jesus in John Chapter 9. A very interesting occasion, it says in verse 1 , "As Jesus walked along he saw a man blind from birth, his disciples asked him ' Rabbi; who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind ? '. Neither this man nor his parents sinned Jesus said, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life, as long as this day we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work, when I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Right here the disciples asked the question of the ages, they're walking along they see this man who was born blind from birth. They say, hay, Jesus...ddd..did his parents sin that this bad thing happened that this man suffered so much ? Did he sin somehow, some way? I mean the question that the lost world and even sometimes the church asks is, why is their so much suffering. Why is there so much EVIL ? Why is the darkness around the world closing ,(softly) tighter and tighter around us, even as we call ourselves the true church? WHY; the wars in the middle east?

Why the horrendous mass graves in Yugoslavia ?

Why such, POVERTY in the third world, and, lets just get down onto it, the core of our first world cities ?

Why the prejudice and hate between cultures and races ?

Why so much Divorce, why so many unwed, unloved mothers and children ?

Why the massacre at Port Arthur ?

Well Jesus tells us ...he's with the disciples, and he simply says, well guys, neither this man nor his parents sinned....but this happened, God allowed it to happen, so that the work of God might be displayed in his life, (faster) now it's very interesting other translations use different words. Other translations say... so the power of God might be displayed in his life. And still others say .. so that the Glory of God; might be displayed in his life. The darker it is, the brighter the light shines. It's easy now that we see the story complete. To understand why... there was a street kid, in India. Who I'm sure was abused, verbally and physically, who had to (untranslatable) in an orphanage, that just some how, some way, Hope Worldwide had contacted. And that little child, Nathaniel, gets to be raised in the Arthur family.

[Apparently this is a reference to the new adoption ministry, which has placed over 100 children in ICC homes. The Boston church has donated over \$200,000 to an adoption charity to make this possible. source: audio tape, Doug Arthur at Madison Square Garden, 8/4/96 ]

You say well, why the street kid ?

So the Glory of God may be displayed in his life. It fires you up, doesn't it to see God work. I've seen the KNN video three times and I cannot help stop crying when little Nathaniel 's there, you know with Doug , and hey we're going to be best friends, and we're going to preach so much, I'm going .. Oh Gee...

(softly) Say why the poverty in the inner cities? WHY IN THE WORLD DID GOD ALLOW A WOMEN WITH ALREADY THREE GIRLS TO HAVE ANOTHER BOY! WHEN THE FATHER'S NOT HANGING AROUND? Why did he give this boy such athletic.. greatness? WHY DID HE ALLOW HIM TO MAKE IT INTO THE NBA, play pro-ball for years, make millions, and THEN, have an injury, and see his marriage completely obliterated, it's so that when Cory Blackwell became a baptized disciple, one day he'd be a World Sector Leader, and we would be able to see the work of God. The power of God.. and the Glory of God. But there are such tragedies brother like....Erica Kim's brother Hiroshi. Was in a Car wreck last year, he was killed instantaneously, you know WHY ? AND A THREE YEAR OLD BOY.. WHY ? (small pause) He never responded to the Gospel. (large pause) But interestingly the Kim's, were then allowed to reach out to his wife Masayo. And invited her and the little boy to live with them in Japan. To be in their home, and if you're around the Kim's for a very long time.. that light is going to push away the darkness. And I am happy to tell you that Masayo was baptized just a month ago AMEN (large roar from audience and much clapping and cheering). Why did it happen, so that the work of God, the Power of God, and the Glory of God be revealed in his life. You know this passage holds very special meaning for Elena and myself. About 11 years ago we went to the Boston Children's hospital with our son Shaun. And the doctor's examined him, and they said he has a very severe birth defect, basically what he had in layman's terms, is three extra vertebrae in his back that were disformed and created tremendous curvature and twisting of the back; which could have caused internal damage, deformity, grave deformity, and a very short life. I remember coming back, and it was such a shock....I was so down, so depressed, I saw Elena, and that was awful riding back in the car. And she goes "Well whatta you mean ?" I said "Babe, didn't you hear.. our kid may be deformed, he's going to get all these problems, he's going to have to have a major operation, a whole body cast." She goes " I didn't even hear that". I said "that's what's going to HAPPEN"... and she started crying. (Knowing male laughter from audience) And I said, "you know we got a bible talk tonight, and I got to do a bible talk for me - have you ever had to do a bible talk for you ? I mean some times you worry about the Christians, sometimes you worry about the non-Christians, but sometimes you just go "I need a bible talk for myself". And this is the bible talk I chose right here. I didn't understand it, but I just had to grab onto the scriptures and sometimes that's all you've got, is your faith... and the Word of God. And sometimes there are no answers, that anybody, NOT EVEN THE VOICE OF GOD WILL SAY. BUT YOU GRAB ONTO THE LORD, AND GRAB ONTO YOUR FAITH, AND YOU GRAB ONTO THE BIBLE, AND YOU READ IN THE BIBLE - THIS HAPPENED SO THAT THE GLORY OF GOD MIGHT BE REVEALED IN HIS LIFE !

And years passed, and Shaun became a young man, (faster)and he was told by the doctors, you can't play contact sports - not even basketball because.. even like high school's just too rough like given your back situation. I sat down with Shaun, I drew a little picture of how his back was, and limitations; I said "Well son I ...I... you know..gotta get you into sports right here; we got our choices, we got swimming, golf and tennis.... which one ?" He goes "Well ... tennis" I go "Amen" So Shaunie started. As usually the custom the little brother tags on in... Eric. And because Olivia got motion sickness, even though she was in gymnastics, she thought she needed to trade on into tennis. Well, Lord would have it, we.. we bounced around from coach to coach; and finally in 1994 we found a coach. His name was Danny Saltze, he was well known in the tennis world, ranked number 88 in the world at one time, he won the New Zealand open in the late 80's. He was Jewish in his background, and he was a very kind man, and he took an interest in our kids, and so.. he started working with them, and they became better and better but at the same time he saw the family. He saw our love, he saw our genuineness... we kindda took him in to our family 'cause at this time he was going through a divorce, and he was hurting pretty bad. But before you know, we were in a bible study, and 6 months later Danny was baptized into Christ. You say well...I'm... I'm beginning to see right now, I see why God allowed Shaun to have that deformity, that congenital defect. It was so the Glory of God could be revealed in his life. And that Danny would become a Christian.

[Note: Apparently, Kip believes his own son was born with a spinal problem so that his tennis coach would become converted and join the church.]

A few months later Danny reached out, along with us to a woman tennis pro, she was ranked very highly in the tennis (pause) pro tour and Abigail Belaina was baptized into Christ. Last year, another man was a tennis pro, 2 time all American, on the pro tour, he was baptized , Terry Davis became a Christian Amen. And I began to see the Glory

of God... It was even greater than anything we could have asked or imagined, and because the kids have gotten quite good all of them are ranked. And in particular Shaun.. er has done well, er but even beyond perhaps even Shaun is Eric. Eric's ranked in the top 10 in Southern California. To give you an idea of what that means Australia has a population of about 20 million, so does California have a population of about 20 million. So that'd be the equivalent of being in your top 10 in Australia. So a lot of times we take him to seminars, and what we try to do is we have Danny go with us, 'cause he's in the ministry right now. And he.. he takes the kids along, particularly Eric and all these different nations they love to play the top American kids. So anyway we were in Johannesburg last fall, Danny and the kids went over to the club over there to play during the break times. And sure enough we reached out to a young man, on Saturday, named Toboko. No 20 in the 18's, in South Africa. He came to church that Sunday, when we gathered there, in Soweto, with the 5000..was that awesome ? But he brought his mum and dad, and his dad's a politician.. well a few weeks later Toboko was baptized, and a couple of weeks after his parents were baptized.. Is that awesome? (Much cheering and clapping from the audience)

And then... just about three months ago... this family was watching Eric play, and Eric was playing well that day and ... when Eric plays well he doesn't get a temper and a tantrum and so, they really liked his character; I'm glad they saw us on a good day you know .. Amen. And she (unintelligible) I'd, I'd love my boys to play like that, and to be that well behaved on the court. I said "Well... Amen.. .er..I'll tell you what er..Bruce, Patty you should, you and the boys to become to church to us, tomorrow." They came the next day to church. Three weeks later Bruce was baptized into Christ, and at the Women's Day Elena baptized Patty into Christ.. Amen.

IS THAT FLAT AWESOME ?

(Much cheering and clapping from the audience)

(Comment by Kip untranslatable due to audience noise - partially : Now here's...)

You look at all the suffering, and the evil, and the darkness that's out there and you ask why? Well the issue's very simple, the reason is that God has allowed it so that the ... work of God... the power of God, the Glory of God may be displayed IN OUR LIVES does that fire you on up?

Well how's Glory displayed ? John 15 verse 8 tell us. "This is to my Father's Glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be disciples." Our Primary mission, our purpose in life, is not simply to evangelize. But is to bear fruit...(quickly) you see a lot of times our churches we teach - you gotta be evangelistic, you gotta be.. uh no I think that's really a cop out. Nowhere in the bible does Jesus say be evangelistic. He says I want you to have enough faith to say 'I am going to be fruitful (quickly) I'm going to meet someone and they are going to become a Christian'. Are you with me right here?

[Note: Kip is saying it is Christians' responsibility to not only be "evangelistic", but to get results. Kip calls just being "evangelistic" a "cop-out". He has distorted what the Bible says about "fruit". Bearing fruit is not synonymous with evangelizing. "Fruit" in the New Testament can mean speech (Luke 6: 43-45), good deeds (Luke 3:8-14), gifts of money (Romans 15:28), repentance (Luke 13: 1-9), and many other things (Galatians 5:22).]

You see Evangelistic Glory is something that God wants us to have, and I can tell you something, there is nothing better than having your life have a sense of purpose. I gotta ask you a couple of questions. Have you been personally fruitful this year? So already a third of the year is up! A third of the year is up, most of the disciples in the room, lets just have a show of hands, lets just get right down to it, how many of us have met someone, studied with someone and baptized someone this year; lets raise our hands. I commend you in the Lord, but look how few of us. My question's this - If Shaun with his congenital defect can influence so many people directly and indirectly, what's your excuse? See your excuse, your lack of faith is the only thing separating you from (pause) Evangelistic Glory and glorifying God.

Lets get back to II Corinthians chapter 3. In II Corinthians chapter 3, he, he begins to encourage the brothers and sisters more, about how they are led in triumphal procession, because, so often we as disciples we had this feeling of - well I'm triumphing today but the next few days I'm not triumphing. Have you ever been there ? In untriumphing day? Let's look if you will in verse 12, Chapter 3 II Corinthians. "Therefore since we have such a hope, we are very bold, we're not like Moses who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away" Let me stop right here. What he's referring to here is the true account that takes place with Moses in Exodus Chapter 34, when he goes back up the second time to Mount Sinai to get the 10 Commandments. It's kind of awesome, because when he went up there, he communed with the Lord, and when he

came down it was incredible, his face was totally RADIANT. Totally bright, totally (pause) hwuf. And everybody just saw Moses like this, but, then Moses noted that... the Glory started to fade, and he so put a veil over his face 'cause he did not want people to see that God's Glory was fading away from his leader.

[Looking at Exodus 34: 29-35, one could make the case this is not the reason Moses wore a veil. Verse 30 says Moses wore a veil because the radiance on Moses' face scared Aaron & the Israelites and made them afraid of him! Kip may have mis-interpreted the account in II Corinthians 3:13, which says Moses "...would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away." Notice it says "while the radiance was fading away", not "because the radiance was fading away." Kip says Moses wore the veil to keep the people from seeing the glory fade from God's leader, yet this might not be Paul's intent when he wrote II Corinthians. ]

But every time, he'd go back up on the mountain, the Glory would be restored, but after a while you have to put the veil back on because it would fade when he went back down. Well right here he says that's how it is under the old testament, " We're not like Moses who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away ". Verse 17 (quickly) " Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (ever quicker) And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's Glory are being transformed into his likeness with EVER INCREASING GLORY WHICH COMES FROM THE LORD WHO IS THE SPIRIT.....DOES THAT FIRE YOU UP CHURCH ?

Since you're not supposed to be like Moses when you have a great day on Sunday, and you are RADIANT, and then Monday on the way to work you start fading...and you put your veil on.

And no-one knows you are a Christian, 'cause you got the veil up. They don't see the light because you got the veil up. They don't know who you really are at work, because you got the veil up and the Glory is fading because you're afraid to be identified as a member of the Lord's church, the true Church of Christ in Sydney. We got our veils up in the high school, we got our veils up in the colleges. But God says, as New Testament disciples, we need to reflect God's Glory all the time, and not just reflect it but have EVER INCREASING GLORY. I mean we're supposed to get MORE AND MORE AND MORE RADIANT...

[In the following section, notice how Kip builds the audience up, and then brings them down repeatedly. This juxtaposition of praise and rebuke is a form of pacing and leading...]

Does that fire you on up church ?

[Up.]

You know very interesting last fall, was horrific for the Los Angeles Church, four straight months we didn't grow at all. As many people as we baptized seemingly fell away. So discouraging. You know, I've got to be honest, I see some parallels here. Can I, .. just lay it on out here on the day. I mean .... we've been visiting, it's 4 days now, so the visits over, it's time to be family...Amen!

[Up]

Sydney church, hey you got about 550 disciples but your attendance is 750, you got about 100 kids, you only have about 100 people in church visiting every week. I think there are a lot of veiled radiances... (pause)

[Down]

Some of the other churches doing okay here, in Australia, Melbourne you're doing pretty good . (Cheer from audience)

[Up]

Not awesome, Not awesome.

[Down]

A polite clap would probably been the correct tenor of that. (Kip claps lightly)

[Down]

But you're doing pretty good, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Gold Coast,... Ummm

[Up]

(Large pause)

You know I can relate to what the feeling is. It's tough being in a church that isn't cranking, isn't it? You look at KNN, (softly) that place's cranking, that place's cranking, they're really cranking, (normal) and here I am.

[Down]

In this church, well we can let it out, certainly all of our churches are facing a very common problem, aging. We're all getting older... that youthful zeal has now given way to a sophistication. You know after all it's better to see the action when you sit back in the back rows... (pause). And you see no longer are the issues of life BLACK AND WHITE , there's there's some gray in there .. and on the sides (laughter at joke). You been around a while and that young leader... (very softly) tch.. man.. tch.. you know he's...(normal) run a little long. (softly) What's the dope...disciplined...(normal) I could have been such a better service. You've been disciplined for a while, and someone's hurt your feelings. And it surprises you that another disciple would hurt you. Not understanding that another disciple is a sinner.. er.. just like you.

(Tape ends side 1)

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(Tape begins side 2)

Lament ago, you know bro, we get so many awesome people baptized 5,6,7 years ago. AWESOME ONES. (softly) but we just don't...not a lot of real awesome ones.. and you know there isn't even a lot of people wanting to go into the ministry. Some people go in the ministry and they quit...You know it's like Bruce Springsteen sings in his song "Glory Days" "Well time slips away leaves here and nothing mister, but boring stories of glory days' We talk about your spiritual life, it is the here and now ever increasing Glory... or is the past Glory days ?

You know,.. I may..I.. sitting there in the fall in LA and I was so FRUSTRATED WHY ISN'T THIS CHURCH MOVING. WHY ARE PEOPLE LIKE MARTY AND COREY AND BRUCE CRANKING ? And then I remembered a principle that I'd taught a few times. That when a church isn't really moving you gotta look at the head guy. And the Spirit led me to a passage that I want to share with you, it's in Revelations Chapter 2.

And at first I was very encouraged by the words of Jesus, I'd feel he was speaking unto me. Verse 2. Jesus says "I know your deeds".. and he does know our deeds Amen. (quickly) "Your hard work and your perseverance, you know that I cannot tolerate the commandments, you tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. You persevered and endured many hardships for our name and have not grown weary." I know a man.. that's me..I'm hard-line, I'm committed.. I'm doing it..I don't put up with false doctrine...these persecutors...bottom line A... I'm ready to keep on going.

And.. then, then I read verse 4. "Yet I hold this against you, you've forsaken your first love. Remember the HEIGHT from which you've fallen, repent and do the things you did at first. If you don't repent I will come to you and remove your lampstand from it's place". Have you ever read the bible and that particular morning it just cuts like a knife. And you know that God is talking to you. I heard the voice of God in this passage. You see (long pause) I had some deep convictions, lemme.. lemme see if you have some. Is your overriding, highest motivation, as a disciple, a deep convictions that you have to go to church, Amen. That you have to read your bible Amen. That you have to give special contribution Amen. That you have to be evangelistic Amen. See that's all of our problems. When your Christianity is have to do something Then it becomes a grind. Being motivated by the cross, and what we have out of gratitude, we have to want to be these things. See that was what happened inside of me. It was.. It was pathetic. When I was a baby Christian I just, I just had my 24th spiritual birthday April 11th. That's pretty awesome.. Amen. (Transcribers note: This means Kip became a Christian on April 11, 1972 when baptized in a Church of Christ) I can still remember.. I can still remember getting baptized. I was baptized at 1-30 in the morning. There (untranslatable) 4 people there at my baptism. And I remember I was so happy.. I was so excited. They asked me if I wanted to ride back to my dorm, I was living on campus. I said no...I just want to think about it .. I just walked all the way back and I got back to my room about 3 in the morning.. I just laid in my bed... I was so happy...all my sins were forgiven...I was a true Christian I had a purpose in my life.. I was just so excited. You ever been there Amen?

And you know the next day.. I was.. I was ..excited. I..I remember I went to my fraternity house.. to.. uh.. get lunch. And while I was there my .. kinda my Glory started to fade a little bit and I got a little intimidated. And all of a sudden when I was up getting a peanut butter and jelly sandwich one of the guys came on up and I thought in rather a loud voice go 'Kip I heard you got baptized'. It was 'Sssshh'. And then he goes ' Uh.. you know I'm kinda interested in doing that too.' I go 'Oh hey lemme talk to you about that I.. Oh.. It's really awesome you know.' And that's how it

was as a baby Christian. I mean you knew the Lord was with you. I mean you had that cowardice, you had that fear, but you knew that God was gonna always lead you in triumph. Amen.

And you were fired up to share, you were fired up to get people to church, fired up to see your family members become Christians. I mean... church.. I mean you never wanted them to close doors. You wanted to stay around and fellowship and fellowship, then go out and eat and fellowship some more. You remember those days? I mean you'd get up.. you'd be so dead tired.. You'd be going I'm going to have an awesome quiet time. You remember that? Amen.

We see.. that should be the least glorious your life ever was as a Christian. And that wasn't me. Oh I had my quiet times, I've got a lot of the Pharisee in me, mean after all. (seriously) I'm the leader of the movement. Gotta read my bible. Go to church.. I'm...I'm ashamed to tell you.. I just...(untranslatable mumble)..I just didn't want to go to church. I mean we'd go, everyone'd be swum (?) bro, bro, can you help me with this; bro can you do this, bro... could you sign my bible?

I mean I saw myself getting critical of the young ministers. And they were young ministers in my church. I don't know.. It.. It just got harder, I mean I..I began to lose my temper, I got short with people, short with Elena my wife, I saw .. just our marriage.. just not being really healthy. I getting short with my co-workers, (indecipherable name) Corey and Marty and Bruce and they're trying hard and.. and..and yet when I read this passage I go 'Wow'. I've lost my first love.

You know how exciting first love is don't you. I .. remember meeting your wife the first time Amen. That first date and everything, and remember that first date with the brother and everything. I mean it was exciting. I mean I still remember the going out the first time with Elena, I was so fired up, I was too fired up. We went to this incredible Italian spot, I just picked out the best place possible, it was called Duke, it.. it closed about a year later, but it was ...it was a tremendous Italian spot and they had a little salad bar in it, I'm going through it, I'm just.. I'm just so excited. We'd gone to a football game, and I said would she like this, did she like that, and I'm scooping out my salad, and I have a little bit of a tendency to talk with my hands... all of a sudden I'd say 'You know Elena this is just been so much fun' and I just hit my salad bowl .. and it went about 5 feet in the air. (indecipherable over laughter) I was.. I mean.. exactly what to say, I said ' Could you pass me another bowl right over there' Listen you know something, I got home that night, and even though I thought 'Oh I've really blown it'... I had an awesome time... I was.. I was fired up. That's how first love is. (quickly) And that's how it is when you get first in the Lord. (quicker) You are flat fired up.. even if things don't go totally right, you are FLAT FIRED UP are you with me here church?

See you've got to ask yourself ...am I experiencing ever increasing Glory? I knew the first thing I had to do was I had to go repent. First of all to the Lord.. but then I had to go and talk to my discipleship group, all my top brothers, all the top sisters. and you know what Satan always tells you ...Oh there're gonna.. there're gonna be..(pause)..critical. They're.. they're gonna look down on you, they're not going to think as highly of you .. You ever had those thoughts go through your mind? If you get really open and vulnerable... and your pride starts welling up... and you don't even want to tell them everything. I said I just gotta go in and tell them. I told them everything. I laid it on out. They were so supportive. I felt so refreshed. I felt so giving to them. I mean they forgave me.. they loved me.. it's flat awesome; and you know when you repent in the Kingdom of God that's what bros and sisters do they support you. They refresh you. The Lord forgives you, and you start getting the spirit back in your heart. And you start waking up again. Are you with me right here? Well you know once you repent, I mean it's still not easy. The next few months, it was a battle. For every tough thing I'd be wrestling, some of the challenges that were going on in my kids life, . I mean..the.. the Lord would encourage us. Olivia's best friend would get baptized. And then we would have some tough things happen in the church with one of the ministers.. and then Shaun would get baptized. That really got me going...that's fired up about that. I mean all the struggles of getting the church going and.. I got.. was..I say .. it was a fight. It was a fight, I was just really fighting with my flesh. Trying to stop doing things because I had to do it, because I needed to do it, I was trying to get my heart and my mind to want to DO IT. To please God. To help people. And you know I.. I ..can honestly say there has been a radical change in my heart in the last four months. I haven't arrived.. but you know something I don't think you ever arrive there.. are you with me here church? But I can tell you, I am just so much more fired up over my faith. And as I said before I've been in the Lord 24 years. And the Glory just keeps on increasing. Point Three. Eternal Glory. Let's get back to II Corinthians. II Corinthians. Chapter 4. He talks about led in..(pause) triumphal procession, evangelistic Glory. Then he challenges the disciples saying " Hold it, it shouldn't be kind of an up and down ride in Christianity, yours should be an ever

increasing Glory". Then in Chapter 4, he gets on down, and he reminds them " Hey, yes this life is hard, but there's eternal Glory". He begins in verse 7 " But we have this treasure" taking about our hope, our salvation, our faith " We have this treasure in jars of clay" that's our bodies, not..not the most complementary term for our bodies, but for some of us it is a very apt description. You know what I mean ?. "But we have this treasure in jars of clay" fragile "to show this all surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed, perplexed but not dispaired, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed". Are you with me right here?

Verse 13. It's written: "I've believed, therefore I have spoken with that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the GLORY of God." That's just exciting right there. That's why we're here today. You know when I read this passage .. particularly in verse 13... He says this grace that is reaching more... and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the Glory of God.

You know I stand in awe... of what happened particularly at the beginning of the Moscow work. When we took the team on over there, there were 17 of us, there was no money in the Kingdom, the LA church just scrimped and saved and yes we have a Kingdom.(pause) kind of collection every year. But there was not any money that year. So the Lord put upon our hearts in Moscow, we just gotta do it. And then we just scraped together a bunch of young disciples. And said we are going over to Moscow. This is 1991. I remember landing in Moscow, it's Tuesday, it's the afternoon, (untranslatable) really exciting and everything. We thought it was a good sign because the bus that we were in said 'friendship bus'. Man... Then we dropped our stuff into the Intourist hotel. I said guys, we gotta take you to Red Square. Everybody goes (strange distorted voice) Amen. I said come on, so we walked on over. We'd walk in, everybody's all fired up.. and then we'd start seeing all of the soldiers. With the machine guns... with the really big machine guns...They looked over at the Kremlin wall. That was at least a mile high. , They see the Tomb of Lenin that just so dominates the square. With St. Basil's at the other side. (spoken with disgust) Seemingly a monument to false religion preached through the ages in a name of Orthodoxy.

And as silent as that young team was as we (untranslatable) to Red Square. Everybody started to walk slowly, and slowly, and closer and closer to Kip then. And I knew what we were feeling. Fear. I says it's time to pray. This is before the coup so I said guys, lets all gather at the bridge on the far side. We need to pray. We got arm in arm, and all fired up. You see it's okay, you know, when you're young in the faith to be arm in arm. Kind of uncool when you get old and sophisticated you know.. but when you're young in the faith. WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG IN THE FAITH YOU NEED ARM IN ARM. Now I remember how the prayer started. (softly) Lord.. really help us here... . About 3 prayers into it. LORD HELP US HERE. BRING YOUR SPIRIT UNLEASHING MOVEMENT IN THIS NATION THE LIKES OF WHICH HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN THROUGH THE AGES. I tell you we got done with that prayer, we were ready to evangelize Russia. We didn't have a place to meet but we found one on Wednesday. We worked all day Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, with 17 people we had 286 people there at our first service. The next 16 days before I left we had 16 baptisms. God unleashed a historic movement. The coup.. we didn't stop...with all the denominational weak faithed people, that's very kind terminology for them, they just got out of Russia. And I was happy about it because it just left the true church right there. The first year we baptized 800 people into Christ, The Moscow church has nearly 4000 every Sunday morning right now and as you saw up on KNN there are 15 other churches that have come directly or indirectly from that work. Let me tell you something, I think of that when it says right here "this grace of God that is reaching MORE and MORE and MORE people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the Glory of God".. are you thankful for what is going on right there.

Let me tell you something you are part of thanksgiving around the world, you're a part of something very special. Jesus taught that one disciple makes another disciple, makes another disciple. In the early days of Boston, Lord put upon our hearts the way to evangelize the world. Is to go to the great metropolitan cities that dominate the continents. They in turn will evangelize the capital cities of nations. They in turn will get the smaller cities, and so on down to villages. Sydney was one of the first places we thought about. You're part of history, because you see.. Boston planted London. London planted Sydney. Sydney planted Melbourne. And Melbourne did Adelaide. And that was the first 5th Generation Church in the Modern day movement of God. When Doug told me about that I WAS FLAT FIRED UP ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON DOWN UNDER THAT IT WAS GETTING RIGHT SIDE UP ARE YOU WITH ME?

MORE AND MORE people are being reached with God's Grace so that thanksgiving will overflow to the Glory of God. The churches are so thankful for the great things that God's doing down here. You know it's kind of interesting. I've been around the church for a while, you give contribution every week. Then you've got the Hope collection very Sunday. And then you got the special. I mean it's really special. And I'm told that ... the Sydney Church like most of the churches has a 16 times multiple for the Kingdom (Transcriber note: In 1992 the multiple was 12X. In 1993 13X. In 1994 14X. In 1995 15X) in other words, you put the 16 times into the Kingdom pot, that helps us evangelize everything. And divide between the World Sectors. And there's a 4 time multiple for the Sydney church. Is that correct bro?.. Give or take...Amen thanks. Evangelists have to speak in round numbers, zeroes and fives that's very good. And you know if you've been around a while, you go well... here's another contribution. And I have to ask you just...just a heart felt question - Are you really... really...I mean... really...really... excited about this? I mean.. I mean.. really? Yet for so many of us it's just another thing we need to do. Part of our Christian commitment.

We've lost sight.. to the grace of God that's reaching more and more people. What does this money do? The money that's collected on Sunday for Hope, the weekly collection, the special? Well you saw Hope Worldwide, you saw the smiles of those little kids eating ice cream right there. And you know those babies that were crying in some of those shots,.. you know Bob and Pat, I kinda cut most of those shot pictures out you know, a little squeamish over there. I had to hold Joyce a couple of times and... But you know those shots can prevent those little babies from getting some really bad diseases. So they can live long enough, to hear from the people, the only people that love them. The reason that they reached out to them in the first place was their love of Jesus. And because we love Jesus we love THEM. And we are willing to go anywhere, anytime no matter what the sacrifice, to help other people know the Lord. You see that's why we call it Hope. Helping other people everywhere. That's what true disciples do. Are you with me right here? See we're.. we're trying to help some of those young people be adopted like little Nathaniel, so they can grow up in a Christian home. You know what happens when you grow up in a Christian home like Doug and Joyce's? Sure you get to live with a warped sense of humor...but .. that.. you may...you can.. you can make it to Heaven with that. You not only become a disciple, you become A TRAINED EVANGELIST IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. That fire you on up right there? I guarantee you Nathaniel is absolutely going to be an Evangelist.

What's it do? Oh it helps the medical missions in places like Png (Transcriber note: Papua, New Guinea) say there's a bunch of sick people. Yeah and we're gonna keep them alive enough, long enough so they can here the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What are we talking about with Hope? Souls! People going to heaven for eternity. Yeah we're also talking about church plantings. I don't know about you but I am so stoked .. about the work here, and going to Canberra, or Canberra.. is that how you say it. I mean you guys.. really, I would give even a technically,... evangelize this continent before the year 2000. What do you think...AMEN (Audience roar of approval as Kip speaks) You gonna do that?.. I'M FLAT FIRED UP ABOUT THAT!!! (long pause to normal background noise)

Another thing.. I'm fired.. I'm...I'm.. fired up about getting the true church back in Jerusalem. What do you think about that? I mean of all cities... the one.. that...you know that's... it's kinda sad that I've been in Jerusalem a few times and.. I mean.. and all the co.. holy places you've got these shrines. I mean.. you you.. you're waiting for some awesome nativity scene and they got this...kinda... adobe.. kinda of a church but.... Go this other spot where they say this is where Jesus did this, and Jesus did that and it's not (indecipherable)... and yet you catch a glimpse. You see the Wailing Wall. Which is the back, of the actual temple of Solomon. You see the walls, oh, they've been displaced a few times, but the walls and the gates, they are there in old Jerusalem. See the cobblestoned streets...you see the merchants, you see the people, you see the children. And then if you look hard enough you can see Jesus.. amongst the people. Because he too was against the orthodox religion of his day. I don't know about you.. I'm.. I'm fired up about Henry Kramer leading the team there. Say why are you so fired up about that, see .. well Henry... well this guy's awesome. He's president student body at my school, he's a quarterback, he went to Stanford, one of our top universities, became a doctor and says AS AWESOME AS ALL THOSE THINGS ARE I'M GIVING THEM UP SO I CAN LEAD A MISSION TEAM IN JERUSALEM, ISRAEL, AND REESTABLISH THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST... DOES THAT FIRE YOU ON UP? See I'm telling ya..... I want to challenge you...with the life of Henry Kramer, you guys that are 5 talent guys, you women that are 5 talent women. You love Jesus. You get back your first love. You get so fired up that the most exciting opportunity ever possibly offered to you, would be to go into the full time ministries so you can help with the completion of the evangelism of Australia. And when you get Australia done come and help us in the US...come and help us in China...come and help us in South America and lets get the job done.. are you with me right here? (rousing audience applause)

You know what it took to build a church in London? People like the Bairds, who sold their house. You know what it took... to build a church... in places like New Delhi India? Sisters giving up their engagement ring. You know what it took.. to build a church... the largest in the history of the nation of Japan? It took little kids, yes I'm saying little kids, that were fired up because their mom and DAD were FIRED UP about the MISSIONS CONTRIBUTION, because they knew it was going to change their mommies and their daddies in new families.

I still remember the first time we got the kids involved. I said Olivia what are you gonna do? She's 'well the most important thing to me is my doll collection. I'm gonna sell half of it' (disappointed) 'Uh Okay, well Amen'. And Olivia was kinda... she always liked to ... have everything kind of in a certain proper place, and always named her dolls... over people she really loved. One of them she named Michelle, another one she named Leanne, another one she named Elena, and one day she got this stuffed animal, this donkey. I said 'Olivia, what are you naming the donkey?' 'Kip' Lemme tell ya something, I made sure that donkey was in special contribution. Amen. But you know, the special contribution's fun! Selling Donkeys is fun! Getting rid of your junk is fun! You can't take it with you to heaven, are you with me right here? Look what he says in Verse 16 " Therefore we do not loose heart, though outerly we are wasting away", and boy were the World Sector leaders doing that in the Fourth Quarter last night . "Though outwardly we are wasting away, wane, wane, wane, wane, wane (Transcriber note: a series of strange sounds is made to simulate wasting away) Dan, Bung Dead! "For our light and momentary troubles, are achieving for us an eternal Glory, that far outweighs them all". So we fix our eyes, not on what is seen, our possessions, our money, but on what is unseen, the souls of men and women. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. In Tashkent, two of our evangelists have been jailed. That's in the old Soviet Union. Our brother's and sisters have been interrogated in Vietnam, Mainland China, Minsk. Even the sophisticated of Brussels, Brussels? One of our sisters was brought in, she worked for NATO. And they were disturbed, that this woman placed her church, above NATO. Amen right.

(softly) I want to tell ya something...the commitment of true disciples is frightening to the lost world. Our brothers and sisters around the world are not.. not just ready to spend their lives... but to give their lives. Why? Because their eyes are not fixed on what is seen, but what is unseen. Paul went through the same interrogations and imprisonments, and Paul calls them... momentary troubles. Light and momentary troubles, it was a light and momentary trouble for the brothers in Tashkent, a light and momentary trouble for this sister in Brussels, AND YET WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT OUR FINANCES, OUR SCHEDULE, OUR BOSSES, OUR CARS. THAT DOESN'T EVEN QUALIFY IN THE BIBLE AS LIGHT MOMENTARY TROUBLES. It's just barely momentary.

See I'm telling ya, I told the church in LA, we have about the same multiple you do, I'm fired up this year especially because of Jerusalem. And all of us are giving, and I said ask your evangelist I pledge to give 5 times OVER, the asked multiple. It's so ridiculous if we j...think, what's the bare minimum I can get by with thereby kinda think pretty good about me. Let me tell ya something, I want to challenge you. Challenge you with the example of LA, challenge you with the example of Russia, challenge you with the example from my life and say.. listen I'm not gonna give this minimum 20 times. I'm going to go WAY BEYOND THE MINIMUM and make sure that Canberra hears the word of God. MAKE SURE JERUSALEM HEARS THE WORD OF GOD MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE EVERYWHERE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD IN THIS GENERATION AMEN. 'Cause you see, I believe, with all of my heart in Evangelistic Glory and ever increasing Glory, but most of all in Eternal Glory. See I believe with all of my heart, that when I die, when any true disciple dies, they are going to go to heaven. Amen. And they are gonna get a new body, not this fragile jar of clay that seems to expand in and out in the wrong places. You know.. best... the best thing about heaven is that everybody's going to have a full set of hair. Not just a new body, but we are gonna to get new clothes... sisters.... you never have to wash those.... is that awesome? You gonna get new food...the word of God everyday. Not only a new body, new clothes, new food.. but you're gonna have new air. Unpolluted by the sins of mankind. The air is gonna be so sweet, it's gonna be filled with the incense of the prayers of the disciples of all time. Not just a new body, new clothes, new food, new air... but a NEW LAND. A land where there are no boundaries, between black and white communities. A land... where there is no boundaries between this language or that language. But will be one nation. The kingdom of God. Not just a new body, new clothes, new food, new air, new land....but we are going to have a new family. All the peopled faith of all times, ....that on fire you up?

It's gonna be a new day. No more night, No more tears, No more temptation, No more trials, No more pain, No more death.. IT'S GONNA BE A NEW GLORY BECAUSE WE ARE GOING TO THE NEW JERUSALEM AMEN. Who you gonna see? We'll see all these folks. We're gonna see people like Moses. (tape ends)

Transcribed 10/13/96 by Martin Hinves.

# Chapter VII

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## Organizations

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## Appendix 1. Parsings of Matthew 28:18-20

	Greek Word	Parsing	Lexical Form	Inflected Meaning
verse 18	kai.	conjunction		and
	proselgw.n	participle aorist active nominative masculine singular	prose,rcomai	going
	o` VIhsou/j	proper noun	o` VIhsou/j	Jesus
	evla,lhsen	verb aorist active indicative 3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular	lale,w	(he) said
	auvtoi/j	pronoun 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural dative <b>masculine</b> /feminine/neuter	auvto,j	to them
	le,gwn	verb participle present active nominative masculine singular	le,gw	saying
	VEdo,qh	verb aorist passive indicative 3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular	di,dwmi	(she/it) has been given
	moi	pronoun 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular dative	evgw,	to me
	pa/sa	adjective nominative feminine singular	pa/j	all
	evxousi,a	noun nominative feminine singular	evxousi,a	authority, power
	evn	preposition		in
	ouvranw/	noun dative masculine singular	ouvrano,j	Heaven
	kai.	conjunction		and
	evpi.	preposition		evpi.+gen. = on, upon
	verse 19	îth/jÐ	article genitive feminine singular	o`
gh/j		noun genitive feminine singular	gh/	earth
poreuge,ntej		participle imperative/aorist deponent nominative masculine plural	poreu,omai	going
ou=n		conjunction		therefore
maqhteu,sate		verb imperative aorist active 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural	maqhteu,w	[you] make disciples (!)
pa,nta		adjective nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter plural	pa/j	all
ta.		article nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter plural	o`	the
e;qnh		noun accusative neuter plural	e;qnoj	nations
bapti,zontej		participle present active nominative masculine plural	bapti,zw	baptizing
avtou.j		pronoun 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural accusative masculine	auvto,j	them
eivj		preposition		<b>in</b> , into
to.		article nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter singular	o`	the
o;noma		noun nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter singular	o;noma	name
tou/		article genitive <b>masculine</b> /neuter singular	o`	of the
patro.j		noun genitive masculine singular	path,r	Father
kai.	conjunction		and	
tou/	article genitive <b>masculine</b> /neuter singular	o`	of the	

	ui`ou/	noun genitive masculine singular	ui`o,j	Son
	kai.	conjunction		and
	tou/	article genitive <b>masculine</b> /neuter singular	o`	of the
	a`gi,ou	adjective genitive masculine/ <b>neuter</b> singular	a[gioj	Holy
	pneu,matoj	noun genitive neuter singular	pneu/ma	Spirit
verse 20	dida,skontej	participle present active nominative masculine plural	dida,skw	teaching
	auvtou.j	pronoun 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural accusative masculine	auvto,j	them
	threi/n	verb present active infinitive	thre,w	to keep
	pa,nta	adjective nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter plural	pa/j	all
	o[sa	relative pronoun nominative/ <b>accusative</b> neuter plural	o[soj	as much as, <b>which</b>
	evneteila,mhn	verb aorist deponent indicative 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular	evnte,llomai	I commanded
	u`mi/n	personal pronoun dative 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural	su,	to you (plural)
	kai.	conjunction		and
	ivdou.	particle	ivdou,	see, <b>behold</b>
	evgw.	personal pronoun nominative 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular	evgw,	I (emphatic)
	meqV	preposition	meta,	<b>meta</b> , +genitive = with
	u`mw/n	personal pronoun genitive 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural	su,	you (plural)
	eivmi	verb present active indicative 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular	eivmi,	(I) am
	pa,saj	adjective accusative feminine plural	pa/j	all
	ta.j	article accusative feminine plural	o`	the
	h`me,raj	noun accusative feminine plural	h`me,ra	days
	e[wj	preposition		until
	th/j	article genitive feminine singular	o`	the
	suntelei,aj	noun genitive feminine singular	sunte,leia	end, completion
	tou/	article genitive <b>masculine</b> /neuter singular	o`	the
aivw/noj	noun genitive masculine singular	aivw,n	age	

The International Churches of Christ has a fallacy in requiring individuals to commit to being a disciple before baptism:

Overview: The ICC argues from a faulty understanding of Matthew 28:18-20 that people who are disciples are the only candidates for baptism (from the First Principles Discipleship study, point VII.B “Who is a candidate for baptism? Disciples.”)

Summary: This is a faulty understanding of the text that has been used erroneously to point out that other Christian groups are in error for not making disciples before baptizing them, and also that ‘there are rather weak Christians

because they were not made disciples first before being baptized' (in reference to other Christian groups and the Mainline Church of Christ, as well as some within the ICC).

“In Matthew chapter 28, in verse 19, when Jesus appeared to the eleven on the Mount before he ascended, he said, ‘go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing THEM’ – there they are – ‘baptizing THEM in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching THEM to obey my Father’s commands.’ I really believe, sisters, we need to get it on straight: Who is a candidate for baptism? It is the individual who IS a disciple.”

-- Kip McKean, Be Perfectly United, DPI Archive Cassette Series, Tape # 4056, early 1987 [audible emphasis on “them” and “is” by McKean].

We’ll look at the Greek text and divide it into a logical flow. See the below. (Parsings are above.)

kai. proselqwn o` VIhsou/j evla,lhsen auvtoi/j le,gwn(  
And [while] came [to them] Jesus said to them (saying),

VEdo,qh moi pa/sa evxousi,a  
Been given to me [is] all authority

evn ouvranw/|  
in Heaven

kai.

and

evpi. îth/jÐ gh/jÅ  
on [the] earth.

poreuge,ntej ou=n

[attendant

participle]

Therefore go and

maqhteu,sate pa,nta ta. e;qnh(  
Make disciples (of) all the nations,

[main verb]

bapti,zontej auvtou.j

baptizing them

[participle #1]

eivj to. o;noma

in the name

tou/ patro.j

of the Father

kai.

and

tou/ ui`ou/

of the Son

kai.

and

tou/ a`gi,ou pneu,matoj(  
of the Holy Spirit,

dida,skontej auvtou.j threi/n pa,nta

teaching them to keep all

[participle #2]

o[sa evneteila,mhn u`mi/n\

which I commanded to you.

kai. ivdou. evgw.

... eivmi

pa,saj ta.j h`me,raj

**And behold, I**

**... am**

**... all the days,**

meqV u`mw/n

with you

e[wj th/j suntelei,aj

until the end

tou/ aivw/nojÅ

of the age.

As Dr. Wallace notes (Wallace's grammar, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, Zondervan Press, Grand Rapids, Mich., pps. 645, cf. 628-630, and 642), the best translation would be something like "Go, therefore, and make disciples..." (as **πορευε, ντεj** is an aorist participle preceding an aorist-imperative main verb, most likely implying that this is an attendant participle)<sup>6</sup> "...by means of baptizing... and teaching..." (as Wallace notes, the means by which the disciples were to make disciples was to baptize and then to teach" (the participles are verbal adjectives of means in their relationship to the main verb) (p. 645).

The implication is that commandment is to make disciples, not necessarily baptizing disciples. As explained earlier, it would be like saying, "Make the house clean, vacuuming the rug, washing your curtains, and doing laundry." Of course, one does not make the house clean, then vacuum, wash, and do laundry, but rather, *by* doing these things.

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<sup>6</sup> Daniel Wallace notes that virtually all instances in narrative literature of aorist participles + aorist imperative involve an attendant circumstance participle. In Matthew, in particular, every other instance of the aorist participle of **πορευο, μαi** followed by an aorist main verb (either indicative or imperative) is clearly attendant circumstance... we must first read this commission in its historical context, not from the perspective of a late twentieth century read. These apostles of the soon-to-be inaugurated church did not move from Jerusalem until after the martyrdom of Stephen. The reason for this reticence was due, in part at least, to their Jewish background. As Jews, they were ethnocentric in their evangelism (bringing prospective proselytes to Jerusalem); now as Christians, they were to be ektocentric, bringing the gospel to those who were non-Jews. In many ways, the book of Acts is a detailed account of how these apostles accomplished the command of Matthew 28:19-20.

Appendix 2: Larger Pictures.

Sinlists:

**CONFIDENTIAL**

mega-weak; may not have become disciples at all; was recently unfaithful; He is emotionally numb; and she has abused him verbally; 3 yrs Xians; and studied with; Lots of bad dynamics here; married four years; early 30's

about 30, Xians 2 years; she real sensitive and accused (bad rel with dad), she very open and wants to grow but struggles with accusation; He ex-Navy submarine guy from Texas; Passion for faith but not enout to love people; He maintains condo units; both are overweight and he esp. undisciplined; marriage strained but they resolve conflict; sex relationship weak.

pretty new Xians; lots of family in area; brings them as visitors; He installs cables, very hard job; marriage strained some; she started more spiritual (after lost son to brain tumor, age two), he understands hard work, but she more lazy (I can ge in a lazy funk). Not bad at all for young christian. She is prideful and tends to be critical of him.

**Overall**

Too much legalism with out dealing with heart; women left can't study all the way through. is closest among the brothers.

**WAKEFIELD FAMILY****Single Women**

very independent; almost blind; student at NE for physical training; in late 30's, christian a long time; not too open; sort of a mystery.

real quiet, very professional black sister; peaceful and calm; abusive family background; going steady but relationship struggling; mainline church background; some time in Gainesville; good servant; late 20s.

single mom, gives impression of calmness, but is unsubmitive and rebellious; 6 yr. old son; she is in mid-20s; has anorexic background; live alone with son; goes to school and works part-time; Xian for 1 yr.

Sharp, professional engineer; about 30; Xian for 6 years; Intimidates men because of position and sharpness, but not manner; She is pretty reserved; discouraged right now because of fruitfulness and dating relationship; outstanding girl.

from Tampa, single mom; baptized in '81; is about 32, Has several kids, but only daughter with her (9 years old). Never married; black; very independent; comes across as uneducated, but is sharp (accounting job—good one); has been fruitful in past but not lately.

baby Xian, several months; single mom of 18 year old son (doesn't live with her). Close to the kids and when they left it hurt her. Late 30s or early 40s; doesn't get along well with other women but does better with men (esp. young ones). Nurse background and temp work; back and forth a lot. Attached to old relationships.

concerned about her; doing badly in household; relationships bad; not asked out enough; guys in world asking her out; ~22; Christian 1.5 yrs; secretarial type work. Concerned list now; disputes over a borrowed/loaned car.

from Florida background; very nice, servant heart; loves her discipler/disciple; very emotional and gets weak; sharp but flighty; overwhelmed easily; teacher part-time (now teaches aerobics).

Lives alone, doing well, strong character overall, Lab technician at Raytheon, about 30, Xian 3 years, didn't do well living with other sisters (has cats plus attitudes); needs boyfriend!

converted in Paris two yrs ago; 37; divorced with no kids; very sharp women; performance oriented; emotionally dependent and needy; volatile and strong—hits brothers hard (needs to understand grace); executive secretary

**Single Men**

bank manager, very sharp and sensitive; fell away for awhile and came back strong; Family in area, opposed to Boston church; ~28; Xian one year; really good guy; dating every other week; Others centered; good disciple

31; aingle; lives alone; studied couple of years back; lots of psych. problems--on lithium, paranoia skitzophrenia; just quit job Dominoes Pizza; is his best friend

## CONFIDENTIAL

██████████ 33; Xian same time as Jim; strong personality and soft heart; kind of beaten down; low self-image; rough pre-Xian days; they lived in huge house with her father.

██████████ 30; college FB player; accountant; very sharp; Xian since Fall of '87; He found out about her pre-marriage abortion just before she baptized--hasn't been same since. Dull spiritually; hot guy business-wise.

██████████ sharp, open; very good, as with ██████████, very generous; husband hurts her, she is doing great; very outgoing.

██████████ Xian since 1980; solid but husband is NC; can get discouraged, strong and faithful; about 30.

## STONEHAM FAMILY

## Single Men

██████████ 31; Xian 2 years, studied with ██████████, talented but too cautious; warm good guy; computer programmer; BT doing well

██████████ 30ish; interned at Pueblo at one time; in holding pattern with life at present; works for leathercraft, work and administr., hot and cold spiritually; emotionally based. lives with ██████████.

██████████ Bapt in NE campus ministry; rebaptized; knows the jargon but hard hearted; hard to live with on a daily basis; lots of attention--is it bearing with the weak or putting up with sin? what to move when finishes a second degree this June; very sporadic; 30ish.

██████████ knows what to do, but heart level motivation is tough; doesn't give away his heart; not totally open; two of his closest friends fell away, one here, one Chicago, one M/one W.

██████████-accused legalist; hard time getting forgiveness; Masters degree with engineering; critical of self and others, about 25 or 26; very talented

██████████-about 42; converted here, emotionally hurt; lost wife in divorce; emotionally immature (limited); special case converted by Tim B. works at Staples.

██████████-dependable guy, but dull and low key as leader; not very open, great guy overall, really wants to get married, 24 Xian two years

## Single Women

██████████ Xian 3 years, tied in closely (too) to ██████████. Had lesbian background with Coast Guard woman before conversion, doing well spiritually

██████████ growing but pretty insecure; improving a lot but needs work on discipline and building relationships.

██████████ very unusual, almost split personality (jeckyl/hyde); didn't speak until five years old; can be very warm or very vicious; needs challenge/help; 32; works for medical co.

██████████ insurance sales/service rep; real insecure about 25; goody two shoes when young; very uptight about how people see her. Throws temper tantrums, a problem, sincere enough but feels hopeless and gets critical.

██████████ steady, joyful, etc. but self-righteous; Xian 2 years, large family with her in the middle works for Sheraton, almost 31 (looks young) conflict avoider.

██████████-28; Xian 2 yrs; live with the Jankas; very prim and proper family but she Totally rebelled; immature but heart changing; people pleaser and insecure; lazy, but working on it. Accountant for Harvard's publishing dept. (non-degree).

## Marrieds

██████████-good couple; she degree; prim and proper background. ██████████ much different; they met in bar. Xians about two years; rough background, but they are growing and doing well now; child, 3 yrs; John does nmanual labor, but has hurt back; Weak in building friendships; ██████████ from Brazil.

