Please Don't Call Us "Anti"

(An Update on the Non-Institutional Churches of Christ)

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Introduction:

1. A young lady in the Carrollwood area where I preach recently contacted me to ask about the belief of the Church of Christ on a variety of topics (abortion, capital punishment, etc.) for a school project she was doing. I had to tell her that I could not speak for the Church of Christ, but could tell her what I understand the Bible to teach on those subjects. I could say to her that I thought the views I expressed were probably the views of the majority of the members of the Carrollwood church and perhaps of other Churches of Christ.
2. A similar problem is faced here today. Given my understanding of the nature of New Testament Christianity it seems somewhat inappropriate for me to be talking about "Us" or an update on "Non-Institutional Churches of Christ." I will set forth some of the differences in mindset between those of the institutional churches and the non-institutional churches [see Point I].
3. I appreciate deeply the invitation extended by Dr. Jerry Rushford and Pepperdine University which allows me to be here today. I also express appreciation to Dr. Harry E. Payne, Jr., Academic Dean of Florida College, for allowing me to arrange my exams early and to miss the graduation exercises at Florida College in order to be here. And thanks to Dr. Rushford for the title, "Please Don't Call Us 'Anti'

I. THE DYNAMICS OF INSTITUTIONALISM.

Richard Hughes, in *Reviving the Ancient Faith* (1996), has set forth the dynamics of institutionalism.

A. Hughes correctly points out that the battle over institutions, "that would rend Churches of Christ in major ways by mid-century" was predicted as early as 1934 (220).

B. Hughes says, "The battle against institutions raged throughout the 1950s, but it proved ultimately to be a lost cause, at least in the context of the mainstream of Churches of Christ" (221).
   1. "…by 1960 they [Churches of Christ] had practically completed their long, tortured journey toward full-fledged denominational status" (223).
   2. "The theme of 'sojourner' rapidly gave way to the theme of 'settler,' as Churches of Christ settled into their cultural environment and felt increasingly at home in the world in which they lived" (224).
   3. According to Hughes, "most leaders of mainstream Churches of Christ never fully comprehended the issues that the anti-institutionalism people sought to raise" (252).
      a. Evidence of this can be found in B. C. Goodpasture's 1954 suggestion that the "yellow tag of quarantine" be hung on the door of the "antis" in order to contain the spread of their doctrine (*Gospel Advocate*: "An Elder Writes" (96:46; Nov. 18).
      b. Evidence of this can be found in Ira North's 1979 article in the *Gospel Advocate*: "Our Anti-Cooperation Brethren Should Come Back Home" (121:9; May 10). "We" did not know know we had left home; we thought we had been left "home alone."

C. David Edwin Harrell was the first to explain the transition from sect to denomination from the sociological point of view to the non-institutional churches in "The Emergence of the Church of Christ Denomination" (*Guardian of Truth*, 1967). See also, "The Emergence of the Church of Christ Denomination Update" (*Vanguard*, 1979). Harrell, in his 1981 lecture on "B. C. Goodpasture: Leader of Institutional Thought" gives a brief history of the emergence of the denomination.

Harrell describes "the evolution of a religious group by the changes in skills from first to second generation leaders" (*They Being Dead Yet Speak*. 1981 Florida College Annual Lectures. 241-53).

1. From truth-oriented to group oriented.
2. From open controversy to closed controversy.
3. From self-conscious rejection of the society to self-conscious acceptance of the society.
4. From builders to preservers.

D. A brief history of the institutional controversy was prepared by Steve Wolfgang for the Nashville (1988) and Dallas Meetings (1990) and is now published by the Guardian of Truth.

E. I shall now venture into dangerous territory recognizing that my comments are the opinions of one man and may not be shared by anyone else. Many of the early leaders of the "anti-institutionalism" effort were known by me and I have been preaching since 1952.

II. BASIC PRINCIPLES GENERALLY HELD AMONG NON-INSTITUTIONAL LEADERS AND CHURCHES.

A. **Authority.**

1. The Bible is the inspired, inerrant and sufficient word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We do have accurate copies of the Bible available to us.
2. The Mosaic covenant has been replaced by the new covenant of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:14-15; Heb. 10:9). This principle has been basic to the Restoration Movement since Alexander Campbell's *Sermon on the Law* in 1816.
3. All authority has been given to Christ (Mt. 28:18-20).
4. The New Testament is the will of Christ as taught by the apostles (Jn. 16:13; Eph. 3:3-5).
5. The necessity to follow the law of Christ, Scripture, the pattern, etc. (Mt. 7:21-23; Heb. 8:5).
6. The importance of speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where it is silent (1 Pet. 4:11).
7. We have generally held that the Bible directs in three ways: direct command or precept, approved example, and necessary inference.
   a. In the first speech of the Cogdill-Woods Debate (Birmingham, 1957), brother Roy E. Cogdill discussed how to establish scriptural authority. He used the Lord's supper as an illustration to show that authority is established by express command, approved example and necessary inference.
   b. Brother Guy N. Woods expressed his agreement with this approach: "With much of brother Cogdill's speech I am in complete agreement. In fact, I should say that the first half of it was largely a waste of his time. No one calls in question these matters which he discussed regarding the authority of the scriptures, the all-sufficiency of the church of our Lord in the matter of performing the work which God gave the church to do. That is not an issue in this debate and will not be. And so he's wasted his time in so far as his discussion of those matters in this particular debate would be concerned" (*The Cogdill-Woods Debate*, Lufkin: The Gospel Guardian Co., 1958. 26).
   c. It is my understanding that the sentiment expressed by Woods would not be held valid among those of the mainstream churches who advocate the "New Hermeneutics."
8. A more detailed discussion of authority may be found in my *Biblical Authority* (Florida College Bookstore).

B. **Church government.**

1. In New Testament times each local church had its own elders or overseers (Acts 14:23). A local church is a relationship of certain members to certain overseers (Phil. 1:1). The oversight of elders is limited to the church in which they serve (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-3). **Chart 1 [Use Bookmarks to see charts on page 11.]**

2. The local church can make decisions (1 Cor. 16:3-5 – "whomever you may approve"). The church at Corinth could select their own representative to take their contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.
   a. Each church acted independently and retained its own *autonomy* — its right and ability to govern its own affairs under the headship of Christ.
   b. The New Testament cooperation of local churches was *concurrent* action. There was no organizational tie or arrangement between two or more churches.
   c. No local church acted as a centralized, brotherhood agency. Later, as the church fell away from the New Testament pattern some did. **Chart 2**

C. **The work of the church.**
1. ***Evangelism.*** The way the early church practiced evangelism may be seen by observing the spread of the truth in the book of Acts. **Chart 3**
   a. Disciples travelled from Jerusalem to Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch (Acts 11:22-23).
   b. The Antioch church had prophets and teachers; they sent Barnabas and Saul away (Acts 13:1-4).
   c. Among the places they went was Philippi (Acts 16:31-33). Paul went on to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-4) and Philippi supported him financially (Phil. 4:15-16).
   d. The church at Thessalonica sounded forth the word of the Lord throughout Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thess. 1:8).
   e. The churches of Macedonia supported Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor. 11:8-9).
   f. The churches were able to preach the gospel without forming missionary societies (as was done in the 19th century) and without some of the congregations becoming sponsoring churches through which the others might work. The churches either sent the preacher or wages to the preacher in the field.
2. ***Benevolence.***
   a. The Jerusalem church was able to provide for its own needy (Acts 6:1-6). **Chart 4**
   b. The disciples at Antioch sent a contribution "for the relief of the brethren living in Judea" by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:27-30).
   c. The churches of Macedonia and Achaia sent a contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-26; 2 Cor. 8–9).
   d. The early church did its own benevolent work without building and maintaining separate institutions. Funds were always sent directly to the church where the need existed.
3. ***Edification.***
   a. The church edifies (builds up) itself through teaching and in the doing of the work and worship which God has commanded (Eph. 4:14-15).
   b. Much of the work of the evangelist is intended to edify the brethren (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus).
   c. Teachers were given an important role in the early church (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28; 2 Tim. 2:2.
   d. The early church was able to edify itself without building other educational institutions.

D. **Distinction between work of individual and work of church.**
1. Jesus taught a distinction between the individual and the church (Mt. 18:15-17).
2. Paul taught a distinction between the individual and the church (1 Cor. 12:20, 27; 1 Tim. 5:16).
3. The distinction between the individual and the church is seen in the difference between the money of the two (Acts 5:4, et al.). **Chart 5**
4. In addition to the work done by the local church, NI brethren emphasize individual responsibility in the preaching of the gospel and in the concern and care for others. **Chart 6**

III. THE NUMERICAL STATUS OF NON-INSTITUTIONAL CHURCHES IN 1998.

The information from this point forward is presented in the spirit of Acts 14:27 —a report of what God has done with us.

A. Mac Lynn reported the following in 1997. "Most of the isolationists draw the line of fellowship with the mainstream on the issue of 'institutionalism.' The Non-institutional (NI) churches number 2,053 and claim 15.7% of the total number of Churches of Christ and 9.5% of the membership. They comprise 60% of the isolationist churches and are found in 48 states. States with the largest number of Non-institutional congregations are Texas (303), Alabama (217), Kentucky (162), and Florida (151), although they claim the highest percentage of churches in Maine (32%). The four leading states account for 40% of the congregations and 47% of the members. These churches are referred to as "Non-institutional" because the major reason for their break with the mainstream was over the issue of "institutionalism," that is, the question of church financial support for institutions such as orphan homes and participation in missionary cooperatives. This break was complete by about 1960" (Lynn, Mac., Comp. Churches of Christ in the United States. 1997 edition. Nashville: 21st Century Christian, 1997. 11).

B. The Guardian of Truth Directory of Churches of Christ (1998) does not provide a count of churches.

IV. THE STRENGTH OF NON-INSTITUTIONAL CHURCHES.

A. Some have preached "our" funeral too soon.
   1. In 1970, a young preacher by the name of Rubel Shelley said, "For, while there are a few places where 'anti-ism' is still a real threat to the true faith, it is generally of no consequence. Isolated little groups of 'antis' still meet; but they are withering away and are having no appreciable effect on the brotherhood at large" ("Some Basic Errors of Liberalism," The Church Faces Liberalism: Freed-Hardeman College Lectures, 1970. 33). Shelley continued in that lecture to warn about the threat of liberalism.
   2. As recent as 1997, Alan E. Highers tells about the proposition he signed for debate with A. C. Grider [1972] . Highers said, "Even though the movement, of which A. C. Grider was a part, was already in decline, his statement finished it off. The effect was not immediate; it took time for his statement to circulate; but, where his statement became known, the influence of the movement failed. It has never been able to exert a significant presence since that time, and most members of the church today are not even aware that such a movement exists" (Highers, Alan E. "From the Woodland." The Spiritual Sword 29:1 (1997): 46-48. Highers continued to warn of liberals such as Max Lucado.
   3. I think I detect a "pattern" among these brethren. ☺

B. Responses. Connie W. Adams was quick to respond to HighJers in the January 15, 1998, issue of *Truth Magazine*. His comments give some limited indication as to the status of non-institutional churches.

"There are today 25 congregations within a 25 mile radius of downtown Louisville which brother Highers would call 'anti.' There are that many or more in the Indianapolis area where that proposition was debated which was supposed to 'finish off' a movement. There are more than that number in Birmingham. Go to the Houston or Dallas areas and take a good look. The congregation in Louisville where we attend supports 15 men in the work of gospel preaching in various parts of this nation and in two other countries. One brother in this area has made 17 trips to India to preach and train native preachers. One is right now in Brazil. Another spent several years in Kenya. Another plans to spend time each year in the Philippines. My wife and I are to spend January working with brethren in South Africa. Our regret is that we will only be able to work with a very few of the congregations in that country.

"Are There Problems?

"Yes, you can be sure there are. Some of us are having to contend with some of the same issues which brother Highers and other writers for *The Spiritual Sword* are vigorously addressing. Have some churches withered and died? Absolutely. Are the 'antis' less in number than the institutional folks? Certainly. That has been true from the beginning. And by the time the dust settles from present struggles among brother Highers' peers they are going to be less in number by far than they were. In the final analysis it does not all come to a head count but to the question as to who is faithful to the Lord and his word" ("'The Rumors of My Demise.'" *Truth Magazine*. 15 Jan. 1998: 35-37).

I might point out that those who are closer to us in mindset, and are sometimes referred to as "conservative liberals" [an oxymoron?] or "consiberals" ☺, seem much less interested in participating in communication efforts than are some others (cf. participants in the Nashville and Dallas meetings). More on the problems under point VI.

V. THE HEALTH OF THE CHURCHES.

Ed Harrell recently (Dec. 1997) edited an issue of *Christianity Magazine* on the theme, "The Problems and Promises of Local Churches," in which he had articles on nine churches. He said,

"In the theme section that follows, I have asked eleven people to describe the experiences of local churches in twentieth century America. You will find great variety in these articles. While a majority of the congregations discussed are located in the South, they range from California and New Jersey to Florida and Texas. Some of these churches have been in existence for decades and others are quite young; some are booming churches in middle-class suburbs and some are older churches in transitional neighborhoods; one is a Spanish-speaking group in New Jersey; and a final article is a personal testimonial from a sister about the influence of a small rural church in North Carolina."

Harrell asked the writers to describe what had sustained these churches and helped them to prosper and survive.

"I noted several recurrent themes that you will find as you read: 1) successful congregations are nurtured by good elders who shepherd the flock as God intended, caring for the souls of the Christians, 2) good churches are built on good teaching, 3) good churches are places of joyful worship, where singing and prayer are heartfelt, 4) good churches are working churches where a concern for the whole body of Christ is manifest by a desire to help others, 5) good local churches exist only when people learn to live together in peace and love, respecting the consciences of their fellow Christians."

Harrell made a good choice of churches, but another editor might easily choose an entirely different group of churches that appear to be successful in their work for the Lord.

I inquired of one long-time preacher in the Dallas-Fort Worth area about the status of NI churches in relation to the institutional churches. He said, "We're thriving, but they don't know it."

The comments below tend to be my general observations about the status of non-institutional churches without statistical proof.

A. **Numerical size.** After the division of the 50s and 60s these churches were usually smaller in number and built smaller buildings. There was a sentiment that large churches had led in the "apostasy" of that day. Financial ability also limited what they could build. Churches still tend to be small, numbering less than 100 members, but there are many churches numbering more than 150 and some numbering more than 250. I think many churches are now limited in growth possibilities because of the size of their building.

B. **Preaching.** Most of the churches have located preachers, but some of the smaller congregations have difficulty finding men to work with them. Preachers tend to stay with churches. It is not uncommon to learn of men who have been with churches 5, 10, 15, or even 20 or more years.

1. Few churches use newspaper, radio or TV for evangelistic purposes. Some preachers write columns (both paid and free) for local newspapers.
2. Some churches do have programs on local cable TV.

C. **Bible Classes.** There has been tremendous improvement in the quality of Bible classes over the past few decades. Many churches have an established Bible study curriculum for both the adult and children's classes which allow study through the Bible in a three or four year cycle.
1. Churches utilize "learning centers" in the classes for children. Training classes for teachers are not uncommon.
2. At least two complete series of literature have been produced by non-institutional brethren: *Truth in Life*, edited by Roy Cogdill, Ferrell Jenkins, Cecil Willis; *Walking With God* (formerly *Journeys Through the Bible*, completely revised by Guardian of Truth).
3. Some individuals have published significant class materials. Examples: Robert Harkrider and Bob and Sandra Waldron.
4. The *Amplified Bible Curriculum*, by JoLinda Crump and Cathy Valdes, described as "a set of educational Bible class outcomes enriched with activities and resources," is used by a number of churches. I have heard good reports on a program called *Bible Lab* which is used by some of the churches.
5. Literature from various publishers is used as long as the content is deemed to be biblically correct.
6. Martin Broadwell, a professional training consultant from Atlanta, has conducted numerous teacher-training courses for churches all over the world.
7. A group of young professionals (including teachers and scientists) from Weatherly Heights church, Huntsville, AL, conducts *Lord, I Believe* apologetics workshops for churches.

D. **Preacher training.** A few churches have conducted extensive preacher training programs. Others conduct short (a few weeks, or through the winter months, etc.) training programs. A fairly popular method of preacher training is for a church to use a young man in a summer training program working with the local elders and preacher. Others will train a man for a year or two.

E. **Foreign evangelism.** There is increased interest in foreign evangelism.
1. There has been some long-term evangelism. *Some* examples follow. Paul and Helen Williams have completed 30 years of work in South Africa. Brother and sister Foy Short worked in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) even longer. Tom and Shirley Bunting have been in Bergen, Norway, for many years. Their grown son and his wife now work with them.
2. There has been much short-term evangelism, lasting from a few weeks to a few years.
3. Sewell Hall writes a regular column in *Christianity Magazine* about evangelism efforts in foreign countries.
4. We currently have three faculty or staff at Florida College who have spent two or more years working in foreign efforts (some taking leaves to do so). None of these are from the Biblical Studies department! Others do short-term work. Young men and women frequently go for short periods to help in the work.
5. It is not uncommon to hear of an elder or preacher of a supporting church making a trip to the field to evaluate the work.

F. **Church lectureships.** The "gospel meeting" is still the most common type of evangelistic effort, but I see this method as much less effective than in previous times. Several churches conduct highly successful annual lectures. Some of these programs are planned with themes (evidences, Bible archaeology, science and scripture, the home, etc.) to reach the outsider. The Dowlen Road church, Beaumont, TX, spends nearly $10,000 annually on a single five-night series. Advertising includes radio, TV, newspaper, billboards.

G. **Benevolence.** Churches tend to have an active program of benevolence to assist needy members. Concurrent cooperative efforts have been seen in cases such as hurricane Andrew, the Ethiopian famine, etc. Each church sends directly to the church in need.

VI. PROBLEMS FACING NON-INSTITUTIONAL CHURCHES.

The problems faced by non-institutional churches are much the same as those faced by the mainstream churches. We may have some peculiar problems. Below are some of the problems which the churches have faced over the past few decades. There has been no division over these issues. The controversies were conducted largely in the papers rather than in the pews.

A. **The "Grace-Unity" movement.** This movement which called for a broader understanding of grace and fellowship seemed to draw its strength from the writings of Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett in the early 1970s. One of the prominent leaders in the movement was Edward Fudge. One of the main topics involved "continuous cleansing" (cf. 1 Jn. 1:7). Much attention was given to this issue in the periodicals and at least three books were produced in response to it (Halbrook, Ron. *The Doctrine of Christ and the Unity of the Saints*; Pickup, Harry. *Fellowship*; Roberts, Tom. ed. *Neo-Calvinism in the Churches of Christ*).

B. ***The Examiner.*** This movement, spearheaded by Charles Holt, opposed the traditional eldership as a self-perpetuating, back-room decision making, board. It called for an end to the concept of the located preacher and the local church treasury. The movement had minimal effect on the churches generally, though some individuals adopted the view and separated themselves from the local church. Those who opposed this movement agreed that there were abuses which needed correcting but denied that the conditions described by Holt were widespread among "us."

C. **The nature of Jesus.** Discussions about His humanity and deity. Was Jesus just an ordinary man like you and me? The main participants were John Welch and Gene Frost.

D. **Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage.** This issue has gone through the same phases for both mainstream and NI churches. It began with the Fuqua view (alien sinners are not amenable to the law of Christ on marriage; 1954). Lloyd Moyer continued the view among NI churches in the 60s. Some NI preachers adopted the James D. Bales view (*Not Under Bondage*, 1979). Homer Hailey has combined both views in *The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God* (1991). I think it is fair to say that the vast majority of NI brethren believe that fornication alone gives the right for an innocent party to put away the guilty companion and remarry and that alien sinners are amenable to the laws of Christ on this issue.

E. **Fellowship.** While the issue of fellowship has always been one of importance, it has taken on renewed significance in connection with the publication of Homer Hailey's book on divorce and remarriage. Some have labeled Hailey a *false teacher* and want everyone to treat him, and those who hold the same views, as such. Others, many of whom disagree with Hailey, believe that no lines of fellowship are to be drawn. The strong belief in the autonomy of the local church may prevent any division on this issue. The main biblical reference being discussed is Romans 14.

F. **Minor issues.** The covering of 1 Corinthians 11. Women in the business meetings. The right of institutions other than the church (colleges and publishing houses) to teach the gospel. The AD 70 view of eschatology (very minor).

VII. SOME PERIODICALS PUBLISHED BY NON-INSTITUTIONAL BRETHREN.

We no longer live in a culture in which the learned Christian has one book (the Bible) and one magazine (*Gospel Advocate* or *Firm Foundation*) in his home. This may account for the fact that the periodicals have become less influential. Most brethren seem oblivious to the papers and the issues they generate. Some Christians have grave concerns about the power of papers and publishing houses feeling that they are a step toward institutional status. Others see the papers as engaged in personal attacks and want nothing to do with them. The publishers, editors and writers usually have a different perspective. Several of these publications are listed in the *Restoration Serial Index*.

A. Magazines currently published (in alphabetical order).

1. *Christianity Magazine*, Jacksonville, FL. Edited by Dee Bowman, Paul Earnhart, Sewell Hall, Ed Harrell, Brent Lewis.
2. *Faith and Facts* (Quarterly), Indianapolis, IN. Edited by Robert C. Welch.
3. *Focus Magazine*, Rescue, CA., Edited by David Posey, Mike Wilson, T. Doy Moyer.
4. *Gospel Truths*, Tulsa, OK. Edited by J. T. Smith.
5. *Preceptor*, Beaumont, TX. Edited by Danny Brown. Now in 47th year.
6. *Sentry Magazine*, Centreville, VA. Edited by Floyd Chappelear.
7. *Truth Magazine*, Bowling Greek, KY. Edited by Mike Willis with a staff of 26 writers. *Truth Magazine* (begun Oct., 1956) merged with *Gospel Guardian* (published 1949–1980) to form *Guardian of Truth*, (1981) but reverted to the original name in 1998.
8. *With All Boldness*, Indianapolis, IN. Edited by Patrick Farish.

B. Significant magazines which have ceased publication. These magazines were the personal projects of their editors.
   1. *Searching the Scriptures* ceased publication in 1992, after 33 years, due to a personal decision by the editor/publisher, Connie W. Adams. The magazine had been edited in its earlier years by H. E. Phillips and James P. Miller.
   2. *Gospel Anchor*, Louisville. Edited by Gene Frost. Ceased publication in 1994 after 20 years.

VIII. OTHER PUBLISHING EFFORTS.

In the days of desktop publishing, anyone can be a publisher. However, from my observations I would judge the following as significant publishers.

A. Guardian of Truth Foundation, Bowling Green, KY, is currently publishing a set of commentaries on the New Testament under the title *Truth Commentaries*. This publisher also publishes other books, a series of adult Bible class literature, and two literature series for children's classes. They also publish the widely used *Hymns for Worship*, edited by R. J. Stevens and Dane Shepard.

B. Religious Supply Center, Louisville, publishes several books by Homer Hailey among others.

C. The Preceptor Company, Beaumont, TX, publishes several booklet and tracts.

D. Faith and Facts, Indianapolis, publishes books, literature, CDs, and reprints of restoration literature.

E. Florida College Bookstore publishes a few books each year including the Florida College Annual Lectures. This series of full-length lectures has now reached 25 volumes. One of the most significant recent publications is *A Tribute to Melvin D. Curry* (ed. F. Jenkins, 1997), a *festschrift* dedicated to Curry on the occasion of his retirement from Florida College. The volume contains articles by some of Curry's former students and colleagues. Several of the essays are chapters from unpublished theses and dissertations.

F. A few individuals have had books published by major publishers: Melvin Curry (Garland); Homer Hailey, Ferrell Jenkins (Baker); David Edwin Harrell (numerous publishers).

G. At least two brethren intend to publish biographical works which will provide a history of the NI brethren and churches: David E. Harrell on Homer Hailey; Steve Wolfgang on Roy E. Cogdill. I expect a similar work will be produced by someone on Fanning Yater Tant.

IX. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

The only institution of higher learning among NI brethren is Florida College, Temple Terrace, FL (est. 1946). The college enrolls about 400 students, offers an accredited (SACS) Associate in Arts degree and a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies (first class, 1997; the college had offered a four year program in Bible for many years). The college, under the leadership of C. G. Caldwell, III, has announced a new degree in elementary education and plans additional degree programs in the near future. As a matter of policy the college has never taken funds from churches. There are some NI brethren who hold the same

reservations about the college (especially offering a BA in Biblical Studies) as others do about the publishing companies.

Florida College published *Making a Difference – Florida College: The First Fifty Years* in 1996. This book contains much factual information about James R. Cope, president of the college from 1949 to 1983, and a leader among NI brethren. Internet: http://www.flcoll.edu.

X. USE OF THE INTERNET.

Several NI preachers are making good use of the technology provided by the Internet. Mark Copeland has led the way with his *Executable Outlines* series which includes more than 600 outlines (http://users.aol.com/exeout). Mark also provides a good service by keeping a (partial) list of Brethren Online. For a general idea of the type of material available I suggest the following pages: http://www.BiblePage.org (Bob West); http://www.hiline.net/~wberkley (Warren E. Berkley); http://www.gate.net/~jenkins (Biblical Studies WWW Page); http://pw2.netcom.com/~padfield (David Padfield); http://bible.ca (The Interactive Bible); http://www.flash.net/~westside/ (Mark Roberts). Some electronic journals are online: http:// www.geocities.com/~expository (*Expository Files*); http://www.watchmanmag.com (*Watchman Magazine*); http://www.focusmagazine.org *(Focus Magazine*).

XI. EFFORTS TOWARD RECONCILIATION.

A. NI brethren frequently debated these issues in the early days of the division and continue to do so occasionally. I participated in two debates in which the decorum was good throughout (Larry Hood, Beaver Dam, KY, 1964; Bill Heinselman, Akron, OH, 1967) and would do so again where there was a mutual interest in examining these issues.

B. Brethren have participated in several major efforts to reach agreement.
   1. The Arlington Meeting (1968).
   2. The Nashville Meeting (1988).
   3. The Dallas Meeting (1990).
   4. I have participated in programs relating to these issues at Abilene Christian University (1974) and Harding Graduate School of Religion (National Consultation on Hermeneutic, 1990).

C. During a seven year period when I was not teaching at Florida College my schedule allowed time to attend many of the monthly meetings of (mostly institutional) brethren in the Tampa area. I enjoyed the congeniality of those meetings and suggested to these brethren that we have a meeting similar to the ones at Nashville and Dallas to discuss the issues that divide us. I recall no interest on their part in doing so.

D. For nearly 20 years I have attended annual professional meetings of Bible professors and enjoyed a most pleasant association with numerous brethren from mainstream churches.

E. At the close of my speech at the Dallas Meeting I asked, "Is this plea [for unity] too late?" The following observations were made.
   1. After reading *The Worldly Church* (Allen, Hughes, and Weed, 1988, especially pp. 13-16), and observing all of the needs which the modern Church of Christ has committed itself to fulfill, one wonders if my plea comes entirely too late.
   2. When one reads the list of speakers on the "institutional" roster, he is aware of the fact that the "institutional" Church of Christ can be, and often is, divided into "liberals" and "conservatives." [There is no intention to be unkind in the use of these epithets!] Some of you who class yourselves as "conservatives" must feel closer to "us" than you do to some of "them." This, also, causes me to wonder if this plea is too late.

F. My highly respected graduate school professor, Dr. Jack P. Lewis, recently wrote a fine article on the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. My first thought was that "we" used to write

articles like that about the sponsoring churches and church supported benevolent institutions. Brother Lewis' conclusion was especially significant to me:

> "For years my wife and I have sponsored an annual worship service in which we sing with no questions asked about attitudes. Non-cooperation people, cooperation people, instrumental people, and anyone else who wants to come worship together in peace and love. It is the Lord's table we set, not ours.
>
> "My contacts with the instrumental people have not suggested to me that they are interested in giving up the instrument for fellowship purposes. If I have misunderstood, I am willing to be corrected. Rather, they are interested in acceptance while continuing their practice. In other words, they want what someone has called "individual choice" — those who want the instrument can use it and those who do not want it can refrain. This attitude leaves the basic issue unresolved" (Jack P. Lewis. "A Cappella Worship in the Assembly." *Harding University Graduate School of Religion Bulletin*. 39:1. Jan. 1998: 1-2).

My objection to instrumental music in worship is a matter of conviction based on my understanding of the scriptures. And so is my objection to the sponsoring church and church supported (benevolent and educational) institutions. The desire for unity is admirable but I can not support these things and I have seen no interest in giving them up for fellowship purposes. "This attitude leaves the basic issue unresolved."

Conclusion:

1. Peter reminds us that we are "aliens and strangers" (1 Pet. 2:11).
2. Paul reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20).
3. In a class on the book of Revelation this semester I tried to emphasize to the students the difference between the *earth dwellers* and the *heaven dwellers*. The earth dwellers are those who acclimate themselves to this world and worship the image of the beast (Rev. 6:10; 13:8; et al.) The heaven dwellers are those who live in cities like Ephesus and Laodicea, Malibu and Tampa, but who give allegiance to the God of heaven (Rev. 12:12; 13:6). I urged my students to be heaven dwellers — and I urge you to be the same.
4. We must constantly guard against the danger of losing this distinctive mindset.
5. Oh…, and about calling us "Anti." We would prefer to be called "Christians."

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This material is to be published in *Focus Magazine* (http://www.focusmagazine.org.)

Audio tapes of this lecture (#269) are available from Gaylor Multi-Media, Inc. Phone 1-888-310-3100 (http://www.gaylor-multimedia.com). Tapes of the three panel discussions on "Confronting Estrangement, I, II, III" (#158, 159, 160), in which I participated are also available.

C a t 1

THE LOCAL CHURCH

Overseers – Elders – Pastors

Independent — Autonomous

Acts 20:28

"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (NASB)

1 Pet. 5:2-3

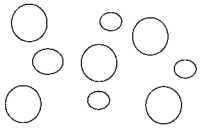
Equal — Sufficient

"…shepherd the flock of God among you not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those alloted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock" (NASB)

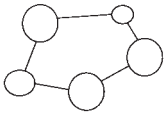
C a t 2

Concepts of Church Government

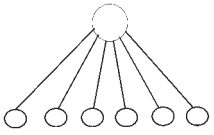
New Testament



Denominational



Roman Catholic



C a t 3

The Mission of the Church:

Evangelism

Jerusalem Church → (Acts 11:19, 22, 23) → Antioch Church → (Acts 13:1-4; 16:31-33) → Philippi Church

Philippi Church → (Acts 17:1-4; Phil. 4:15-16) → Thess. Church → Corinth Church

1 Thess. 1:8 — 2 Cor. 11:8

C a t 4

The Mission of the Church

Benevolence

Jerusalem CHURCH — Acts 6:1-6

Antioch CHURCH → Church, Church, Church — Acts 11:27-30

Judea

Macedonia and Achaia: Church, Church, Church → *Jerusalem* CHURCH

Rom. 15:25-26
2 Cor. 8 – 9

— *The Early Church*

C a t 5

Two Treasuries - Acts 5:4

Individual	Local Church
1. Method of Raising	
A. By Honest Labor – Eph. 4:28	A. By Voluntary Offering – 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7.
2. Oversight	
A. The Individual – Acts 5:4	A. Local Elders – Tit. 1:7; Acts 11:30
3. Use	
A. Liberal Contribution – 1 Cor. 16:2 B. Pay Taxes – Rom. 13:7 C. Provide for Family – 1 Tim. 5:8,16 D. Maintain Good Works – 1 Tim. 6:18; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:28; Jas. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:17-18; Lk. 10:30-36.	A. Preaching Gospel – Phil. 4:15-16; 2 Cor. 11:8 • Edify Saints • Preach to Lost B. Relieving Needy Saints – Acts 4:32-34, et.al.

C a t 6

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON THE CHRISTIAN'S CONCERN & CARE FOR OTHERS

INDIVIDUAL	CHURCH TO ITS OWN	CHURCH TO CHURCH(ES)	CHURCH TO BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION
Mt. 5:43-48 Mt. 25:35-40 Lk. 10:30-36 Acts 4:36-37 Acts 9:36,39 Acts 20:34-35 1 Cor. 16:15 Gal. 6:10 Eph. 4:28 1 Tim. 5:16 1 Tim. 6:18 Heb. 13:15-16 Jas. 1:26-27 Jas. 2:15-18 1 Jn. 3:17-18	Acts 2:44-45 Acts 4:32-34 Acts 6:1-6 1 Tim. 5:16	Acts 11:27-30 Rom. 15:25-26 1 Cor. 16:1-2 2 Cor. 8 - 9	?