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EVANGELISTS VS. ELDERS



By
P. H. LILLY, JAMESPORT, MO.

REVIEWED BY
A. M. MORRIS, WINFIELD, KAN.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor
cometh and searcheth him." (Prov. 18:17.)

INTRODUCTORY

DEAR READER: I herein undertake the review of a tract or booklet written by P. H. Lilly, of Jamesport, Mo. I have known him and the church at Jamesport for more than twenty years. I knew intimately and well J. F. Jordan and Dr. Hutchinson, two elders of the church at that place, and ever respected each and all of them. The writer has held more protracted meetings in Jamesport than any other man, and thus has had every opportunity to know whereof he speaks. It is from a sense of justice to all parties concerned that I write. I have spent weeks at a time in Bro. Lilly's home, and could I be persuaded that the church there, and the evangelists who aided it, had received justice in his booklet, old friendship would impel me to lament with him and console him. But truth and fairness demand that I speak, and, unfortunately, duty is against long-cherished friendship, and I expose the one-sidedness of his tract.

My exposure is intended to supply the vital points omitted by the author of "Evangelists vs. Elders," all of which are against him and his charge against three faithful evangelists that they destroyed Jamesport church. Willing hands are ready to help scatter his literature. If you will notice, however, we have several instances in the Bible of the doctrine, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain"; and of this also, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Haman was hanged on his own gallows.

If I am not in error, the tract under review was written by an interested party to make people believe he is innocent of wrong-doing as elder, and that the evangelists are guilty. The case is thus easy to see. First, P. H. Lilly aimed to give some facts, suppress or omit others, do a whole lot of special pleading, and win out. Second, But candid readers are not to be convinced in that way. They wish to get all the facts in the case and decide for themselves; hence his ingenious, one-sided story is exposed to the merciless light of truth in the following pages, and his partial, *ex parte*, treatment of the case is made very plain.

I think the united testimony of Floyd M. Edwards, Wm. J. Whaley, Chas. H. Owen, T. L. Gray and Daniel Sommer, supported by that of some half a hundred members of the Jamesport church, ought to be conclusive proof on any single matter of fact. And it is my aim in the following pages to show to every unprejudiced, fair-minded reader the cause of the trouble and final division in the Jamesport church. In deference to the age of Bro. Lilly (and I will persist in calling him brother, though he dispenses with the use of this term entirely in speaking of brethren

Sommer, Gray and Gilbert, as though they were aliens, in his attempt to fasten odium on them; yet he and they are my brethren, even though there is injustice to be righted); I aim, I say, in deference to his age and experience, to point out with kindness his errors, expose his sophistry and supply much that he has studiously left out of his tract. It is needless to say that one regrets to have to point out the omissions in such a one-sided document, written by a brother in Christ, one who has served a congregation for years as elder, and with whom the writer has been on friendly terms for more than twenty years. But I write solely in the interest of truth and justice, regardless of earthly friendship. The tract was written, however, as an assault, it seems especially, against the reputation of one brother in Christ, and is being industriously circulated to the injury of his work for the Master. If the elder (chief witness for himself) had exercised that candor and frankness which the facts in the case demand, this review would have been unnecessary. But for one to conceal all the facts that condemn his own course, put forth just such things as could be made to appear unjust treatment against him, and suppress the very facts, plain and plentiful, that would explain this apparent injustice, **demands exposure**. Such a course, I am sorry to say, was adopted by our venerable author; hence the imperative demand that some impartial person or mutual friend, with nothing to gain by the attempt, should point out the manifest errors, the criminating omissions, the bitter reproofs of others, that were prompted by his one-sided views, mistaken views of them and of their teaching and practice, and thus furnish the whole truth to all interested parties.

REVIEW BEGUN

IN his "A Fore Word" Bro. Lilly says: "I bespeak for the matters presented in this little booklet a careful reading, especially by the faithful disciples of Christ; and may the Lord give all such understanding to judge righteous judgment, that they may place the blame for the destruction of the church in Jamesport, Mo., where it rightfully belongs."

Then, in closing his review of the case, page 30, he says:

"There is much more that might be said concerning the origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble, but I forbear. Suffice it to say, the Church of Christ in Jamesport is in ruins."

I have read and studied this statement and his tract carefully, but not once do I find that he admits that he was either directly or indirectly to blame in either the origin or progress of the trouble. I could not but recognize it as an undesigned but imperative call to duty each time I read his statement, "There is much more that might be said concerning the origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble."

The "reminiscent" features of the tract under review are in the main good. But, agreeable to my sense of justice, he should have said more on a few points. On page 3 he says:

"After this meeting, monthly preaching by an evangelist was given a trial. As a result of nearly two years' effort in this kind of evangelistic work, the church found itself in debt, with an empty treasury; and aside from the first meeting of four weeks' duration, not a soul had been led to obey the Gospel. The experience of the church in the 'monthly preaching' method of evangelizing was so discouraging and barren of practical results in reaching the people with the Gospel that further effort in that direction was abandoned, and from that time (1888) until now has never been resumed."

Next he enumerates the preachers who held from one to a dozen meetings for Jamesport church, and in that list you will find the names of A. Elmore and A. C. Crenshaw. He should have told us that Bro. A. Elmore was a strenuous advocate of the so-called "order of worship," was a prominent evangelist and sowed the seed of that doctrine plentifully. The "no preaching to the alien world" on Lord's day morning feature was adopted and faithfully cultivated by the venerable brother under review, who was at all times the ruling elder in Jamesport congregation, and this may justly be called the "origin" of the Jamesport church trouble. I doubt whether an evangelist has visited this congregation for twenty years who did not have more or less discussion with P. H. Lilly over this question. **This is a very important omission on his part!**

He should have informed his readers also that A. C. Crenshaw, of "order of worship" notoriety, held two protracted meetings in Jamesport.

The people in central Kansas, at least, would have known, without any further explanation, that if the trouble over the "no preaching at the eleven o'clock service on Lord's day" had not yet developed, the church there had a man of unquestionable ability in that line to develop it, as all the churches know that are familiar with his work.

By introducing thus early in his tract these two men and their labors in Jamesport he would have paved the way for us to see distinctly the "origin and progress" of the church troubles, whereas his omissions leave the impression that the trouble was of recent origin, and of very rapid progress. **Another omission by the elder!**

The fact is stated clearly enough in his interpretation of Acts 20:7, which I append, but one in reading his story concerning the fruitless efforts of some preachers in their monthly meetings, and their subsequent adoption of another more effective method of getting the Gospel to the world, is deficient, in that he omits the fact that he took a stand on Acts 20:7, also Acts 2:42, which he has resolutely, if not obstinately, maintained in theory and general practice ever since. Such a statement in the beginning would have made it plain as noonday that the position of Bro. Lilly on these two questions—monthly preaching and preaching a sermon to alien sinners on Lord's day at the communion hour—have been agitated in Jamesport church for a quarter of a century. **Another important fact omitted, as you see!**

Read below his latest and most mature interpretation of Acts 20:7. He says of that scripture:

"The charge that I have not regarded this scripture in its most evident meaning (see Sommer's letter of Dec. 31, 1909) is not true. I have considered this scripture carefully and prayerfully, from every conceivable point of view. Its most evident meaning is that it was a meeting for the edification of the disciples at Troas. This scripture justifies no one in making the meeting to 'break bread' an evangelistic service, to which the world is invited to hear the Gospel. Such practice is an unwarranted change in the divinely appointed purpose of this meeting."

But another important omission is found on page 4 of his tract:

"For twenty-five years there were always two, and part of the time three, men in the eldership, Bro. J. F. Jördan being associated with Dr. Hutchinson and myself in the work, and between all of whom there was never a substantial disagreement in continuing the work. The relentless hand of death removed Bro. Hutchinson and Bro. Jordan, leaving but one in the eldership. There are good and scriptural reasons why the vacancy was not filled, that I will not mention here."

I think this is inexcusably misleading. (1) Bro. Jordan moved with his family to Gallatin, Mo., many years ago and dropped out of practical church work entirely, and his family took up with the Christian church. Thus he had severed all active connection with the Jamesport church several years before his death. The statement concerning his eldership, given by Bro. Lilly, leaves the impression that he lived and died in the Jamesport eldership. **Why this omission?** (2) Dr. Hutchinson, through all the years that I knew him (some twenty years), was never appreciably active in the eldership. He did not believe in Bro. Lilly's theory of

"no preaching at the communion hour," but as he was engaged in professional duties, and was of a quiet, submissive, retiring disposition, he moved on to the end, virtually resigning the management and control of the church over to Bro. P. H. Lilly and contented himself by occasional expressions of disapproval. I respect the memory of these deceased brethren too much to invoke further the aid of their history in refuting the only surviving elder. (3) It would be no news to the brethren in Jamesport to state the reasons why these vacancies were not filled—none of the brethren were qualified, according to Bro. Lilly's repeated declaration. You may readily see that Bro. Lilly was in a dilemma. I think it is no reflection against the scripture knowledge, the piety, the zeal, the humility or Christian manhood of the brethren in Jamesport to say that none of them could peaceably serve with Bro. Lilly in the eldership. You should know ere this, what will be plainer in the sequel, that no active elder in Jamesport could avoid clashing with Bro. Lilly, unless he chanced to be one of those very rare men who adopts the theory set forth above by him concerning Acts 20:7. The man can not be found in Jamesport, and the only way possible left open to him to continue the practice of his theory on the death of Dr. Hutchinson was for the only surviving elder, Bro. Lilly, to keep out every other man. So he was deaf to all entreaties on that subject and would neither consent for one to be appointed either to succeed or to aid him in his official work. So much for the statements he gave us concerning the eldership. These facts are omitted in the one-sided tract under review. The matters omitted are plain in their bearing on his case.

THE DEAD CENTER.

Judge Arch B. Davis, the amiable gentleman who had this case in hand, was eminently fair in his rulings. I take him to be a man of fine legal ability. He is not a good Biblical exegete, however, as any one can readily see by even a casual glance at the Scriptures cited, if at all acquainted with the position of the Church of Christ. I will not take the time or space to point out many of his indefensible positions on scriptural subjects, for they are not wholly germane to the issue in hand. The judge decided the case on other grounds, namely, the fact of Bro. Lilly's being deposed from the eldership in Jamesport church, as, subsequently, he was deprived of church membership. Waiving, for the present, therefore, all that might be said here on these points upon which the legal decision was rendered, I wish simply to state that Judge Davis saw, what everybody else of any experience with Jamesport church has seen, that the church split over Bro. Lilly's theory. I call this "the dead center." The judge hit it a tremendously hard blow. He, of course, couldn't decide such a question and compel either side to yield. Hence, he simply stated what the trouble was over and wisely dropped the question. His only legal question to decide was, as we shall see, in regard to the official relationship of P. H. Lilly and others to the church. Notice what he says:

"The rock on which the members of this church split was as to whether or not they should have preaching, when an evangelist was present, at the eleven o'clock hour on the Lord's day, the controversy being as to the proper construction to be placed on the seventh verse of the twentieth chapter of Acts, which is as follows: 'And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.'

"Defendant Lilly and his associates contend that a proper construction of this scripture required that at this service the evangelist, if present, should take his place among the disciples, and should speak or teach as a disciple; although, if the evangelist so present desires to do so, he may speak from a text, assuming a position in the pulpit and speaking as long as he may choose, being called upon by the elder after the other disciples had participated in the mutual exhortation service, which it was usual to hold at that hour. While the plaintiffs and their associates contend that when an evangelist is present he should be permitted to preach a regular sermon at the eleven o'clock service.

"Neither, however, believed in having a regular preacher, or that one should be paid any regular salary, or otherwise than by voluntary contributions."

The judge presented the gist of the matter here in a clear statement. This is the whole thing in a nutshell. Read it over carefully. Pick out the "rock" on which the church "split." It was over P. H. Lilly's refusal to allow a preacher in good standing to preach in Jamesport church at eleven o'clock Lord's day mornings. Just what nearly all other churches of Christ do he forbade or prevented. Just what evangelists did all over the country, in this particular, they were forbidden by Bro. Lilly to do in Jamesport. This state of things continued for some six years, as will be seen below. I cited the judge's clear statement concerning the "rock" on which the church "split," and in corroboration of that statement I produce a few facts—not convenient for Bro. Lilly to give us in his tract. It was important for him to omit them!

EVANGELISTS WHO WERE REFUSED.

Wm. J. Whaley, Floyd M. Edwards, F. M. Gilbert, Chas. H. Owen (deceased) and others were refused the privilege of preaching at the eleven o'clock Lord's day meeting. This was against the will and protest of the church! I wish you to note distinctly that Bro. Lilly confuses this subject. Upon the very face of matters there was trouble in Jamesport church. It was brewing for years. It was a smouldering volcano. Dissatisfaction was general, almost universal, chiefly over Bro. Lilly's theory. He was not generally admired or very highly esteemed by many of the disciples on various grounds, but the feeling was intense on this question. The "split" came ultimately and the "rock" on which the church was destroyed has been pointed out by Judge Davis. The brethren endured the tyranny of conscience for years. It was not a sudden impulse. Bro. Lilly's tract indicates that a furious and violent storm broke on his head unexpectedly. Had he cited the facts which I have already given, and others that are yet to be submitted, one could better see the "origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble." He

omitted them. Why? Was it necessary to suppress these matters in order to **blame the other man?**

NUMBERS CONSIDERED.

There were at the time of the division some eighty-five names on the church book. Lilly says:

"About seventy-five of these could be reckoned on as active members. Out of these there was an average attendance on the first day of the week of about fifty disciples, and at that time, so far as I had knowledge, peace and Christian fellowship prevailed. Such was Jamesport congregation in the month of May, and year of our Lord 1909."

After making this statement our venerable brother proceeds to give Evangelists Gilbert, Sommer and Gray the bitter and partisan arraignment that he saw fit to publish to the world. To read his tract, without knowing of its omissions, one might be led to think that the trouble was of very **recent origin**, and that outside parties were **wholly to blame** for it. This is a good way to excite sympathy, but not the best way to let the unprejudiced public know the facts. Bro. Lilly's tract is an ingenious appeal to the manufacturers of "Sommerism," and is evidently intended to awaken the Bible college advocates, the belligerent editors, the men who nurse a grudge against Daniel Sommer (and who are not difficult to locate), to united action. This is nothing new in history. A. Campbell had to endure the united enmity and persecution of a horde of priests and sectaries of injured prestige and favor with the people. Benj. Franklin, the lion-hearted, was the central figure in the furious and unscrupulous assault of ambitious editors and designing pastors, and the aristocrats fought for innovations against the truth and faithfulness of this revered defender of the Bible and the sacredness of the New Testament Church. I would be surprised not to learn that there is **concerted action** today in the ranks of the ambitious and designing champions of modern departures from the Bible, and that they will uphold any one and every case in opposition to the O. R. Hence we are not surprised to find the tract on every hand, scattered by some one who has quite a list! See? But, nothing daunted, we confidently appeal to the honest-hearted for truth and justice. Who sent you Bro. Lilly's booklet? Where did he get the names of all the brethren who have received it, north, south, east and west? He is not an editor! Are the editors working at the same business? Well, it is a good plan to ask yourself a few questions, such as the following: Do I know P. H. Lilly? Do I know the seventy-five active members at Jamesport? Do I know any preacher or editor who is condemning Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray in this matter who has ever been to Jamesport or who knows personally any more about the case than he has got out of P. H. Lilly's tract? Were not these editors, professors and preachers enemies of Daniel Sommer and the O. R. before they ever heard of P. H. Lilly or his tract? May it not be an opportunity to pay off an old grudge against the O. R. editor, which makes some men so active in circulating literature and denouncing the O. R. staff?

A few questions of this character will aid you in getting down to bedrock, where you can decide the case on its merits—just the same as though the names of the elder and the evangelist were not known to you.

Four men and their wives upheld Bro. Lilly in the division. The youngest man was sixty and the eldest over eighty years of age. They were not very talented or experienced. One of these elderly brethren has died since, reducing the number of old brethren to three who stood with the elder. One of these men came into the church in 1906. To these must be added the elder's wife, his daughter (non-resident) and his step-daughter, and some three or four other women. Since he went through the farce of withdrawing church fellowship from fifteen brethren and sisters, as described later, the so-called "church" has dwindled down until it is now composed, it seems, of the elder, his wife and daughter and one man. These were all who were present Lord's day, Sept. 24, a letter of recent date informs me. Some six or seven walked out with him when he withdrew fellowship from fifteen brethren in one bunch. Were these four old brethren, their wives, the three or four sisters and P. H. Lilly and family the church? Where are the seventy-five active members he tells us were in Jamesport in May, 1909? Nearly half a hundred of them constituted the "faction," as he calls them!

These two bodies of people met in private houses in Jamesport for nearly half a year while he had their meeting house locked up. There were nineteen men in the "faction," twelve men and their wives. These are men in mature life, store-keepers, farmers and active men. So it is with hobbyists. Half a hundred disciples, who were faithful according to the elder's own statement in the opening, have been sacrificed with the friendship of nearly all the earnest, active members of the church, in order for one to retain the eldership! These disciples, against all opposition, maintained the worship of God, and compare favorably with a similar number of disciples in any other congregation; but they are by him called "the faction." Now, to show no favoritism, give an impartial view, outline the "origin and progress of this Jamesport church trouble," Bro. Lilly should have told us that the whole church had opposed him for years on this matter of "no preaching to alien sinners at the communion hour," but that visiting evangelists had nearly all, if not all, tried to prevent the inevitable "tear-up." Evangelists who knew Bro. Lilly's temperament, his dogmatic way, his iron will, tried to counsel submission and forbearance, and to them, very largely, is due the fact that Jamesport church was not in ruins years ago. T. L. Gray and Daniel Sommer, when justice is finally done them, will receive credit as peace-makers in Jamesport during many years of imminent danger. Conditions were considered almost intolerable, by many in the congregation, for years before the final outbreak, and all the united energy and influence of the evangelists could scarcely restrain the disaffected ones from open revolt. It was chiefly over this question, the judge says, was the "rock" on which they "split." The evangelists all liked Bro. Lilly, respected him highly for his long-continued battle against sectism, and regretted sincerely his attitude on this question. But it was hoped that he would modify his views on the ques-

tion, make necessary concessions to the brethren, and all would ultimately work out for the best. But it was virtually "hope against hope," as I know from personal experience, as well as by observation, that at no time in the last twenty years has Bro. Lilly had the congregation at Jamesport convinced that he was right in his interpretation of Acts 2:42 and 20:7. They were **submissionists**. He has "dinged it into our ears," as one would say, until it has become monotonous. **It was at this point he lost his hold of the congregation!** Here he broke down utterly, the brethren ultimately revolted, brought charges, and fought against his domination longer over the church. I will cite a few witnesses, in harmony with the task I undertook in the beginning, to show there are overwhelming proofs to the matter of fact that the church "split" over a certain "rock." Additional proof is also thus afforded that his iron rule on this one point had caused trouble in the church for several years.

In response to some questions addressed to Bro. Wm. J. Whaley, he says:

"I have been in Jamesport, Mo., several times. As I now remember, I have preached there twice on Lord's days, the last time being, perhaps, in the fall of 1905. I was requested by P. H. Lilly not to preach at eleven o'clock service. There was friction in that congregation at that time over the question of preaching at the eleven o'clock service. P. H. Lilly, as elder of that congregation, objected to me preaching at that hour, and I was informed that he also refused other preachers the privilege of preaching at that service. On this point the Jamesport church was different from all others where I have preached. I have never been forbidden, on doctrinal grounds, to preach at the eleven o'clock service in any other congregation except Jamesport, Mo."—Wm. J. Whaley.

This was all omitted. Can you fail to see why such facts were not revealed?

Bro. Floyd M. Edwards, replying to the same questions, says:

"In 1907, I think it was, Bro. P. H. Lilly, as elder of Jamesport church, wrote me an invitation to come to Jamesport, but 'don't expect to preach on Lord's day morning, as that time will be taken up in the worship and mutual exhortation. You will be expected to take part just the same as any other disciple, but you can preach Saturday and Sunday nights.' These are as nearly his exact words as I can recall. When Bro. Lilly asked me to accept remuneration I refused and asked him how he could support a man in preaching something he did not believe, as he had said, 'Your bread and butter depends on your teaching; that is the reason that you do it.' I finally took it as he was vexed. I advised the brethren to bear with him all they could without sacrificing principle. Bro. Gilbert will likely remember the statement I made to him when he was going to Jamesport, that he was going into trouble; and he replied to me, 'You don't know Bro. Lilly.'" **Another self-condemning omission!**

Bro. Chas. H. Owen (deceased) held a meeting in Jamesport and was accorded the same treatment, according to a statement signed by four of the leading brethren at Jamesport—that is, he was not permitted by P. H. Lilly to preach at 11 o'clock Lord's day service, as he always did in other churches.

Bro. F. M. Gilbert is given a conspicuous notice in the tract, some two columns on pages 4 and 5 being devoted to him. He is said to have lived in Jamesport some two years. He was positively forbidden to preach at

the 11 o'clock service, but when present was permitted to take part in the mutual exhortations, like all the rest. He was in good standing. Bro. Lilly says:

"On all these occasions appointment would be made for him to preach at night; and for such labor he was on every such occasion paid the sum of ten dollars from the church treasury."

Bro. Gilbert lived in Jamesport for some two years, talked frequently with the elder, reasoned with him out of the scriptures, but never drew any concessions from him on this question that for so long had worn out the patience of the brethren. It was his misfortune to be in Jamesport during the culmination of this long drawn-out controversy, and he was active in the defense of the brethren in their contention. Bro. Lilly tells us in column 2, page 4, the

"Jamesport congregation numbered about eighty-five souls. About seventy-five of these could be reckoned on as active members. Out of these there was an average attendance on the first day of the week of about fifty disciples; and at that time, so far as I had knowledge, peace and Christian fellowship prevailed. Such was Jamesport congregation in the month of May, and year of our Lord 1909."

This he adduces as evidence of the so-called "schismatic course" of Bro. Gilbert, and the "satanic work" of Bro. Sommer, which he seeks immediately to make appear. But let us sum up some of the plain facts in the case already cited; note the omissions he made, and it will be very evident that he was too anxious to convict the other man.

1. Monthly preaching was discontinued after a two years' trial in 1888. The experience was not satisfactory. By this admission we see that the subject of monthly preaching was forever settled for Jamesport twenty-three years ago.

2. Bro. Lilly's idea of the evident meaning of Acts 20:7 was:

"This scripture justifies no one in making the meeting to 'break bread' an evangelistic service to which the world is invited to hear the Gospel. Such practice is an unwarranted change in the divinely appointed purpose of this meeting."

To this interpretation, evangelists, elders and all members, male and female, must yield in Jamesport. This was his "Gibraltar."

3. A. Elmore early in the church's history sowed the seed of that doctrine, and it was cultivated by P. H. Lilly, aided by A. C. Crenshaw in two protracted meetings, and by the elder constantly. Witness his discussion with J. C. Frazee, now in tract form. **Omitted!**

4. Wm. J. Whaley says there was trouble on that question in Jamesport in the fall of 1905. He had to bow to the iron scepter and was forbidden to preach. This was five years before the actual division. **Omitted!**

5. Floyd M. Edwards was forbidden to preach, as indicated, by P. H. Lilly as elder, in 1907. **Omitted!**

6. Chas. H. Owen (now deceased) was accorded the same treatment by P. H. Lilly during a meeting he held in that congregation. **Omitted by him!**

7. Forest M. Gilbert was likewise positively forbidden to preach there a single time at the communion hour during a residence in Jamesport cov-

ering two years. He was in good standing then (is now, as far as I know, with all but Bro. Lilly, who became so grievously offended at him, T. L. Gray and Bro. Sommer). But, while refusing him to preach to the alien world, at 11 o'clock Lord's day, Bro. Lilly was willing he should preach at night. He had nothing against him. Bro. Lilly says:

"Occasionally, when without appointment to preach elsewhere, he would meet with the church and engage, so far as any one knew, heartily in its services. On such occasions he was always given an opportunity to preach, and use as much time as he desired in addressing the church unto edification. On all these occasions appointment would be made for him to preach at night, and for such labor he was on every such paid the sum of ten dollars from the church treasury." (Emphasis mine.—A. M. M.)

Then he was not forbidden to preach on Lord's day mornings because there was no money in the church treasury, nor because he was unworthy, but because of the elder's interpretation of Acts 20:7, This was likewise true of all the other evangelists mentioned above as forbidden to preach by the elder at the 11 o'clock service Lord's day. Is this to rule within the law, or is it ruling against the law of Christ? On the same principle might not an elder forbid a sinner to be baptized at the 11 o'clock service? Is not preaching to sinners the gospel of Christ a part of the apostles' teaching? Has any elder the scriptural right to decide what part of the Word an evangelist shall preach and what parts he shall not preach at that service? Is not an elder assuming authority he does not possess when he forbids an evangelist to preach to sinners the gospel of Christ and give them an opportunity to obey it at the 11 o'clock or any other service?

8. Judge Arch B. Davis says: "The rock upon which the members of this church split was as to whether or not they should have preaching, when an evangelist was present, at the 11 o'clock hour on the Lord's day."

9. The whole congregation quit Bro. Lilly on this point, excepting four old brethren and their wives (held evidently as much or more through social ties as anything else, as were all that were identified with him), some few sisters (three or four), and his wife and two daughters. This is natural enough.

10. All this is enough to convince any unbiased person that brethren Gray and Sommer were justified in all they said about trouble, of long standing, being in the Jamesport church, and, I trust, that all this has enlightened us quite a good deal on the vital points left out by Bro. Lilly in his omissions, from his "Reminiscent" paragraphs, in which he was giving us the "origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble," and will aid us in "placing the blame where it rightfully belongs."

THE SO-CALLED ENDORSEMENT.

Bro. Lilly made much ado over an article written by Bro. Sommer at his house while in a meeting there in October, 1907. The O. R. of Nov. 5 following contains the article of nearly two columns' length, under the heading, "Will You Read This?": "Thirty-four came forward in course of the meeting—fourteen to be baptized, and all the others were received by letter, statement of their relation, or by confession of wrongs, according to their several conditions." He returned in March, 1908, and assisted the

brethren in a good meeting. Bro. Lilly alludes to these meetings, mentions Bro. Sommer's article, quotes some extracts from it and another note or two of his in O. R.—one of March, 1908, another of Aug. 3, 1909, with usual omissions. I think it will only be necessary to make two points clear in this connection for the whole truth to be brought out on this subject. Half-truths and special pleading cover up the issue. Keep the "rock" in sight.

1. The manner of worship in the Jamesport church was not in controversy. There was no friction over that. All was harmonious on that subject, for all the church had yielded to the order that P. H. Lilly had imposed. The subject has not been agitated either by the "faction" or by Gilbert, Gray or Sommer as evangelists. There was a great trouble there, but it was not over the worship, as such, nor over the order of worship there on ordinary occasions.

2. The trouble in Jamesport, as I have made it plain to the reader, by giving Lilly's omissions, was over the scriptural right of an evangelist, when present on Lord's day, to preach, after the usual manner in nearly all other churches, at the communion service. This is the "rock" on which they "split."

With these two points clear in mind, the reader will see that Bro. Lilly's tract is "weak as water" on the point of having Daniel Sommer endorse him, on "number two," when he only endorsed him on "number one," of these items. It is worse than weak!

The fact is easily decided one way or the other. It requires no labored effort to settle this phase of the matter. But, inasmuch as Bro. Lilly is so positive that Bro. Sommer endorsed his work, editorially, the editorial should have been reproduced. Did Bro. Sommer turn a religious somersault? Bro. P. H. Lilly grows sarcastic and vitriolic against him on the assumption that he is a turn-coat. From an endorser to a persecutor is a radical change, and I grant you that, if Bro. Sommer proved to be a traitor and a hypocrite with P. H. Lilly on this question, he deserves a severe rebuke. But, fortunately for all parties concerned, the article is at hand. I know you will give it a careful reading. I quote all of it that bears on this controversy, only premising its introduction with this fact—the article was written to show the propriety of dividing congregations into classes that each may have teaching corresponding to age and attainments. Bro. Lilly had this article before him when he wrote his tract. He alludes to the itemized order of services, but does not quote it. Why? The tenth item was practised or observed by Bro. Sommer in Jamesport! Bro. Lilly said later, when pressed on the question, it was because of his ability and experience. If Daniel Sommer could preach in Jamesport as elsewhere, and wrote out the whole itemized service—is that an endorsement of P. H. Lilly's position so repeatedly given above as the "rock" on which the church "split"? I dare say this "rock" would have been removed entirely if P. H. Lilly could have been induced to allow Whaley, Edwards, Owen, Gilbert, Gray and other evangelists, when present, to observe item ten. It was the elder's persistent refusal, in so many instances, to observe item ten, founded on Acts 20:7, that was the primary cause of the whole trou-

ble. Daniel Sommer never, in person nor in the **Review**, took the side of Bro. Lilly on that point. Neither has he been a traitor to him. And all that Bro. Lilly insinuates on that question is pure sophistry. I hesitate not to say that a more baseless attempt to incriminate a brother has never been known to me than the attempt to show that Bro. Sommer was his friend because he endorsed him and his theory, and turned to be his enemy because he repudiated his theory later. I unhesitatingly affirm there isn't the least shadow of truth in the statement that Daniel Sommer endorsed the pet theory of P. H. Lilly in Jamesport, then proved traitor and repudiated his theory, on occasion, some two years later. These are plain words, but truth and candor demand them because of the fact that the whole argument of P. H. Lilly is founded upon this baseless assumption, and when it is removed a child can see that his bitter words and hot invectives leveled against Bro. Sommer were all uncalled for, unprovoked, and inexcusable.

Bro. Sommer was in Jamesport, it seems, over four Lord's days. He preached there every Lord's day as at other places. He knew Bro. Lilly's "Gibraltar." He knew nearly the whole history of the church. He poured oil on the troubled waters. He had no objections to their manner of worship—but delighted in it. He occupied the hour usually given to mutual edification, or to "social meeting," and preached a discourse. This all the church delighted in—except, perchance, Bro. P. H. Lilly, who suffered it in deference to his ability—and experience. But other evangelists were not accorded this privilege, as I have conclusively shown above. Bro. Sommer endorsed the one and repudiated the other. He was kind, considerate of Bro. Lilly's feelings and erroneous notions, but did his duty and preached the Gospel, wrote an account of the complete service, including the preaching, published it, and that's the whole of the matter. Had he been sat down on by the elder (as were Whaley, Edwards, Owen, Gilbert and other evangelists), and then have written an unqualified endorsement of the services, specifying that his item ten was not tolerated in Jamesport as it usually is in other churches, but that he was a friend of Elder Lilly and endorsed him, as his method was better, then, truly, the charge of hypocrisy against him, or of simple-mindedness, would have been well founded. But when frankness, candor, sincerity shine forth like the sun, in Bro. Sommer's work at Jamesport in his meetings and in his eminently clear history of the mutual effort made, I know not how justly to characterize the labored effort that is made in the tract to caricature him as a hypocrite in this matter. The article follows—the itemized account of Lord's day services:

1. "All the members of the church who can be induced to do so come together at ten o'clock each Lord's day morning, and bring all the children they can induce to accompany them.

2. "After two songs are sung one of the elders reads the chapter that is the lesson for the occasion, and either leads in prayer himself or calls on some one else to do so.

3. "Then another song is sung, after which the children go to the back part of the house, and a sister goes with them to be their teacher.

4. "An elder of the church arises and opens his Bible at the lesson, and perhaps every other member opens the Bible at the same place.

5. "The elder who leads in the investigation then calls on that one of the members who sits at one end of the congregation to read the first verse of the lesson, and when that member has done so, the elder calls for that one's comment, or asks a question concerning it for that one to answer. The question thus asked sometimes is referred to the entire audience. This procedure is continued for about three-quarters of an hour.

6. "In the meantime the sister who is teaching in another part of the house is questioning her pupils after the same manner in another part of the New Testament—the first part, which is easiest understood by children.

7. "Both of these audiences exist and are instructed thus because the scripture says, 'Always abounding in the work of the Lord,' and 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.'

8. "When the hour of eleven is indicated the service is then changed without a dismissal of any kind. The children go to their parents, or to some part of the house that their parents or guardians may approve.

9. "Another song is announced and sung. Then the presiding elder states that the time has come for mutual teaching and exhortation, and the members are given an opportunity to read and lead in prayer, teach or exhort, as they may be able to do. This is continued, probably, three-quarters of an hour, and then the contribution is attended to. Next the Lord's Supper is attended to, and then a verse is sung and the congregation is dismissed. (I emphasize the next number.—A. M. M.)

10. "If a preacher, or any other brother from any other congregation, is present who is known to be capable of teaching the entire congregation, he is invited to occupy the time that is generally given to mutual teaching and exhortation."

I have been thus explicit and painstaking in letting the light in on this question because it reveals much to the reader.

1. It shows that Daniel Sommer did in Jamesport on Lord's days, 11 o'clock service, just what he always does in his meetings at other places—he preached the Gospel. This was omitted. **Damaging to quote!**

2. It shows that the brethren in Jamesport appreciated Bro. Sommer's work, for he held them two grand meetings and left there with the most cordial relations existing between himself and Bro. Lilly, as well as the church in general.

3. It shows conclusively that Bro. Lilly could have conceded, without the sacrifice of principle, just what the brethren, now styled the "faction," demanded—a sermon by the evangelist at the 11 o'clock service. **This is concealed in the tract.**

4. It shows beyond all controversy that all the bitter and acrimonious sayings of Bro. Lilly against Bro. Sommer were unprovoked, in that he never swerved a hair's breadth in his after-teaching and practice from his teaching and practice while in Jamesport, as to the points in controversy in Jamesport church trouble.

5. It shows, with noon-day clearness, that Daniel Sommer is grievously misrepresented in the tract under review, and that P. H. Lilly, from some unexplained motive, is trying to manufacture a fictitious Daniel Sommer to antagonize the real Daniel Sommer. He labored with great intensity of purpose to give a pen-picture of a wily, crafty, cunning, "satanic" Daniel Sommer, and thus to impeach his veracity. The sole reason he did not succeed was that he didn't have the material from which to make the

picture! He sought to array Daniel Sommer in Jamesport meeting, October, 1907, against Daniel Sommer in his letters of 1909. But the reader of these lines knows, as well as the writer, that the article quoted above is the same man in teaching and practice in Jamesport in 1907 as he was two years later in his letters. He never faltered in 1907 nor temporized nor compromised with Bro. Lilly, as all plainly see by his article.

8. It is clearly evident, therefore, that the author of "Évangelists vs. Elders," in arraying himself against practically the whole Brotherhood at large on the "no preaching to aliens at the 11 o'clock service on Lord's day," must bear the **BLAME FOR THE CONSEQUENCES**, sad as they are, and that he **CAN NOT BE EXONERATED**. His effort in self-defense falls fruitless to the ground. His effort, born of desperation, to fasten the odium on Bro. Sommer, is objectionable from every standpoint, and will not be effective when the facts are clearly known and faithfully considered. Why did he conceal all this testimony? **Do you see why?**

CORRESPONDENCE.

July 24, 1909, Bro. Lilly joined the brethren in a letter to Bro. Sommer of two columns' length requesting:

"If it be possible, for you to visit Jamesport some time in the near future and assist in adjusting a difficulty that has grown up in the congregation."

In this letter Bro. Lilly says:

"Bro. Gray came, and so far as I know labored faithfully and earnestly to restore order. The only thing lacking in accomplishing this was in locating the responsibility for the trouble. Gilbert admits he was the cause of the division, but claims it was a justifiable one, and charges the sin and wickedness of the schism wholly upon myself; while I disclaim all the responsibility for the schismatic course of F. W. Gilbert. Thus the matter stands, and if it can not be settled without my accepting responsibility for Gilbert's wicked and schismatic course, it never will be settled in this world."

Thus there was trouble likely never to be settled, when he first called **Bro. Sommer!**

The fact is plain that both evangelists, Gray and Sommer, were accepted as faithful brethren at this time. The "division" had virtually come, the "split" on the "rock" of "no preaching at 11 o'clock Lord's day" was imminent. Bro. Gray was on the ground laboring "faithfully and earnestly," but Bro. Sommer hadn't been in Jamesport or had anything to do with the church for about a year and a half. Surely this whole schism and division can not be laid at his door, but must be the final outbreak against the tyranny of the elder in forcing his pet "theory" longer upon the church.

Bro. Lilly says:

"At the time this letter was written I believed Daniel Sommer to be my friend and I addressed him as such. Our acquaintance and friendship had extended over a period of more than twenty years. When in Jamesport he always made my house his home, where he was always a welcome and honored guest. In October, 1907, during a meeting of weeks, and while in my home, he wrote a most commendatory article concerning the

work of Jamesport congregation, and read it to me before sending it to the O. R. for publication." Omitted to give article!

So you see, dear reader, that Bro. Sommer was in high esteem with Bro. Lilly at this time. He next (in his tract) proceeds to show Bro. Sommer was a hypocrite and traitor, as I examined above under the sub-heading of "the so-called endorsement." I showed the simple fact that every endorsement that Bro. Sommer ever gave of Jamesport services on Lord's day demanded the free and full use of the evangelist when present. In other words, he did not have one law for Jamesport and a different law for other places. Bro. Lilly, for some inexplicable reason, labors hard to fasten such inconsistency upon him, and thus justify himself in rejecting Daniel Sommer's repeated overtures to him that follow. It is as manifest as light that his whole objection to his friend of twenty years' standing was founded on an entirely imaginary basis—if he has given us his objection in the tract, and in the so-called "endorsement."

But, from henceforth, he treats Bro. Sommer with scant courtesy, and I think worked desperately and unscripturally against the only possible settlement of the trouble in Jamesport. I, nor you, reader, are final judges in this sad affair, but we are called upon by Bro. Lilly's tract to justify him and condemn Sommer, Gilbert, Gray and the vast majority of the active members of that church—which he said in May, two months before this, consisted of seventy-five active members. You remember this. You will keep in mind also that Daniel Sommer was in Indiana and had nothing whatever to do with Jamesport church since he held two grand meetings there two years or less before. Yet he, forsooth, is to be the scape-goat to bear the mighty load of sin that belongs to somebody for ruining Jamesport church. Bro. Sommer has proven an alibi so far, and the church is on the verge of formal disruption, or, as Bro. Lilly says, "a violent attempt to force me from the eldership" was then being made. Notice two or three points here:

1. Bro. Lilly did not object to having evangelists aid in settling the Jamesport trouble, for he wrote for one to come on that very mission (to Bro. Daniel, July 24, 1909), because he thought he was his friend, but soon recalled the invitation. **Why?**

2. He had no fears of Daniel Sommer, or "Sommerism," when he wrote his letter, but had known him for more than twenty years, the most cordial relations existed between them as friends, and he was always a welcome and honored guest in his home, while in Jamesport, Mo.

3. You can not have failed to notice how bitterly and severely he speaks of "Sommerism"—"irruption of Sommerism," and how intensely he can denounce one who, up to that time, was on such cordial relations with himself and the church that all were disposed to have him to aid them in settling their "church trouble." But in "Notes and Annotations," by Bro. Sommer, in O. R. July 27, 1909, was some advice given which upset Bro. Lilly's equanimity. It was just after his letter written to Bro. Sommer, July 24, inviting him to come to Jamesport and assist in settling the trouble. Immediately he wrote Bro. Sommer not to come to Jamesport,

this letter bearing date July 28, one day later than the article and four days later than his invitation. The "Notes" were as follows (some important points in which, by the way, Bro. Lilly omitted in his quotation in "Evangelists vs. Elders"). I think this is likely to aid one in getting the truth, so I will quote the original "Notes" in their entirety:

Churches sometimes have trouble with an elder and don't seem to know what to do in handling him. An experienced evangelist should be called to deal with elders. But elders ought to know enough to understand when they are unfit for office and deal with themselves. They ought not to cling to their official position any longer than they can serve the church acceptably. The good of the church should be the end in view, and elders should set an example in working for this end.

Every elder who is regarded unfit for his position should be kindly requested to resign. The church chooses its elders by reason of their supposed fitness for the position to which it calls them. If an elder finds himself, at any time, to be unfit for that position, then he should resign of his own accord. For instance, if his wife becomes a slanderer, or his children become unruly, or he cannot control his temper, he ought to resign. If he will not resign, he should be kindly requested to do so. If he will not do so, charges should be preferred against him. Then an experienced evangelist should be called and requested to try them.

An elder may sometimes hesitate to resign because he fears that the church will go into innovationism if it be left without some one in official position to check its disposition in that direction. But he cannot afford to refuse to do his duty in order to avoid some other evil. "Let us do evil that good may come" was a slander when charged against Paul. He would not do evil in order to accomplish good. Neither should we. An elder who is "soon angry" is not more fit for the eldership than a liar, a thief or a drunkard is fit for membership in a church of Christ.

I do not understand why elders and deacons should ever become self-willed or should ever come to the conclusion that they don't need any counsel. Common sense, common law and the teaching of the "common salvation," of which the apostle Jude wrote—all these require that officers shall be candid in dealing with the congregation that they are selected to serve. I know a church that has not had the least trouble nor misunderstanding for many years. It has a business meeting once a year to elect trustees, and then the treasurer makes his report. At that meeting all other business affairs are considered as they pertain to the congregation. The clerk keeps account of money matters with the treasurer, even of the Lord's day contribution. Before each business meeting the treasurer requests that some one be appointed by the congregation to look over his accounts, so that he may make his report with confidence. Disciplinary matters are considered in the business meeting, and at other times as occasion requires. As a result, that church has not been having trouble, nor even friction, for many years. All the officers and members seem to understand each other. This is common sense, common law and according to Acts 6th chapter and 2nd Cor. 8th chapter.

I notice in Bro. Lilly's comment on this he says:

"The whole 'mess' breathes a spirit of evil that cannot dwell in nor come from a clean heart. The presumptuousness displayed in giving instructions about 'handling an elder' are both vicious and shocking. Coming as it did, in the midst of a violent attempt to force me from the eldership, I could not fail to understand that the article was directed against me." Why did he not quote it accurately?

Here are several important facts: (a) An effort was being made in Jamesport to get P. H. Lilly out of the eldership—he calls it a “violent effort.” Evidently it was a sincere effort. (b) He recognized that Bro. Sommer’s article, while, in the main, of general application, was virtually an open letter to Jamesport church. Nothing secret in it, any way. (c) That letter held **resignation, voluntary resignation**, up before the elder as his way out; second, the brethren should **kindly request** an unfit elder to resign. Lastly, charges should be preferred against him and an experienced evangelist called and requested to try him. **This teaching of general application made the elder in Jamesport angry, it seems.**

Well, barring the latter statement, which I will consider later, his advice seems to me to be sound and of easy application in any case. Not to discuss, in this connection, church government, but to admit that a man who is “unfit for office” can voluntarily surrender it, what is offensive in the above advice? **Must a man hold office when unfit for it, knows that he is, or when his brethren know that he is “unfit for office” and kindly request him to resign? When he assumes the office of elder does he do so for life, or merely while he or his brethren, or both, recognize his “fitness for office”?** Evidently the latter.

As much capital has been made of this “note” in the O. R., I simply suggest that Bro. Lilly has not improved his fitness for office by spurning this eminently sound advice. His quiet resignation would have saved almost the whole of the troubles that followed, and he might have had the satisfaction today of knowing that he served the church as elder for twenty-five years, and in deference to the wishes of his brethren, the largest majority of the active church of seventy-five members, and in deference to his friends Sommer and Gray (the first of whom he believed to be his “friend” and had been on the most cordial terms with him for a long period of time), he resigned his official relation to the church. This is no new or unheard-of precedent! **But this he resolutely refused to do.** His letters and conduct indicate that he regarded the efforts of his “friends” as the work of “enemies,” and he considers their urgent requests as so many formal demands to resign, even at the very first. Thus, it seems, he effectually barred the way for any peaceable settlement of the difficulty, and the church grew more and more determined to assert their right to select officers to preside over them and to break what they, after years of toleration and submission, now openly condemned as a yoke of tyranny, and refused to submit to his iron rule—or “lording it over God’s heritage” longer. Why should he not have resigned quietly? Read what brethren Gray and Sommer wrote him. Bros. Sommer and Gray urged, upon Bro. Lilly to resign. For instance, Bro. Gray said:

“But I was made acquainted with the sad situation near about my first visit to Jamesport, and on every occasion I have tried to calm the troubled waters. But now I am called to meet you and the church and hear charges against you as an elder. This is painful to me, and allow me to suggest this one thing, if the church doesn’t wish you to serve as its elder any longer, you resign and continue to work with them. If this is not done, I fear the cause of Christ will suffer at Jamesport. I would not serve any congregation as its elder if a small number was opposed to me. I am sure of one thing, and that is this: You cannot serve the

church at Jamesport as elder with the consent of the church. I don't say by this who is in the wrong. But if the church was called to call some one to the eldership they would not call you. In view of the salvation of precious souls and the good of the church look into this, and may God bless you, and remember that I have written this with love and the best of feeling for you. With love for your family, your brother in Christ—**T. L. Gray,** Dec. 14, 1909.

And this from Bro. Sommer:

"That you have done much, in times past, by way of helping to save the church in Jamesport, all will admit who are acquainted with the facts in the case. But many other elders have done the same at other places, and then have damaged their work by holding to their official position too long. I do not wish you to be numbered with such, and therefore entreat you to resign your eldership next Lord's day, if you have not already done so. I entreat you to do this for your own sake and for the sake of all who feel kindly disposed toward you, especially for the sake of the name of Christ, which you have so long endeavored to honor.

"Hoping to receive word from you early next week that all differences are settled in the church at Jamesport, I remain your brother in the Lord—**Daniel Sommer.**"

Another bunch of "Notes" were given in the O. R. by Bro. Sommer, Aug. 3, 1909. He sets forth clearly in these how carefully and prayerfully men should deal with the established order in any congregation. You will observe what he says about his disposition in the matters in hand, especially the preaching on Lord's days. Note especially the last paragraph and discover, if you can, anything wrong in either the sentiment or spirit of the "Notes." Bro. Lilly picked out nine lines of this endorsement and wilfully omitted all that Bro. Sommer said about preaching on Lord's day. Such a method of handling the Bible would prove there are oxen in the kingdom of heaven. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn"—"for of such is the kingdom of heaven." You will see, without my pointing it out, that Bro. Lilly wilfully omitted to quote Daniel Sommer's "notes" in which he condemned his hobby on preaching, but misquoted him and thus made him endorse him. Do you wonder that Jamesport church was in trouble? Here is Elder Lilly's report of those notes:

Npt only was Daniel Sommer in harmony with the work being done in Jamesport (if we may judge him by his words), but was opposed to any interference with the orderly workings of churches in general. Hear him:

"I never censure a church, nor try to change the order in a church, that attends to all the acts of worship in an orderly manner. I know the importance of forbearance and the danger of disturbing a church. * * * Woe unto those who disturb a church and cause offenses, except when the Sacred Text so requires. See Matt. 18:7."—O. R. Aug. 3, 1909.

And here are those "notes" fully copied:

"What is your order here?"

"We have the preaching before the communion."

This question and answer may be often heard where disciples meet to worship. The only reason for such a question and answer is that certain preachers have been technical about a "special order of worship," and have led certain churches to adopt it. When I first heard of that "special order" I was pleased with it. But when I learned that its tendency was.

to break down the outside hearing on Lord's day morning I began to reconsider it. Then I found that to preach the Gospel to either saints or sinners is to **attend to the apostles' teaching**. As a result, I ceased to favor that "special order" which rules out preaching on Lord's day morning.

And why should any one be contentious on this subject? Several scriptures must be taken together in order to find authority for singing, reading and praying. Then why not take several others together in order to find authority for all the other acts of worship? "Wherefore, brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." (1 Cor. 11:33.) While we are tarrying we may do some teaching, or nearly all of it, for that occasion. A Gospel sermon would be in place if we have some one present who can preach such a sermon. Certainly to preach a Gospel sermon is in obedience to a part of the teaching of Paul. See 2nd Tim. 4:1-4.

But we need not to spend much time on this question. In Eph. 4:2 we learn that Paul exhorts us to forbear "one another in love." By so doing we shall be enabled to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Thus far I have never met with a church that did not allow me to preach before the breaking of bread, or preach afterwards before the end of the meeting for worship. This is right. The Lord did not give a ritual for the meetings of the church, and we should not make one, but should consider the importance of keeping the unity of the Spirit, while obeying the teachings of the Spirit.

I never censure a church, nor try to change the order in a church, that attends to all the acts of worship in an orderly manner. I know the importance of forbearance and the danger of disturbing a church. When it is once settled in its order of worship it should not be disturbed, except when it is, in some respects, in positive error. For instance, if I should move to a place where a church of Christ is established in the practice of only making use of an evangelist on Lord's day morning, after the communion, I would not even suggest a change, lest in so doing I might disturb that church and cause dissension. Woe unto those who disturb a church and cause offenses, except when the Sacred Text so requires! See Matt. 18:7.

Are these the words of a church divider or disturber? To ask this question will suffice.

When I am convinced that a man has to hold the office of elder after appointment as long as he belongs to the congregation over which he was appointed, then I will admit that Bro. Lilly's friends mistreated him, ill-advised him here; but not till then. It is passing strange to the writer that he could not see and know that the life of the church was in his hands, and his imperative duty was plain. No man can take the oversight of a congregation by constraint. The same qualifications that put a man in office maintain him in office, and a bishop "must be" a certain character, clearly defined, "must have" certain virtues and characteristics. When these, or any of these, are absent, he, by virtue of this fact, loses his eligibility to office, either to be put in or to be retained, and he should respect the wishes and judgment of his brethren, and his "friends" of long standing, and cease to act in official capacity. This much I say without attempting either to prove or disprove any formal charges that might later be brought in. In Elder Lilly's case the trouble was acute, the dissatisfaction general with him as elder, and it certainly would have been wisdom on his part to exercise the privilege, and refuse longer to serve the church

as elder. The church can and did exist without any elders (when there is no scriptural material in the congregation), as nearly all infant churches necessarily do. If P. H. Lilly had seen the force of the scriptures, their evident bearing on the subject of the relation of the elder to his flock, he would have quietly and peaceably resigned. Then there would have been no church trial, no court trial, no "Evangelists vs. Elders" document, no divided church in Jamesport, and no disgrace of our plea for New Testament Christianity. As it is, we have all these results, and a great judgment day is coming wherein the whole blame will be faithfully placed where it belongs. If he would not listen to these friends of long standing, to whom would he have listened? Such friends were soon regarded as enemies by him.

I have no need to consider in detail all the letters passed between these brethren, and I omit entirely the urgent letters sent by the so-called "faction" to brethren Sommer and Gray, urging them (during the six months between the date of Bro. Lilly's first letter of invitation, July 24, and his last letter to Bro. Sommer, Dec. 11, and his last to Bro. Gray, Dec. 17) to come to Jamesport. The whole matter is briefly summed up, and rightfully, by saying brethren Sommer and Gray endeavored by every righteous means to hold the brethren back, and urged them to be patient, forbearing in the matter, and to do nothing hastily or rashly in dealing with their trouble, and especially in handling their troubler, P. H. Lilly. In the meantime they urged upon Bro. Lilly, by correspondence, to resign his eldership as the only apparent means of settling the trouble among themselves. This he did not see fit to do, and called for scriptural authority for an elder resigning, or for an evangelist asking him to resign, and maintained with characteristic vigor his right to rule in Jamesport church. The letters are not significant further than to develop these points. The evangelists knew the inevitable fact that Bro. Lilly would have to make concessions or most likely he would have to be gotten out of the eldership, and they urged and entreated him, using every argument known to them, to induce him to yield to the all but unanimous desire of the brethren and resign. He maintained, with arguments more or less plausible, and with great animation, bordering at times on scorn, that he would never resign or yield his position as elder of Jamesport church. Thus matters stood Friday evening, Dec. 17, 1909, when, in obedience to a telegram as follows: "New developments; come at once!" T. L. Gray and Daniel Sommer went to Jamesport. The brethren sent urgent, repeated letters to Bro. Sommer, half a dozen times or more during the six months elapsing between the time Bro. Lilly sent his letter of invitation, July 24, and the telegram. They sent a petition signed by thirty-three members, asking him to come, and finally sent a telegram. I think even a prejudiced man ought to see that it was the church and not Daniel Sommer that demanded this investigation of the elder's rule. Bro. Sommer was careful and very slow about even going to Jamesport, hoping that the brethren could settle their trouble without the presence of himself or any other evangelists. The church would no longer bear with the condition of things and wired him as above. These evangelists went and found that their presence was anticipated as,

when brethren T. L. Gray and Daniel Sommer arrived in Jamesport, Bro. R. N. Gardner, of Odessa, Mo. (at Bro. Lilly's behest), was already there as an evangelist to aid and advise him.

THE FAIR PROPOSITION.

"Jamesport, Mo., Dec. 18, 1909.

"We, the undersigned members of the Church of Christ in Jamesport, Mo., agree to call a mutually chosen tribunal of evangelists, who have not thus far been connected with the existing disagreement in the church here, to hear and decide upon the merits of the disagreement. By a mutually chosen tribunal, we mean that the accused shall choose one evangelist in good standing with the Church of Christ where he is known, and the accusers shall choose one of the same kind, and these two shall choose a third evangelist, and these three shall hear the charges that may be preferred, and decide upon them, and we whose names are appended to this agreement agree to abide the decision of that tribunal."

(Submitted by Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray.)

This proposition, the main one offered him, Bro. Lilly does not even quote in his tract. You have learned his method of self-defense before this—to omit what the other man said. Here he omits to quote the proposition—then he omits the chief point in it as far as the evangelists are concerned; that they, the three evangelists, should be men "who have not thus far been connected with the existing disagreement in the church here." Do you see why he omitted to publish the proposition, garbled it, and left the impression that he was giving it substantially? His tract was written to exonerate self and condemn the other man. This one sentence took all the pith and point out of his charge against these brethren, and he was afraid to let his readers see how disinterested and fair the evangelists were in dealing with him. A man can prove that he is all right by the omission method. How cunningly the venerable elder used it on all vital points!

Speaking of the period just preceding the coming of the evangelists, Elder Lilly said, page 11:

"At this stage of the difficulty repeated offers were made to W. L. Arnold, one of the deacons who was acting as a 'go-between,' to submit the whole matter to one or more competent and fair-minded men, who could have no selfish interest in the case, other than a righteous adjustment of the difficulty. All these offers were rejected, and I was finally told that further efforts in that direction would not be considered."

Why, then, did he turn down this proposition of the evangelists which they presented to him early the first morning after going to Jamesport and urged upon him for three days? He claims that the other side had been refusing his offers for an impartial tribunal to submit the whole matter to—yes, an impartial tribunal—and Bro. Arnold wouldn't hear to it, though asked repeatedly to do so, and now Bros. Sommer and Gray urge the very same thing upon Bro. Lilly and he turns it down! Is that consistent? It is a matter of grave importance, so notice the following facts clearly wrapped up in it. The proposition is not even quoted in "Evangelists vs. Elders." Why this studied and wilful omission?

1. Bro. Lilly said in a letter to Bro. Sommer, Dec. 8, just ten days before this:

"I am willing to meet any charge the church at Jamesport, or any part of it, may make against me, but I can not meet a charge until one is made. After one or more is made, I am justly entitled to have a fair, impartial and competent tribunal to conduct the hearing. And, more than this, I have an unquestionable right to a voice in the selection of those who are to try the charges. All of these self-evident rights you arbitrarily set aside and propose to come to Jamesport, at the bidding of a faction in the church, and conduct the hearing to suit yourself. This is spiritual anarchy and can not result otherwise than in evil."

A great deal of capital was made by Bro. Lilly and others over the "tribunal" (whatever that is), the fair and impartial tribunal. It is insisted upon that he was a lamb in the midst of wolves—by the way, an expression of his. Now, in all frankness, I confess the point is too dim for my eyesight—I can not see it. **Nine days** before brethren Sommer and Gray visited Jamesport he was ready for an impartial tribunal to try him. He made repeated offers to Bro. Arnold "to leave the whole matter," so he says, to "one or more competent, fair-minded men," and, strange to say, this terrible man Sommer and his able associate Gray urged this very matter upon him, and he positively and repeatedly refused to do it! The whole matter of "impartial tribunal," and all that he made out of it, falls to the ground with a dull thud like so much soft soap, when we read and study this first proposition and Elder Lilly's resolute rejection of it. This whole matter was likewise left in obscurity in his tract! His memory is too defective to enable him to write history, he is too charitable to self.

2. Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray proposed that the matter be thus taken entirely out of their hands and be referred to a mutually chosen tribunal. This would have left them out, without any semblance of undue officiousness in the case, and he knew it when he wrote the tract, as you know it now. But he omitted it. Why? This would have put the whole matter where Bro. Lilly says he proposed repeatedly to put it but was refused, and would have given him a voice in the selection of the tribunal, the accusing brethren a voice, and would have relieved evangelists Gray and Sommer of any further effort to settle the trouble, as they were careful to specify that point in their eminently fair proposition. For some time they had urged him to resign, but to no avail; now they urge upon him to submit the matter to a mutually chosen tribunal, that had not been connected with the trouble in Jamesport, and this is spurned and rejected. Had he done so he could never have written "Evangelists vs. Elders" and have "wrung the changes" on "impartial tribunal," "spiritual anarchy" and other similar statements. It is not to be forgotten that Sommer and Gray, in behalf of the long-suffering church, urged this proposition upon Bro. Lilly for three days, and he absolutely and finally refused to submit the case to arbitration by any such tribunal. **WHY DID HE NOT QUOTE THIS PROPOSITION!**

3. Bro. Lilly offered that Bros. R. N. Gardner and T. L. Gray should hear the case, and "when these brethren shall have come to a decision, let them make it known to all concerned, and admonish them in error. The future action of the one or ones in error will determine what action the church should take in the future. In order to hasten matters, I am willing to allow Bro. T. L. Gray and Bro. R. N. Gardner to try the case, and

suggest that we begin the investigation at 9 o'clock tomorrow morning." This was his counter proposition. This one he preferred to the other. R. N. Gardner was strictly for P. H. Lilly, as he well knew. T. L. Gray was presumably for the "faction," so-called, and both men had their minds made up almost to a certainty. Bro. Lilly evidently knew this, and that they would not likely agree, and thus that nothing would be done. He was safe in having one partisan any way, and also in that he nor any one else was not bound to abide by anything they did. This was his method—his proposition was a makeshift to avoid leaving the matter to impartial men. He didn't want men who had never been connected with the case, three of them, but two partial men, to leave it to them? Nay, verily, but rather to have them hear the case and report to the church. He knew, evidently, that they could not settle the trouble. What a contrast between this partiality and the selection of men, all of whom were wholly disinterested, chosen by both sides, and the whole matter to be left to them to arbitrate, as proposed by the two evangelists whom he now brands with partiality. One proposition would settle the whole matter, the other would not, as he might well know, and as all impartial readers can see. Did he fear that he could not make his case of partiality stick if he quoted the proposition?

4. I submit, in conclusion on this point, that every charge of "incipient popery," "ecclesiastical tyranny," and that Bro. Lilly could not have an "impartial tribunal" to try him, is unfair and misleading. When the facts are known it is as evident as a mathematical demonstration that for six months and more the church in Jamesport sought relief in an earnest and urgent manner from his so-called iron rule. For months Brethren Sommer and Gray refused to go to Jamesport, declining the repeated solicitations of the church (exclusive of Bro. Lilly and the few hitherto pointed out as holding with him). For weeks these God-fearing men urged Bro. Lilly to resign to save the church at that place. And finally they worked earnestly, prayerfully, sorrowfully for three days to induce him to leave the matter that threatened the immediate disruption of the church to a mutually chosen tribunal of three men (themselves excluded), disinterested men, wholly so, and all efforts, including the last, were rejected, and the only remaining alternative was for the church to assert its liberty in Christ and bring charges against him in the only manner, apparently, left open to them. This, dear reader, was the last resort, the final action, and while contemplated as a final necessity for some months, as is true in the case of every instance of discipline of either church officers or unofficial members, it was postponed through charity unfeigned on the part of all, until united and protracted efforts were made, as seen above, to effect a settlement of the trouble by some other means, and had been rejected by P. H. Lilly. It beggars description! I hesitate to attempt to characterize the base effrontery of any man who would accuse the church and these evangelists of haste, of lack of charity, of disregard of patience, of partiality, of persecution. How manifestly absurd for Bro. Lilly now to claim he was forced to trial before a partial tribunal and had no opportunity for defense! He had opportunity to choose one of the tribunal, the accusers to

select another, and they the third. He says he made repeated offers to leave the whole matter to disinterested men before these men came in obedience to the telegram from the brethren— then, dear reader, he broke down utterly when he forsook this position with a written proposition in his hand, with three days in which to sign it, securing his own sort of a tribunal. His whole long-drawn-out statement of partial tribunal is summed up in this statement: **HE ABSOLUTELY REFUSED TO HAVE ANY OTHER KIND.** Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray showed him impartiality in proposing to **drop out of the case entirely** and leave it unreservedly in the hands of the proposed mutually chosen tribunal. Which leaves his whole plea like a clock without weights, an auto without an engine, a flying machine without a propeller, a charge without foundation. **Why did he make this omission?**

THE TRIAL.

A short time before Sommer's arrival in Jamesport on his lawless mission the following note was handed me by the opposition. It shows they were trying, to the best of their ability, to carry out the instructions given them in O. R. From lack of familiarity with such "official" procedure, they failed to either date or furnish signatures to their production. Here it is:

"Inasmuch as P. H. Lilly is soon angry, and self-willed, and lords it over God's heritage, we, the members of the Church of Christ at Jamesport, Mo., kindly ask him to resign the eldership."

These are charges, given in writing by the "opposition," to P. H. Lilly a short time before Sommer's arrival in Jamesport. Then he **knew what the charges were?** Oh, yes! But, on a technicality (they were not signed or dated because the brethren were unfamiliar with such "official" procedure), he treated them with contempt. **No new charges were made later,** however, when signed and delivered to him. Thus may be seen the futility of his attempt to make it appear that he **didn't know what charges would be made against him** when the mutually chosen tribunal would examine his case. He had the charges in writing in his possession before Brethren Sommer and Gray reached Jamesport, and knew positively the serious nature of them. Thus his tract is misleading, and makes a plea for sympathy on the ground that he was ignorant of the charges, when they were in his possession and he had commented upon them at length and read them, **both privately and publicly, on Lord's day, when the church was assembled for worship.** What shall we say of a man rejecting repeated, urgent offers of selecting an impartial tribunal to try him on the ground that he must **first have the charges?** True, the brethren would better have dated and signed the charges, **but they made them** in a formal manner and specified what they had against him as elder, and said to him personally, "We have charges against you, and here they are." Did you ever learn from the Bible that charges have to be written at all, not to say signed and dated, to be valid? Is it absolutely necessary to **write charges** at all? Are all the charges written, signed and dated in every case of church discipline? Is it this failure, on the part of the brethren, that was so objectionable to P. H. Lilly? It was not the charges themselves, it seems, but the manner of presenting them without date or signature that destroyed his

confidence in the brethren's ability to bring charges against him. He stood on civility, courtesy, on a custom, reasonable enough itself, but not necessary to the validity of action. He had the charges in writing, knew the brethren would back them up, and yet refused to submit to an impartial tribunal and gave as one reason, at first, that no charges—his style of charges, signed—were preferred.

At once such charges were handed him. Read them carefully, as given below, and you will note the fact that the brethren didn't spring any new issue on him, but simply reiterated their written charges which he already had in his possession and had full and complete knowledge of, therefore, **all the time**. These, as you will see, were handed to the accused elder on Saturday evening, Dec. 18—the **same day** that Evangelists Sommer and Gray first offered him the proposition to select the mutually chosen tribunal. He **had no long and tedious wait for them**. They were not difficult to obtain. So he absolutely refused for three days to have a fair and impartial tribunal to hear these written and signed charges, the same that he had in his possession before the brethren came to Jamesport. He was not asked to play "blind man's buff," but to submit to a fair and impartial examination of these charges. These are the unvarnished facts in this matter and show us that the church was "trying to the best of their ability" to settle this trouble before an "impartial tribunal," and were fair and patient with the accused. Notice the charges were as specific as the scriptures themselves. He refused to have the charges tried—it was the charges that hurt, not the manner of presenting them **unsigned! undated!** He had them verbally and in writing for weeks!

The charges called for were first handed to me Saturday evening, Dec. 18, 1909, and were as follows:

"To the Brethren Selected to Hear Charges Against Elder P. H. Lilly:

"We, the undersigned members of the Church of Christ in Jamesport, in behalf of ourselves and others, regard it our solemn duty to prefer against Elder P. H. Lilly, of this church, the following general charges and specifications:

"General Charge—

"He is not fit for the eldership of this church.

"Specifications—

"1. He is soon angry.

"2. He is self-willed.

"3. He acts the part of 'lord over God's heritage in Jamesport.'

(Signed) "H. E. BOND,
"W. J. PEASLEE,
"M. A. SCOTT,
"H. H. JUSTUS,
"S. B. CROPPER,
"J. W. HAMPTON."

As to the trial itself, I may offer a few suggestions. Offending brethren are often "withdrawn from" without any written charges being preferred against them. The elders of the church that expels them usually, if not always, know of their guilt before the "trial" or day of disfellowshipping them. The accused, having been visited and entreated repeatedly to repent, is known to the elders to be unworthy of fellowship, and it can not be justly charged that they are "partial" or "popes" or "ecclesiastical

tyrants" if they execute the law of Christ, having given previous notice to the accused and all parties concerned that his case would be up for final settlement at a certain date. To assume that because the bishops have virtually made up their minds, or actually done so, as to the guilt of a man, is to do what Paul did concerning the incestuous man in the Corinthian church, and in the same document that he made the charge he assessed the penalty, ordering the brethren to execute it—"When ye are gathered together * * * to deliver such an one unto Satan * * * put away from among yourselves that wicked person." It is not apparent to me, therefore, that one is disqualified from executing finally the law of Christ in any given case because he has been familiar with the offender's conduct and has his mind well made up concerning his guilt, having been, as elders usually are, both witnesses and judges of the conduct of their flock and impartial defenders of the truth of heaven. At times, they must violate their fleshly feelings and disregard their emotions in order to perform sacred duty, and thus exercise discipline upon their own kindred. But they know the offenders are deeply sensible of their unworthiness, and, painful as the duty is, they discharge it in order not to forfeit their loyalty to our Lord and Master. **Can any fair-minded person deny this?** That Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray, as evangelists, possessed the feelings of our common humanity, and acted in this case solely from a sense of duty, must be admitted, if we are to remember their long-cherished friendship for Bro. P. H. Lilly, their urgent, almost pathetic, letters to him urging his resignation, their final personal appeals to him to submit to an impartial tribunal of mutual selection (and leave them entirely out of the case), and that, as a last resort, under an imperative sense of duty to the church, they yielded to the demands of the church (the major part of it, as shown above at length) and on Dec. 20, 1909, formally excluded P. H. Lilly from the eldership of Jamesport church. This act was judged to be the last possible remedy for existing trouble in that congregation. The meeting was announced, the accused was notified in writing of the time and place, the nature and solemn import of the meeting, the written charges as shown above had been discussed publicly by him, and the signed charges were in his possession, and had been for days also. He ignored the church and the evangelists, stayed away from the meeting, had the church door locked, and then, as previously stated, stoutly maintained that he and the few who upheld his action and submitted to his rule were the church in Jamesport, and that he was not subject to discipline by the "faction" and these evangelists.

It is possible that Bro. Lilly, with his bitter and deep-seated feelings of distrust against his brethren in the congregation who opposed him, his special dislike for the young preacher, Gilbert, and his extremely partisan feelings against Brethren Sommer and Gray, who knew all these facts and more of the history of Jamesport church trouble, may have felt as he has expressed it. He says:

"Nor did this coterie, composed of members of the Octographic Review staff, with Daniel Sommer in the lead, cease their onslaught until the once peaceful and prosperous church at Jamesport, Mo., was a piteous

and distorted mass of ruins. Daniel Sommer, peradventure, may have friends and supporters who will uphold him in such satanic work, and justice may never overtake him in this life; but, certain as fate, he will surely have to answer at the bar of God for the ruin and desolation wrought in 'Zion' by his lawless course in Jamesport."

This is belligerent, but it is conceivable, I admit, that Bro. Lilly voiced his honest expression of judgment in the above and much more that he said concerning the evangelists. But he ought to have been more moderate and less bitter in his statement concerning the judgment "bar of God." That trial will be fair and impartial, and justice will be meted out to all at that "tribunal." I sincerely deplore the fact that we do not have before us at all times the subduing consciousness of the fact that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Nothing will be left out there. **All of Bro. Lilly's carefully planned omissions will be in evidence there.**

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP WITHDRAWN.

On Wednesday evening, Dec. 25, three deacons, a treasurer and a "clerk" were chosen, and three trustees were elected. On the 29th a formal demand was made by these men upon Bro. Lilly (by these trustees) for the key to the meeting house.* This he refused. The same evening, at the regular prayer meeting service, F. W. Gilbert read a paper charging P. H. Lilly with insubordination, and the question of withdrawal of fellowship from him was put to the church. I am not in possession of the history of the case upon this disfellowship feature, and decline to speak. Bro. Lilly characterizes the meeting as one of "violence and disorder," "one of violence and lawlessness, without a semblance of authority of any kind, save that of the 'thug' or assassin." Neither you, dear reader, were there, so we can neither verify nor modify this statement of the case. Yet, on the face of it, there is exaggeration. He makes it out as wholly one-sided. **Omits his side.** It is scarcely credible that there were either "thugs" or "assassins" in evidence. There probably was some disorder, as neither side recognized the authority of the other to occupy the time. But the disorder arose out of the conflicting interests involved, and was not all manufactured by the preacher and his helpers, manifestly, for there had to be opposition to create disorder; hence, it is self-evident that if the elder and his following would have remained silent there would have been an orderly withdrawal of fellowship from him. I have never read the charges as then made, did not hear them from any of the brethren, and know nothing further concerning this so-called turbulent meeting further than the statement of the brethren that Bro. Lilly and others supporting him in his claims made it a "rough house." I have little doubt that it was an unpleasant meeting for both sides, and mutual crimination followed, each blaming the other for the disorder. The fact remains that after this date there was no fellowship regarded between these brethren, and as this was Dec. 29, 1909, and the house was locked three days later, or the following Lord's day, Jan. 1, 1910, and remained closed till the middle of May, when it was opened by order of court, we need follow the parties in detail no further. Bro. Lilly was disfellowshipped on Dec. 29, and he posted the fol-

lowing "notice" on the church house door Lord's day following, Jan. 1, 1910. This, as you will see, made it necessary for the brethren to "go to court," as notice was given that "this house is, and will remain, closed until the matters in controversy be legally and scripturally settled"—the only other alternative being for them to give up their place of meeting, forfeit all right to the church property and retire from the conflict, or take the law into their own hands and break open the door. Whether they acted wisely or not, each must decide for himself. The notice was as follows:

"NOTICE.

"In view of existing disorder and lawlessness in the faction assuming and claiming to be the Church of Christ in Jamesport, and in view of the arbitrary and unscriptural course of said faction in assuming to excommunicate, expel and deprive of their rights and privileges as members of the congregation worshipping in this house for twenty-seven years past, I, as one of the grantees in said deed conveying the same, acting for all the grantees in said deed, and still having control of the property, do hereby give notice that this house is and will remain closed until the matters in controversy be legally and scripturally determined.

"P. H. LILLY, Trustee."

Trial was had in the circuit court of Daviess Co., Mo., Judge Arch B. Davis presiding. I deem it neither profitable nor necessary to burden these pages with his opinion and decree, necessitating the labor of pointing out the misapplications and misinterpretations of Scripture given us by the learned judge. It is a superfluous task, moreover, inasmuch as the case presented in this pamphlet is a church matter, a religious affair, and the judge's decision is a legal matter having to do wholly with the rights of property. It would not have been necessary to attach the judge's decision to Bro. Lilly's tract only for the fact that the judge passed adversely on the tribunal proposition and tried to expound the New Testament on points of church government, criticised the work of Brethren Sommer and Gray, and quoted copiously from letters, editorials and other available testimonies those things which upheld the contention of P. H. Lilly on the legal point involved, namely, the validity of his expulsion from the eldership, his later expulsion from church membership, and the election of trustees and deacons by the so-called "faction." I think it worthy of remark in closing, however, to state that Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray have made the study of the Bible—the law of God—their life-work, while the honorable judge has made the civil law his business. He is good in his line, but a sectarian interpreter of the Scriptures and thus an unreliable expositor. He is eminently fair as a trial judge, and deserves and receives credit for his impartiality, but the presumptive evidence is that on New Testament teaching, affecting vitally the peace and prosperity of the Church of Christ, he would not be as competent to decide as Evangelists Sommer and Gray. It is but justice to all parties concerned to say that his opinion concerning the polity that governs the Church of Christ does not carry the weight of that of these evangelists. Wherever his views of the Scriptures cited condemn the views of these brethren, one should excuse his inaccuracy, if he be in fault (and he generally was), by the remembrance that he is not a member of the Church of Christ, has obscure ideas on many

phases of doctrine that govern it, and labors at a great disadvantage in seeking to ferret out in a court of law the whole truth of the Gospel on any question that may come before him—such as the qualifications and duties of elders, their tenure of office, how and by whom they may be tried, the extent of their rule over the flock, and the Scriptures relative to the manner of appointment, fields of labor, privileges and duties in general and particular of evangelists. So, on the whole, it is with a sense of the impropriety of attempting a formal review of the judge's opinion that I pass the document, except to say that he **strangely omitted** all reference to, and all use of, the **fair proposition** we have above discussed.

My aim has been to show plainly many things **omitted** by Bro. Lilly in his attempt to narrate the "origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble" in "Evangelists vs. Elders." All of these omissions show him to be entirely too partial and charitable to himself! Supplying these omissions aids the candid reader in placing the blame for the trouble where it rightfully belongs. The decision of the judge did not settle the trouble. It is as bad, if not worse, in Jamesport today than it was before there was any trial, a melancholy testimony to the fact that an obstinate man, in holding **legally** it may be, though not **scripturally**, to an office in the church, can destroy its power for good, as we shall see in the sequel.

The civil court put the brethren right back where they were before there were any church trials or discipline exercised, and each side paid one-half the costs. Thus the "rock" on which the church "split" was not removed, and the elder seemingly felt no rebuke, but continued as before. He could not engage peaceably in the work and worship of any church of Christ that has "monthly preaching" and "preaching to the world at the communion service," but this is ignored, and his opinion is law on these subjects in Jamesport, for he is elder by civil appointment. So the church is "split" over the compulsory observance of his notions, his self-willed and arbitrary rule. Elder Lilly could have settled peaceably this whole trouble at any time by doing either one of two things. First, he could have consented for the brethren to have two or more elders, himself included. Second, he could have resigned and given his successor active support in the eldership. Either of these actions would have been acceptable to the brethren. But there's the rub! This meant for him to surrender his darling theory, his cherished views on the questions involved, wherein Jamesport differed from nearly all other churches of Christ, both in teaching and practice; hence the tenacity with which he clings to the eldership and rejects all others. If a man has no partner he can run the whole business; but when he has one or more equal partners, all have to be consulted. But the eldership in Jamesport is like the "Evangelists vs. Elders" booklet—a **strictly one-sided affair**. Just as competent men, in all of our congregations, who have no hobbies to maintain, are anxious to have help and strength afforded them by the appointment of other men to that responsible position, and manifestly it should have been so in Jamesport, Mo. Instead of this rule prevailing there, however, the elder has been treasurer, "clerk," trustee, song-leader, Bible class teacher, and has been averse to the appointment of any more elders or to the retirement to private discipleship

of the one they already have. Almost any other elder known to me would have done cheerfully either of the above things. But they have no darling hobby to maintain different from the rest of their brethren, both at home and abroad.

EVANGELISTS' AUTHORITY.

I find Timothy has two charges, both very similar—1 Tim. 5:21 and 2 Tim. 4:2. One is to "preach the word, reprove, rebuke, exhort"; the other is to "observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." The passage in 1 Timothy follows:

"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."

1. Who ordained deacons and elders? The preachers.—Acts 6:3, 6; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.

2. The elder must have certain revealed qualifications before he can scripturally become an elder, bishop or overseer, and it is self-evident that if he "must be" a certain character to get into official work he must **maintain that character in order to retain his position**. This is a necessary inference, for otherwise one would be appointed to office for life, regardless of subsequent conduct.

3. It is necessary to observe that bishops are not appointed for a term of years, definitely pointed out, as were the priests of the old covenant; nor for life, as were the kings; but the length of their term of office is determined by the nature of their qualifications, by **their continuing to be what they "must be"**—what they have to be as men to be bishops. A bishop who disqualifies himself can no longer lay scriptural claim to the office. An unfit man can refuse to accept the office when first tendered to him, the evangelist can refuse to appoint him, or the brethren can refuse to have him appointed. If he is disqualified later it is the same as though he was unqualified at the first; the same power that put him in has power to put him out.

4. Who is to receive an accusation against an elder? **THE BIBLE SAYS THE EVANGELIST**. How many witnesses are necessary to establish his guilt? Two or three witnesses. This calls up Deut. 19:15, also Matt. 18:15-22, both of which teach judicial action, the first under the law, the second under the Gospel. The elders, nor the congregation, did not receive such a charge as Timothy—and I wish to know how this scripture can be obeyed if the evangelist is now **FORBIDDEN TO DO WHAT PAUL SOLEMNLY CHARGED HIM TO DO?** He was in authority to reprove and rebuke (see Titus 2:15) and was to show no partiality.

1 Tim. 5:17, 18, describes the honorable elders and their reward; verses 19-25 the dishonorable elders and their punishment. Even if verse

22 meant "ordination," this fact is not altered. But most likely that verse does not refer to ordination. The lesson is not about **how to ordain** elders, but how to treat elders **already in office**.

1. Elders who labor in word and doctrine—double honor—support when necessary. (Verses 17, 18.)

2. Sinful elders are next (verses 19-25) treated of as follows: (a) Evangelist authorized to receive the accusation, not to have any partiality; (b) the legal witnesses, both in number and character, two or three; (c) the guilt of the elder established; (d) the judgment observed in the most faithful manner; (e) the evangelist kept pure by acting unselfishly; (f) the different cases require different degrees of carefulness in the inquiry—some sinners are brazen and impudent, some are secretive and sneaking, but impartiality must prevail and the truth will be upheld.

THE REBUKE.

Evangelists had **authority** to rebuke (Titus 2:15), and this **authority** extended to the rebuking of an elder lawfully convicted of sinning. How are we to determine the extent of that rebuke? By the Scriptures; these are self-interpretive. When a man sins, the violated law determines the severity of the penalty. For instance, 1 Cor. 5:11: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?"

1. Here are six classes unworthy of the company, or fellowship, of the Church, and they must be judged and dealt with—the Church must "purge out, therefore, the old leaven." The apostle had been speaking at length, however, of one class of sinners—fornicators—and a notorious case at that. In giving his method of dealing with him, he shows how to deal with all the others—"Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Then see Titus 3:10, 11: "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself." We can see that this "heretic" may be an elder (as Paul warned the bishops at Ephesus—Acts 20:30), or a preacher (2 Tim. 2:16-18), or any man (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

2. Elders, or bishops, can not be appointed or retained as scriptural elders in a congregation when they sin and destroy their qualifications. The evangelist's rebuke of elders, like the rebuke of the man who "had his father's wife" in Corinth, is regulated by the nature of the sin committed. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Judas fell by transgression from the apostleship, otherwise called "bishopric." Demas fell because he loved this present world. Diotrephes fell through love of pre-eminence. And many have fallen, Achan-like, through covetousness. Some fall through being lifted up in pride—some through being soon angry—some by being self-willed (obstinate and heady)—some through ambition to be elder, and taking or holding office by constraint (or compulsion), and others by lording it over God's heritage. Some fall by set-

ting a bad example in going into places of revelry, by practicing games of chance or patronizing lotteries, or by betting on horse races, or by fooling away precious hours in playing pool, billiards, cards or other fascinating games, and by learning to cheat in them. Some fall by being like the world in enthusiasm over ball games, over politics, over silly fashions in dress, or by lack of circumspection in many things. By these and such like they are seen to be the opposite of sober, grave, temperate, and not an example to the flock, nor in good standing with them that are without. **So the rebuke of an elder by an evangelist is for correction of the wrongs committed.** And the fact of proven guilt in an elder's case, like the fact of proven sin in any other case, is one thing, the first thing; but the penalty for the sin is stereotyped, and must be the measure of the rebuke such sinner must receive if the Scriptures are obeyed.

We should not forget that to be appointed a bishop a man **must** possess certain qualifications. There are some personal attainments in knowledge, and in the ability to impart it—"apt to teach"; some moral qualities—sober, grave, temperate, just, and the like; some social—such as a lover of good men, a lover of and given to hospitality; and some are domestic, having to do with his family, as he is the husband of one wife, rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; and he is in office by the will or consent of the church, not by constraint (or compulsion), and then he is to be an example to the disciples, not a lord or arbitrary ruler over them. They are like Gideon (Judges 8:22). If, therefore, a bishop sins and disqualifies himself for office, he may, or he may not, forfeit his claim to the fellowship of the church. He may sin in those particulars only which disqualify him for office. His wife may be a scandal-monger—his children may be unruly and profane, riotous and a disgrace to him, and thus disqualify him for holding the position of elder. It is self-evident that if an elder "must be" a certain character, then **whenever he forfeits that character he can no longer be a scriptural elder,** although he may live and die a Christian. His family may be his official ruin. The penalty in every case is the scripture penalty, and is not difficult to locate when one's guilt is established. But his disqualification may be his misfortune and not his fault—loss of speech, unruly, riotous children, wife a slanderer, or the like.

Acting upon 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5, 2:15; 2 Tim. 4:1, 5—all of which are scripture authority for the evangelist to act—Daniel Sommer and T. L. Gray, acting with and for the church in Jamesport, tried P. H. Lilly on the charges already given and declared the scripture penalty against him. **That scripture penalty forbade him to be a bishop in the congregation!** An evangelist **CAN NOT APPOINT AN ELDER** over the scriptural protest of his brethren, even the smallest minority of them. And he **CAN NOT REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE HIS UNWORTHINESS FOR OFFICE** when the church, by two or three lawful witnesses, by the law of Christ, prove him to be an unworthy officer, and the admonition, "Let no man despise thee," makes it exceedingly hazardous to despise the evangelist when he is doing his scriptural duty in such matters. I have said they acted "with and for the church," meaning thereby that the church demanded that he should

no longer serve as elder when his guilt of the charges was established, and that Bro. Lilly and his handful of supporters in this work were like Paul prophesied would come. See Acts 20:29, 30. And, while they (Lilly and his company) were in the congregation, they were a faction according to all right rules of defining a faction.

I wish it distinctly understood, however, that those four elderly brethren and their wives, respectively, together with Bro. Lilly's wife and two daughters and the two or three other women who went out with them, were probably held by social as well as religious ties. This furnished him some encouragement and gave him an opportunity to cling to the eldership. Of course, in nearly every instance some folks will cling to a disciplined member of the church and uphold him. But the church, almost as an entire body, repudiated him as an unscriptural elder—in that he is "soon angry," "self-willed" and "lords it over God's heritage." The Bible ought to make it plain who was right here. **Such a man can not be a scriptural elder!** The witnesses said P. H. Lilly was guilty of such actions. What's the use of denying the fact, that when one's sin is proven by competent witnesses, and the law of Christ is enforced, he is scripturally put out of the eldership? Do you say the evangelists should not hear the charge or accusation? **Paul commanded them to do so!** If they had not done so in Jamesport, what should have been done? Do you know? **DO YOU KNOW OF ANY ONE ELSE WHO COULD HAVE HEARD THE CHARGES BUT AN EVANGELIST, ACTING FOR THE CHURCH AND WITH THE CHURCH, AS THESE MEN DID?**

P. H. LILLY'S METHOD.

Sept. 3, 1911, on Lord's day morning, with the communion table spread before him, but the worship not observed, the so-called elder arose, read a paper containing notice, charges, specifications and withdrawal of church fellowship from fifteen members—a deacon, W. L. Arnold, and his wife, and thirteen others—without any previous notice. He picked up his Bible and hat and walked out, some six or seven following him. At the door he turned and announced meeting for afternoon, which he accordingly held. The brethren remained in the house and continued the worship as usual. Such manifestations of zeal (?) are to be explained by some abler man than the writer. It seems to me that such conduct is calculated to forfeit the last degree of confidence that any one could have in Bro. Lilly as a man fit to be in the eldership. Has an elder the right to "depose," and especially without notice, a deacon who has charge of the emblems, is a Bible teacher by the elder's appointment, and living so as to retain the confidence and esteem of his brethren, and generally respected by all who know him as an honorable Christian gentleman? The fact that W. L. Arnold opposed P. H. Lilly, as an unfit man for the eldership, was the ground of opposition to him, as plainly as if Bro. Lilly had said: "You have leadership in you and I am afraid of you, for your character is above reproach, and I will humiliate you by disfellowshipping you without charges, either signed or unsigned, being furnished to you beforehand."

Thou that sayest I must have an impartial tribunal, why dost thou refuse to others an impartial tribunal? Thou that sayest I must have

charges beforehand, written, signed and dated, why dost thou not furnish written charges, signed and dated, in exercising discipline? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, that the judges had their minds made up in thy case, that a lamb was in the midst of wolves, dishonorest thou the law by having thy mind made up, thy charges signed and thy discipline exercised without previous notice of thy intentions being given the accused? Thou that sayest I have an inalienable right to have a voice in selection of the tribunal that shall try me, refusest thou thy brethren their inalienable right to be heard, but readest thou thy paper only, pickest up thy Bible and hat and walkest out from the communion table? Is this thy "example to the flock"? Thou that preachest that one should not lord it over God's heritage, dost thou lord it over God's heritage? Thou that chargest "lawless mission" against others, dost thou practice lawlessness and professedly withdraw church fellowship from fifteen of the best members in Jamesport church, including a deacon and his wife, without notice, specifications or charges having been given them, and simply read them out of the church? In view of the fact that thou hast not previously withdrawn public fellowship from any of the flock for many years, is it not plain as noonday that thou didst exercise this discipline because thou didst fear that these brethren would exercise discipline against thee as they had previously done, for lording it over God's heritage, being self-willed, soon angry, and holding to the eldership through constraint? Inasmuch as you have left out the things that show your guilt as to the "origin and progress of the Jamesport church trouble," you may find it exceedingly unpleasant to read, as it is for me to write, things which you omitted in your tract, "Evangelists vs. Elders." But inasmuch as your document has been sent broadcast, and is incomplete and misleading in so many particulars, as I have attempted to point out, my unpleasant task has been a matter of duty, not of choice.

The Jamesport church is said to be in ruins. Any other church will go to pieces very likely under such leadership. It is a melancholy testimony to the fact that the spirit of hobbyism is intolerant and tyrannical. Put a hobbyist in power in a congregation, and sooner or later that congregation will be "a piteous and distorted mass of ruins." As time advances the hobby becomes more and more important, and all advisers, counsellors, teachers, friends and brethren are esteemed or held in doubt, or as enemies, owing to their attitude towards this hobby. It is the religious thermometer that gauges their attainments in the divine life. It registers the degree of confidence to be put in the preacher, or other public teacher. Any one who is not humble enough to heed the voice of the church and defer to their judgment in particulars where no principle is involved, and no rights are violated, will live to see his folly. It will be as certain as truth that no congregation will cherish love and esteem for one who seeks to lord it over them, nor retain confidence in an elder's example or teaching who is both elder, Bible teacher, treasurer, song-leader, clerk, and arbitrary manager of the church, when they know that many men are qualified to do much of this work in a creditable manner. It is too one-sided! It is assuming too much authority. It is lording it

over God's heritage. It is treating men of marked intelligence and ability, of zeal and humility, as though they were children and incompetents. It is, so to speak, the manifest effort to keep self and pet theory to the front, and to be able officially to resent anything bordering on a proposal of a division of work, or a recognition of the methods of the brethren all over the land in conducting the services on Lord's days, when a preacher is present in good standing and full fellowship. Gradually, as intolerance of criticism develops in the elder, Bible teacher, song-leader, treasurer, clerk, trustees part, their opposition becomes more pronounced and is to be reckoned with, and the whole controversy becomes so acute that the formal charges are written and handed to the elder in authority and he is finally asked to resign the eldership, as abundantly shown above.

I submit, in closing, the following suggestions, knowing that Daniel Sommer has many enemies, editorial and otherwise, and that Herod and Pilate made friends against Jesus, that all sectarians join hands against the church of Christ, and that all the enemies of Bro. Sommer would not care to vindicate him in this matter. Knowing this I state that "Evangelists vs. Elders," was written, as it seems to have been, to aid in "creating public sentiment" against "Sommerism." But the document has to be tried on its merits. And in thus trying it we find that all the facts show that P. H. Lilly was the cause of the trouble, and that he refused to have the church to try the charges which they preferred against him; refused to have a tribunal mutually selected to try him, when urged for three days to do so; refused to have evangelists Sommer and Gray to try him; refused to resign; and is still hammering away, trying to be an elder.

CONCLUSION.

"I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2.) "Against an elder receive not an accusation but before [under] two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." (1 Tim. 5:19-21.) "These things speak, and exhort and rebuke with all authority; let no man despise thee." (Titus 2:15.)

Did Paul, with the other apostles, have authority to teach us the "all things" we are to "observe"? Then here is authority from Paul, speaking in view of the final Judgment, and the rewards in the everlasting kingdom, for the evangelist to do certain things. If he is an evangelist by scripture right then he must preach the Word, must reprove, rebuke and exhort, **AND MUST HEAR AN ACCUSATION AGAINST AN ELDER UNDER TWO OR THREE WITNESSES**, and must rebuke him. Just so long as evangelists have authority to preach the Word; to reprove and rebuke, with all authority (let no man despise thee), just so long **THEY MUST DISCIPLINE THE ELDERS THAT SIN** (elders are specially pointed out), and they have no option in the matter of reproof and rebuking, with all authority, the disobedient. The admonition is given: "Let no man despise thee," also and thus special solemnity is attached to

how one treats their rebukes. It is a supremely dangerous thing to set aside the plain law of Christ either as to how to come into the church, or into the eldership. Heaven's own law decides both. And the same law prescribes how one can remain in the fellowship, and how one can be continued in the eldership. The word of God makes the distinction between a bishop and one who is simply a Christian. None can be scripturally put into the bishopric who lacks the qualifications; neither can one be retained in office who does not maintain the special qualifications, that he possessed when selected, any more than one can be retained in church fellowship who has forfeited his right to it by disregard for the law of fellowship. Heaven made the law by which to try elders, and the evangelists and elders should remember that Paul commanded the evangelist to hear the charges against, and rebuke, the sinful elders. This must be heaven's own rebuke, and its nature and degree of severity are determined by the nature of the sin, and the law will never be complied with except where the scripture penalty is enforced. This is heaven's own rebuke, faithfully and impartially administered before all, that others also may fear. No scripture authorizes a man to confer with flesh and blood to screen a friend, to punish an enemy unduly, or to have regard to persons. But the command must be observed in view of the great Judgment, and without partiality.

A Precaution: 1. No man can show from the New Testament that any one but an evangelist can ordain an elder and set in order the things wanting.

2. No elder was ever commanded to receive an accusation against an elder, before two or three witnesses, and to rebuke him. The same is true of all unofficial members. The evangelist was the only one commanded to do so, in the most solemn manner we ever read of on any subject.

3. No man can fail to see that the evangelist who knows how to put an elder in office on his qualifications, can put him out of office on his disqualifications, and that when the two or three witnesses establish his guilt the elder's future relationship to the eldership, or to the church, or both, is predicated upon the particular sin or sins of which he is proven guilty. The evangelist is the only man appointed to deal with him, either as to ordination into office or as to sinful conduct, and as he is charged in the most solemn manner possible to receive accusations against him before [under] two or three witnesses, and to "rebuke with all authority," it follows that he must "set in order the things that are wanting" and see that sinful elders are not tolerated to preside, as lawless men, over God's heritage. This he must do as far as possible by his teaching, reproof and rebuke and exhortation. And any man who claims that evangelists Sommer and Gray exceeded the scriptural authority vested in an evangelist will have to show where **ANY ELDER OR OTHER PERSON** is authorized, by the New Testament, to sit in judgment upon the testimony of witnesses as to the guilt of an elder, judge him guilty of sin and "rebuke" him! When a case is found where this was ever done in apostolic days, or where a command was given to do so, it will be time for evangelists Sommer and Gray to confess to the sin of having usurped author-

ity over the elder. But such case nor command **can not be found**. Therefore the scripturalness of the procedure of those evangelists at Jamesport, as shown above, is self-evident. They acted within the law of Christ, and to question their authority to act thus, is to impeach the wisdom and authority of the apostle Paul who commanded the evangelist to do such work.

4. It is time some careful study was given to the subject of recklessly accusing humble, God-fearing men, of "popery," "ecclesiastical tyranny" and "lawlessness" because they, as evangelists, obey the solemn charge given to evangelists: not only to "preach the word," but also to "reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine," and "against an elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses—they that sin rebuke before all that others also may fear." This evidently was done faithfully in Jamesport by the evangelists, and should be observed without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality in all churches of the saints. See 1 Tim. 3:14, 15.

The evangelists who are authorized of heaven to preach the Word, to reprove and rebuke with all authority, to set in order the things that are wanting, to ordain elders, have much to do and of very solemn import, in doing the work of an evangelist, making full proof of his ministry. Not all men are qualified to act as evangelists, and none should be authorized or appointed by the congregations who are incompetent. But to claim that evangelists can preach the Word, baptize, preside at the Lord's table and look after an infant congregation until they develop men who have the qualifications for elders, then ordain them, **but that they dare not receive an accusation against an elder before [under] two or three witnesses**, and them that sin rebuke before all, is to **set aside the revealed will of heaven on this subject**. For the same man who was charged to do the former, received a special charge to do the latter. When was this law repealed and by whom? **When was it divided?** It is no use to cite cases where justice miscarried, where an evangelist abused his power, where one evangelist followed another and attempted to reverse his work, where evangelists could not agree, and such like—for if the law is revealed no violations of it, or disregard for it by any number of people, nullifies the law. As well say that two elders may disagree, or the elders of one congregation disregard the discipline exercised by the elders of another congregation and take into the fellowship without repentance and confession excluded members, and by such like disregard of the lawful discipline nullify it. The fact remains that God authorized the discipline, both of sinful disciples and sinful elders, and whoever ignores the discipline after it has been scripturally observed ignores God and not the elder, or the evangelist, as the case may be. All such "offences" will come, but there is nothing in the law of Christ, to encourage one in such contempt for his faithful servants in the humble discharge of their duty.

Some disciples will ignore all discipline, start up new congregations, assume to "reorganize," and some evangelists, elders and others will encourage them thus to set aside God's law. But they would better be careful that they do not "fight against God." So, on the whole, it may

be said that, however faithfully and impartially offenders in the church may be dealt with, some will ignore the Scriptures and uphold the offenders. But this does not argue any imperfection in the law, or that discipline should not be faithfully exercised by all who love the purity of the Church and seek the eternal welfare of the sinful members, including the elders of the churches. The church is composite, made up of both official and non-official members. The church may exist without elders or deacons in the event that no proper material can be found in the congregation for these offices. But the divine provision for the growth and effectiveness of the church requires these offices that the greatest good may be accomplished. The fact that evangelists have a definite work, the elders a definite work, the deacons a definite work, does not decrease, but rather increases, the work of the church, because these offices supply certain functions in the church, and enable it to work more effectively. We should not think of the church as one thing, and these offices as independent of it; but rather, the church acts through its elders, deacons, and evangelists. Each congregation when fully set in order for work and worship has these offices, and the congregation that at first had none of them, but later has all of them, is simply developed into the power and efficiency contemplated in the New Testament.

Some extremists have claimed that the church lost all authority for elders, deacons or evangelists when the miraculous age ceased. Some religionists assume that "official grace" has been handed down in "apostolic succession," and that none, not officially baptized by a regularly ordained officer, can be an officer in the church. Much of the ecclesiastical machinery of the modern church is founded on this baseless assumption. Other extremists would retain the elders and deacons, but rule out the evangelists. Others would rule out the evangelists as disciplinarians of the elders—telling us it is a new doctrine. Others say it is part of the apostasy. I have not written for extremists, nor Catholics, Episcopalians, Mormons, Jews nor pagans, but for those who recognize the church of Christ when faithfully set in order, and working under divine teaching, as heaven's own arrangement, fully adequate to meet all the emergencies of life. I deem it scarcely necessary to add that one passage of scripture is enough on any subject, when inspiration has given no more. For instance, the meetings for "breaking bread" every first day (Acts 20:7); the contribution every first day (1 Cor. 16:1); the confession before baptism (Acts 8:37); the method of dealing with a brother who has trespassed against another (Matt. 18:15), or the matter of rebuking an elder by the church through the evangelists (1 Tim. 5:19-21) are cases in point. The fact that the elders are active in disciplining the unofficial members of the church does not signify that they are above the church, superior to the church, but simply expresses the will of Christ acting through the New Testament upon the church. The church is not independent, one class; the elders independent, another class; and the evangelists independent, a third class; but the church, the evangelists and elders are inter-dependent, and all working to one and the same end, when scripturally harmonized. The church acts in every instance, whether in the appointment of elders,

or the discipline of unruly members, even of the elders. The church through its elders executes the law of Christ in withdrawing from every brother that walketh disorderly, and the church through the evangelists executes the law of Christ in disciplining her elders. The same inspired authority that qualifies elders for their work qualifies evangelists for their work, and each class are servants of the church, work with and for the church, not independently of the church. The church, by the ministry of the evangelists, appoints her elders; and the church, by the same ministry, rebukes the sinful elders. The church, subject in all things to the law of Christ, has rights which elders and evangelists alike are to uphold and maintain. The church is responsible to God for calling an evangelist for a Lord's day, for a protracted meeting, to appoint elders, or to "reprove, rebuke and exhort." No evangelist is independent of the church, even as no elder is independent of the church.

Some evangelists may go beyond their scriptural rights, and force themselves upon the churches, but this is manifestly an abuse, and not the legitimate use, of their scriptural authority. Everything divine, as well as human, in being interpreted by mankind, is liable to perversion. But every evangelist who knows his place, and honors Christ, will not be a meddler in affairs that do not concern him. The fact that an evangelist is called from a distance to preach the Word, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all authority, does not militate against him. Timothy, as evangelist, was not confined in his labors to Lystra and Derbe. Titus was left by apostolic authority in the Island of Crete to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order the things that were wanting. It is not important to have the official grace spoken of above—the apostolic succession of officials, but the apostolic sanction for the office, which demands the special work of the official that occupies it, is indispensable. No scriptural evangelist will foist himself upon a church, for a protracted meeting, or even one sermon, badly as he may think it needs his services. The harmony of purpose and unity of effort between the church, her elders, deacons and evangelists, when governed by the inspired record, are the fruits of divine wisdom. The law of Christ, however, provides not only for the reception of members into the church, but for their rejection. The law is ample to meet all emergencies, and through the eldership of the church disciplines unruly and disorderly members, and through the evangelists' co-operation establishes the guilt of elders and deals with them. The elder is not to be screened by his brethren, his sins winked at, neither is he to be rebuked without good and sufficient cause. The work must neither be hasty, rash, premature, nor dilatory and partial. Two or three witnesses must establish the guilt of the sinning elders, their unworthiness, their unfitness for the eldership it may be, or even their unfitness for Christian fellowship. If it is necessary to exercise discipline against disorderly members, and the elders take the lead, the church is back of the work, and not simply approves it but carries it on through the ministry of her elders. If the church who appointed elders through the evangelists needs and asks for the assistance of the evangelists later in admin-

istering the rebuke of heaven against a sinful elder, and he is put out of the eldership, or out of Christian fellowship, it is the church that does the work. The church is not independent of the evangelist, nor the evangelist independent of the church, but both are mutually working to the same end. The elders do not discipline disorderly members, only as servants of the church. Likewise evangelists in all that they do are servants of the church. They are not a "court," a "tribunal" inferior or superior, but are a divinely called, qualified and commissioned class of men, with solemn and imperative duties to perform, and, as servants of the church that called them, are to exercise all authority in preaching (the revealed word), in reproof, rebuking and exhorting, and in receiving an accusation against an elder, under two or three witnesses, determining his innocence or guilt, and in dealing with him according to the word of God; and the church thus keeps herself pure, honors the law of Christ and proclaims aloud that "righteousness exalts a nation [or congregation] but sin is a reproach to any people." To oppose the elders when executing the discipline of Christ for the church, or to oppose the evangelist in exercising his scriptural functions, is to sin against Christ himself.



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