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From: D. Hoff

To: Steve Isitt

Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2003 12:55 PM

Subject: Re: An Appeal to you, brothers, to fellowship and have "sincere dialogue" unto reconciliation in the Lord.

Dear Brother

I do not know how or why I received this e-mail since I have no interest in this dialogebut if I may offer some fellowship from my heart.

In reading the Bible you must have realized that the Lords main problem is His own people....."most stiff-necked, hardhearted people in all the earth" the Lords summary of his peoples basic condition.....Yet, incredibly He has been able to advance His Purpose through such ones....The Father of Faith, Abraham, TWICE, told his wife to give herself in adultery....Jacob lied and cheated to get the Birthright....David lusted to the point of premeditated murder.....Yet, all these ones, and more, advanced God's Purpose on this earth.....

Please, do not be distracted by these "fightings", who is right, who is wrong...Everyone is wrong! Only Christ is "right".

Consider the church in Corinth.....Horrible.....but, called the Church of God by Paul.....the secret is found in the midst of such a poor testimony....."the approved ones".....what made them approved? We know no more about them. What did they do? They did not start another table in Corinth, even though the practice at the Table was abominable....

They are not heard, they are not known, they are not manifest, but they are called the approved

...and eventually the whole church is healed not only by Paul's letter, but by their approved behavior., which was what? **They did not get involved in the situations.** They diligently guarded the oneness. They did not agree or sanction any of the evil behavior, but simply cared for the saints and prayed. I believe that when one came to them and said, "Isn't Paul better than Peter?" they quietly would state, "brother, we need all the members of the body in their function or we will suffer

They did not take sides, they did not protest, they did not make themselves into a party, they did not start something else, they just stood and prayed for the Lord to build His church, and shepherded the saints without controversy

Brother, I have seen and witnessed many things in the practice of the church life, accusations, misunderstandings and so on....But as long as the approved are praying and standing for the Lords testimony of oneness . they will give the Lord a way to complete His building on this earth....

Why have I stood for this way for over 30 years? Because of the wonderfulness of the brothers, including above all, my own behavior.?....God forbid...Because what we have seen is the truth of the Word of God.....If what we have seen concerning Gods Purpose is not correct, then what could it be? From Genesis to Revelation, God.s Building, Gods Life, Gods Testimony of Oneness by His own Life.....If God is merciful to us, he will fulfill His Purpose in us, dear brother, even in spite of us.....

Ask yourself this dear brother, If you are accused wrongly, what should our reaction be. Haven't we been helped to realize that we must take it from the Lord Himself, to let the Lord vindicate His truth, or to adjust us as needed, and to be open to the Lords shining on our being in the situation, and to not become part of a faction or party?. If we have not learned this over the years then we have learned nothing. And when brothers feel they need to defend themselves, I feel that very act is against the nature of God's life in us. But when I see a brother take all things as from the Lord and yet not allow division, that brother will be the one I wish to emulate.

I have personally witnessed a dear brother who was under suspicion and castigated for over 20 years, a very gifted brother, even lied about. What would you do in that situation? Yet, he never made an issue, he never started something else, and still serves the churches to this day. In observing this brother, I was helped so much. I realized that the church life is not only a positive matter but also it is an ordained environment for negative matters, which work this wonderful reality of Christ into our being.

Paul said that there has to be these ugly situations just to show who are the approved among us. These approved are the hidden ones, standing in the midst of a horrible situation, ministering life to the saints, for the healing of the Body.

Care for these things brother, and you will see the glory of God

Yours in Christ.....Dave Hoff

----- Original Message -----

From: Steve Isitt

To: DaveHoff

Sent: Friday, June 06, 2003 8:42 PM

Subject: hidden ones A response to Dave Hoff's kind correspondencel

Dave, Praise the Lord!

Thank you for thoughtful encouraging fellowship in a spirit of love, without harsh criticism. Had the brothers here in my locality responded to me this way two years ago when I expressed concerns in a much milder way, I would still be in the church life.

Related to my experience, the brothers set me aside for writing about my concerns, until I could repent. I had initially approached Dan Towle by email concerning a booklet I wrote and asked him for "fellowship", saying I didn't want the writing to be "widespread" and I would like him to correct me if I'm "unfair or inaccurate" in any way" and that I thought it was "safe" to come to him, that perhaps he could "catch" me and I could either "adjust or terminate" the fellowship of my concerns. He did not contact me, but recommended discipline measures, which were taken.

I had not presented other documents to him then my booklet. I mainly spoke of the losses in the new way and the factors that drove hundreds of saints away. I encouraged building a bridge of communication to them, by firstly understanding their concerns, then reaching out to them in love, admitting where we were wrong or were too much. Just like in a husband and wife relationship.

I have been set aside for my writing, and because I contacted brothers who had been "quarantined". I only contacted them because I detected a spirit in the recovery that was not right, and I reached out to these brothers to learn of their experience. It was just as you described, a messy situation among God's people.

In the Old Testament God was not happy with an improper testimony, however, and ever strove to correct it, commending ones like Hezekiah for going about to raise up the standard among His people and make wrong things right. Brother Lee also commended Hezekiah as the top man of God in the Old Testament, because he was not passive about the state of things and moved to tear down what was not of God and offensive to His nature.

In the New Testament, Martin Luther did the same. He wasn't an approved "hidden one" but he was an approved "overt one", for taking action against the falsehoods and lies of the Catholic church. As a result, God was able to take a giant step in leading His people out of darkness and bondage and into a revived state. This was Martin Luther's care for the church and God's testimony.

Before Luther took the steps of confronting the pope and the hierarchy, he fully knew the situation he was dealing with and had the burden in his heart to take action. Others were spiritually asleep on the matter or not willing to risk their lives.

Dave, I want to ask you, your fellowship about hidden ones is good but do you think Martin Luther would take your fellowship about being hidden? Would Hezekiah, if you encouraged him to be passive about unrighteous matters. I think they would wonder about your integrity, brother, about your feeling for the saints and suffering ones due to the degraded and unrighteous state of things. Don't be offended by me, but consider.

Dave, do you care for the testimony of Jesus and for the suffering saints due to unrighteous mishandlings and misrepresentations? These situations do exist and in abundance. I myself cannot be passive about this. Crooked ways should be made straight. This is to bear responsibility before the Lord for His testimony. The way you described is also right, but why be sleeping concerning wrongs that should be made right? Why not address the wrongs and make straight paths for our feet in the recovery?

I appealed to you and many others to consider the very serious matter of bearing false witness against our brothers. Are you concerned about this? Shouldn't this matter be investigated by brothers in responsible positions, and not ignored or spiritualized away? Why would you or any brother reject "sincere dialogue" and fellowship over unrighteous matters being brought to your attention?

We would like others to deal with their false witness against us and would even go to court to *defend* ourselves and the testimony. Why wouldn't we be willing to investigate our own sin, and deal with it? Or can we sin and make mistakes?

Dave, I just want to share with you about whether or not we should defend ourselves. You wrote: "*When brothers feel they need to defend themselves, I feel that very act is against the nature of God's life in us.*" It depends on if the Lord is defending Himself in you. Then you better do it, for truth's sake. We can take our spirituality too far and become the most passive people on earth. In defending ourselves, we are sometimes caring for and defending the truth, which affects the saints and the testimony.

Brother Lee said that the elders oftentimes play politics with one another and will not talk about the real situation. They would rather be gentlemen, being nice to one another. But, he said, this is a reason for our slower progress in the recovery. The brothers will not address the real situation and rebuke others when needed for the sake of the truth and the Lord's move.

Do you think brother Lee never defended himself? and vindicated himself? He lived that way for a long time to gain the churches to follow his lead as the "commander-in-chief", "God's oracle", "the unique leader", all the time vindicating and defending. Was the Lord doing it? .

Concerning John Ingalls defending himself: 1. John knew of the distortions of truth made about him and others that have permanently damaged our concept about him and our relationship with him. If this happened to brother Lee, he would have gone to court. 2. He had a choice to be

quiet about it, or record the story according to the facts and his experience and then leave it for the Lord and the saints to judge. 3. Note that you didn't get his book, I didn't get his book, the churches didn't get his book. The story is just there for anyone who might seek him out to hear his testimony. 4. I asked Bill Mallon if they thought about suing for libel. Bill said they would never do that and bring the Lord's name to shame in a courtroom.

Dave, they haven't been defending themselves. They have let the slander go on and on, and take their way by faith, looking to the Lord and trusting in His sovereignty. None has fallen away from the Lord; rather, they are close to Him and thank Him for His ways. They are open and desirous for an opportunity to fellowship with brothers in the recovery, even *longing for* fellowship with the brothers. Their love for the brothers is evident, but there is not a reciprocal feeling among the Anaheim brothers. The possibility for fellowship has been outright rejected; coldly, absolutely, and I would also say, unscripturally and unbecomingly.

What do you think, brother? You speak of division and the forming of a party. I ask you, what kind of an attitude is this to not be open to our brothers in Christ? There is a spirit that has come into the recovery and it wreaked havoc and caused division before the brothers left the recovery. That spirit is still here excluding, condemning, regulating, and damaging. It is a divisive spirit. It makes a special party in itself. That is what I am trying to address.

We should be broadened to know the Lord, His will, and His accommodating heart to maintain a righteous testimony that is according to Him, not a system or way, in the genuine oneness of the Body of Christ. (Remember the brethren, and Darbyism.)

Dave, I have been encouraged by your loving response, but not happy that you "have no interest" in meeting a need in the Body. I would sincerely like to hear from you on what I have shared today. You are the only one in over two years who has shared with me in a thoughtful way, and with a sound scriptural basis, and in love. This is valuable to me and to the Lord. But our fellowship is not complete. Tell me why I should be like you 1. to have no interest in unrighteous matters among us. 2. to not have the spirit of Hezekiah to make wrong things right 3. to not have a practical interest in others and care for their spiritual welfare and for the truth and the oneness in the Body. 4. Tell me why other elders would be passive. 5. Tell me why we wouldn't all rise up to condemn our own unrighteous bearing of false witness against brothers, and be healed. 6. Do you think a revival would not ensue? Repentance (on both sides) unto reconciliation and restoration in the Body of Christ would impact the earth, and our own localities, with an eager shepherding spirit and heart going out to the "one that was lost", to so many "ones" who were once among us. How pleasing to the Lord this would be!

How about this "one accord" and this "recovery"! How about this genuine display of oneness and love. This is about dealing with division and swallowing it up, not causing it. This is about admitting we were wrong. We just need to be honest and consider the record. God does. The brothers, our brothers, that we call rebels (Moses tried using this word) are not defending themselves in their report, but are responsible to care for the truth for the sake of having an accurate record. May the Lord use that record among us for His righteous name and for His glory! (The attachment, *In the Wake*, shows the first page of my booklet, as it appeared to Dan Towle. The other attachment is a testimony that would help clarify many things, if you should become interested to read. ..)

Yours in Christ,

Steve I.

Steve.....I only meant to share my experience with the Lord in the church life, that is all I have.....Yours in Christ, Dave