

11-10-1963

## Correspondence between Chalk & J.T. Smith -- INTERESTING

John Allen Chalk

J.T. Smith

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Belmont Heights  
Church of Christ

J. T. Smith, Evangelist

November 10, 1963

Mr. John Allen Chalk  
% Broad Street church of Christ  
Cookeville, Tennessee

Dear John:

I received a newspaper article last week regarding the proposal for the Broad Street church being moved to a new location. I was surprised to hear that the congregation there has "outgrown" as large a building as the building in which they are now meeting. I am reluctant to believe it since the proposed new building is to have its beginning with a "325 seat chapel." I was of the opinion that the Broad Street building would seat that many people without any difficulty.

There are, however, some things in this article I just cannot understand. The article stated that building plans included a "day school." I had some hope that as you studied the orphan home and sponsoring church question that you would eventually oppose them, for when Louis Garrett returned from Cookeville last summer, he told me that you were OPPOSED to taking money from the church treasury to send to a school. Then, the next thing I heard from you was this article about your not only SUPPORTING a school, but actually BUILDING one. Now, of course, since brother Garrett was there you must have discovered some passage of Scripture that would justify such an arrangement. If you have, I would like to know what it is. If not, why are you engaging in it, or are you in the habit of engaging in things without Scriptural authority?

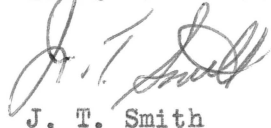
Next, I notice that you are going to have a "fellowship hall." Now what Scripture will you use to try to justify a fellowship hall or kitchen's being purchased with money that was contributed into the church treasury? Is it the work of the local church from its common treasury to feed the physical bodies of people who are not needy saints, or is it their work to feed the spiritual bodies?

I also noted that you are going to have a "nursing home" ---what ever that may mean. I said some time ago that it wouldn't be five years until the brethren would be building hospitals in the United States, and perhaps this is just a second cousin to one. Is it? and would you be opposed having a church of Christ hospital?

The article further states that the "fellowship hall can double as a Gym." Now that caps the stack! Are the elders over all these things? I didn't know that the elders as elders had Scriptural authority to oversee kitchens, gyms, schools, nursing homes, etc., but then there are many things I don't know. Therefore, I am asking for information on these matters.

I will appreciate an answer from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours for Truth,

  
J. T. Smith

5701 30th St  
Tampa, Florida  
33610  
6-2

In that same paragraph you mentioned "the needy saints only" doctrine which is the most pernicious, damnable, ungodly, and anti-christian doctrine ever devised by the depraved mind of man. The nursing home you are so concerned about will again be organized in such a way as to take care of these "needy saints" about which you mockingly November 21, 1963d. It will probably be best for you to wait and see the developments on this subject before mounting your miniature soap box.

The gym is the invention of the press but if a day school Mr. J. T. Smith, Florida (non-christian) College the fellowship 5701 30th Street for that purpose by that group. Tampa, Florida 33610

Your last statements in the recent letter certainly do not Dear J. T.: real reasons for the letter and I hasten to confess that I do not understand by what stretch of your consummate pride you I am extending a courtesy to you that you were unwilling to extend to me in August of last year when I wrote you a letter motivated by sincere concern. Your recent letter has been received and its implied spirit completely unappreciated.

By some divine revelation (aid) you know the bishop of Your first paragraph cast aspersions on our reasons for building a new building. I realize it is strange for "anti's" of your legalistic stripe to conceive of some congregations baptizing enough people each year to "out grow" any kind of building. You obviously or intentionally overlooked the 1600 seat auditorium that will be built as soon as funds are provided. The chapel will be used in three morning services to take care of crowds which are attending our services. Of course, I realize that the "Anti" Bible has a scripture against large congregations.

John Allen Chalk

You assume a role which neither your learning or experience dictates when you make certain glib remarks about the day school. Out of difference to your lack of information, I will state that if such a school is started that it will be organized just like Florida (non-christian) College and will simply utilize the facilities of Broad Street's new building on a rental basis like the Episcopalians did at the school mentioned above.

Your complete lack of understanding of the New Testament Church causes you to make certain statements about the proposed fellowship hall. As in so many areas, you have failed to learn how often and for what reasons the Church came together to eat, to have social relationship, and to generally learn better how to love and co-operate with one another.

In that same paragraph you mentioned "the needy saints only" doctrine which is the most pernicious, damnable, ungodly, and anti-christian doctrine ever devised by the depraved mind of man. The nursing home you are so concerned about will again be organized in such a way as to take care of these "needy saints" about which you mockingly are so concerned. It will probably be best for you to wait and see the developments on this subject before mounting your miniature soap box.

The gym is the invention of the press but if a day school is organized like Florida (non-christian) College the fellowship hall may be used for that purpose by that group.

Your last statements in the recent letter certainly do not offer the real reasons for the letter and I hasten to confess that I do not understand by what stretch of your consummate pride you can demand or even "appreciate an answer" at my earliest convenience. It now appears that you have gone the way of all of the "Antis". By some divine revelation (sic) you are now the bishop of Putnam County though living in Tampa, Florida. The remarks addressed to you in this letter have not come because of any obligation which I feel to answer your letter. They rather have been prompted by my pity for your ignorance.

Concernedly yours,  
It seems from your notes to report that some of your new friends are as desirous of your attending school as you are.

I am writing out John Allen Chalk for your future usefulness to the cause of the Master. I pledge my help to you if such is needed and desired. I cannot approve or in any way offer encouragement to your position recently acquired. If you could hear the ranting of the ignorant being who now fills the pulpit at Jew Whitson, you would be appalled also.

If I can be of help in getting you to school at Lipscomb, at Freed-Hardeman, or at Tech, I will be happy to do so.

Fraternally yours,

John Allen Chalk

JAC/sw



# BELMONT HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Phone 237-5485

5701 30th Street

Tampa 10, Florida

November 27, 1963

August 21, 1962

Mr. John Allen Chalk  
P. O. Box 474  
Cookeville, Tennessee

Mr. J. T. Smith  
4416 Bass Street  
Tampa 10, Florida

Dear J. T.:

I was grieved to learn recently from Lilton Way that you had returned to the "anti" fold. I read of your move to Tampa but was not aware at the time of what caused it. Last week I received a call from your mother and then visited in her home. Needless to say, she is deeply troubled about your new convictions. Her loads have been many in the last several months and your return to former ideas is an additional burden.

I can highly appreciate your desire to go to school. It seems from your mother's report that some of your new friends aren't as desirous of your attending school as you are.

I am writing out of a deep concern for your future usefulness to the cause of the Master. I pledge my help to you if such is needed and desired. I cannot approve or in any way offer encouragement to your position recently acquired. If you could hear the ranting of the ignorant being who now fills the pulpit at Jere Whitson, you would be appalled also.

If I can be of help in getting you in school at Lipscomb, at Freed-Hardeman, or at Tech, I will be happy to do so.

Fraternally yours,

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JAC/sw

# BELMONT HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Phone 237-5485

5701 30th Street

Tampa 10, Florida

November 27, 1963

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Mr. John Allen Chalk  
P. O. Box 474  
Cookeville, Tennessee

Dear John:

When I received your letter, I didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. I had no idea that my asking for Scriptural authority for a thing would cause a man for whom I have always had such high esteem personally, to react like a sectarian preacher when he is asked for Scriptural authority for salvation by faith and prayer. I realize that my secular educational advantages and achievements have been greatly inferior to yours. I had difficulty in making myself believe that I was reading a letter that expressed the sentiments of the heart of my old friend John Allen Chalk. I could not understand by any stretch of my imagination, how my letter of November 10 could so upset you emotionally as to provoke you to say the unkind things you have said about me, and to talk about the "implied spirit" of my letter. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor.2:11) It is almost unbelievable that instead of giving Scriptural authority for the things that we obviously are in disagreement on, that you would spend two pages ridiculing my letter and my motives and trying to justify what you are engaging in by what someone else is practicing or has practiced. It would have been so much simpler just to cite Scriptural authority for such practices, and then, even with my limited ability, I could have understood plain Bible teaching. I beg you to forgive me for any wrong spirit which you read into my letter. If such exists, it certainly is a mistake of the head, and not the heart.

It appears that I have offended you by not replying to your letter of last August. I did not realize that you were offended about it. It is quiet possible that I made a mistake by not replying, though I had never thought that the letter required a reply. I saw no point whatever in changing schools for there is no difference in the academic standing of Lipscomb, Freed-Hardeman and Florida College. The main reason, however, for my desiring to remain at Florida College, was to study under men who oppose the very issues about which you and I are corresponding---whereas I believe that teachers in the other schools teach false doctrine on the same matters. Not only this, but you and many of your colleagues have sought to degrade Florida College by referring to it as "Florida (non-christian) College." Your reference to this comes, no doubt, from the fact that the word "Christian" was removed from the name. But, let me ask you this, when they changed the name of the school in Nashville from "Nashville Bible School to David Lipscomb College" did they take the "Bible" out of the school, and should we now refer to it as "David Lipscomb (non-Bible) College?"

November 27, 1963

And since Freed-Hardeman has never had the word "Bible" or "Christian" in its name, am I to assume that it should be called Freed-Hardeman (non-Bible and non-Christian) College? Really! I thought you were a bigger man than that, but then how could an "ignoramus" like me be any judge of character?

Your observation that "I cast aspersions on our reasons for building a new building" misses my point completely. I did not cast aspersions at all, I merely stated that I was surprised to hear that the Broad Street congregation had "out grown" its present building when it proposed to build a new building with a "325-seat chapel." Certainly I can understand how three services a day could accomodate present audiences. I do not understand, however, your statement, "I realize that the 'Anti' Bible has a scripture against large congregations." Maybe you have an explanation of this statement, but it makes no sense whatever to me. I have never heard of anybody that quoted any passage to indicate how large or small any congregation should be. I have heard people express judgment on this matter just as you have indicated that you feel that one should be at least 1600 under some circumstances. I find no fault with this point per se.

I fail to understand why you get so upset about my remarks regarding "the day school." Have you changed your mind about church support of schools since you discussed this matter with brother Garrett last summer? In view of the statement you made, I can not help believing that you believe that such action would be Scriptural. If this practice is right, then I need the Scripture to quote to my brethren who ask about this practice. I am forced to the conclusion that you believe that it is in harmony with the Scriptures for Broad Street to rent its facilities to some human organization and receive pay from this human organization for its facilities. Here I need another passage of Scripture. Where is the divine authority for raising money in this manner? What is the difference in securing money this way and selling cake and ice cream? Again, if you can rent one part of the facilities then why can't you rent any other part, or all of its facilities? Why not arrange the seats in the auditorium so they will revolve into the wall and rent the auditorium for a skating rink? Are you now in the position to defend this practice? Are you saying now that after all the big ado about Florida College renting a room to the Episcopalians that you have decided that this was all right, and is all right even for the Lord's church? In any event, if you believe that the New Testament teaches that a church may make donations to a school or any other human organization, you will help many of us to solve many problems by just simply citing the Scripture that teaches it.

I have the same sort of problem with the fellowship hall. You tell me that I "have failed to learn how often and for what reasons the Church came together to eat, and to have social relationship, and to generally learn better how to love and co-operate with one another." This is what I want, John---a passage or the passages in the New Testament that will help me to "learn" what I have "failed to learn." I can read where "the disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7) and I can also read that "the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom.14:17). I can also read where Paul said to the church at Corinth, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say

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to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not...if any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment" (1 Cor.11:22,34). Now, will you please tell me where the Lord ever commanded His church to "eat" anything together except the Lord's supper?

At first I thought you were about to deny that the church could build a gymnasium but since you say it is alright that a day school be organized like the college and this "day school may use the fellowship hall for a gym," it matters little about the inaccuracy of the press report insofar as what is actually intended, does it? As I understand the situation, the brethren will contribute on the first day of the week into the church treasury. This money will then be used to build a fellowship hall which will be used as a gymnasium for physical exercise and other physical activities and this, in turn, will be used both by the church and the school but the school will pay the church for the use of the fellowship hall for its physical activities, Is this the idea? I need a Scripture for this also, John. If I have misunderstood what you have said, then perhaps you will clarify the matter for me.

*isn't what was asked*

I simply asked if it was the responsibility of the Lord's church to feed the physical bodies instead of the spiritual bodies, and that of the saints, and instead of answering my question you say that this doctrine is "the most pernicious, damnable, ungodly, and anti-christian doctrine ever devised by the depraved mind of man." Now, John, it would have been much simpler for you to have supplied the Scriptures at my request than it would have been for you to display your vocabulary. If you had told me the Scripture that authorized this, I would be in the position to teach others the truth on this subject. The way it is, I am in the same boat now that I was to begin with, and not a single Scripture to paddle it with. So, why not just present the Scripture instead of "making fun" of me and accusing me of being "mockingly concerned" about this matter?

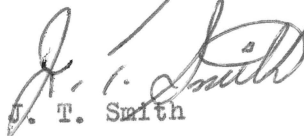
Your observations concerning my assuming the role of "the bishop of Putman County though living in Tampa, Florida" is really beneath your dignity, don't you think? Am I to understand that even though you live in Putman County, that you were trying to be "the bishop of Tampa, Florida" because you wrote me a personal letter in August last year soliciting my enrolling in a school other than Florida College? I know that I am not very smart, but even I can reason better than that. As I said before, I truly regret that my simple request for Scriptural authority for practices that you are promoting has so upset you. I shall attribute your remarks regarding my motives to your emotional upset. I am sorry that a man whom I have always esteemed as being "great in the kingdom" now says that his reply to my request for Scriptural authority has "been prompted by pity for my ignorance" rather than by a love for my soul. I simply cannot understand why, John, this kind of reason should be given by one who claims to walk in the footsteps of Him who was willing to die for ME. Jesus found time to help the Publicans, sinners and all who sought the truth. I am sorry that you feel that I am too LITTLE for you to teach.

*do not want teaching*

November 27, 1963

Let me again remind you that you wrote me a two page letter, and not ONE time on either of them did you cite ONE PASSAGE of Scripture for the practices about which I wrote. Regardless of what you think of me or my motives, will you not PLEASE, in heaven's name, present the Scripture for the practices you are promoting.

Your Servant for Christ's Sake,

  
J. T. Smith



November 21, 1963

Mr. J. T. Smith  
5701 30th Street  
Tampa, Florida 33610

Dear J. T.:

I am extending a courtesy to you that you were unwilling to extend to me in August of last year when I wrote you a letter motivated by sincere concern. Your recent letter has been received and its implied spirit completely unappreciated.

Your first paragraph cast aspersions on our reasons for building a new building. I realize it is strange for "anti's" of your legalistic stripe to conceive of some congregations baptizing enough people each year to "out grow" any kind of building. You obviously or intentionally overlooked the 1600 seat auditorium that will be built as soon as funds are provided. The chapel will be used in three morning services to take care of crowds which are attending our services. Of course, I realize that the "Anti" Bible has a scripture against large congregations.

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JAC/sw