

# Plain Truth

"WE USE GREAT PLAINNESS OF SPEECH....." II COR. 3:12

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## PRESSURE AND THE HERALD OF TRUTH

(Editor's Note: We hope you will read and re-read this good article by bro. James P. Miller. It will help you to see just what kind of high-pressure organization Herald of Truth is. The directors of this missionary organization are the Highland elders in Abilene, Texas. These elders spend the money of over 2,000 churches of Christ, and they aspire to have a budget of \$2,239,250.00 by the year of 1969. Only a small amount of this money will come from the treasury of Highland, the rest coming from churches of Christ throughout the world. Brother Miller reveals to us the high-pressure methods they are using to raise this money. Wake up, brethren, before it is too late! The New Testament reveals no plan for all churches to work through any central agency of any description. dt)

In defense of the Herald of Truth and the work of the Highland Church in Abilene, the argument has been made over and over that cooperation with the program is

purely voluntary. This was the same claim made for the Missionary Society in another era. Advocates of the program have said that no pressure is used and the autonomy of a single congregation in regard to support has never been violated. I have known for a long time that this was not true. Early in the days of its beginning while the Seminole congregation for which I still preach met on North St., we had a letter from brother W. F. Cawyer suggesting that he come and speak in behalf of the Herald of Truth. The elders had me write him that we already had our work planned and that it would not be suitable for him to come. To our surprise brother Cawyer came right on anyway and planned to speak.

After the debate I had with G. K. Wallace in Tampa this summer, I found in the meeting house at Seminole a large book entitled, "THE HERALD OF TRUTH STORY." This work was an inch thick, printed on letter size paper and double spaced. It was a costly production. The  
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same amount of material could have been published at far lesser cost simply by single spacing it and printing it on both sides of the paper, but of course that would not have made as imposing a book. It is divided into twenty-one sections and tells of the work of the program and of the Highland church. The pages are not numbered, but in section 18 Waymen Wilkerson under the heading, "What Can You Do", gives instructions on how to raise money from the churches. This instruction was given to 500 brethren called "Key Men" who had been called to Abilene for just this purpose. I want to quote from his report and then leave every fair minded reader to judge for himself if the claim of no pressure is true or false. On the third page of his speech we find this:

"I know from experience what you will be facing. Let me tell you in part what you can expect.

"Steaming hot or bitter cold telephone booths, trying to set up an appointment that no one wants to give. Truculent elderships that can't understand why Highland must continually have more money to carry on this program of preaching and teaching. Indifference from "Christians" everywhere. They are content with the status-quo - 'why rock the boat!', besides we are already having budget problems.

"The preacher with a program of his own and he can't understand why anyone else would want to put another program in his town. (He might want to be the only preacher in the world too.) I could go on and on in this vein, but not

much would be accomplished."

Let us take a moment and analyze what brother Wilkerson said. First get the appointment regardless of whether the congregation wants it or not. Stay in the cold or hot phone booth and insist on a meeting that "no one wants to give." If this is not a violation of local autonomy, where on earth would we find one? Suppose I treat the Highland church in the same manner. Stay in the phone booth and continue to call for an appointment that they did not "want to give?" The outcome would be that they would tell me to mind my own business, that they would see to their own work. Brethren, this is not true with the Herald of Truth; the instructions are to stay with it until you get the desired audience and the elders that will not give it or do not want to submit are "truculent elders." I suggest that every elder in the church look up this word and decide for himself if not supporting every scheme proposed by the brethren makes him a wild or fierce elder.

Then the word Christian is in quotation marks along with the term indifferent. Does brother Wilkerson mean by this that no child of God can be indifferent to the Herald of Truth and be a Christian? What about pressure in this suggestion of what is required to be a Christian without quotation marks.

The third thing worthy of notice is this: It does not make any difference about the condition of the church financially, try to get

the money anyway. Upset the "status-quo" and disregard the problems they may already have in meeting their budget. Brethren, what would they have to do to violate local autonomy.

The last thing worthy of notice in this part of the address is the instruction to totally disregard the will of the local preacher. It does not make any difference to the men at Highland if he has a program of his own or how much good it is doing or how hard a time the brethren may be having paying for it, try to put the Herald of Truth in regardless of all of these things. The statement, "He might want to be the only preacher in the world too," is one of the most unfortunate I have ever seen. I suppose the true meaning is simply that he wants to be the only preacher in the world, but the addition of the little word "too" means there are two competing for this distinction, and since the local preacher and the Herald of Truth are the only two involved the conclusion is inevitable, the H of T desires the same thing. There is this difference even if the charge were true: the local preacher is doing his work at the local level and has little chance to be the only program in the world, while our brethren in Abilene have all the machinery to take over the task.

On page seven the instructions continue:

"As you make your appointments, stress the points over and over that you want to put across. Don't

be bashful or apologetic about asking for an appointment. Be proud of the team effort that is being made on behalf of the Herald of Truth, and be proud that you have an opportunity to be a part of the team.

"Impress on the person with whom you are dealing that he or the congregation of which he is a member needs to have a part in this effort. Tell him that you know he will want to have a part.

"If necessary, briefly outline your personal schedule of calls and state you would like to meet on a certain night because it fits your schedule. You might also state that you have very recent information on the Herald of Truth that you feel certain they will want to hear. Don't ask if he wants to hear it, or don't ask if it will be all right if I come to speak. Emphasize the necessity of your coming."

Many of the selling organizations of this world would not use such pressure methods. Such, in some places would not "be so much as named among the Gentiles." Brethren, listen to what was said; heed the warning. "DON'T ASK IF HE WANTS TO HEAR IT OR DON'T ASK IF IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT IF I COME AND SPEAK. EMPHASIZE THE NECESSITY OF YOUR SPEAKING." A simple look at Webster's Collegiate Dictionary will give the meaning that the elders in Abilene have in mind for the word NECESSITY, "that which is unavoidable because compelled."

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## PRESSURE AND THE HERALD OF TRUTH continued

I want brother Wallace to be prepared to answer these things in our next debate. He has promised to use his influence to repeat the discussion in the cities where brethren operate schools, and I will be waiting for his answer. If these statements of policy and intent given to the 500 "Key Men" in Abilene and published in their own work book on the "Herald of Truth Story" do not prove that it is the purpose of the entire organization to force their way into the treasury of every church on earth, I am frank to confess I do not know how it can be proven.

Elders need to remember that it does not make any difference whether you want to hear it or not, or whether you want to give permission or not; it is necessary. It does not matter about your own programs; it is necessary. It does not matter whether you have the money or not; it is necessary, and the only course open to you is to submit. May God help us to see that it is

the old Missionary Society story all over again, and that it will break down the autonomy of every church that will not stand on its own feet.

(From - SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES,  
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## SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Roy Cogdill

"The simple facts of New Testament Church organization are these: (1) Qualified men appointed as "elders" in every church. (2) These qualified men to have the "rule", or have the oversight of all the affairs of the church. (3) Elders to have oversight of just one local church. (4) Elders to have the oversight of no other organization in their jurisdiction as elders. (5) Elders to have the oversight of no function that does not belong to the local church.

"That is how simple God's plan for the government of His Church is and He will countenance no perversion or corruption of it. To depart from it is to apostatize and denominationalize the church."

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