

*Luffkin Debate*

**"How New Testament Churches Can,  
and Can Not, Cooperate: or,  
What Is Wrong With Herald of Truth?"**

**A STUDY OF  
"SPONSORING CHURCH" COOPERATION**



**Fanning Yater Tant**

# WHY "HERALD OF TRUTH" IS WRONG

Debate Notes  
For A Discussion  
on

"Sponsored Cooperation Among Churches of Christ"

at

Lufkin, Texas — April 11-14, 1955

Abilene, Texas — June 20-23, 1955



From the Library of:

*Scott Harp*

Between

E. R. Harper and Yater Tant

## INTRODUCTION

This debate has come about because of difference in belief concerning New Testament teaching on

### Congregational Cooperation

Propositions for the debate are vague and not expressive of the true issue between us; but they were signed only as a last resort to make the debate possible. The real point at issue, and the difference between us can be summed up in three questions:

1. Does the New Testament furnish a pattern for the cooperation of congregations?
2. If so, is the kind of cooperation in Herald of Truth "according to the pattern"?
3. Is the pattern (if one is set forth) obligatory upon churches today, or do they have freedom to cooperate in ways not embraced in the pattern?

### Not a new issue

This is not a new question. The matter of "congregational cooperation" has been before the church for a hundred years. Three general answers have been given:

1. Campbell, Pendleton, McGarvey et al, taught that it was right for congregations to cooperate through the **Missionary Societies**.
2. Certain Texas brethren (following the Civil War) developed the concept of congregational cooperation which centralized the work under the eldership of one congregation, to whom other congregations contributed. This is essentially the type of cooperation which has been revived in our day under the name of "**sponsoring church**" cooperation. It was finally rejected by the churches of the past generation as being no different in principle from the Missionary Society. (This is the kind of cooperation involved in Herald of Truth.)
3. The third kind of cooperation which has been advocated was that "congregations of the Lord, working in their individual, local, and independent capacities

were truly 'cooperating' in the work of the Lord." They might all contribute under certain conditions to a given work, but they did it directly, and never turned their funds over to some intermediate agency (either Society or congregation) to spend for them. David Lipscomb was the chief defender of this type of cooperation, and gradually as the issues were discussed pro and con, brethren generally came to a clear, positive, and definite understanding that **this** was the only kind of cooperation taught in the New Testament.

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With very few exceptions (there may not be a single one!) every argument advanced in this debate by Brother Harper for Herald of Truth can be found in the writings of Lard, McGarvey, Pendleton, Briney, and others who were defending the Missionary Society. Every argument used by Yater Tant **against** Herald of Truth will be found in principle in the writings of Lipscomb, Srygleys, Kurfees, Elam, Tant, McGary, Otey, Tolbert Fanning, and others who were writing against the perversions of New Testament teaching involved in both the Missionary Society type of cooperation and the "sponsoring church" type of cooperation.

#### WHAT WE ARE NOT DEBATING

1. We are NOT debating the scripturalness of radio preaching.
2. We are NOT debating the good accomplished by Herald of Truth.
3. We are NOT debating the **structure** of the organization of Highland Church (elders and deacons).
4. We are NOT debating the teaching and practice of Highland Church in **all** phases of congregational cooperation.
5. We are NOT debating the right of churches to cooperate with one another in the work of the Lord.
6. We are NOT debating the scriptural right of brethren to teach the truth through gospel papers such as the **Gospel Guardian**.

## WHAT WE ARE DEBATING

1. We ARE debating the right of congregations to cooperate in the kind of arrangement involved in **Herald of Truth**.
2. We ARE debating the scriptural functioning of Highland's elders in overseeing a national (or international) work to which all churches are equally related.
3. We ARE debating whether the **Gospel Guardian** has taught in harmony with the Scriptures in opposing the "sponsoring church" method of congregational cooperation.

## ARGUMENT I

*Herald of Truth is wrong because it exists by a type of church cooperation which is without scriptural authority.*

### I. The Scriptures are complete for all spiritual needs.

#### 1. II Timothy 3:16-17

“Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.”

#### 2. I Corinthians 4:6

“Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written;”

#### 3. II John 9

“Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.”

#### 4. Revelation 22:18-19

“I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.”

#### 5. Deuteronomy 4:2

“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you.”

#### 6. Proverbs 30:5-6

“Every word of God is tried; He is a shield unto them that take refuge in him. Add thou not unto his words, Lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”

In view of these passages, and many others like them,

Christians have long since adopted the simple rule: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; Where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent. We call Bible things by Bible names; And do Bible things in Bible Ways."

## II. The Scriptures authorize a pattern for church organization.

### 1. Acts 14:23

"And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed."

### 2. Titus 1:5

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge."

### 3. I Peter 5:1-3

"The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock."

(Note: The Missionary Society is wrong because it exists and functions **without authority**. It does not come within the scope of the New Testament pattern.)

## III. The Scriptures authorize a pattern for worship.

### 1. Ephesians 5:18-19

"And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."

### 2. Colossians 3:16

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God."

(Note: Instrumental music in Christian worship is wrong because it is used **without authority**. It does not come within the scope of the New Testament pattern.)

**IV. The Scriptures authorize a pattern for congregational cooperation.**

**1. Acts 11:27-30**

“Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea; which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.”

**2. I Corinthians 16:1-4**

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me.”

**3. II Corinthians 8:13-15**

“For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; but by equality; your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality: as it is written. He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack.”

**4. II Corinthians 8:16-24**

“But thanks be to God, who putteth the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. For he accepted indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord. And we have sent together with



him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show your readiness: avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us: for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you. Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward; or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ. Show ye therefore unto them in the face of the churches the proof of your love, and of our glorying on your behalf."

**5. II Corinthians 11:8**

"I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you."

**6. Philippians 4:15-16**

"And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need."

**V. Essential elements of the pattern laid down in these scriptures**

1. The action:

Many churches—Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, etc.—sent to one church, Jerusalem.

2. The reason:

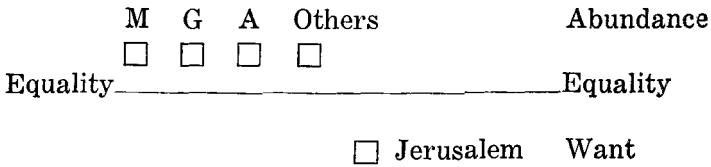
To benefit the **receiving** church "that there may be equality." (II Cor. 8:14.)

3. The time:

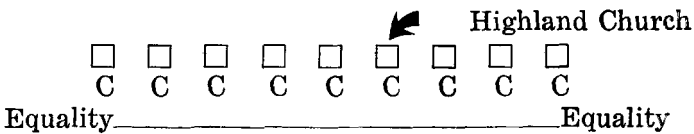
Temporary "at this present time" (II Cor. 8:14.)

II CORINTHIANS 8:14 AND "HERALD OF TRUTH"

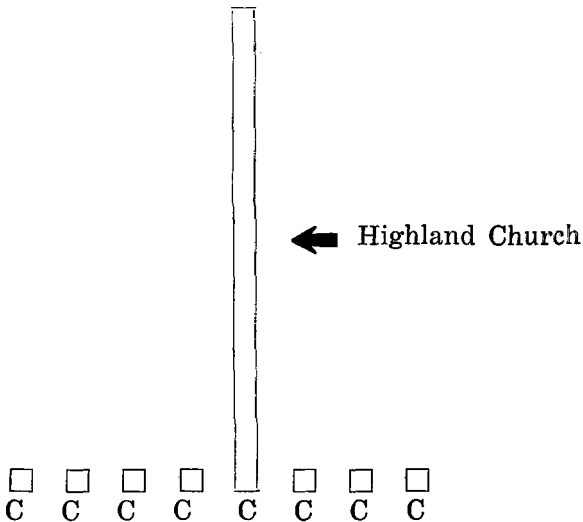
New Testament Example



Before Herald of Truth



After Herald of Truth



VI. Contrast: Essential elements of the "sponsoring church" pattern as exemplified in "Herald of Truth" and other such projects.

1. The action:

Thousands of churches sending to one church.

2. The reason:

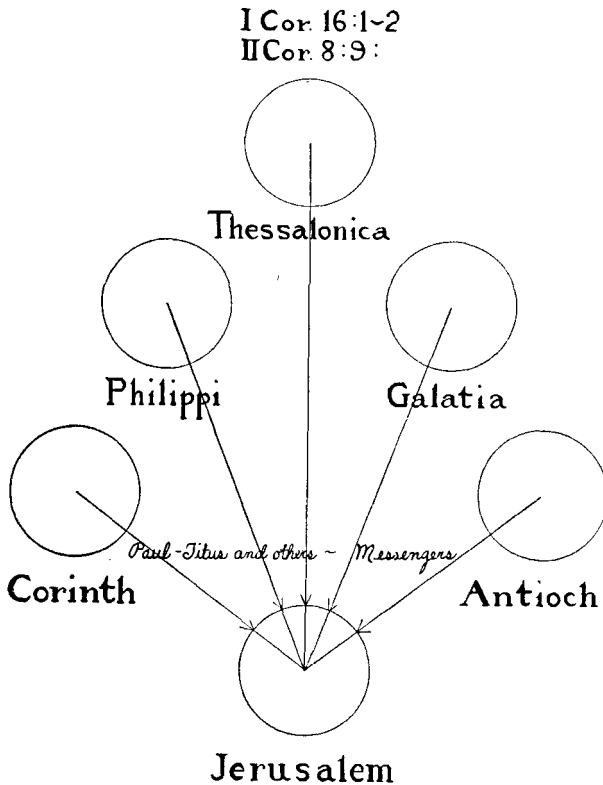
NOT to benefit the **receiving** church, but to do a general "brotherhood" work. (See charts.)

3. The time:

Permanent—"The Highland elders can and will drop this program at any time they see fit. They will never, however, demand or infer that any other church refrain from carrying a like work.") No definite termination point.

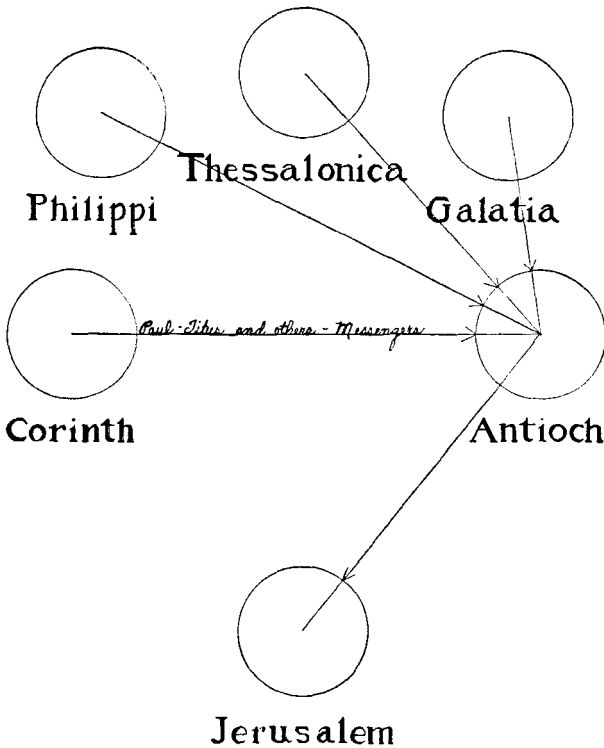
### NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN OF CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION

(In which many churches with a common goal, for a common cause, discharge their obligation to cooperate.)



**THE "SPONSORING CHURCH" (HERALD OF TRUTH)  
PATTERN OF CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION**

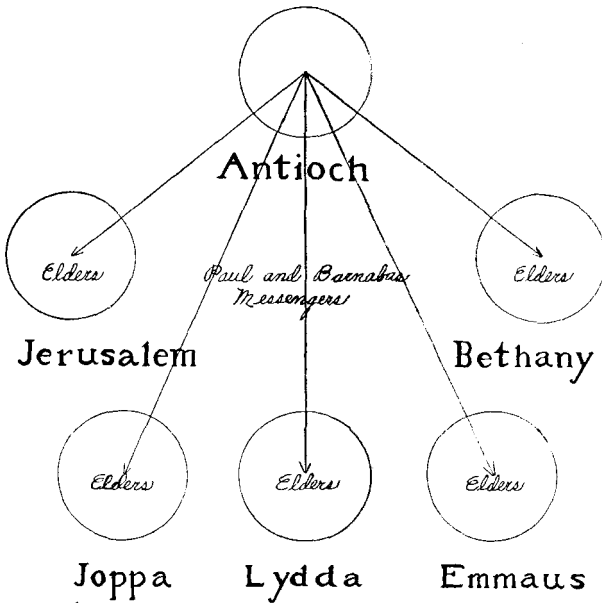
(In which many churches have a common goal, a common obligation, but one church becomes the agency through which they all operate.)



NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN OF  
CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION

(In which one church cooperates with many churches.)

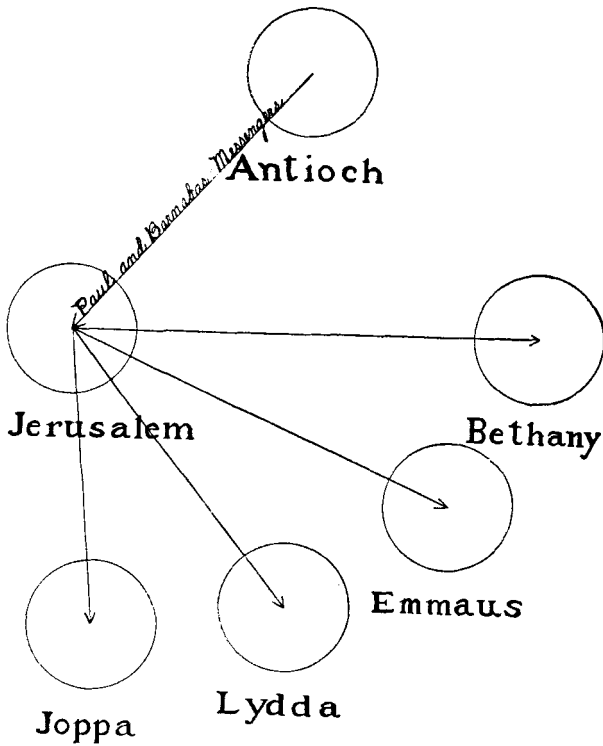
Acts 11: 27~30



*"Churches of God which in Judaea are in  
Christ Jesus" I Thess. 2:14  
Elders in every Church Acts 14:23*

**THE "SPONSORING CHURCH" (HERALD OF TRUTH)  
PATTERN OF CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION**

(In which **one** church becomes the radiating, distributing center in behalf of **many** churches.)



**VII. Since Herald of Truth cooperation is not "according to the pattern," we cannot "walk by faith" in practicing it.**

**1. II Corinthians 5:7**

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight)."

**2. Romans 10:17**

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

**3. Application of the principle**

a.—In giving the bread and the fruit of the vine, Christ **excluded** all other elements in the Lord's Supper.

b.—In specifying "singing" in our worship, God **excluded** every other kind of music.

c.—In designating "the first day of the week" as the day for observing the Lord's Supper, God has **excluded** the other six days.

d.—In "appointing elders in every church" God has **excluded** majority vote rule on the one hand, and ecclesiastical hierarchy on the other.

e.—In giving the pattern of "independent congregational action with assistance only in time of need to bring about equality," God has **excluded** total congregational aloofness on the one hand and centralized combinations for cooperative work on the other.

## VIII. Baptism and cooperation—a parallel.

### Scriptural and Unscriptural Baptism

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>SUBJECTS</u>	<u>DESIGN</u>
Immersion	Penitent believer	For remission of sins
Sprinkling or pouring	Infants	Because of remission of sins

### Scriptural and Unscriptural Cooperation

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>SUBJECTS</u>	<u>DESIGN</u>
Gift from one church to another	Churches having inequality (one with abundance; one in want)	“That there may be equality” (II Cor. 8:14)
Gift from one church to another	Churches having equality	“To do a good work”

To be **scriptural**, baptism must have proper action (immersion) of the proper subject (a penitent believer) for the right design (unto the remission of sins). Failure at any point invalidates the whole act.

To be **scriptural**, cooperation must have proper action (a gift from one church to another) between proper subjects (a church having abundance and a church in want) for the proper design (to produce equality).

Herald of Truth violates New Testament teaching concerning the proper **subjects** and the proper **design** of congregation cooperation; and is therefore wrong.





## ARGUMENT II

*Herald of Truth is wrong because it provides an arrangement by which the "church universal" may function through a single agency—the elders of Highland Church.*

### I. New Testament use of the word "church"

1. In a local sense
  - a.—I Corinthians 1:2—"the church of God which is at Corinth."
  - b.—Acts 8:1—"the church which was in Jerusalem."
  - c.—Romans 16:16—"the churches of Christ."
  - d.—I Thessalonians 1:1—"the church of the Thessalonians."
2. In a universal sense
  - a.—Matthew 16:18—"I will build my church."
  - b.—Ephesians 1:22—"head over all things to the church."
  - b.—Ephesians 3:10—"might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God."

**II. All New Testament church action is congregational—never super-congregational or inter-congregational.**

**III. The two great apostasies (Catholicism and the Digression) developed out of efforts to promote "church universal" action.**

1. Catholicism
  - a.—"Nothing is more evident than the perfect EQUALITY that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there ever appear, in the first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches, from which councils and metropolitans derive their origin."  
— Mosheim, Eccl. Hist. Vol. 1
  - b.—"During a great part of the second century, the Christian churches were independent of each other; nor were they joined together by association, confederacy, or any other bonds but those of charity. But in process of time, all the Christian churches of a province were

formed into one large ecclesiastical body, which, like confederate states assembled at certain times, in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole." (Ibid. Vol. 1)

- c.—“The idea rapidly prevailed that Roman and Christian were two names for the same thing, and there was formed a new combination of religion and state—designed to gather all men into its bosom exactly as the universal sway of the Caesars had controlled the innumerable kingdoms and republics before it. Men already disposed to believe the empire to be eternal, under the influence of this movement, came to believe that the church and the empire were equally eternal. So the union of the world-wide church with a world-state came into being, and with it—the Roman Catholic Church, the visible church, the national church, the universal church, held together by imperial power.”  
(Bulwarks of the Faith — Vol. 1, p. 46)

## 2. The Digression

- a.—“We fear that the large conception of the church universal is too little realized by many Christians of the present day. Their ideas of the church and of the responsibilities and work of the church, circle too much within the limits of a single congregation. The kingdom of God is scarcely recognized as commensurate with the people of God, and the sphere of its cooperative as well as its free individual effort, as being as wide as the commission, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature’.”

(Pendleton — Mill. Harbinger, 1866.)

- b.—“The basic apology for the Society, Pendleton based upon his conception of the **church universal**, and in this he followed closely the reasoning of Alexander Campbell. No man is prepared to see the Society as Pendleton saw it without beginning where Pendleton began. First, he filled his mind with the thought of the church

in its universal aspect, ignoring for the time being the local church. God gave to the church—in its universal sense—the responsibility to convert the world. Therefore, whatever method the church—in its universal sense—uses is acceptable. The method is a matter of expediency. The church universal is left free to decide for itself. This is briefly the defense he made for it.”

(West — Search For the Ancient Order, Vol. II, page 55.)

c.—“Now I repeat that this body of Christ, or the church, **in this comprehensive and general sense**, cannot act in carrying out this commission, as a whole, that is, the whole church, everybody cannot arise and go to preach the Gospel. Well, now, how is it to be done then? And just here I lay down this principle, and it is to constitute the foundation of nearly my whole argument upon this question. I read as follows: ‘When a thing is commanded to be done, and the method of doing it is not prescribed, those commanded are at liberty to use their best judgment in devising ways and means to carry out the command, and they are to act under the principle laid down by Paul in I Corinthians 14:39 and 40: ‘Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.’”

(J. B. Briney, defending the Missionary Society, Otey-Briney Debate, p. 162.)

**IV. Herald of Truth is essentially a general, comprehensive, “brotherhood” work, and not peculiarly, specifically, and exclusively the work of Highland Church.**

1. The original promoters regarded it as a general, brotherhood project, not as the work of any single congregation.

a.—It existed first in Iowa, under a church there.

b.—It existed next under the College Church in Abilene, Texas.

c.—When College Church elders refused to con-

tinue any "sponsorship" of the program, it was moved to Highland Church, whose elders "accepted the responsibility, including the authority to change preachers, in case they failed to measure up to the quality of preaching needed, also the right to have, or not to have, guest speakers and to make any other alterations, expedient to the success of the program."

2. It was "sold" to College Church not as their program but as a general program:

a.—**"Emphasize Churches of Christ**

"No emphasis should be given the College Church in the broadcast. In fact, its name could be eliminated, but it should be emphasized that ALL the congregations of the Church extend a welcome, and that many have a part in this network program. Attached is a typical format of the program. Notice that the College Church is not mentioned."

(Excerpt from a type-written brochure presented to College Church elders by the original promoters to enlist their support as a permanent "sponsoring church" for Herald of Truth.)

b.—**"Still Challenge**

"The Lutherans, with a membership of 1,800,000 spend \$1,500,000 on a nationwide scale. The Seventh Day Adventist, with 235,460 members are spending \$906,000 for a nationwide program.

The Christian Reform, with only 134,608 members spend \$278,000 on a nationwide program.

The Churches of Christ, with 903,000 members spend \$ 000,000.00 for a nationwide program.

Lutheran .....	1,800,000.....	\$1,500,000.00
Seventh Day Adventist	235,460.....	906,000.00
Christian Reform .....	134,608.....	278,000.00
Churches of Christ .....	903,000.....	000,000.00

(Excerpt from same brochure quoted above.)

3. Highland's own statements reflect the general, nationwide, "brotherhood" nature of the work.

a.—"One thousand eighty-eight churches and numerous individuals comprise Herald of Truth." (September, 1953, Report. They later withdrew this and apologized for it **after they had been criticized for it.**)

b.—"The Churches of Christ salute you with a Herald of Truth." (Opening announcement on the programs for many months, used on their bulletins and other publicity material. Later changed to "Highland Church of Christ salutes you with a Herald of Truth.")

c.—"Briefly we shall give you some idea of the inner workings of this YOUR national broadcast." (Open Letter sent out by Highland elders to thousands of churches and individuals, 1952.)

d.—The Highland elders "hope that no local radio program will lack support because of the Herald of Truth but that by joining hands and uniting effort the greatest number of gospel sermons can be carried to the greatest possible listening audience."

(Brochure by J. M. Patterson, The Herald of Truth, Its Management and What It Does.)

e.—"Some ask, Why did the Highland elders pick Nichols and Willeford instead of older preachers to do the speaking? The elders were on the wrong side of the table to **pick**. The whole idea was a "brain child" born out of the minds of Nichols and Willeford. The elders accepted the responsibility, including the authority to change preachers, etc."

(J. M. Patterson, in statement signed by all other Highland elders.)

4. Statements of listeners and supporters show the program is considered a "brotherhood" nationwide effort, not exclusively Highland's work.

a.—"The Herald of Truth program is the outstanding achievement of the church in this century . . . . It has increased the respect of the world for New Testament churches, and has served

notice on hostile elements that they cannot with ease ignore **the voice of the churches of Christ.**"

Jack Meyer

Birmingham, Alabama

b.—"How many times when we have told people that we have no denominational headquarters or super-organizations have they asked, 'But how do you do mission work?' Now we have your program to which to point."

J. Harold Thomas

Bangor, Maine

c.—"I feel that the Herald of Truth Radio Broadcast of the Gospel of Christ is proving to be a very effective means in Tulsa in reaching the masses in this area."

Delmar Owens

Tulsa, Oklahoma

d.—"The Herald of Truth has been of great value to the church the nation over, but it is especially valuable to the northwest and north central sections where the church is so young and little known."

Arthur W. Francis

Sioux City, Iowa

e.—"Emporia Avenue continues to benefit from the Herald of Truth program. It is bearing fruit in this area."

James C. Bays

Wichita, Kansas

f.—"In this great Rocky Mountain region the Lord's church is being made known as never before, and given a prestige that otherwise it would take decades to achieve."

Cecil N. Wright

Denver, Colorado

g.—"The Herald of Truth has been effective in the Portland area."

L. D. Webb

Portland, Oregon

h.—“In this section of the country, it is often difficult to get non-Christians to attend the services of the church. The value of the Herald of Truth program in teaching these people in their homes cannot be measured.”

Monroe R. Hawley  
Wilwaukee, Wisconsin

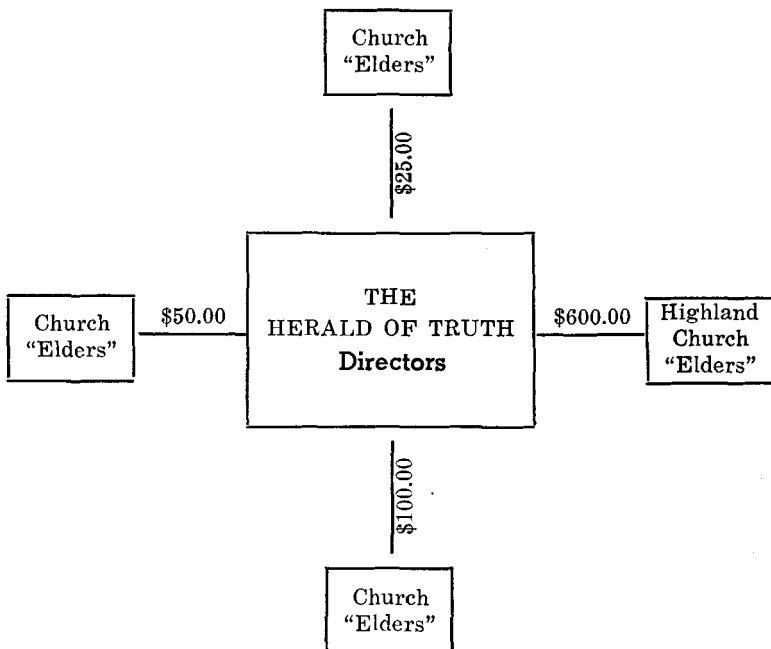
5 .So far as Herald of Truth is concerned, Highland elders sustain no relationship to Highland Church that they do not sustain to every contributing congregation.

a.—Same responsibility to have the pure gospel preached is owed to **all** contributing churches

b.—Same obligation to give true and accurate accounting for finances

d.—Essentially they are **directors** rather than **elders** over the program

### “DIRECTORS” NOT “ELDERS”





e.—Were selected as **directors** because they were first **elders**. Being an elder was one of the qualifications for membership on the Board of Directors. (There was a time when every member of the Board of Nashville Bible School had to be an elder of a Church of Christ in Nashville. But his work as a director of the school was not a part of his work as an elder.)

4. Summary

a.—Highland Church did not originate Herald of Truth

b.—Highland Church does not contribute enough to it even to pay the salary and traveling expense of her own elder who supervises it.

c.—Highland Church did not select the preachers for it

d.—Highland Church “accepted the responsibility, including the authority to change preachers.”

e.—Herald of Truth had operated under two different congregations before it ever came to Highland.

f.—Highland Church could not stop the program—she could only stop her contribution to it (a little over one-half of one percent of the total sum sought).

**V. As a “brotherhood” effort, Herald of Truth is nothing more nor less than the Missionary Society of the last century revived and put in modern dress.**

1. It provides a “modus operandi” for the whole brotherhood to work through a single agency.
2. The agency is the eldership of a local congregation.
3. No local eldership is either qualified or designed for such functioning.
4. The fundamental affirmation of the “sponsoring church” type of congregational cooperation could be stated as: “It is scripturally right for a plurality of congregations to combine their funds into the treasury of one church, and under the supervision and oversight of its elders perform a work to which all of them are equally related, such as a national radio broadcast, or the evangelization of a foreign nation.”

VI. The "sponsoring church" type of congregational cooperation was tried and rejected as unscriptural in the last century.

1. Texas

a.—"Beginning in 1867, it had been the practice of the churches to put the work each year under the elders of one Texas congregation. The work was under the Sherman church perhaps more than any other one congregation.

(Search For the Ancient Order  
Vol. II, p. 424)

b.—"This very same course was pursued in Texas a number of years ago. The elders of the church at Dallas were made the supervisors of the work, received the money, employed the preacher, directed and counseled him. For a number of years they employed C. M. Wilmeth. He then dropped out of the work and the Texas Missionary Society took the place. Other experiments along the same course have been made. **All of them went into the society work.**"

(David Lipscomb—G.A. 1910)

2. Tennessee

a.—The church at Henderson, Tennessee, in 1910 proposed to become the "sponsoring church" to oversee the work of an evangelist in West Tennessee. As many other congregations as would voluntarily do so were asked to cooperate by sending funds. Lipscomb commented:

"Now what was that but the organization of a society in the elders of this church? The church elders at Henderson constitute a board to collect and pay out the money and control the evangelist for the brethren of West Tennessee."

(G.A. 1910)

3. Lipscomb's view of the "sponsoring church":

"All meetings of churches or officers of churches to combine more power than a single church possesses are wrong. God's power is in God's churches. He is with them to bless and strengthen their work when they are faithful

to him. A Christian, one or more, may visit a church with or without an invitation and seek to stir them up to a faithful discharge of their duties. But for one or more to direct what and how all the churches shall work, or to take charge of their men and money and use it, is to assume the authority God has given to each church. Each one needs the work of distributing and using its funds, as well as in giving them."

(Gospel Advocate, March 24, 1910)

## ARGUMENT III

*Herald of Truth is wrong because it sets a bad example for other churches to follow.*

### **I. Every Christian is to be an example to others**

#### **1. I Timothy 4:12**

“Be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.”

#### **2. I Corinthians 4:16**

“I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me.”

#### **3. II Thessalonians 3:9**

“To make ourselves an ensample unto you, that ye should imitate us.”

#### **4. Philippians 3:17**

“Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample.”

### **II. Every congregation should be an example to other congregations**

#### **1. II Corinthians 9:2**

“For I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them.

#### **2. I Thessalonians 1:7-8**

“So that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth.”

### **III. Highland Church sets a bad example for other churches in the following respects:**

1. She is a perpetual beggar
2. She seeks to control and use the funds and resources of other churches
3. She reflects on the “ability” of elders from all contributing churches (See under Argument III in Defense of Herald of Truth)
4. She seeks to increase “the charge allotted” to her at the expense of other congregations.



## ARGUMENT IV

*Herald of Truth is wrong because it sets the precedent for innumerable succeeding departures.*

I. If Herald of Truth be accepted as scriptural, it establishes the following fundamental pattern of congregation cooperation:

1. "Several congregations may select one congregation and contribute funds to her to enable her to do a work which she could never do by herself."
2. "A plurality of congregations may combine their funds into the treasury of one church, and under the supervision and oversight of its elders perform any work which comes within the scope of the church's mission."

### II. The consequences

1. A "State Evangelism" church in each state. Some well known congregation in each state can plan, promote, and "sponsor" the task of evangelizing every unreached community in the state. She could describe this as "her" work. Every congregation in the state could send funds to her "to enable her to do that which she could never do by herself alone." Thus we would have a "State Missionary Society" for each state **within the eldership of a local congregation in each state.**
2. A "Pension Fund" congregation for the nation. Some altruistic congregation could announce as her project the "sponsorship" of a pension for aged ministers of the gospel. This would be a worthy work; it would be "her" work. And congregations all over the nation could send funds to enable her to "do a good work which she could not do by herself."
3. A "Church Extension" congregation for the nation. This congregation would "sponsor" building projects for worthy and weak congregations in all parts of the nation. Loans would be made, church buildings made possible, consulting architects kept on salary to advise, etc. She could never do this "by herself alone," but other congregations could voluntarily send contributions to this "her" work.

4. A "Foreign Evangelism" congregation for **each** foreign nation—one for Germany, one for Italy, one for Japan, one for South Africa, etc., and gradually **all** (or practically all) churches interested in those fields will work through the "sponsoring" church.
5. A "Children's Home" congregation for each state. Some big congregation will conceive it to be "her" work to provide an orphan home for the homeless children of the state; and all other congregations willing to do so can send donations to help in "her" work. Thus we would have the elders of a single congregation acting as directors of a charitable institution for the state.
6. A "Public Relations" congregation for the nation. Some congregation can announce it as "her" program to provide an answer to all false propaganda appearing in national magazines and newspapers (such as the Knights of Columbus ads) and ask congregations to provide her with sufficient funds to spend \$1,400,000.00 each year in buying advertising space in national magazines to answer these false teachings.

**III. The end result: A United Christian Missionary Society with all its abuses and none of its safeguards.**

ARGUMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE FOR "SPONSORING  
CHURCH" COOPERATION IN GENERAL AND  
HERALD OF TRUTH IN PARTICULAR

ARGUMENT I

*Herald of Truth and other "sponsoring church" cooperative enterprises are in harmony with the New Testament pattern.*

**I. The argument:**

1. Jerusalem "sponsored" the distribution of benevolence among many Judean churches (throughout a province)—just as Highland "sponsors" radio preaching throughout a nation.

**G. C. Brewer, Gospel Advocate, July 16, 1953:**

"a.—The church at Antioch sent a contribution to Judea, or to the saints who were in distress in Judea. (Acts 11:29, 30)

"b.—There were a number of churches in Judea. (Gal. 1:22) How many, we have no way of knowing.

"c.—Yet the money Paul was collecting is expressly said to be for Jerusalem. (1 Cor. 16:5; Rom. 15:31; Acts 24:11; 21:18, 19.)"

**E. R. Harper, Gospel Guardian, August 5, 1954:**

"Would Paul and all these congregations be so self-ish as to gather all this 'bounty' for the 'poor saints' and then refuse the Jerusalem church to allow all saints to share in this UNLESS they had their 'membership' with the Jerusalem congregation? How far will men press a 'theory' to defeat something they are against? Would the Jerusalem church have sinned had they known of other poor saints who needed help in Judea had they divided their blessing with them? This is the question. Did the local autonomy of the Jerusalem church allow them to divide their blessings? (The letter killeth.)"

2. Philippi "sponsored" Paul's work in Corinth, receiving contributions from other churches, and sending them on to Paul.



G. C. Brewer, *Gospel Advocate*, July 16, 1953:

“Paul tells us in II Cor. 11:8 that he robbed other churches in order that he might preach to the brethren at Corinth without charge. Note the fact here that he says ‘churches.’ Then remember that in Phil. 4:15 Paul tells that church that when he departed out of Macedonia in the beginning of the gospel no church had fellowship with him in the matter of giving and receiving except this one church at Philippi. Now when he left Macedonia, he went first to Athens, but remained there only for a brief period and established no congregation there, but went on to Corinth. He remained there eighteen months and established a church. So this is the time that **the Philippian church was the only church that** was contributing to him, and yet he says ‘churches’ were supporting him. **EITHER PHIL. 4:15 CONTRADICTS II COR. 11:8 OR ELSE ONE CHURCH REPRESENTS A PLURALITY OF CHURCHES!”**

## II. The answer:

1. This argument (on Jerusalem being a “sponsoring church” for benevolence in Judea) **confuses** two separate occasions when relief was sent to Judea. The **first** (Acts 11:27-30) took place about 44 A.D. Relief was sent by the disciples in Antioch “unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea.” (See Chart No. 4) The **second** (I Cor. 16; II Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:26) was sent to “the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem.” (See Chart No. 2), and came about 58 A.D.—fourteen years later. The “sponsoring church” argument tries to lump these two cases together, and make them appear as the same instance.
2. The “diocesan eldership” principle established by this argument violates the New Testament teaching concerning elders’ jurisdiction.
  - a.—**I Peter 5:2-3**

“Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as

lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock."

b.—**Acts 20:28**

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops."

c.—An elder's jurisdiction, authority, "oversight" **begins** and **ends** in "the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made" him a bishop. He can not go beyond "the charge allotted" to him. If the Jerusalem elders did indeed "sponsor" a benevolent program for a whole province, this clearly establishes the principle of a **diocesan** eldership, which is the tap-root of Catholicism and all religious ecclesiasticism.

3. The argument on Philippi being a "sponsoring church" for Paul's work in Corinth is recognized by Brother Brewer as being weak and insecure by his liberal use of "probably," "possibly," "could have been," "could it be possible," etc. The very passage cited (Phil. 4:16, 16) shows that the time when Philippi was the **only** church sending to Paul was during his stay at Thessalonica, "for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need," not at Corinth as Brother Brewer assumes.



## ARGUMENT II

*Since no "Method" of cooperation is revealed, Herald of Truth does not violate any scripture.*

### I. The argument:

We all agree that God has unquestionably authorized the cooperation of congregations. Since He has NOT revealed the "method" of such cooperation, we can adopt any method which respects the autonomy of the churches.

**G. C. Brewer, Gospel Advocate, July 16, 1953:**

"The authority of God must be back of all that we do in His service, but when the thing that we are doing is unquestionably authorized by the Scriptures, then the METHOD of doing the thing, if not described and commanded, must be left to our own choice. This, you admit, and yet you say that the method of cooperation is clearly described, WHICH IS NOT CORRECT."

**J. B. Briney, Otey-Briney Debate, page 162:**

"When a thing is commanded to be done, and the method of doing it is not prescribed, those commanded are at liberty to use their best judgment in devising ways and means to carry out the command, and they are to act under the principle laid down by Paul in I Cor. 14:39, 40: "Wherefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."

### II. The Scriptures:

No scriptures are cited to support this argument.

### III. The answer:

- a.—This argument assumes that "the method" of congregational cooperation is not revealed. This is wrong. The "method" is revealed. (See charts.)
- b.—The realm of "expediency"
  - i.—An expedient must first be **lawful**
  - ii.—Must not be **specified** (if specified it becomes a matter of faith)
  - iii.—Must not violate the conscience of a brother (Rom. 14:13-15)

c.—Measuring “Herald of Truth” by this standard

i.—It is NOT lawful.

ii.—It violates the consciences of brethren.

d.—Concerning autonomy—“the right of self government”

Any “government” involves the inherent ideas of legislative, judicial, and executive. The legislative branch makes the rules and laws; the judicial “judges” or determines whether those laws are in harmony with the authoritative, accepted standard; the executive branch “executes” or carries out the decisions made. It is in this third area “executive” that Highland Church violates the autonomy of other congregations. She does the work which God has laid upon **them** to do.

“All meetings of churches or officers of churches to combine more power than a single church possesses are wrong. God’s power is in God’s churches. He is with them to bless and strengthen their work when they are faithful to him. A Christian, one or more, may visit a church with or without an invitation and seek to stir them up to a faithful discharge of other duties. But for one or more to direct what and how all the churches shall work, or to take charge of their men and money and use it, is to assume the authority God has given to each church. Each one needs the work of distributing and using its funds, as well as in giving them.”

(David Lipscomb, G.A. 1910)

### ARGUMENT III

*The kind of cooperation practiced by Herald of Truth has been accepted by gospel preachers and faithful churches for thirty years.*

#### **I. The argument:**

1. Highland Church in accepting the "sponsorship" of Herald of Truth acted in harmony with the general practice of gospel preachers and loyal churches for the last thirty years.

##### **a.—Hardeman's Tabernacle Meetings**

"My first example is that of the great Tabernacle meetings in Nashville, Tennessee, with Brother Hardeman doing the speaking. This is the first example of 'congregational cooperation' I ever knew about. Over forty congregations 'cooperated' in this great event. No one congregation could have done this great work. Committees of men from these congregations worked this out. In the last meeting Brother Hardeman conducted there, I was one of the men who sat in the meeting and helped with its arrangements."

— E. R. Harper, G.A., July 8, 1954

##### **b.—Music Hall, Houston**

"One of the greatest meetings ever conducted in Houston, Texas, was the 'Music Hall Congregational Cooperation Meeting' under the supervision of one congregation."

— E. R. Harper (Ibid.)

##### **c.—Highland and the Indians**

##### **d.—Little Rock radio program**

##### **e.—Maude Carpenter Home**

This is the kind of cooperation involved in the benevolent work of the Maude Carpenter Home. This work was defended by G. K. Wallace; and Yater Tant declared Wallace's article in defense was "solidly based on scriptural foundations."

##### **f.—Tampa, Florida**

"In Tampa, Fla., I was invited to assist in a 'congregational cooperation meeting.' The con-

gregations of the city went together and rented the large auditorium and we had a 'city wide meeting.' I never heard any criticism of the 'arrangements.' This was an example of being 'too large' for 'one congregation' so a number of congregations 'cooperated' and the meeting was on."

— E. R. Harper (Ibid.)

## II. The Scriptures:

None.

## III. The answer:

We concede the truth of much of this, and acknowledge that there has been little criticism of this type of cooperation until recent years, when it began to bear the inevitable fruit of slight and seemingly innocent departures from the divine pattern.

**Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** (Torch, October 1950)

"There are some issues that are defined by positive precept and specific command, and are therefore automatically resolved and immediately composed. There are others that find definition in development and application of principles. Extremes grow out of some things less dangerous in themselves, and seemingly innocent, in the work and activities of the church. In this category some things have mistakenly been taken for granted in their start which had to be abandoned and repudiated in course of development. Any man who would say that he has never sanctioned, approved, or participated in some activities of churches that he did not later find necessary to reverse would be an egotist and could not be trusted for honesty.

"In connection with the discussion on lately centralized elderships, the following statement was made in Torch:

It is to be admitted that these extremes in this so-called cooperation have slipped up on us all. Most of us in the past have acquiesced in cooperation plans, one way or another, and have said things that may be taken as a past endorsement of what is presently being done. But it has

developed into something that was not expected. Even the brethren who have assayed to come to the defense of the central sponsors are now conceding that this cooperation thing may be carried to extremes. That being true, it really becomes their duty to point out **when** and **how** these churches may practice the extremes they concede to be a possibility. If they are not already doing so, I confess a loss to know how they could do so. If it has not already gone to an extreme, **when would it**, and **how could it**? When the conceded extreme is named, and an attempt made at an argument on it, the conclusion will contradict the premises.

“This was a statement of my own attitude toward what has been said and is being said, made in the same article in which the issues were under discussion, and it covers the case, so far as I am concerned, in whatever revision of views or alterations in arguments necessary to make to be right.”

**Roy E. Cogdill** (Gospel Guardian, July 29, 1954)

“I have thought and still think that there is a vast deal of difference between a congregation undertaking in its own city a work for which it feels responsible and obligated and allowing others to help it do that work and that same congregation promoting a program for the whole brotherhood for which it is no more responsible than any other congregation and expecting all the churches to finance that work for it, a work that it could not bear and would not undertake of itself alone, and then electing themselves to oversee such a “brotherhood program” for the church universal. If there were no more difference than the size of the thing it would be much more dangerous because of its size. It has proven so difficult though to show the difference that I think I see in that to some of the brethren who seem determined to justify themselves in forgetting the New Testament pattern of the independence and equality of New Testament congregations that I have long ago surrendered the ground and henceforth will hold no more such meetings lest I lead my brethren into sin.”



## Fanning Yater Tant

In 1950 and 1951 a serious discussion was under way in the gospel papers as to the scripturalness of Orphan Homes under a board of directors chosen (or self appointed) from a number of different congregations. Brother G. K. Wallace wrote an article to the **Gospel Guardian** setting forth the idea that the elders of the congregation are the only "organization" God knows anything about to care for the needy who are their responsibility. We gave editorial endorsement to this position, saying it was "solidly based on scriptural foundations." Because some took this to mean we endorsed **everything** about the Maude Carpenter Home, however, the following appeared in the **Gospel Guardian** editorial of August 30, 1951:

"Our endorsement of that principle, however, does not mean nor can it be taken to mean, that we endorse every ABUSE that may be made of the principle in practice. For instance, we very seriously question the right of an eldership to deliberately plan, promote, and undertake any work on a permanent basis which they know in advance will be far, far beyond the ability of their congregation ever to sustain or carry on. That looks too much like an instance of an eldership deliberately planning a permanent program which will make them continually **dependent** (an object of charity) on other churches. Such permanent dependency is as bad for a congregation as it is for an individual. And it is clearly as wrong for a church as it is for an individual to plan and provide for a permanently **dependent status**. That is an abuse of the principle. The principle is right; the abuse of it is wrong."

## ARGUMENT IV

*Herald of Truth cooperation should be supported because of the thousands of people who are being saved because of it.*

### I. The argument:

1. The world is dying in sin (170 Americans die every hour without Christ); we have the gospel which will save them, and we let them die and go to hell while we argue and fuss and wrangle about "Methods," "arrangements," "plans," etc.
2. God wants the gospel preached; People are going to hell for not hearing it; we have it, and refuse to preach it because we are fighting among ourselves as to HOW to preach it!

### II. The Scriptures:

None.

### III. The answer:

1. This is the old argument that "the end justifies the means." Those who make it fail to realize that "**the means will determine the end.**"
2. Scriptural prohibitions
  - a.—**Romans 6:1,2**  
"What shall we say then, Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid!"
  - b.—**Romans 3:8**  
"And why not (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just."
3. This was the **basic** argument that won the churches to a support of the Missionary Societies, and so brought on the Digression.



## ARGUMENT V

*Herald of Truth is justified by the superior mental and leadership ability of Highland elders.*

### I. The argument:

a.—Because of their superior mental ability and leadership ability, God expects Highland elders to sponsor such a program as Herald of Truth.

“While elders or brethren do not have the right to obligate themselves beyond their ability to meet, this does not mean they cannot use their **leadership** to encourage others to come to their rescue. If a group of elders and the church where they are do not have the ‘financial ability’ to do what needs to be done, but they do have the ‘leadership’ to direct such a work, and they do have the ability to get the help needed, they are obligated to get this help, else they have failed in their stewardship in the church of the Lord . . . .

“. . . . Again if a group of elders possessed the ability to get help; if they possessed the ability to scripturally handle such work, and **refused** to try to get help so they could do a greater work, would these brethren have used their stewardship acceptably in God’s sight? Do you men really know what you are saying and to what extremes you are going?”

— E. R. Harper, Gospel Guardian  
January 6, 1955

### II. The Scriptures:

None.

### III. The answer:

Herald of Truth is a “brain-child” of Nichols and Willeford, not of Highland elders. This argument is an insult to the eldership of every church which has ever contributed a single dollar to Herald of Truth; it is a reflection on their ability. The New Testament knows nothing of “superior” and “inferior” elders. It implies that they are incapable of properly discharging their obligations in “the charge allotted unto

them” and so to get the best and most fruitful returns from their financial means must turn those means over to the superior wisdom, judgment, and ability of Highland’s elders.

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Publisher: Roy E. Cogdill

Associate Editors: Roy E. Cogdill, James W. Adams, Charles A. Holt, Jr., Cecil B. Douthitt, W. Curtis Porter.

Subscription: \$3.00 per year; 2 years for \$5.00

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Lufkin, Texas

