


# Bible Beacon



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## HAWK-NEEDHAM DEBATE THE SCRIPTURAL USE OF MEETING HOUSES

### HAWK'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

*THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THE ELDERS MAY CALL THE CHURCH TOGETHER TO EAT A COMMON MEAL ON CHURCH PROPERTY, NAMELY, IN THE CHURCH BUILDING OR ON CHURCH GROUNDS WHEN SAID MEAL IS DESIGNED FOR SOCIAL AND/OR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.*

#### Definition of Proposition

A-1 By *the scriptures*, I mean the 27 books of the New Testament. By *teach*, I mean to impart knowledge through command, example, or necessary inference. By *elders*, I mean the overseers of a local church, I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28. By *may call*, I mean they may make an announcement, either personally, or through someone/something else: example: bulletin, or one who makes the announcements. By *church together*, I mean the local congregation assembled together. By *eat a common meal*, I mean to consume food which is not the Lord's supper. By *church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds*, I mean that property which has been borrowed, rented, or bought by the church for its use. By *designed for social and/or recreational purposes*, I mean, *Social*, "of or having to do with human beings living together," Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1960), p. 1722. By *Recreation*, "refreshment; food." *Ibid.*, p. 1509.

#### Elders Calling the Church Together

A-2 I believe we all recognize the elders may call the church together for other than worship purposes. The church may be called together on a voluntary basis by the

elders. That is, women called upon to sew. Men called upon to work around the building. Members called to work on the bulletin. If my brother desires passages for these things in detail, I cannot give them, but neither can he. We both accept these items as being true. If I am mistaken, my opponent may point this out.

#### Members May Eat on Church Property

A-3 First, what is church property? The New Testament shows the church may borrow, rent, or buy property to meet on/in. The church in the first century often met in the houses of members, Acts 12:12; Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15 and Phile. 2. We know the church did not buy these houses, therefore they were either rented or borrowed/loaned. My opinion is they were loaned, but loaning, borrowing, or renting cannot be proved.

3/a The church ate common meals together. In Acts 2:42 we read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine. . ." Who are the "they"? I'm sure my opponent would agree with me that they are the church in Jerusalem. In Acts 2:44, "And all that believed were together, and had all things in common." Here again we have the church in Jerusalem. Could we say that one thing they had in common were common meals? In Acts 2:46 we are told, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (All Emphasis mine, RH).

3/b Hervey says of verse 46, "This version hardly represents the true idea of the original;  $\kappa\alpha\tau'\ \omicron\upsilon\kappa\omicron\nu$  represents

(Continued on Page 2)

## EDITORIAL

With this issue, we begin the debate between the editor and brother James P. Needham. Brother Needham will begin in the May issue of *Torch* with the first installments of our debate on eating in the church building.

I suppose this is the first time this issue has been discussed by either of us in a written debate that is published. I certainly have enjoyed discussing it. It has helped me to see what is not relevant to the issue and what the real "meat" of the issue is. I suppose in every debate one sends out "feelers" on certain things to test his position, test the other man's, and try to see what is really right or wrong with an argument, and in total, with a position.

I appreciate James for entering this discussion with me. I would hope that it will help us see clearer, understand one another better, and perhaps, get closer together. I know we are still divided, but perhaps as these matters are discussed openly and honestly, we can soon find whether one is guilty of binding human judgment, or whether the other has been guilty of loosing where God has bound. I should hope that the whole matter is merely a misunderstanding of what the other is actually doing.

Written and oral debates can and have done much good. I sincerely hope and pray that this one will be productive of only good. I am sure the reader will study, read, and reread both speeches and then ascertain the truth. May the truth prevail and error suffer, always! — RH

### THE SCRIPTURAL USE OF MEETING HOUSES — (Continued from Page 1)

the private Christian place of meeting, as contrasted with the temple. The meaning is not that every disciple broke bread in his own house, but that they broke bread at the house where Christian assemblies were held, whether one or more. . . The link of connection is the *αγάπη* or love-feast, which formed an important part of the *κοινωνία*, or common life, of the early Christians. The whole description is a beautiful picture of Christian unity, piety, love, and joy." H.D.M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, "The Acts of the Apostles," by A.C. Hervey (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., rep., 1962), Vol. 18, p. 55.

3/c Who is breaking bread and eating meat? The church. Where? In private homes. But, the church met in private homes! We meet in buildings today. May we do in our buildings what the church did in private homes that were loaned or borrowed for the church to meet in? Certainly we may.

3/d If buying a building means we can no longer meet and eat in the building, then I suggest we go back and restore New Testament practices!

3/e It appears from Jude 12 the church observed love feasts. Vine says of Jude 12 and 2 Pet. 2:13, "These love-feasts arose from the common meals of the early church." W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell

Co., 17 rep., 1966), Vol. III, p. 22. Thayer says, "*αγάπαι*, -ών, agapae, love-feasts, feasts expressing and fostering mutual love which used to be held by Christians before the celebration of the Lord's supper. . ." Joseph Henry Thayer, "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Co., 4th pr., 1965), p. 4. Arndt and Gingrich state, "a love-feast, a common meal eaten by early Christians in connection w. their church services, for the purpose of fostering and expressing brotherly love." William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 6.

3/f When the Corinthian church met, they apparently were eating a common meal, 1 Cor. 11:20-32, although they had allowed it to get out of order and mixed it with the Lord's supper. No church to my knowledge does what Paul condemns in that passage. When Paul met with the church in Troas, he ate the Lord's supper with them, Acts 20:7, and then partook of a common meal, verse 11. H. Leo Boles says of this verse, "It seems better to conclude that this was not the Lord's supper, but that it was a common meal which Paul ate in preparation for his expected departure." H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on Acts* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1960), p. 320. Here the church met, worshipped, and then ate together. All in a building either borrowed, rented, or bought by the church.

3/g These passages prove the church ate together. Although Acts 2 and 20 do not say the elders called the church together in the different homes, neither does it say they called the church to participate in the Lord's supper, study the apostles' doctrine, or pray. I believe this would be sufficient to prove the elders may call the church together for the purpose of eating a common meal on the church grounds or in the church building, said meal being for a social or recreational purpose.

### Practice of our Brethren Over the Years and at Present

A-4 My opponent recognizes that in the past brethren have eaten a common meal on church property. There was a time when brethren thought nothing of having a "dinner on the grounds." If it was scriptural then, we wonder when and for what reason it became unscriptural? Our opponent also recognizes that a preacher may take his lunch to the church building and eat it during the lunch hour. If this is scriptural, at what point does it become an unscriptural practice? Two saints? Three? Ten? Fifteen? Twenty? Perhaps he can tell us. Our Anti-Bible class brethren argue that a woman may teach when a teaching situation occurs "accidentally." May members eat in the church building if they "accidentally" bring their lunches and decide to remain over the lunch hour?

### What is the Issue Between Us?

A-5 What actually is the issue between use? Is it because we say the elders may call the church together? If this is the issue, perhaps it can be solved by all the members deciding among themselves, without saying anything to the elders, that they will bring their lunches and remain over to eat it

rather than go home. Is the issue over members eating together? Surely this cannot be the issue, for I am sure the scriptures and my opponent both agree that saints may eat together. Is the issue over eating in the church building? Surely not, for my opponent agrees that saints may eat in the church building. At least he does so! Is it over the phrase, "said meal is designed for social and/or recreational purposes"? If so, then perhaps we can solve this by designating it as a *κοινωνία* meal! See Arndt-Gingrich, p. 438, 39; Thayer, 351; Vine, p. 212. Harper says of this word, "common, belonging equally to several." The Analytical Greek Lexicon (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, n.d.), p. 235. Perhaps our opponent will show in his negative speech wherein the issue lies.

### Questions For My Opponent

A-6 (1) If there were no church building owned by the church today, but the church met in borrowed houses, could the elders call the church together to worship and then call them to remain for a common meal together?

(2) would it be sinful to practice in the church today what was practiced in Acts 2:46 by the church?

(3) May an announcement be made in the assembly, before worship begins, stating the church will meet at the Community Center building for a common meal after services are over?

(4) May property, which is in use by the church, be used for anything other than for spiritual purposes?

(5) Is Christian "fellowship" only singing, praying, preaching, giving, and the Lord's supper?

A-7 It is my pleasure and honor to participate in this written discussion. I hope that it may be profitable to all who read it. Brother Needham and I are searching for the truth. I pray that truth will prevail and error will be exposed.

## NEEDHAM'S FIRST NEGATIVE

### Introduction

I am not glad to engage in this debate with my good bro. Hawk because a debate between brethren indicates rather serious disagreement, and no sincere brother could be happy for that. I am always anxious, however, to study with those with whom I disagree. I appreciate bro. Hawk's attitude.

It should be remembered that I am in the negative. My position is not on trial. I am not obligated to affirm anything, but to examine the proof offered by the affirmative. For reader convenience I shall follow the affirmative's headings as much as possible.

### A-1 – Definition of the Proposition

Bro. Hawk's definitions of "social" and "recreational" are incomplete. I suspicion a conscious evasion of these *key*

*words*. He knew before writing his first article that these two words form the *basis* of our disagreement. Knowing this, he gave them a bare minimum of attention. I say kindly, that if his definitions are all he knows about these two words, he has no business affirming a proposition containing them. The first proposition bro. Hawk proposed was essentially the same as this one, except for the following words: "When said meal is designed for social and/or recreational purposes." I insisted that this clause be added or there would be no debate. I would not deny the proposition without it, in fact, I would affirm it! Therefore, I say he knew the words "social" and "recreational" were *key* words in this debate, and his treatment of them in his definitions is inexcusable. The rules of good debating stipulate that the proposition shall be *clearly* defined. In this our brother has failed; necessitating my using my negative space to complete his work for him.

He defined "social" as follows: "...having to do with human beings living together." This is not what I meant by social, and certainly he should know that. By "social" I mean what is involved in the noun form of the word: "An informal gathering of people for recreation or amusement; party" (Webster's New World Dictionary).

He defined "recreation" as follows: "Refreshment; food." Who can believe this is a complete definition of this term? Let's look further: "Amusement, diversion, entertainment." Analogous words: "Relaxation, repose, ease, play, sport, frolic, rollic; mirth, jollity, hilarity" (Webster's Dictionary of Synonyms, p. 686). Why did bro. Hawk evade these words?

I agree that a congregation can eat on church property when such is necessary to its function. I deny that church property can be used for social and/or recreational purposes;" not because it is holy, but because there is no divine authority for it. Bro. Hawk signed a proposition that affirms that "the scriptures teach" that church property can be so used. He says in his definition of the proposition that he believes the scriptures teach "through command, example, or necessary inference." I will gladly accept either one as proof that church property can be used for "social and/or recreational purposes." Bro. Hawk failed to provide this in his first affirmative, as we shall see shortly:

### A-2 – Elders Calling the Church Together

I accept what bro. Hawk says in A-2, but nothing he says proves his proposition, namely, that elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property "for social and/or recreational purposes." There is a vast

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difference between calling the church together to sew, work around the building, or on the bulletin, and calling it together for "social and/or recreational purposes." Does he really believe that sewing for the needy, or working around the building or on the bulletin are "for social and/or recreational purposes"?

The elders "can call the church together" to do anything *essential* to the work of the church: *evangelism, edification and benevolence*. I deny, and my opponent cannot prove, that "a common meal... for social and/or recreational purposes" is essential to the accomplishment of these works. Elders cannot scripturally call the church together to do an unscriptural work.

Thus, bro. Hawk is obligated to prove, either: (1) That elders can call the church together to engage in something which is not the work of the church, (recreation), or (2) That "social and/or recreational" functions are essential to the work of the church. I prophesy that he will do neither, and thus, must surrender his proposition.

### A-3 – Members May Eat on Church Property

In this section our brother tries to find scriptural authority for his proposition, I shall take up his evidence as he gave it:

(1) Early church ate where they met: Bro. Hawk reasons that early Christians met in private homes. They ate in these private homes, therefore they ate where they met, so we can do the same. Is he arguing that the church can do anything on church property that the members can do in a private home? So goes his logic! Members can have an hootenanny in a private home, can the elders call the church together and have one at the building? If bro. Hawk proves his proposition, he will have proven such to be scriptural, along with a thousand other such activities. He has proven too much, therefore nothing!

(2) Acts 2:42, 44, 46: I can admit everything he says about these passages and still he has not proven that these supposed common meals were "for social and/or recreational purposes." But notice: v. 46 says that while they assembled in the temple, they broke their bread (common meals) "At Home," bro. Hawk's quotation from Hervey to the contrary notwithstanding!

He then asks, "Can we do in our buildings what the early church did in private homes that were loaned or borrowed for the church to meet in?" My answer is yes, but in this question he assumes that they met on church property for common meals "for social and/or recreational purposes." His proposition obligates him to prove it, not assume it. He has not proven it!

(3) Jude 12; 2 Pet. 2:13 – AGAPE – Love feasts: Bro. Hawk next seeks proof of his proposition in the AGAPAI, or "Love feasts" which he assumes were feasts held on church property "for social and/or recreational purposes." That is a rather large assumption! The Lord's supper better meets the demands of these two passages (See Albert Barnes' Notes on Jude 12). All of bro. Hawk's information about the "Love feasts" being common meals on church property must be gained from Uninspired sources, but even these do not fit his proposition. Let us call upon some

witnesses:

In a book entitled "Early Christians Speak," (A compilation of uninspired post N.T. writings with commentary), by Everett Ferguson, professor at Abilene Christian College, (and incidentally, a brother who almost certainly agrees with bro. Hawk's position), comments as follows on page 133:

"It is an AGAPE because it benefits the needy; special consideration is shown for the lowly. The sharing of food by the wealthier with the poorer was an important means of charity. The host provided food for those chosen who sometimes did not eat at his house, but received the food at home or accepted it to take home." Doesn't sound like they ate it on church property, does it?

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says the AGAPE was "a common table at which the wants of the poor were supplied out of the abundance of the rich (Acts 6:1ff)" (p. 70).

Guy N. Woods says, "They (AGAPAI) appear to have had their origin in the practice of wealthier members of the congregation providing food for the poorer ones, and eating with them, in token of their brotherliness" Commentary on Pet., John, and Jude, p. 395).

Bro. Hawk quoted one short excerpt from Thayer in reference to AGAPAI; just enough to leave the impression that they were held on church property. I am disappointed in him. I hate to accuse him of manipulating quotations, and definitions, but his practice is leaning in that direction! I now give the rest of the quotation from Thayer so the reader can see what bro. Hawk did to the poor fellow: "...feasts expressing and fostering mutual love which used to be held by Christians before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, (This is where bro. Hawk stopped!!! jpn). and at which the poorer Christians mingled with the wealthier and partook in common with the rest of food provided at the expense of the wealthy. Jude 12; 2 Pet. 2:13." Thus, Thayer is my witness, not his! He has perverted Thayer!

Thus, bro. Hawk cannot prove his proposition by AGAPE. I would endorse, promote and participate in an AGAPE feast on church property, if such be needed. In fact, I have done so many times in the Philippine Islands.

(4) 1 Cor. 11:20-32: Bro. Hawk says, "When the Corinthian church met, they apparently were eating a common meal." Right! But Paul told them to stop it! "What, have ye not *houses* to eat and drink in?" (v. 22). "If any man hunger, let him *eat at home*; that he come not together unto condemnation" (v. 24).

Bro. Hawk thinks they had mixed a common meal with the Lord's Supper, but he cannot prove it. The context indicates that they had turned the Lord's Supper into a "common meal... for social and/or recreational purposes." Thus bro. Hawk is in the awkward position of affirming that such a meal "on church property" is scriptural, when the *only* time such a meal is mentioned in the scriptures, it is *condemned!* Bro. Hawk can say anything he pleases about 1 Cor. 11, but I predict that everything he says will be a boomerang to his position. This text fits his proposition about like a cow hide would fit a canary bird!

(5) Acts 20:7: On this passage our brother quotes H.

Leo Boles to the effect that a common meal was eaten by Paul (note that) "in preparation for his expected departure." But to help his cause, bro. Boles should have said, "For social and/or recreational purposes." He cannot prove that this meal was eaten by the congregation, or that it was eaten on church property.

Our good brother then claims that he has proved his proposition! For shame! Imagine that! Let the reader judge. Nobody would have guessed it had he not told us!

#### A-4 – Practice of Our Brethren Over the Years and at Present

Having failed to prove his proposition by the scriptures, agape, *Pulpit Commentary*, H. Leo Boles, Thayer, and Vine, our brother now grabs for the last straw: the "practice of our brethren over the years and at present." I don't believe his proposition says anything about "the practice of our brethren." I deny that he can prove his proposition by "the practice of our brethren over the years" (historically), and I challenge him to try it. I admit that he can prove it by them "at present," else, why this debate? But that is not what his proposition obligates him to do. He is supposed to prove it by the scriptures, but he *has not, will not, and cannot!*

I shall ignore his prejudicial reference to "our Anti Bible-class brethren." It is unworthy of him, and should not be dignified with a reply.

#### A-5 – What is The Issue Between Us?

The issue between us is simple: He affirms that church property, and thus money, can be used for "social and/or recreational purposes," and I deny it. Eating in the church building as social fellowship (they call it Christian) is just a very common way brethren practice this error.

#### A-6 – Questions For My Opponent

I submitted this reply to bro. Hawk's first affirmative without answering his questions, since it is not the prerogative of the affirmative to question the negative, especially before he has said anything in the debate, and more especially when no provisions were made for such in the rules. I wrote bro. Hawk and told him this, but agreed to answer his questions if he agreed for me to do so in excess of the regulation six pages per article stipulated in the rules. He replied that I could have a seventh page for this purpose, if he could have a seventh page to reply to my answers. I agreed to this, but reluctantly because it gives him a slight advantage which I shall explain later.

The reader should understand that when the affirmative resorts to such questioning, he is not satisfied to be in the affirmative, for he is trying to get into the negative. You see, it is bro. Hawk's position that is on trial in this debate, not mine. But he wants me to affirm my position, so he can examine (negate) it, and thus I will then spend my time defending my position, rather than examining his. My opponent is willing to grant me an extra page to reply to his questions, and would not send me his second affirmative until he learned if I would reply to his questions. He wants to go back and re-write the rules before we proceed! I don't

know his heart, and I shall not attempt to judge it, but I am very suspicious of such maneuverings. Could it be that he is aware that in his first affirmative he has failed to sustain his proposition, and now hope to find something in my position that will SEEM to justify his?

I shall refer to his questions by number, and ask the reader to refer to his first affirmative for their content: (1) No, if you mean a common meal sponsored by the church "for social and/or recreational purposes," and as a work of elders. (2) No. It says they ate their meals "at home." (3) Yes. Because "hospitality one to another" is enjoined in the scriptures (1 Pet. 4:9), but this does not justify "social and/or recreational" events on church property as church work, any more than announcing that bro. Jones is in room 204 at Memorial Hospital justifies a church hospital on church property as church work. Will bro. Hawk affirm that the church may have anything on church property as church work that can be announced on church property? If not, why this question? (4) Yes, but not as a work of the church. Brethren sometimes discuss golf games, fishing trips and political elections, etc. on church property, but not as a work of the church. Does bro. believe such events can be church sponsored? If not, why this question? (5) I believe Christians can have fellowship in everything in which the Bible says they can have it. Bro. Hawk, where does the N.T. use the word fellowship to mean common meals, to say nothing "for social and/or recreational purposes"? Until you produce such a passage, your question is meaningless. Most of your questions are based upon false assumptions.

#### B-1 Definition of Proposition

1-a. My brother is disappointed over my definitions of *social* and *recreation*. Actually it all boils down to him being disappointed because I did not say what he wanted me to say. Since the words are not found in the Bible, I used Webster's Dictionary. I selected the meaning from Webster's that fitted what we do when we eat. In re-typing my first affirmative I did not type all the definition for *social*, but accidentally left out several words. The complete quote is, "of or having to do with human beings living together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another." Webster, p. 1722.

1-b. My opponent admits: The scriptures teach (a) the elders, (b) may call, (c) the church, (d) to eat a common meal, (e) on church property, (f) namely in the church building or on church grounds! He will affirm that!

1-c. Now, back to Webster's definition of *social*. Was the church in Jerusalem, Acts 2:46, eating "together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another"? Was this *recreation* (refreshments or food)?

1-d. My brother states, "This is not what I meant by *social*..." Yet, I am not affirming what he believes the word means. The anti-Sunday school man defines Bible class as "a Sunday school organization separate and apart from the church," but does it because he so defines it? He said in his Introduction, "I am not obligated to affirm anything," yet here he is affirming for me what *social* and *recreation* mean!

1-e. Our brother says he agrees the church may eat on church property "when such is necessary to its function." He will probably evade this question by saying his position is not on trial, but we would all be interested in seeing a passage which has the church eating in the building when it is necessary to its function and said meal not be "a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another" or not be "food" eaten!

### B-2 Elders Calling the Church Together

2-a. My opponent agrees the elders may call the church together in the church building to eat a common meal "when such is necessary to its function." He wants the words *social* and *recreation* to mean "fun and games." I do not read of the church having fun and games, using restrooms, drinking fountains or smoking on church property, but I do find it eating together, Acts 2:46.

2-b. My brother says, "Elders cannot scripturally call the church together to do an unscriptural work." AMEN! The elders are not calling the church into an unscriptural practice when they call it together to eat. My opponent agrees to this. I suppose he wants to make our eating together into an orgy?

2-c. My opponent said I would have to prove two things. I have already shown, and my opponent has agreed, that the church may practice eating food together. It is as simple as that!

### B-3 Members May Eat on Church Property

3-a. My esteemed brother tries to water down the force of my argument here by saying, "Is he arguing that the church can do anything on church property that the members can do in a private home? So goes his logic! Members can have a hootenanny in a private home, can the elders call the church together and have one at the building?"

3-b. My brother, the elders may call the church together for a common meal on church property. You agree! They may call the church together in a private home too. I am not arguing nor does my proposition cover a hootenanny. Do you actually believe the elders may call the church together in a private home borrowed from a member so the church can throw a hootenanny under the oversight of the elders in that loaned to the church building? We would like to hear more on that!

3-c. The brother's answer in the affirmative to my question, "Can we do in our buildings what the early church did in private homes that were loaned or borrowed for the church to meet in?" Good. The church in Acts 2:46 met in private homes to eat. The elders may call the church together today in the church building to do what the church did in private homes in Acts 2:46. Thank you, my brother. That is exactly what we do today!

3-d. My brother says I assume agape feasts were in the building, then he argues that they were in the building because they were the Lord's Supper. I can't tell which way to meet my brother because he flies off in two different directions! He cites BARNES' NOTES on Jude 12 to prove it's the Lord's Supper and then in the next four paragraphs

uses Ferguson, The I.S. B.E. and Guy N. Woods to prove it wasn't! He says the agape feasts were celebrated in the building but not in the building; it was the Lord's Supper, but it wasn't the Lord's Supper! WOW! While we are on these quotations from these sources he introduced, when is the last time you, my brother, knew of a congregation on your side of this issue feeding the poor in the church building?

3-f. Thank you brother for quoting the rest of Thayer. I left it as quoted in my first affirmative hoping you would quote the rest. We practice in our buildings what my opponent refuses to practice but says he would. We practice these passages: Acts 2:46, 20:11; Jude 12 and 2 Pet. 2:13. Some saints who are poor partake with the rich. Yes, this quote sustains and proves my proposition, for this is what we practice. Thank you brother. My brother says he would "endorse, promote and participate in an AGAPE feast on church property, if such was needed." He said in one place it was the Lord's Supper. If so, is that needed? He practiced common meals in the Philippines, will he do so in the U.S.A.?

3-g. On 1 Cor. 11 my opponent argues the practice here was condemned only because it was a common meal. Not so, but the practice of (1) drunkenness, (2) making the Lord's Supper into a common meal, v. 20, 21, (3) not sharing in what was suppose to be the Lord's Supper which they were perverting, and (4) eating and drinking damnation to themselves. I know of no church today which practices what Paul was condemning in this passage.

3-h. Paul ate a common meal in Acts 20:11. My opponent thinks the church did not eat. Yet he admits that it is not wrong. If one (Paul) could eat, all could eat. Would it be right, after services, for my brother to continue to talk to the brethren while he sat and ate and they sat around and listened to him talk in between bites? Alright for him to eat, but sinful for them? Consistency, thou art a jewel!

### B-4 Practice of Our Brethre Over the Years and at Present

4-a. Did you notice how my brother evaded the practice of by-gone years where brethren once ate "dinner on the grounds" and my opponent eating in the church building? Surely he can do better than that!

### B-5 What Is The Issue Between Us?

5-a. My brother misses it again. Members bring the food to the building just as he brings his sack lunch to the building to eat. He makes much ado over "social fellowship." What do you brethren call it when you stand around in the foyer fifteen minutes before services, between Bible classes and worship services, and fifteen to twenty minutes after services "visiting"?

### B-6 Answers to My Questions

1. My brother answers "no" if said meals are "sponsored by the church 'for social and/or recreational purposes' and as a work of elders." My brother would no doubt have objected to the meals in Acts 2:46; 20:11 and other places

and hidden behind the phrases, "sponsored" and "work of the elders" as smoke screens.

2. My brother agrees here to that which he replies against in No. 1.

3. My brother says the elders may call the church together in the Community building for a common meal. He quotes 1 Pet. 4:9 and says "hospitality" is enjoined upon the church/saint. Is hospitality a work of the church under the oversight of the elders?

4. The game of golf may not be sponsored by my brother, but it seems he will allow money to be paid out of the church treasury for the lights and heat-air conditioning while brethren stand around talking about their golf game. That's scriptural according to my opponent's logic. But, let one or two of those brethren bring along a drumstick to practice Acts 2:46 and eat it while they are showing "hospitality" and it becomes "social and/or recreational per my opponent's definition and therefore sinful!

5. My brother believes "fellowship" is everything the Bible says it is. The church ate a common meal together, Acts 2:46; 20:11; Jude 12. Therefore, the Bible shows this is a way of having fellowship — all things common.

#### B-7 Questions For Opponent

7-a. My brother will not answer my questions unless I give him an extra page or seven pages. I have so done! However, where, in any of the rules on debate does it say the affirmative speaker cannot ask his opponent questions? I suppose if I had not put them under a heading but simply asked them within the body of a paragraph, he would not have objected! My worthy opponent agreed to six pages per speech, margins set at 75 characters and *only 26 lines to each page*. Yet, my opponent had 28 lines on page 1, 30 lines on page 2, 29 lines on page 3, 30 lines on page 4, 30 lines on page 5 and now he takes not only a 7th page to answer my questions, but uses an extra 8 lines over the regulation 26 to do that! And he talks about me wanting an advantage! Shame on you brother! He used 25 extra lines, plus one extra page to answer my first affirmative speech which contained 21 lines less than six pages! I have answered his seven pages plus 25 extra lines (that's almost 8 pages) in less than 6 full pages! He no doubt will be hard pressed to answer my 5 pages plus 20 lines in 6 pages.

#### B-8 Conclusion

8-a. (1) My proposition only calls for common meals per my definition from Webster.

8-b. (2) We use rooms already available.

I also share my brother's feelings on debate. However, it becomes necessary to ferret out error and this is our purpose. Find truth and renounce error.

## NEEDHAM'S SECOND NEGATIVE

WHAT IS THE ISSUE? Bro. Hawk still is confused

about what is the issue between us. IT IS NOT: (1) Eating in the church building. I believe such is scriptural if it is: (a) To feed needy saints, and/or (b) essential to scriptural church function. I have practiced it, and would do so again anywhere, even in U.S.A. (2) Whether the early church ate where they met. Just as a matter of fact, he has not proven that it did (except 1 Cor. 11) but even if he could, he must then prove that it was for "social and/or recreational purposes." But, the only time he can find the church doing that, Paul told them to stop it (1 Cor. 11). The Issue Is: What is the work of the church? The scriptures teach it is: (a) Evangelism, (b) Edification, and (c) Benevolence to needy saints (Eph. 4:12). Bro. Hawk will agree with this, but then he wants to add another, namely, SOCIAL and RECREATIONAL functions. He has not produced scriptural authority for such, and will not.

Bro. Hawk is right in theory — wrong in practice: He rightly says Bible authority is established by: (a) "Command," (2) "Example," and (3) "Necessary inference" (Def. of Prop.) I said I would take either for his practice. He has given neither.

Bro. Hawk's "Proof": (1) Incomplete and inadequate definitions of words. He knew before the debate that I believed it is right to eat in the church building under scriptural circumstances (Letter to him 12-22-72). For that reason I refused to sign his proposition without the phrase: "For social and/or recreational purposes." I said I would affirm it without this. He was willing to add this, obviously thinking he could get by with perverting definitions. He shall not succeed. He says I am disappointed because he didn't define the words to suit me. I am disappointed because he didn't define them in their accepted senses. He is afraid of these words, and he knows it. Where he preaches they have common meals on church property for social and/or recreational purposes in the accepted sense, but Ray is reluctant to admit it in this debate. He has almost abandoned these two words, but the readers know full-well what they mean in the context of the proposition and Ray cannot conceal it by sophistry. Ray, what is the purpose of the meals in your building?

(2) Elders can call the church together: But he agrees they cannot do so for unscriptural purposes, but he has not proven common meals on church property for social and/or recreational purposes is a scriptural work.

(3) Scriptures which don't say what he cites them to prove. (a) Acts 2:42, 44, 46. These verses say the Jerusalem church met in the temple and ate "AT HOME." Ray uses them to prove they ate where they met. He is unable to see that "in the temple" and "at home" are two different localities. (b) Jude 12; 2 Pet. 2:13 — AGAPE. In his second affirmative, he tries to show that I contradicted myself on AGAPE. I did not. I distinguished between N.T. AGAPE (which could well have been the Lord's Supper and which certainly would have been on church property), and the AGAPE described in post — N.T. literature. (Which may or may not have been on church property). He did not and cannot prove that N.T. AGAPE was not the Lord's Supper, so he made no effort! He cannot prove that N.T. AGAPE was a common meal on church property "for social and/or recreational purposes." He cannot even prove that about

post-N.T. AGAPE!!! Early writers say it was for *benevolence*. Ray is confusing N.T. AGAPE with post-N.T. AGAPE. I suspicioned that he deliberately failed to quote all of Thayer, now he admits it! He claims he did it to play a little game with these serious matters, but I will let the reader judge why he did it. (c) I Cor. 11:20-32. He says the Corinthians "were eating a common meal" where they assembled, but overlooks the plain fact that Paul told them to STOP it. The only passage in the N.T. that mentions a church dinner "for social and/or recreational purposes" commands it to be STOPPED! I warned Ray to let this passage alone, but he didn't heed it. He must bear the consequences of his folly! He is like a Baptist preacher affirming salvation by faith only, when the only time he finds the words mentioned together in the scriptures, it is condemned (Jas. 2:24)! His charge that I argues that "the practice here was condemned only because it was a common meal" is false and I challenge him to prove it or retract it. I did not argue it, imply it, nor do I believe it. But the fact still remains that it was a common meal on church property "for social and/or recreational purposes," and Paul told them to stop it and "eat at home" (v. 22, 34). (d) Acts 20:11. He used this to prove a church dinner, but the text says only that PAUL ATE. So says bro. H. Leo Boles, whom Ray quoted. I would warn him not to try to put bro. Boles on his side of the proposition. He said, "Neither is it the mission of the church to furnish entertainment for its members or for the world" (Gospel Advocate, May 31, 1945).

(4) Practice of brethren over the years: He accuses me of avoiding his "argument" here. I did not. I challenged him to prove his proposition historically, but he left it alone! The challenge still stands. Church social and recreational functions are a recent thing as can be seen from the above quotation from H. Leo Boles, and this one from B.C. Goodpasture: "...it is not the responsibility of the church as such to furnish recreation (note that word, jpn) for its members...for the church to turn aside from its divine work to furnish amusement and recreation is to pervert her mission. It is to degrade its mission. Amusement and recreation should stem from the home rather than the church" (Gospel Advocate, May 20, 1958, p. 484).

I know we used to have "all day preaching and dinner on the grounds," but Ray can't prove it was for "social and/or recreational purposes," and I dare him to try! When we travelled 10 miles in a horse-drawn wagon it was not possible to go home, eat lunch and return for an evening service; so we took our lunch, ate it with others, had a mid-afternoon service then returned home. Is that "for social and/or recreational purposes"? Even if it were, it wouldn't prove his proposition for it says, "The SCRIPTURES teach," and not "The brethren have practiced."

(5) Tried to get me into the affirmative by questions. Did he think he could get me to say something that would seem to justify his unscriptural position? Refusing to be taken by such tactics, I agreed to answer his questions only in excess of our regulation six pages per article. He was so anxious for me to answer his questions that he granted me an extra page provided he could have one to reply to my answers, if he wanted it (which he didn't!) Now that he has

my answers, he doesn't know what to do with them! Let us notice: (See his first affirmative for the content)

No. 1. All he said in reply to my answer is that I "would no doubt have objected to the meals in Acts 2:46; 20:11 and other places and hidden behind the phrases, "sponsored and 'work of elders' as smoke screens." That is amusing! Acts 2:46 says the Jerusalem church MET in the temple and ATE at home, and 20:11 says Paul ate a meal before he went on a journey. Now, why would I object to these, or hide behind a smoke screen? I would agree to both. These are my passages, not his! By the way, Ray, where are those "other places" where the church ate meals? Come on, tell us!

No. 2. He claims that what I said here contradicts what I said in answer to No. 1, but he didn't bother to show how. He wants you to take his word for it. No. 2 concerns Acts 2:46, which says the Jerusalem church met in the temple, and ate at home. Ray says they ate "at church," but Luke says "At home," and we are not going to let him forget it.

No. 3. He misrepresented what I said. I did not say the elders could call the church together for a common meal in a community building. I said we could announce a common-meal gathering in a community building, but that this would not justify a common meal on church property as church work any more than announcing that a member is in the hospital would justify a church hospital. What did Ray say about it? He was as silent as a tomb! He wanted to know, "Is hospitality a work of the church under the oversight of the elders?" No, if you mean "social and/or recreational" functions. Yes, if you mean benevolence to needy saints.

No. 4. He wanted to know if the building could be used for other than spiritual purposes? I said, "Yes, but not as a work of the church." I explained that brethren and sisters use the building to discuss fishing, golfing and sewing, etc. at almost every service. These are not spiritual activities, but this does not justify having a golf, fishing or sewing clinic in the building as church work. Ray thinks I would object if "brethren brought along a drumstick to practice Acts 2:46..." How could they do this when Acts 2:46 says they ate "AT HOME"? Won't he ever learn?

No. 5. Concerned which acts can Christian's have fellowship in? I challenged him to produce the passage that uses fellowship to mean eating common meals. He gave Acts 2:46; 20:11; Jude 12. These passages have nothing to do with eating common meals in the church building, and the word "fellowship" is not one time mentioned! He did not answer the question, but we will continue to ask it. Where Ray preaches they announce common meals in the "fellowship room." Ray, where do the scriptures use the word "fellowship" to describe common meals? Come on, tell us?

Ray got all exercises about my refusing to answer his questions unless he granted me an extra page to do it. He asks: "Where, in any of the rules of debate does it say the affirmative speaker cannot ask his opponent questions?" Ray, where do the rules say he can? I will gladly answer any question you ask about something I say in this debate, but you asked your questions before I had said one word! Ray



says this is his first debate, so we will try to be tolerant with him and charge it to his inexperience.

A-8 — CONCLUSION: I asked him what other social and/or recreational activities can the elders call the church together to perform? He said his proposition calls only for meals per Webster's definition. But Ray accuses me of evading! I asked him if elders could expend church funds to build special facilities for social and recreational activities. He says they (where he preaches) use rooms already available. But he accuses me of evading! In his bulletin he sometimes mentions a "fellowship room." But he says it is a room already available, but it was obviously built with church funds. Ray, are you saying common meals are a work of the church but the church cannot use church funds to build a place to have them? Can't use church funds for church work?

HIS COMPLAINTS ABOUT EXCESS SPACE: Ray used an arbitrary interpretation of the rules to try to prove that I have taken advantage of him by using more space than they allow. He used 10 lines of his space to try to build this case, but failed. Rule six allows one hundred fifty-six-seventy-five-character lines per article. To arrive at his conclusion, Ray counted part of a line as a whole one. Several such lines had only one word on them. Several lines in the body of my copy did not have 75 characters in them. These partial lines don't constitute "a line of time" as per the rules. He might have a case, if we let him interpret the rules for us, but I don't plan to do that. I can interpret also. Ray is suffering the agony of an unproven and unprovable proposition, and he is whimpering and whining for reader sympathy. To prop up his weakness, he boasts about how he has not taken the regulation six pages in either of his first two affirmatives. I wouldn't need six pages either, if I did no better in the negative than he is doing in the affirmative: deliberately leaving off part of Thayer, half-defining key words, making ambiguous references to my articles, and asking questions of the negative, etc. He is quite fond of comparing me with "the anti-sunday-school brethren," so he should not mind a dose of his own medicine: I have met several denominational preachers in debate, and they nearly always have trouble taking all their allotted time!

### C-1 What Is The Issue?

1-a. My esteemed brother complained over my questions, saying that I wanted him in the affirmative so I could be in the negative. Then he affirmed for me what "social" and "recreation" meant. He is so shook up over Webster's definition, which I gave on these words, that he continues to affirm what he believes these words are, using another definition of Webster. My friend, you may continue to affirm what you think I should be saying or practicing all you want, but the reader is intelligent enough to see that you are not answering my arguments and that you are binding a human, man-made law upon your brethren!

1-b. My worthy opponent keeps saying the church can eat on church property when such is necessary to its functions. He has affirmed a number of things already; I wonder what he would affirm on that statement? I doubt if he will tell us

what those functions are, but you can put it down that what he will allow himself to do, saying it is a "function of the church," he will not allow us to do, saying it is social and/or recreational per his definition! I am amazed at how brethren can make themselves into gods on such things. Making (binding) things/laws which God has not bound. I wonder if our brother would affirm a proposition to be printed in our papers which stated: The Scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds, and this is not what my opponent practices?

1-c. My good brother states, "I am disappointed because he didn't define them in their accepted sense." My brother, I defined the words "social" and "recreation" according to definitions given in Webster. Argue with him if you will; not me. Make your gripe with Webster, not Hawk. My friend says I have abandoned the words "social" and "recreation" but I have not. The reader may go back over my affirmative speeches and count the number of times I have used the words and see I have not abandoned them. He keeps trying to make the reader think I have forsaken them, but I haven't. He's hurting and knows it. He asks, "What is the purpose of the meals in your buildings?" For the same purpose The Church met and ate in the homes, Acts 2:46. By the way, James, you never did answer my question. Was the church in Jerusalem, Acts 2:46, eating "together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another"? Was this recreation (refreshment; food)? Again, we would all be interested in seeing a passage which has the church eating in the building when it is necessary to its function and said meal not be "a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another" or not be "food" eaten!

1-d. My opponent said in his first negative, A-2, p. 2, "The elders can call the church together to do anything essential to the work of the church; evangelism, edification and benevolence." My friend, we would like to know, if the church can eat on church property when such is necessary to its function, would the act of eating be evangelism, edification, or benevolence? When the elders call the church together to eat on church property, when such is necessary to its function, is the act of eating a "work of the church"? My opponent has already admitted that he would affirm "The scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds." I dare say he would use the same passages and line of argumentation we have advanced and he knows it. The very way he argues against me in this discussion would be the way some brother who disagreed with his proposition would argue against him. Is it not hard to kick against the pricks?

1-e. On the AGAPE FEAST, my brother quoted one authority to show it was the Lord's Supper. He quoted others to show that it was a common meal. He now says he was showing what some said about the word in the first century and then later. Well, which position do you take? Does the word AGAPE refer only to the Lord's Supper or does it refer to common meals? Apparently my opponent

did not appreciate Thayer's quote for he did not say too much about it in his last negative speech except to complain against me.

### C-2 I Corinthians 11:20-32

2-a. My friend informs us the brethren were eating a common meal for social and or recreational purposes and this is why Paul condemned it and put a stop to it. Not so. They were making the Lord's Supper into a common meal. Paul condemned the abuse. I have said over and over again that I know of no church today that does what Paul condemns in this passage. Let my opponent find such a church and I will stand with him and Paul in condemning it. Of course, my opponent is still using his definition of my proposition rather than mine!

2-b. I admit that a common meal was being eaten here, but during the Lord's Supper. This is what Paul condemns. If Paul is here condemning all common meals, then he would condemn himself, Acts 20:11 and my opponent's proposition which he says he will defend: "The scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds." James, if Paul's statements tell me to go home, he would also tell you and himself to go home! What proves too much, my friend, proves nothing at all. Is that not what you told me? By the way, would your proposition be an AGAPE meal or a HATE meal? In your first negative, you stated on A-5, p. 6, "The issue between us is simple: He affirms that church property, and thus money, can be used for 'social and/or recreational purposes,' and I deny it." Is that really the issue? When the church eats on church property, per your proposition, when such is necessary to its function, may the church pay for that meal from the treasury of the church? According to your logic, the church cannot if it is social and/or recreation per your definition of these terms. But, the implication is that the church may if the meal is not social and/or recreational per your definition! Now, if you will show what these functions are, I can show whether we are or are not doing what you oppose. You've already shown that the preacher may eat a meal in the building. You need to show your passage for that, and then give us other times and occasions when the building may be used to eat in, giving book, chapter, and verse showing that this is the case. Now, the reader will see some mighty powerful debate dodges from my opponent, but I doubt if he will ever answer that point!

2-c. My opponent quotes H. Leo Boles and B. C. Goodpasture to prove I am not with my brethren in the past on this issue. My opponent knows that these men no more condemned what we are doing today than they were condemning this same practice in their day. My opponent admits brethren ate dinners on the church ground. Yet, he uses quotes from men who practiced eating dinner on church property as though their quotes were condemning that practice! Whatever they were condemning was not what they were doing when they ate dinner on the church property. Now, my opponent says that it was alright to eat dinner on church grounds several years ago, but sinful

today. Who made it sinful? God or James P. Needham? THERE IS YOUR ISSUE! Friend, that is the true issue. He says, "I know we used to have 'all day preaching and dinner on the grounds,' but Ray can't prove it was for 'social and/or recreational purposes,' and I dare him to try!" James, was the all day preaching and dinner on the grounds "having to do with human beings living together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another" and was the dinner they ate "refreshment; food"? My opponent will side step Webster's definition as I have used it in my proposition until this debate is over. My opponent will continue to side step the real issue and plow in his own self-made field, setting up his own straw man and pretending that this straw man is Ray Hawk and that the straw man's proposition is the issue. This may fool the prejudiced reader, but not the honest truth seeker! What is the real issue? The real issue is that my opponent says it is alright for brethren to eat a dinner on the church grounds several years ago, but sinful now. Well, who made it sinful to do so today? God or James P. Needham? There is the real issue. Needham binds where God has loosed!

### C-3 His Reply to My Five Questions

(1) I asked: If there were no church buildings owned by the church today, but the church met in borrowed houses, could the elders call the church together to worship and then call them to remain for a common meal together? He said, "No, if you mean a common meal sponsored by the church 'for social and/or recreational purposes,' and as a work of elders." You see, he's still plowing in his own field with his own definition of these words; not mine. I suppose if the meal in the church building was necessary to its function, it could be sponsored by the church and be under the oversight of the elders. Right? My opponent says "The Jerusalem church MET in the temple and ATE at home." That is suppose to prove, I assume, that the church cannot eat in the building? Yet he will affirm that the church may do so! So why the smoke screen? The same ones who ATE are the same ones who MET. The temple did not belong to the church, so they coul;not do there what they could do in the homes. But the church MET in the temple, ATE in the homes. Now, unless my brother is saying the church building is equal to the temple of Acts 2:46, he loses the force(?) of his quibble.

(2) Would it be sinful to practice in the church today what was practiced in Acts 2:46 by the church? Answer: "No. It says they ate their meals 'at home.'" James admits the church may eat in the building. He admits the church met in homes. The church met in homes in Acts 2:46 and ate. My opponent says, "Ray says they ate 'at church,' but Luke says 'at home,' and we are not going to let him forget it." My brother wants Acts 2:46 to say, "And they, continued daily with one accord in the church building, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat. . ." I didn't say they ate at church, I said the church ate together, Acts 2:46, and you know it!

(3) My opponent's comments here are: "I said we could announce a common-meal gathering in a community building, but that this would not justify a common meal on

the church property as church work..." Oh, but my opponent says that the church may eat a common meal on church property when such is necessary to its function. Brother, wouldn't that be a common meal on church property as a church work? I don't believe I've ever said anything about eating being a "church work." You are the one that implies this, so you answer your statements. By the way, who is showing hospitality to whom when you (JPN) eat your lunch at the building? Do you live so far from the building that you cannot go home? Do you drive a horse and buggy?

(4) His answer? "Yes, but not as a work of the church." Therefore, as long as the elders announce the meals are not a work of the church, we may eat in our church buildings. THANK YOU BROTHER! We never announce our meals together as a work of the church!

(5) He chides me on the word "fellowship room or hall." Yet, in a letter 11/1/72 he said, "Our fellowship hall here is our entire building. We meet in all parts of it to engage in worship and other scripturally authorized work, but we don't call it a 'fellowship hall.'" (All emphasis mine, RH). According to his, he could put up a sign outside saying, "Fellowship hall of the church of Christ." I asked him what kind of fellowship he had in the restrooms! Our "fellowship hall" is just as scriptural as your "fellowship restrooms." In fact, I am sure we have what would be considered a more scriptural fellowship in our fellowship hall than you do in your fellowship restrooms.

#### C-4 Extra Space For Me

4-a. I have used several extra lines using my brother's interpretation of the rules on space. He should not mind since he used so much extra space himself and I have used so little compared to him.

## NEEDHAM'S THIRD NEGATIVE

**DEFINITION OF SOCIAL AND/OR RECREATIONAL:** Ray is still running scared where these two words are concerned. He quibbles that I am "affirming" the meaning of these words, when anyone knowledgeable about debating knows I am only performing the prerogative of the negative; questioning the affirmative's definition of words. Ray denies his abandonment of these words, but the fact is obvious. He wanted to try his debating wings so badly that he was willing to include these key words in the proposition hoping he could get by with misleading definitions. When I insist that they be defined in the context of our differences, he accuses me of "plowing in my own field." (At least I am plowing, Ray has neither a field nor a plow!) His definitions are inadequate and absurd. In the first part of the proposition he affirms that common meals may be eaten in the church building. (This I will also affirm). But this includes everything he says in defining "social and/or recreational, namely, people being together eating food for refreshment. So these words are redundant, if he has

properly defined them! The church could hardly have a common meal together without eating food for refreshment! Yet, Ray comes right along and defines "social and/or recreational" to mean what everyone knows a common meal to be! Now, figure that one out! You see, Ray continues to try to make you think I oppose all eating in the church building. When he sees I don't, he gets frustrated and makes false accusations.

**CHURCH FUNCTIONS:** Ray prophesizes (falsely) that I won't tell what are church functions (even though I already have!), and that I will condemn him for what I allow. Church functions are: Evangelism, edification, and benevolence to needy saints. In any situation where the church's eating together in the building would expedite any one of these words, it is included in the command to perform them, and the church could pay for the meals! If Ray would take the time to read my negatives, he could save himself some embarrassment! He's too busy trying to plow without a field or a plow!

**WHO IS PLAYING GOD AND MAKING LAWS?** Ray repeats that old cliché of his brethren that we are "making laws where God made none." I shall leave it to the reader to decide who is guilty of this when Ray has made a law that allows the church to do what he cannot authorize by command, example or inference, tries to prophesy what I will do before I do it, and knows that I am hurting, and knows that I know it!!! Then he has the temerity to accuse ME of playing God! (If I am hurting, I don't know it, so how could he?) He also "knows" that if I were affirming the church can eat in the church building I would use his arguments. God forbid!

**ACTS 2:46:** Ray just cannot get this passage right, can he? He now says, "THE CHURCH met and ate in the homes, Acts 2:46." Honestly! When I read this statement from him again, I opened my Bible, and it still reads just like it has for almost 2000 years, "And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home..." Talk about "kicking against the pricks"! I will go over it again for Ray's sake (surely everyone else sees it by now). This verse says the Jerusalem church MET IN THE TEMPLE, and ATE AT HOME! I challenge Ray to prove his assertion.

Ray wants to know why I didn't answer his question: "Was the church in Jerusalem, Acts 2:46, eating 'together as a group in a situation requiring that they have dealings with one another?'" Every question he asks is based upon a FALSE ASSUMPTION. I didn't answer the question because it is not relevant. Acts 2:46 says nothing about the Jerusalem church's "eating together as a group." It says they MET IN THE TEMPLE and ATE AT HOME. It is up to Ray to prove that they all "ate together in a group" in the same home, which he cannot do. Ray thinks that in this answer I am denying that the church can eat together in the building. Good grief!!! I am doing no such a thing! I am only showing that this passage does not prove his proposition. This is the duty of the negative. You see, Ray, you still don't have me in the affirmative! It was a good try, but it didn't and won't, work! You say "the same ones who MET are the same ones who ATE," and right you are, now prove they "ate together as a group." But if you could

prove this, you still couldn't prove it was a church-sponsored meal "for social and/or recreational purposes."

AGAPE: Ray has really taken a beating on AGAPE! All he can do now is try to pick at what I have said. He has quit affirming! He tries to make a big deal out of my distinction between AGAPE in the N.T. and AGAPE described in post-N.T. literature. Ray wants you to think they are the same, but cannot document his assumption. But even if he could, it wouldn't help his proposition because post-N.T. literature AGAPE FEASTS were for benevolence, not for "social and/or recreational purposes." I dare him to take the N.T. ALONE and try to show the nature of the AGAPE feast. He has tried to manipulate Thayer and others to prove his assumption, but he got caught "red handed," and pleaded guilty to deliberately omitting part of Thayer's statements! He has the audacity to say that I "Did not appreciate Thayer's quote" because I "Did not say much about it." The drunk man always thinks the other person is intoxicated! I didn't need to say anything more about Thayer. I took him away from you (the function of the negative), accused you of deliberately misquoting him, which you admitted, so what else did I need to say about it?

Ray wants to know if the common meals I would allow on church property would be "An AGAPE meal or a HATE meal." Ray, they would be AGAPE meals, but that doesn't help your proposition because you are affirming a church meal "for social and/or recreational purposes" and the common meals on church property I am defending would be for benevolence or essential to scriptural church function. You just cannot get your kite off the ground, Ray!

I COR. 11: Ray has met his "Waterloo" on I Cor. 11. In spite of the fact that the Corinthians were bringing their "own supper" (v. 21), and eating it with their little parties (v. 33), and some were "drunken" (v. 21), Ray still denies that they were eating a common meal for "social and/or recreational purposes." But then, that is not too surprising since Ray doesn't know what "social and/or recreational" mean!

Ray says, "They were making the Lord's Supper into a common meal," and "I admit that a common meal was being eaten here, during the Lord's Supper." Which way was it, Ray? It is obvious that they could not make "The Lord's Supper INTO a common meal" (Emp. mine), and also eat a common meal "DURING the Lord's Supper." (Emp. mine). You had better get your "marbles together"! The fact is, Paul said, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER; for in your eating each one taketh before other HIS OWN SUPPER...." (v. 20-21). Another boomerang for Ray!

Ray says if Paul were condemning "all common meals, then he would condemn himself, Acts 20:11, and my opponent's proposition which he says he would defend." You see, reader, every argument Ray makes is based upon a false assumption. Who said Paul was condemning "all common meals"? It is a fact that the I Cor. 11 meal has a "social and/or recreational" purpose, and Paul told them to stop it. Ray can say what he pleases, but this fact remains.

You will note that Ray didn't retract his FALSE

CHARGE that I said the only reason Paul condemned the Corinthians was that they ate a common meal at the assembly. He only has one more opportunity to straighten this up. I hope he will take advantage of it, lest he stand condemned as a false accuser.

I predicted that anything Ray would say about I Cor. 11 would prove to be a boomerang to his position, and so it has. It condemns his proposition at every turn, but he comes back and tries to patch it up. When Paul punches holes in his patches, he then patches the patch!

CAN THE CHURCH PAY FOR THE MEALS I WOULD AFFIRM? The church can pay for a meal that is eaten on church property, (1) If it expedites the work of the church. The church could pay for such a meal on the same basis it can pay for the building. It cannot pay for a building "for social and/or recreational purposes." The same is true of a common meal. (2) If it is for benevolence to needy saints (2 Cor 8, 9; Rom. 15:26, 27; I Cor. 16:1, 2, etc.).

PREACHER'S LUNCH: Ray wants the scriptural authority for the preacher's eating his lunch in the building, and wants to know who is showing hospitality when this is done, and do I live so far from the building that I can't go home for lunch? Ray drags many "red herrings" across the path, hoping to get me off his track, but he shall not succeed. I repeat, my position is not on trial, HE is in the AFFIRMATIVE. Suppose I can't justify eating my lunch in the building, does that prove his proposition? The fact is, when I eat my lunch in the building, it is not the congregation eating a common meal on church property for social and/or recreational purposes, as per your proposition. Can't you see that, Ray?

BOLES AND GOODPASTURE: Ray says, "Whatever they were condemning was not what they were doing when they ate dinner on the church property." Ray is right, but Goodpasture condemned the church's furnishing "recreation" (see quote my 2nd neg.), so obviously he knew that the old practice of eating dinner on the ground was not "recreation." Try again, Ray. Since Ray defines "recreation" as food eaten, then Goodpasture would condemn all church-sponsored meals! Talk about somebody being "shook up"!

MISREPRESENTATION: Three times now, Ray has charged that I say it was alright to eat dinner on the ground several years ago, but sinful now. I have corrected him already, and asked him to retract this falsehood. He now has only one more opportunity in this debate. I never said this, or implied it. I have offered to defend the right of a church to have a common meal on church property under scriptural circumstances and specified the circumstances. This puts Ray in a dither! This is why Ray can't "plow." He has neither plow nor field!

HIS COMMENTS ON MY ANSWERS TO HIS QUESTIONS: Ray was so dumbfounded by my answers to his questions in his first affirmative that he didn't know what to do with them. He treats my answers like he treated Thayer, he omitted part of what I said and replied to his misquotations, but nothing he says is of any consequence, and most of it has been answered in the course of this negative, but let us note a thing or two:

On Q-2, Ray denies that he has been saying they ate "at

church" in Acts 2:46, but that "the church ate together as a group." Surely, every reader knows he has been arguing that the elders could call the church together to eat a common meal on church property for social and/or recreational purposes!!! That is what his proposition says, in case you have forgotten, Ray! He has mistakenly used Acts 2:46 as an example of his proposition, and yet denies that he is saying they "ate at church." Ray is so confused that he doesn't even know what his own proposition says, or means! Who is "all shook up"?

On Q-3, Ray jumped the gun and took what I said out of context. If the reader will go back to my first negative he will see that when I said announcing a meal at the Community Center would not justify a meal on church property as church work, I said "for social and/or recreational purposes." In replying to my answer in my second negative, Ray conveniently left out this phrase and tried to make me contradict my contention that common meals may be eaten on church property when essential to church function. Would that classify as "a powerful debate dodge," Ray?

On Q-4, which was "May property, which is in use by the church, be used for anything other than for spiritual purposes?" my answer was yes, that brethren discuss all kinds of activities on church property at every service, but these are unavoidable, and are not church sponsored. I asked him if the church could sponsor all the activities thus discussed? What did he say? He grabbed at a straw and said, "Therefore as long as the elders announce the meals are not a work of the church, we may eat in our church buildings." Now, that's profound! Ray, may the elders also call the church together for a golf clinic, if they announce it is not a work of the church? Come on, now, answer it! And furthermore, since Ray says they can have social and/or recreational meals on church property as long as they announce it is not a work of the church, he is defending the using of church property for something which he admits is not church work! Ray, let me ask you again; What other non-church works can we have on church property? That's twice I have asked that, and you have been as silent as an oyster both times! I hope you won't forget it in your last effort.

Q-5, Ray thinks he has me in a "tight" when he says that "According to this, he could put up a sign outside saying, 'Fellowship hall of the church of Christ.'" The church can put anything true on the "sign outside", and this would be true. Ray still has not shown an instance where the scriptures use "fellowship" to mean the eating of common meals. We are still waiting! We have forgotten, Ray!

Ray thinks he has justified his "fellowship room" by our restrooms!! He is really desperate, isn't he? Restrooms are authorized in the same scripture that authorizes the building. They expedite church work. I ask again, Ray, what scriptural church work do your church meals expedite? Can we expect an answer?

EXTRA SPACE: Ray is still whimpering and whining for reader sympathy. I challenge him to prove that I have "used so much extra space." When he does, I will apologize, and I now invite him to use an equal amount in his final affirmative which still would be insufficient to prove his

proposition (Rejection of this invitation shall be accepted as admission that his charge is false). He justifies taking "several extra lines" in his third affirmative (?) by using "My brother's (jpn's) interpretation of the rules on space." Well, now that I have converted him to a proper interpretation of *our* rules, maybe I can convert him to a proper interpretation of the *Lord's*! I surely hope so. I love him, and would delight to see him renounce his error and take a stand for the truth.

## HAWK'S FOURTH AFFIRMATIVE

### D-1 Definition of Proposition

1-a. My Opponent is still bothered by my definition of social and recreation. He will not allow me to define the words in harmony with what we are practicing! He wants them defined as "an informal gathering of people for recreation or amusement; party" and "amusement, diversion, entertainment," or "relaxation, repose, ease, play, sport, frolic, rollic; mirth, jollity, hilarity." (Needham, 1st negative). In fact, he makes a pretty good pun when he said, "He wanted to try his debating wings so badly that he was willing to include these key words in the proposition hoping he could get by with misleading definitions." Misleading? I originally submitted the proposition: The Scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds. My worthy opponent would not sign this until I had agreed to accept the additional wording, when said meal is designed for social and/or recreational purposes. He thought I would be put at the disadvantage of affirming a position that I did not believe in and do not practice. If he does not think I practice the original position or proposition, let him sign the following and affirm it: The Scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds and this is not what my opponent practices. Lest he make something of my above statement, I do not believe in nor do we practice social and/or recreation as defined by my opponent, but we do as defined by me and Webster!

1-b. My opponent says he would debate my original proposition himself and affirm it! But, I really wonder if he would??? He states in his 3rd negative, "In any situation where the church's eating together in the building would expedite any one of these works (evangelism, edification, benevolence), it is included in the command to perform them, and the church could pay for the meals!" Again, he says, "The church can pay for a meal that is eaten on church property, (2) If it is for benevolence to needy saints." That would make it a work, wouldn't it James?

1-c. If feeding needy saints is a work of benevolence, or expedites this work, could the church (1) build a cafeteria to feed those needy saints in if the eldership felt, in its judgment, that this was expedient? Now don't tell us it isn't

expedient, or it is not relevant to this issue, or it is ridiculous. The readers will see your failure if you do. Just tell me and our readers if a cafeteria in the church building would be sinful or scriptural?? Remember, is it scriptural or sinful? That shouldn't be too hard to answer! Do you really believe in the original proposition I advanced, James? Also remember, you said, "If it expedites the work of the church. The church could pay for such a meal on the same basis it can pay for the building." Then it could build the facilities to feed the needy saint!!!

1-d. You said, "Church functions are: Evangelism, edification, and benevolence to needy saints. If any situation where the church's eating together in the building would expedite any one of these works, it is included in the command to perform them, and the church could pay for the meals!" "In any situation"! Whose judgment is relied upon to figure out when a situation fits one of these works the church may function in? James P. Needham or the elders that oversee that local church? Now don't accuse me of taking the above statement out of context. I am not, I am only amplifying it! Again, who determines when a situation is one of these works and the church may eat a meal in its building? James P. Needham or the local eldership? The Bible says the local overseers.

1-e. If eating food (a common meal) can expedite evangelism, and my worthy opponent said it could, then could the church (1) feed aliensinners in the church building in situations that according to the judgment of the elders were areas of evangelism, but which the New Testament did not specifically spell out in every detail? My opponent may refuse to answer, or quibble, but he is the man who said the church could foot the bill in areas where it was a work of the church or when it expedited the work of the church! Now he may answer (1) that the church has never faced nor is it faced with these situations, or (2) this is a hypothetical case. I deny it thoroughly. The reader will see his failure here. Now, James, do you really believe you would affirm my original proposition???

1-f. If eating food (a common meal) may expedite edification, could the church feed members in situations that according to the eldership's judgment were areas of edification, but which the Bible did not go into a great amount of detail on? See Acts 2:46; 20:11; 1 Cor. 11:22-33; Jude 12.

### D-2 I Corinthians 11

2-a. My opponent wants to make it appear that our eating together is some kind of drunken, lascivious orgy! If he thinks our eating is as he defines social and/or recreational and not as I have so defined it, then let him sign to affirm: The Scriptures teach that the elders may call the church together to eat a common meal on church property, namely, in the church building or on church grounds and this is not what my opponent practices. Will he do it???

2-b. My opponent gives 1 Cor. 11:27-29 as a definition of what he thinks is the proper definition of social and/or recreational. I have tried to show over and over again that this perversion of the common meal and the Lord's Supper is not what we do. If the Corinthians had not perverted the

common meal and the supper, Paul would not have condemned them. My worthy opponent already agrees that Paul does not condemn all common meals. He states that Paul condemned this kind of common meal here and told them to eat at home. Surely, he did not mean eat all meals at home, for if so, he would have condemned himself, Acts 20:11, James P. Needham for eating his lunch in the building, and the brethren several years ago who ate their dinners on the grounds. What kind of common meal was it that Paul condemned? Certainly it is not the common meal of my proposition!!! It may be of my opponent's definition, but not mine! What kind of meal is this social and/or recreational per my opponent's definition? (1) v. 21 Some eating while others go hungry, (2) v. 21 Drinking alcoholic beverages and getting drunk, (3) v. 22 Despising the church of God, (4) v. 22 Shaming them that have not, and (5) Eating and drinking unworthily, therefore bringing damnation on themselves. Now, I've asked my good opponent if he knows of any church of Christ that practices this? Over and over I have asked him. No doubt he will give some kind of quibble in his last speech since I can no longer reply. Is that why he has waited to answer it in his last speech? If he thinks our common meals in the church building are on a par to what Paul condemned, then all I can say is "Shame on you, James P. Needham." Our meals are the same as theirs would have been without this perversion Paul corrected them on! Needham says "It is a fact that the 1 Cor. 11 meal has a 'social and/or recreational' purpose, and Paul told them to stop it." The meals of my proposition are not the meals condemned by Paul, for this was a perversion of what they should have been doing! My opponent has lost the force of his argument from 1 Cor. 11!

### D-3 My Opponent's Lunch, etc.

3-a. My opponent is now trying to back out on himself and eating in the church building on his lunch break! He now says, "Suppose I can't justify eating my lunch in the building, does that prove his proposition?" When you use an anti-located preacher's practice against him, he usually will end up denying that his practice is scriptural! You show them that what they practice in a two week meeting with an evangelist is what we practice in principle with an evangelist over a period of two years, five years, or twenty years, and they will then reply, "Suppose I can't justify using an evangelist for two weeks in a meeting, does that prove your proposition?" It seems my opponent jumped in the same boat!

3-b. My opponent's lunch must be evangelism, benevolence, or edification. If it isn't, it must be an expedient of one of these, or expedite one of them. If not, then his lunch must be equal to what Paul condemned in 1 Cor. 11! Let my opponent grapple with himself on that one! He wants to practice things he will not let others practice!!! Consistency, thou art a jewel, indeed! Now, if he really wants to back out on his lunch in the building, the pages of TORCH and THE BIBLE BEACON are open here and now for him to repent and make a public confession! What will he do? Make his lunch evangelism, benevolence, edification, or repent?

3-c. If he says his lunch expedites one of the works of the church, then the elders where he works could cater his meal and pay for it out of church funds. If not, why not? Or, they could buy a refrigerator to preserve his lunch until he got ready to eat it. The refrigerator would be equal and parallel to "Willie the water cooler." They could also buy a stove to heat his meal. Also a dishwasher to clean the church plates, forks, knives, spoons, cups or glasses that he uses. My good opponent may cry, "All this is not expedient." But, keep in mind that his human opinion or judgment is not the law of the churches of Christ. Other elderships might find these things to be as expedient as the water fountain, wash basins, and etc. are.

3-d. My opponent keeps saying I misrepresented him about eating meals on the grounds several years ago being alright, but he says they are sin now. Well, if we ate a dinner on the grounds, wouldn't my illustrious brother say we were sinning? If not, then why this discussion? If not, then I apologize.

3-e. If the church may eat a dinner on the grounds when it has all day meetings, as practiced several years ago, then this must be scriptural. If not, then I have nothing to apologize to my worthy opponent over. If these meals were scriptural, then the church could pay for them, according to my esteemed opponent! We would be interested in knowing which work it expedited: evangelism, benevolence, or edification? Since this is scriptural, then the elders could have catered the meals and paid for them out of church funds. If not, why not? James, would that have been sinful or scriptural??? Since these brethren practiced this quite often, I suppose, if they thought it expedient, they could have built a kitchen onto the building and served the brethren in their "fellowship kitchen and dining hall!" Now, if my brother may have fellowship in all parts of their building, surely these brethren could have had fellowship in this hall! If not, then the activity they participated in was not scriptural. Right? Which shall it be, James?

#### D-4 Acts 2-46

4-a. My opponent wants this passage to read, "And day by day, the church continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple (church building), and then individual members eating a common meal in their own houses." I have shown from the *Pulpit Commentary* what a scholar has said. My opponent did not really reply. He may ask if I agree with all the *Pulpit Commentary* says. My answer is of course, no. However, he must show that the scholarship of this Commentary and others, such as F.F. Bruce on Acts is in error. He cannot do so from the Greek, from other Commentaries, or from the Bible itself. James, why would the Holy Spirit find it necessary to mention individuals eating at home? None at all. People have done that since time began with man. But, he uses this space in divine history to show what the church was doing collectively!

4-b. James, I did not say I deliberately misquoted Thayer, and I certainly did not admit such a thing! You do some correcting, please!

4-c. My friend says the meals of his proposition which he would affirm would be agape feasts or meals! Would you go

to Woods and company to prove that, or would you run to Albert Barnes for proof???

4-d. By "at church" I simply meant "at worship."

4-e. I've already used up my allotted space and then some. But, my good opponent has given me permission to so do.

4-f. I have enjoyed this discussion and pray that it will do much good. May it help bring us closer rather than drive us further apart. I love my opponent and appreciate his willingness to discuss this issue.

## NEEDHAM'S FOURTH NEGATIVE

This is the final article in this exchange. While I am always glad to engage in Bible study, Ray's part in this discussion has been both disappointing and absurd. Ray first suggested that we debate this matter, but he has refused to affirm his practice, hiding it behind inadequate and incomplete definitions of two key words in the proposition ("Social and/or recreational") which words contain the sum total of our differences on this issue when properly defined. His refusal to define them in their *accepted senses* and in the *context of our differences* has made me appear to be trying to force a position on him which he disavows. This has not been my intention, and he knows it. Before the debate started, I told Ray that I would AFFIRM that the church could eat in the building under scriptural circumstances, and that all I would deny is that such can be for "social and/or recreational purposes." He signed the proposition with this knowledge in hand, and yet has defined it to mean that the church can eat food in the building for refreshment. That is the very thing I said I would affirm, if said meals were essential to the work of the church. If Ray has properly defined "social and/or recreational," these words are *redundant* in the proposition because his definitions involve ONLY (no more or less) what EVERYBODY understands a common meal to be, namely, food eaten for refreshment.

I maintain that most of the meals eaten in the "fellowship rooms" (such as the one at E. Gadsden where Ray preaches) are more than meals eaten for refreshment, which is proven by Ray's statement that the fellowship they have in their "fellowship room" IS DIFFERENT from the fellowship they have in their auditorium. His failure to produce the passage that authorizes this "different kind of fellowship," proves that it is also different from anything described in the N.T. The only time Ray can find the church having this different kind of fellowship," Paul told them to stop it (I Cor. 11:34). Said "fellowship" is different because it is "social and/or recreational." It belongs *in* and *to* the home, and that is where Paul told them to take it.

Furthermore, even after Ray gets through hiding the "social and/or recreational" church meals behind half-baked definitions, he still comes up with something that is unscriptural, namely, the church furnishing a place for the members to simply eat food for refreshment! This is the purpose of a restaurant, so Ray makes of the church a

"sanctified" restaurant!

I have quoted Ray's own brethren to show that his definition of the word "recreation" is inadequate. I now call one more witness on this matter, namely, Franklin Camp in *Words of Truth*, Dec., 20, 1963. He said,

*"It is reported that at least one congregation has already employed a recreation director in the field of SPORT and PLAY...(showing what he understood recreation to be jpn). Recreation (food eaten for refreshment, Hawk) is not the business of the church, but belongs to the home and in the physical realm. It is no part of the mission of the church. Those who would put the church in the field of recreation (food eaten for refreshment, Hawk) show a plain disregard for the scriptures. Their claim for the liberty to do it is nothing but making for themselves license to do something NOT AUTHORIZED OF GOD, either by specific or generic authority....Recreation (food eaten for refreshment, Hawk) is no method of doing anything which God has commanded his church to do. There is no authority of any kind for it..."* (Amen, and all emphasis mine, jpn). Brother Hawk has been running from his practice and the demands of his proposition and I think he knows it. He cannot scripturally defend them, so he tries to hide them.

HIS SCRIPTURAL "PROOF": Ray signed a proposition that says "The scriptures teach..." To his credit, he started out trying to prove his proposition by the scriptures, but the effort was short lived, as we shall see. Here I want to review his weak effort at scriptural proof.

1. Acts 2:46: Ray quoted Hervy on this passage in a vain effort to prove that the Jerusalem church ate where they met. Ray repeatedly said, "...The church met and ate in the homes, Acts 2:46" (Third Affirmative, Part 4). When I insisted that the text says they MET IN THE TEMPLE and ATE AT HOME, Ray finally admitted it, thus contradicting both himself and Hervy. He chided me for *repudiating* Hervy's scholarship, but it is alright for Ray to *contradict* it!

Ray's basic fallacy on Acts 2:46 is his ASSUMPTION that the Jerusalem church ate in the SAME home, but he did not, and cannot prove this. Nothing in the language demands this. The church where I preach meets in the church building and eats at home, but that doesn't prove that we all eat in the *same* home. If this language does not demand his conclusion in my case, how could it demand it in Acts 2:46? But, even if it did, Ray must prove it was "social and/or recreational."

In his fourth affirmative, Ray says, "If eating food (a common meal) may expedite edification..." Here he cites: Acts 2:46; 20:11; 1 Cor. 11:22-33; Jude 12. Thus he is saying that in Acts 2:46 the members ate where they met for edification! But the text says they MET IN THE TEMPLE (one place), and ATE AT HOME (another place), yet this is Ray's authority for the church to furnish a kitchen and dining room where the saints meet so the members can bring their food from their homes to the meeting place and eat it for edification! In the first place, in Acts 2:46 they didn't eat where they met but this is what Ray uses the verse to prove. In the second, Ray has now gone back on his definition of his proposition. He has been saying that the church can eat a common meal on church

property for social and/or recreational purposes which according to him simply means eating food for refreshment. Now he says this expedites edification, a new thought altogether in this debate. I specifically asked him what church work his recreational church meals expedited, and he has been observing the passover. Now, if he can prove that the E. Gadsden church meals or the ones mentioned in Acts 2:46 expedited edification, we will shake hands. If he had defined the common meals of his proposition as those which expedited edification, I would have quit the debate, because I will affirm such meals.

The fact that it has taken me this long to get Ray to commit himself to this position is evidence that he has given up his proposition and is grabbing at straws in a vain attempt to keep from drowning on this issue. I say the fact that he has finally gotten around to defining his church meals in terms he has always known I would agree to, is prima facie evidence that he has known all along, and still knows, that the church meals in the E. Gadsden "fellowship room" do not expedite edification, but are precisely what the proposition says they are, "Social and/or recreational" in the accepted sense. I defy Ray or anyone else to prove that meals of this nature can expedite edification, or that they constitute scriptural activity in a church building.

2. Jude 12; 2 Pet. 2:13: The "love feasts" (AGAPE) mentioned in these two verses have been the "sugar stick" of Ray's brethren ever since this issue arose among us. They all like Ray, rely upon assumption rather than proof. They assume that the AGAPE feasts mentioned in the N.T. were recreational church meals, but they can't prove it. When they are run off this, they quote uninspired literature to prove that churches in the early centuries sometimes are together, but they will not quote that part of these early writings that show these meals were for *benevolent* purposes, and most necessarily held where the saints met. Furthermore, while I think such meals would be scriptural, there is no way to prove that they are under consideration in Jude 12 and 2 Pet. 2:13. There is pretty good evidence that they developed after the closing of the N.T., but even if before, they were not for "social and/or recreational purposes," I do not deny all church meals, but I deny that AGAPE is the scriptural authorization even for those I would endorse.

Again we note that Ray cited Jude 12 in support of his statement that "...a common meal may expedite edification..." Here again Ray slipped up because he knew all along that I would agree to a common meal on church property that expedited edification. The fact that he did not contend this in the definition of the proposition, and the fact that he didn't introduce it until his last article, proves that he knows it is not what he had in mind in the proposition, and therefore it does not describe the nature of E. Gadsden's church meals in the "fellowship room."

3. Acts 20:11: Ray quoted this passage to prove "social and/or recreational" church meals when all it says is that *Paul* ate in preparation for his departure. It very well could have been a church meal, but to support Ray's proposition, he must PROVE it, and the language doesn't demand that. Furthermore, if I should concede it to have been a church meal, Ray would still have to prove it to have been "for



social and/or recreational purposes," which he cannot do. Furthermore, he cited this passage also in connection with his statement that "...a common meal may expedite edification..." So, I can admit his assumption that Acts 20:11 was a church meal, and accept his contention that it expedited edification, and still deny his proposition. Ray, I never saw anyone get himself into so much trouble!!

4. I Cor. 11: Like a heretic captain, Ray has determined to go down with the ship on this passage! Everything he has said has boomeranged on him as I prophesied it would. He keeps coming back and tries to patch up the leaks! In the course of his voyage his ship got so full of holes that to abandon ship would have been wise, but Ray was determined to be a dead "hero"!!

He started out by affirming that I Cor. 11 was an example of his proposition, of all things! I pointed out that the Corinthians were eating a "social and/or recreational" meal in connection with church work, and Paul told them to stop it. Thus, I have contended that the only time Ray can find a N.T. church engaging in what he is defending, Paul told them to stop it! He has not been able to overcome this devastating defeat. He tried to salvage his boat by saying Paul was only condemning the abuses, not the mere fact that they were eating on church property. I have tried to get Ray to tell us why Paul didn't just tell them to stop the abuses, rather than telling them to "eat at home" (v. 34). Would Paul burn down the barn to get rid of the rats? I have maintained that part of the abuse was eating a "social and/or recreational" meal in connection with spiritual work. Paul's telling them to "eat at home" is my proof. But Ray came back and said that if Paul were condemning all meals on church property, he would condemn my eating my lunch in the building, and the meals I would defend as being essential to scriptural church function. But who said Paul is condemning all meals on church property? I contend that he condemns the kind of meals my opponent is trying to defend. Ray also cited this passage in connection with his statement that "...a common meal may expedite edification..." Can you believe it? I Cor. 11 is an example of a church meal expediting edification, but Paul told them to stop it!! For pity's sake, Ray! Don't you wish now you had listened to me when I warned you to let I Cor. alone? I really hate to see a brother get himself in such an absurd position. To think, this discussion is going to be published!

5. The elders judgment: This defense of Ray's proposition is typical of him and his brethren. If they can't prove a thing is "scriptural" in some other way, they will try to slip it in the back door by contending that it is a matter of judgment, and God has given the elders the right to decide such matters. So Ray says that if the elders judge that spending thousands of dollars of the Lord's money to build and equip a fellowship room will "expedite edification," that makes it scriptural. Ray, I know some elders who have decided that a ball team will expedite edification and some others who decided that a car wash in the name of the church of Christ would expedite evangelism. I also know of some elders who once decided that instrumental music would expedite the singing, and missionary societies would expedite the Great Commission. Some elders are now deciding that darkening the auditorium lights and speaking

in tongues expedite spirituality. So, Ray, don't oppose any of these things or you will be arraying your judgment against God's elders, and making your opinion "the law in the churches of Christ." To be perfectly frank, Ray was grandstanding when he tried to put me in the position of arraying my judgment against the elders, and making my opinion "the law in the churches of Christ." But I doubt that the applause will be very loud when the readers remember that this melodrama was played by one who has affirmed a proposition that allows the church to practice that which he has miserably failed to scripturally authorize. Was not Haman hanged on his own gallows?

Thus Ray has gone down in defeat. He has not sustained his proposition by the scriptures. I have negated every argument he has based upon scripture. In this final article I am not replying to any of his absurd quibbles about the preacher's lunch, the cafeteria, the old dinners on the ground, what the members happen to discuss at the assemblies, his efforts to confuse the issue, etc. etc. His proposition obligates him to prove his practice by the scriptures. The duty of the negative is to defeat his effort along that line, which I have done, so I have not wasted time and space on his quibbles.

In conclusion I love and respect brother Hawk. I have sometimes pressed my points rather hardly, but this has not been a manifestation of any animosity toward him as a person. I love him as a brother in Christ, but I do not love the error he espouses nor the division and strife it has wrought in a once united brotherhood. I ask only that the reader study these matters with an open mind, and be swayed only by the truth. I pray that only good will be accomplished through this effort.

## BAPTISM IS NOT THE FIGURE

Richard E. Black

The sectarian contention that baptism merely "figures" or pictures in an outward action the inner spiritual regeneration that has been experienced at some prior time has been handily exposed by the biblical evidence of the good confession which the inspired writer says is made "with the mouth" and is "unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9,10). Such a passage declares that the confession is the visible and vocal announcement to the world that one is embarking on the life in Christ; hence, the attempt to place baptism in this office is meaningless for it would amount to God having demanded two actions to accomplish one purpose.

### "Antitupon"

The inspired Peter wrote: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also not save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 3:21). The clear understanding of this text depends on one being able to determine what is meant by the word, "figure." What is the figure? The contention by those who

teach that baptism is unessential to salvation is that baptism is the figure, but the apostle has not so stated at all.

This baptismal statement follows on the reflection of the verse 20 that "in the days of Noah, eight souls were saved by water." Now, in the antitype, "baptism doth also not save us." The figure is the fact that eight souls (Noah's family) were saved by water in the flood, and baptism is the antitype, the reality rather than the type or figure. Those who have studied the Book any time at all know that the Old Testament furnishes the figures while the New Testament furnishes the fulfillment in the antitypes. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." (Heb. 10:1). Paul said the law of Moses was a shadow, not the image: but, the body, the image, the reality, is seen in Christ and the gospel of the New Testament. Therefore, the figure, the type of which Peter speaks in I Peter 3:21 is the flood and the antitype, the image that is real, is baptism! Those that desire to make baptism the type or figure have a problem which they cannot answer: If baptism is the type, what is the antitype?

**The Lesson Explained**

The deluge, the flood in the time of Noah prefigured the salvation that is in baptism in this manner. Peter said eight souls were saved by water — it would be folly of the nth degree to deny such a plain statement. Now, that is a type of salvation in baptism. How so? The water of the flood was the means of saving a few; it bore up the ark in which they were. It saved them from the corruption of the world and from the destruction of that ungodly civilization. It was the means of saving the race of men as by a new birth through death into a new life, a new beginning. It washed away the evil, those who had suffered for evil-doing, and so saved those who had doubtless been suffering for well-doing. (See I Pet. 3:17-19) and the apparent connection of the lesson on baptism, Noah, and suffering). Thus, the flood is the figure (tipos) of the antitype (antitypon) baptism. The passage is clearly teaching that the water of the flood and the water of baptism correspond as type and antitype — it is a ridiculous mutilation of Scripture to teach otherwise. So, the conclusion is that the water of the flood is the prophetic foretype; baptism is the accomplishment in New Testament fulfillment.

The language of this passage is in the present tense (baptism is saving you) designating that baptism alone is not the key to salvation! Rather, it is only the beginning, the birth; the growth must follow; the death unto sin, the new birth unto righteousness must now be apparent in life; otherwise we shall have received the grace of God in vain! Nor does the passage teach that baptism without faith and repentance is effectual to salvation for it is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God."

It is indeed strange how the sectarians preach a figurative gospel, a figurative baptism, for salvation "in a figure" and yet want a literal Heaven! All their "figures" should result in figurative Heaven for consistency sake.

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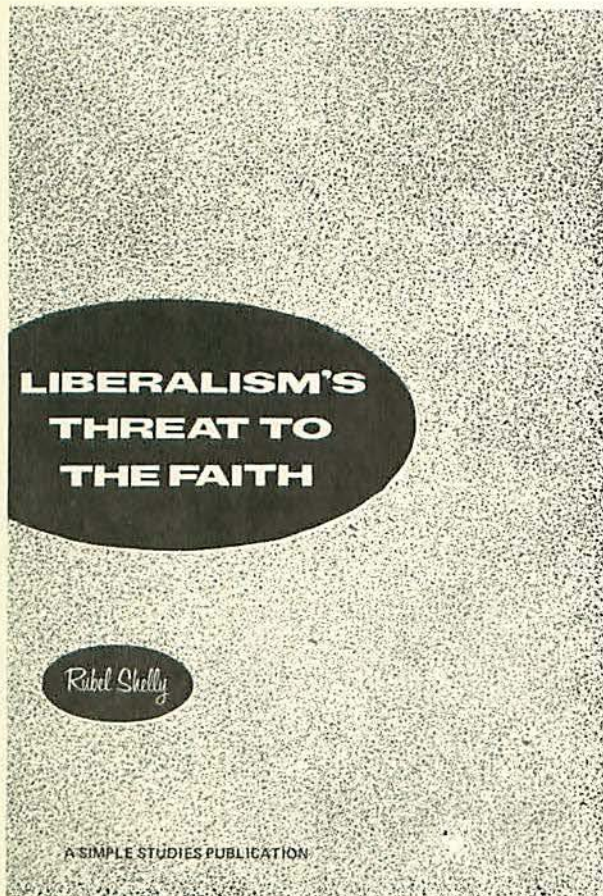
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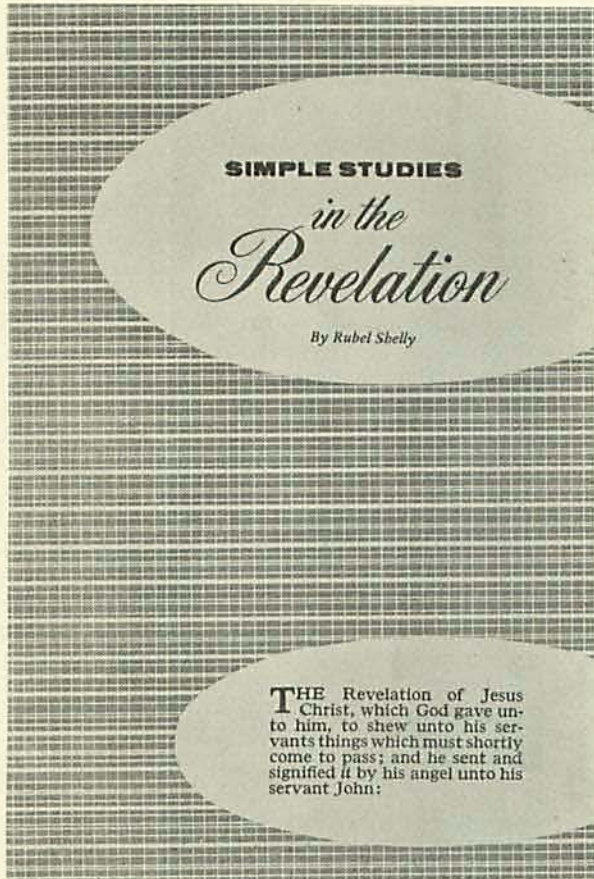
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