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## Correspondence between Chalk & Dwain Evans

Dwain Evans

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# THE CHURCH

## IN WEST ISLIP

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August 3, 1965

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

Dear John Allen:

I am writing to you, Bill Banowsky and Wesley Reagan to see if we could set up a 9 a. m. conference session Saturday morning, September 4, in the library of the Golf Course Road building. I am enclosing a prospectus that I would like for you to examine critically.

As you examine this prospectus I hope you will keep two things foremost in mind. First, is there a need; and secondly, if there is a need will there be a real market for it among the majority of those who constitute our fellowship. This initial conference is exploratory. No decisions will be made at this time.

We are simply seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a matter which could have a powerful effect for good or which, if wrongly handled, could bring about much evil. I would appreciate it if you would write me and let me know whether you can make this meeting. God bless you in the ministry of His Son.

Yours in the Way,



Dwain Evans

DE/dh

P.S. For the time being I would appreciate it if you did not mention this matter to anyone except those whose names appear in this letter.

## PROSPECTUS

### Part One A Statement of Belief

Revised 4-16

We believe in the eternal relevance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In Christ, and Christ alone, is the power to save man "from this crooked age" and from himself. And we believe that Jesus has in no way compromised the complete commitment he demands of his disciples. "If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine," he tells us, "he must leave self behind he must take up his cross and come with me. Whoever cares for his own safety is lost; but if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self."

For Jesus' first-century disciples, faith was a fatal proposition. Now it is not so. But if Christianity is to exhibit the dynamic power and relevance that Jesus brought to it, immediate steps must be taken to initiate renewal, *objectives* to imprint upon the consciousness of every believer that not less than his *for members* life is required of him. The church that Jesus told his followers he would build was a deeply penetrating communion of the committed, welded together by the all pervasive action of the Holy Spirit.

All about us are the fruits of a secularized Christianity that demand only ritual observance and minimal acceptance. Standards of success are measured in the size of congregational budgets and attendance.

How are we to bridge this gulf between the Christianity of Christ and the "Christianity" that surrounds us? How are we to influence the mass of church members in our day to become a true communion completely dedicated to Jesus Christ?

To this dilemma there is no simple solution. The call is one of uncompromising discipleship, and such commitment is extremely difficult

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to achieve on a mass level. But the burden of our conscience dictates that we attempt to reach as many people as possible with a message of renewal. And so we propose to begin a new publication dedicated to this purpose, a bi-weekly magazine that will speak to contemporary man in vital, energetic language.

recurring emphasis

to man or  
Christ - man

Too often, modern Christianity has isolated itself from the world it proposes to save. Instead of dealing with the contemporary concerns, it has offered answers to questions the world is not asking. A journal that presents the Biblical always contemporary Christ must speak clearly and incisively. It must deal with the searching questions of this age, demonstrating that man's only hope lies in Christ and not in political and social activism.

Objective 2  
present contemporary Christ

Such a journal must "hunger and thirst after righteousness" it must always openly seek the truth -- the truth that heals, the truth that liberates. It must then be ever prepared to re-evaluate the precepts and presuppositions under which it operates. It must not fear intensive introspection of the methods, motives, mission and message of the church that claims to be Christ's. It must not hesitate to subject its tradition to the searching light of the teachings of Christ.

This journal must attempt to bridge the gaps between Christian communions, "that they may all be one." It must offer not a sect but a Saviour as the answer to Christian schism. It must plead that it represents "Christians only," not "the only Christians."

Objective 3  
ecumenical emphasis

The platform of this publication is to be unequivocally evangelical, presenting Christ alone as he is revealed by the Holy Spirit. Its sole recognized authority will be that of holy scripture. That God has spoken

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to man, revealed himself to us through Jesus Christ in holy scripture; that this same Jesus offers us his healing, cleansing power as a gift through our faith; that this gift is available to all men who will commit themselves completely to his will -- this is our plea.

At no time in the history of mankind have mass-communications media <sup>relation</sup> ~~been~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~exercised~~ <sup>out</sup> ~~so~~ <sup>opportunity</sup> ~~powerful~~ an influence as in the American of today. Political factions, in such journals as the Nation, New Republic, and National Review, and religious factions, in Christianity Today, Commonweal, Christian Century, Christianity and Crisis, and many others, are striking with a pronounced impact into vital nerve centers of the thinking American consciousness. All of these publications espouse a sectarian or secular viewpoint, or a combination of the two. There is no comparable force presenting plain Christianity.

~~There~~ There are at present available within the fellowship of the churches of Christ committed, intelligent and eloquent men and women who, speaking through a journal of this nature, could begin to bring about in the hearts of men the reformation demanded by their Saviour. We then plead for this: that these men of God be given such an opportunity to speak, for the glory <sup>to offer</sup> of God.

*Objective & answer for those not now allowed to be heard*