

INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST  
A/K/A BOSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST MOVEMENT

AUDIO TAPE TRANSCRIPT

Indianapolis Church of Christ  
Ed Powers, Evangelist Speaking at  
Leaders Meeting  
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Transcribers Notes:

- audience reactions in brackets (..)
- transcribers comments in square brackets [..]
- paragraphs numbered for reference purposes [1]

[Ed Powers] . . . at the present time and what's transpired since we last got together and so forth. Basically what has happened since - and for those of you, there might have been some of you not here Sunday night - but basically we talked to the church and we talked about the fact that myself and the staff had come to some convictions about some things from the Word. We shared those things with the church. The church, that portion of the church that was here, voiced overwhelming support. We really had two goals. Does anybody not know what these things are that we talked about. Just one or two of you. Ok, basically what we talked about, and I took two hours to cover this OK so your going to get the thumb nail version. We talked about the fact that it has created a problem having ,well basically in 1988, when Chicago came to us and talked to us about reconstructing the church and really about us being pulled into the discipling movement. What was proposed at that time was that we were going to have relationships that were going to be based upon cooperation and working together for the common good to evangelize the world. And I think were all in favor of that, were still in favor of that. I was in favor of that at that time.

However, I shared that things have gradually, over a period of time, changed - to where we now have, and are living and operating under, a very rigid system of church government and authority that very closely resembles the Catholic church. It is organized with one man at the top. There is no doubt about that. He claims to be the one man at the top and things filter down from there. (inaudible comment) Yes, I've heard him make that claim publicly. He said the movement is always lead by man in the Bible and he is that man today. That is very very clearly defined, it was not always so, but it is now. It is very clearly defined.

I beg your pardon. (inaudible comment) Yes, I mean there's even in the guide lines a - this is the information that I didn't share - **but there is even in the written guide lines for the Int'l Churches of Christ, there is a policy of succession. Where it is set-up to say who will succeed Kip if something were to happen to him. So, it is a very rigid system.**

Basically what we have, because of being under this rigid system, we no longer have really a situation where we are voluntarily cooperating with one another. And basically that leaves us in the position - and this is the problem that I shared - that I feel I can no longer function or I feel that we should no longer function under. That what ever basically is expected of us; there is great pressure brought to bear to produce whatever is expected of us. The illustrations: special

missions contribution - **the amount is assigned - the time we're to give is assigned - that we have no input into that. And that is something basically that is passed down to us through the structure that exists.**

Things like giving per member is monitored, certain expectations as to what our giving per member should be. Attendance is monitored, again with certain expectations our attendance is rated - bad, good, great, awesome and those expectations exist. Our leaders, people, are expected to be made available, and we've often - I mean since I've been back here - **we've been put in the position where we've had to plug in very inexperienced leaders in place of more mature leaders that have been taken from us. And because of plugging in those inexperienced leaders it does create a leadership void and a lot of times peoples needs are not met.** We'll go out and we study the Bible with people and I feel we are making a commitment to those people to provide help, discipling, help with their marriage, help with their children, that they need in order to make it. I feel like if we - as a church - if we can not and do not have the ability to say "no we can't give you this leader, or we can't give you these leaders at this time". We don't have that right. And then we're pretty well left to pick up the pieces that are left behind when leaders are taken from us with out really our consent.

We studied out how God's plan in the Bible is unity through acceptance of diversity. Romans 14 & 15, 1st Corinthians 10, Galatians 1 & 2, 1 Corinthians 16:12. We studied out those passages and saw that God's plan that we be unified, that we cooperate together - we believe that - but that is going to happen not because we all agree to adhere to a rigid system of government which legislates, which passes down our doctrine, which passes down our policies. Our doctrine, our policies are set for us by a church 2000 miles away, by people who in many cases have never even been here. That often times inadvertently creates some serious problems.

That was my - I said that I feel that everybody has a good heart. I do not question that the people involved are sincere. I believe that they are sincere. But I believe that churches, such as ours, are inadvertently damaged by the way things are set-up. I also believe that when error is embraced at the top inadvertently that error ends up permeating through out all the churches. And I believe, and I've experienced this in my own life, that leaders tend to be robbed of their zeal to study the Bible when we are really not free to stand up and teach what we have learned from the Bible. I have found that personally that is intolerable - to me anymore - personally.

Secondly, I said that I have a problem with the fact only teaching - **again this is a clearly stated teaching, I've heard it expressed in a number of ways in my own years from the leader of the movement - and that is that only those that are members of the Int'l Church of Christ are saved.** Now if you press that they will concede that there - I don't know if Kip will, but I know that others have conceded - that theoretically there might be, there could be someone out there somewhere who maybe, possibly could be saved. However, as far as any other groups of people being saved, or anything resembling large numbers of people or anything like that - the belief is that only those members of the Int'l Church of Christ are saved.

**It has also been stated repeatedly that the Int'l Church of Christ is the kingdom - not a part of God's kingdom - but it is God's kingdom - all the kingdom.** I pointed out that I feel that comes from a gross misunderstanding of the scriptures. A gross misunderstanding of the difference between the gospel, which when obeyed makes a person a Christian, and the many doctrines of the Bible on which, the truth is we're never going to be

totally in agreement. Or totally of the same mind. The only way you can be totally- a group of people can be totally of the same mind on all the many doctrines of the Bible - would be if you are willing to acquiesce your opinion and just simply accept mine. Personally I don't believe that's healthy. I don't believe that's right. I don't believe we should ask people to do that. I think you have opinion like I have opinion. The Bible teaches that two people can be of opposite opinions concerning religious issues and that both can stand approved before God. Romans 14. The fact that both are sincere, that both are fully convinced in their own minds, the Bible says God is able to make both of those people stand. The system that we have though is that there is not room for any disagreement on the creed, the doctrines of the Int'l CoC. There is no room for disagreement, it is legislated for us from the top. I have a problem guys, I mean I can't help it - it is not scriptural - the problem of the fact [that] any group, any religious group, any group of people, that goes through and picks out all the doctrines in the Bible that they feel are important and makes all of those doctrines prerequisite to salvation - there is a problem.

The Bible says that the gospel consists of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ and our response to that action on His part - by accepting Him as Lord, repenting and being baptized for the remission of our sins. That's the gospel. The gospel is what gets you into a saved relationship with God. The discipling ministry has taken the words "go make disciples", which appears in one of the synoptic accounts of the "great commission" - it does not appear in Mark's account or Luke's account, and Matthew's account says "go make disciples". The doctrine the discipling ministry has taken that word, which means 'learner'- and if translated as 'learner', then we are to go make 'learners', help people to learn about Jesus and what he did for them. If you interpret it in that way then it harmonizes with Mark's account and it harmonizes with Luke's account. If, on the other hand, you take that word 'disciple' and say "Here's what we're going to do with it ." We're going to go back and we're going to again comb through the scriptures a find out everything the Bible says about what it means to be a disciple. And we're going to bring that over and we're going to apply all of that to the word 'disciple' and make a person adhere to all of that before we will allow them to be baptized, and to receive salvation. If we're going to do that then I think we have a major problem in harmonizing Matthew's account with Mark's account and Luke's account. Which do not do that.

We not only interpret "go make disciples" as calling people to adhere to all the teaching in the NT on discipleship, in fact, what is done is that we have taken and applied to peoples lives - we have required of them that they agree with all of our teachings which we deem important. i.e. The Church study, The Word study, The kingdom study - if we think they need it, The Holy Spirit studies, The Persecution study, The Light and Darkness studies. We at any point, at any point in that process - now I want you to think with me for a minute - at any point in that whole process which includes all the scriptures that we've deemed to be important, any point it breaks down and the person we're studying with says "Look, I just don't agree with you on this one", if we can't get him over the hump, if we can't t accept all of our doctrine then we do not allow him to be baptized. Even to the point, as I shared with the group Sunday night, even to the point of sometimes throwing in arbitrary tests of his discipleship. For example, I shared the illustration of a young man who had gone through the whole study series and had not gotten hung up and wanted to be baptized. He was - the people who were getting ready to baptize him went to their leader, who happened to be a 'World Sector Leader', and excitedly announced the young man was ready to be baptized. The WSL asked them if he had pledged a fraternity and they said "yes". And he said: "Have you talked to him about that?" And they said: "no". [WSL]: "You need to go talk to him and tell him that he can not pledge a fraternity." So they did. And he [the young man] said "My uncle, my dad, my brother were in this fraternity, it's a family tradition. Why?" - "Your going to fall into sin, your going to be caught up in drinking parties, your going

to end up falling away. We will not baptize you unless you agree not to join a fraternity." And the story was told - again I heard this from the mouth of the World Sector Leader - the story is told that he went away sorrowful as did the rich young ruler. [1993 Midwest Leadership Conference - "A New and Living Way", Nick Young 12/31/93 #1672]

Guys, we have got to recognize the difference between gospel, which brings salvation, and all of our favorite doctrines and opinions. Which we teach and then when a guy or a woman disagrees and we can't come to an agreement on one of those many doctrines - then we say "look your not being a disciple". I mean, basically, your not being a disciple if your not willing to agree with whatever I'm teaching. And I have a problem with that and I can't do that anymore.

Thirdly: Giving by compulsion was the third thing. We are required to give a certain set amount during our special missions contribution. This year I believe it was something like \$254,000. I have not figured out how to accomplish that without compelling you to give. We are compelled as a church to give an amount that amounts to fifteen times our regular weekly contribution. Fifteen times - we are compelled to do that. How - in light of the fact that we are compelled as a church to give fifteen times -how do I motivate the church to give without compelling them. In the past I have not been able to do that. I have had to go back to the church - we have had to go back as leaders - over and over again. And many times encourage people, try to help people, push people, make people feel guilty until we finally get the amount that is required. I believe that's giving by compulsion and I'm against that.

And the forth and final thing, is really an opinion, but it's an opinion that I believe we have a right, as a church, to embrace. And that is: **we face, as a church, constant pressure because there are placed upon us, and particularly leaders - it gets passed down from there - many arbitrary expectations, statistics and quotas.** I shared many of those. We are required to report weekly to Chicago, by zone, our attendance, our contribution, our baptisms, our budget, our giving per member, our predicted increase in members, our actual increase in members. Our attendance is analyzed; bad, good, great. Our contribution is analyzed by zone, how much each zone, average giving per member. And all that is analyzed and **we are evaluated and the staff is able to retain their jobs on the basis of performance.**

I believe that pressure gets passed down, clear down to the average member of the church. I believe the church ends up being robbed of her joy because of the pressure. I believe that many people are wounded emotionally, spiritually, when they do not "measure up" to that expectation. I believe that a works mentality has been fostered among us that causes many people to believe, emotionally at least even though intellectually I guess we try to tell people that it's not true, but emotionally we believe and act as though our salvation was dependent upon our works and how we're doing. I don't think you can tell a guy: "I want you to do it because of love." Then tell him your going to set his hair on fire if he doesn't. And have him be motivated by love.

Many of our leaders here confessed that while being under these many statistics and expectations that their first response - the first response in their hearts, and maybe many of you can identify with this - but the first response of their hearts does not tend to be a genuine concern for people. But the first response of our hearts, too many times, tends to be one of self-preservation. Especially for our full time leaders when they see their very livelihood depending on their performance. When somebody's ready to fall away - it's hard not to think of it in terms of "this is going to ruin my month." Instead of just thinking in terms of "man, I hate the fact that this soul is in trouble." I think that comes from the pressure that we are placed under.

Leaders are pressed to baptize, at the end of the month especially. We keep people up late - they don't know why we're doing it. But we do. We are evaluated on a monthly basis and I believe it's unhealthy, it's taken its toll among our churches.

You think what you want, you say what you want. The truth is - the absolute truth is - that the churches in the discipling movement that have been around a long time are not doing well, they're not growing well. The churches that have not been around very long at still growing because the legalism has not caught up to them. The churches in areas of the country where there are more open people to study with than what we have people to study with them are growing rapidly. Older churches - Boston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, San Francisco, San Diego - churches like that are not doing well because they are experiencing pretty much the same thing we have here.

I want to say this, this - I've reiterated this for those of you who did not hear this on Sunday night. Again, I spent two hours - we studied out the scriptures, we went into much detail and I think the conviction of the people was very deep after we did that. But - what has transpired since then - I was talking to Marty Fuqua, I related to him on a number of occasions. At least - I don't know - I know I mentioned it at least four or five times during the various conversations that we had. That it was not our desire to not be in fellowship with the movement. It was not our desire not to give to missions. It was not our desire to not help with leaders or to not help plant churches. I made that clear. The last conversation that we had - I was calling to set up an appointment to get together. Actually he had called me and left a message and I was returning his call. But we were hooking up to set up a time when we could get together to sit down and talk.

When I talked with him on the phone, the last time, I asked him - based on what I had learned, and I wanted to check with him to find out if it was true - I asked him if it was true that they were coming to town, bringing people into town to hold meetings with our church that were not authorized by our leadership which had just received a vote of confidence from the members of this church. He informed me that they were in fact doing that. And subsequently what has happened is there is in town right now or will be arriving tomorrow - many of them who are here or will be here are: Kip McKean, Marty Fuqua, Douglas Author, Bob Gemple, Al Baird, Steve Staton, Dave Eastman, Chris McGrath, James Campbell, John Casey. . . Virtually anyone who would have any in roads or influence into the congregation. Anybody who would have any in roads or influence, it appears, has been brought into town.

Our members are being called, they are being invited to a meeting. I want to make it clear that this is not a meeting that has been scheduled by the leaders of this church. Now, I want to say this: some of you, I know are very curious about that meeting, some of you are probably of the opinion that we all ought to just all go on out to the meeting. I am of the opinion that to place our members under the influence of that kind of fire power is foolish. I do not believe that the average person is going to sit under the likes of Kip McKean, Marty Fuqua, Douglas Author, or an Baird and all these people that we are talking about here - I don't think they are going to be able to subject themselves to that and not be swayed. I personally think it would be foolish to do that. I know that many of you are curious. One of the things I've heard is "Isn't it fair to hear both sides?" Now, I've heard that and I would challenge you to think about what your saying here guys. It's always been my experience that preachers make things sound better than they are. I mean, that's at the very least. Okay? I don't have to go to a meeting on Thursday night and hear people talk about how things ought to be or how things are, or whatever. When I have lived these things for years. Like a lot of you. Why do I have to hear the other side when I have lived

the other side? Many of you have lived the other side. If you are going to be going to a meeting like that I think you are subjecting yourself to the possibility of being influenced by words rather than by what you have experienced.

We have seen one side, I have tried to share with you another side and personally - I just want to lay this out right here - I believe the only hope of there not being a fairly major split in this church is if we are being united. I told Marty Fuqua that I was willing to sit down and talk to him. I also told him that I was not going to sit down and talk with him while he was in the process of phoning all of our members and trying to get them out to a meeting so he could pull them out of our church. I don't believe you can negotiate with a gun to your head. If your under attack you have to defend yourself. I feel very much under attack. I have many, many friends in the movement over the past ten years. Those friends were told not to call me in the last couple of days. Virtually all of those friends, except for maybe two exceptions - Roger Lamb & John Mannel. They called me today. The first couple of days nobody called me and personally guys - I just want to say this - I mean, I've got a problem with that. I've got a problem with an organization that can tell people "don't call your friends". [?] (applause)

I know that many of us are of differing opinions of how this should have been handled. In fairness, I know that some of you have expressed the opinion that what we should have done is that before we went before the congregation that we should have taken these things, first, we should have taken them before Marty Fuqua or Ron Drabot or some other leader. I respect your opinion if you think that, but I'm going to give you my opinion after ten years in the movement and after knowing the people, I think at least as well as most of you. My opinion is that had we done that - then we would have never had gotten our chance to make our case to the people. Because they would be doing then what they are doing now.

Now, I mean personally guys, I don't understand how you can think that they wouldn't do it then when they are doing it now. They are doing it, they are systematically going to every member. They are trying to get with them, they are trying to get them to come to the meeting where they can be swayed.

And the point is guys, what we have done, what we have done to this point, has not been divisive. Because the the only thing that we have done is that we've said number 1: it's hurting us to be under your toe of authority; [2] we don't believe that only those who are members of the International Church of Christ are the only ones saved; [3] we don't believe in giving by compulsion; [4] and your stats are killing us. (applause) That's all we said, I want you to know that. We didn't say - and I made this clear, and some of you want me to go back and keep making it clear over and over. I have made it clear over and over. We didn't say: "we don't want to give to the missions"; "we don't want to help you plant churches"; " we don't want to give people".

We said: We've got to have control over this church in order to do what is best for this church. And get back to cooperation, which was the bill of goods that was sold to us back in 1988 when we went into the movement. That's what was told to us and that is not the way it is today. That's all we said. That's not divisive. We have not said to one single member of the International Church of Christ: "You need to leave the Int'l Church of Christ and come and join us because we're right and you are wrong." We have not done that. But, what is happening today and what will happen all day tomorrow and into the next day is that the . . .

[End of Tape 1; Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]:

. . . both systems guys. I know that a lot of good has been done, I know that. I know that a lot of good people are involved. And on the issues that we have talked about, you got to let those issues stand on their own merits. These things are not right. We are not saying that we don't want anything to do with you, we are just saying "You can not have total control of us." And they are not willing to accept us on that basis. We have not been divisive. They are being divisive. They are approaching the members of our congregation that has received a vote of confidence from the people. They are calling a meeting over our objections. I don't know what could be more divisive than that. And frankly, I'm going to tell you, that I believe that the only hope that we have as a church is to have a united front.

You say "Can we have an impact on the discipling movement?" That was an objective when I went into this, a secondary objective. Secondary to basically getting this church into a situation where we could do what was right without the oppressive things that I've been talking about. That was my first objective, basically that we as a church are doing what is right. A second objective was to, hopefully, influence the discipling movement.

My opinion, for what ever it is worth, after 10 years - and the last two days - of having all my friends turn their back on me, of being lied about, of being slandered, of being not fairly represented, of having virtually every conversation that I've had - when I was truly trying to work things out - having those conversations come back to me from the four corners of the earth. After that I'm not optimistic that we are going to influence the discipling movement, by virtue of their looking at our issues here and saying "Well guys, I think you've got a good point there."

You know, if they agree to number one they loose control of thousands of people who have been taught that they have to do basically whatever they say. If they agree to number two, they are changing the whole basis of their doctrine. Which is: make disciples and baptize them. If they change number three, it will cost them millions of dollars. And if they change number four, they will loose the the type of control which has enabled them to make a lot of statistical gains and growth. I am of the opinion that they are not going to say: "Ok, we will accept you on that basis." They have shown - there has never been any indication that they would do that. I do believe that we can impact the discipling movement. [amen, clapping] If we can remain united as a church. Then they have to come back to the table and talk with me. Instead of going around me, around our leaders, and approaching the church. [amen, clapping]

I told Marty - I'll get your questions, I see you - I told Marty about the over whelming response to these things. And I told him, I said: " Marty, I believe that the response of our people to these things that I shared needs to serve as a 'wake-up call' to the ICC. [that's right] I don't believe that we are the only people who feel this way. [that's right] I don't believe that is a bad here as it is in many other places. The horror stories come in, the legalism that we are made aware of from everywhere. Now look, when you talk to people out here what are you going to hear. What do you hear? You get: "well, that's not happening here." "That's not happening here." "That's not happening here." That's like saying "There's thousands of dead bodies laying around, but nobody shot anybody."

I believe that if this church can be united, that it can be a wake-up call. It's going to have to say: "There is something seriously wrong here that needs to be addressed." And I think it can

change the course of history. [amen] If, if half of us go down there to that meeting, because your curious, because you don't trust us and our opinion here. And it is an opinion. It is a judgment call. I've gone way out on a limb here. [laughter] I've told Marty that the church was behind me, if the church is behind me then maybe we can get something done. If half of you, if half of our people go down there to that meeting because your curious, because you want to hear the other side even though you've lived it. Then they're going to gain a foothold.

These very persuasive people are going to persuade very many people. The church is going to loose large numbers of people. It's going to be a real "downer". And basically I'll go down in history as being just some nut who got a bunch of people stirred up and then they came in and got it all straightened out. If we stand together, guys, we can have an impact. [that's right] And let me tell you something. Right now if you were part of one of these churches that I was describing and I was your leader. I would simply command you not to go to the meeting on Thursday night. And you wouldn't go or you would be disciplined and possible kicked out of the church. I am not commanding you, but I am appealing to you. I'm appealing to you not to talk to them, not to go to their meeting and to leave here tonight and you go get on the telephone and talk to people that you lead, the people in your group and encourage them not to talk to them and not to go to their meeting.

If we do that we will come through it, if we don't we will end up divided. But we'll still be Christian, we'll still be an awesome church. It's going to be awesome. I mean even after all the damage that can be done is done it's till going to be awesome. We will pick up the pieces and we will go on. I'll be here, I'm not going anywhere. [amen] The staff people are going to be here. We may have to get jobs, I mean you know . . . [amen, clapping] But I'm saying guys we can do this in a lot less messy way if you'll trust me and if we'll be together. Maybe you don't agree with my judgment. Think about this for a minute. There is no way on God's green earth that I'm going to be able to do things in such a way that every one of you is willing to agree with my judgment or how I handled it. That's - your right to have that opinion is what I'm fighting for. [that's right] Your right to disagree with me, to disagree with your leaders, to have an opinion that matters is what I'm fighting for here. You have that right, that's why I'm not commanding you. But I am pleading with you. To stay together and see this thing through to the end without tremendous carnage.

I know this is hard. I know that some of you think that you can help if you go to that meeting. I know if you think you can have a sit and talk with somebody. Some of you . . . I admire your hearts to the max. Some of you believe that if we sat down and talked, we could get this all worked out. Guys, I don't think that is going to happen. But I think this can be a wake-up call if they see hundreds of people who say "no more here." And look we still love you and we're not going to judge you - and I'm going to be honest - there was a period of time earlier today when the last thing that I wanted was fellowship with anyone. I think when the dust dies down [inaudible comment] - I know, that is why I was just confessing - [inaudible comment]. I think that is what I just said bro. I did feel that, and I'm hopeful when the dust dies down what we can sit down and we can work things out to where we can have fellowship with one another without controlling one another. [amen] That is what I want.

[male:] . . . inaudible . . . [stand up bro] . . . inaudible . . . I trust the Holy Spirit more than anybody . [?] . I would appeal to your own relationship with God and your own conviction to what is right. We can't follow Ed anymore that we can follow Kip. But we must be heard. The whole movement leadership has come here . [?] . Why can't they come here united, as we are here tonight, and talk with us? When they hear you say it, when they hear me say it, when they

hear Steve \_\_\_\_ say it, when they hear Steve \_\_\_\_ say it: what can they do? If we have conviction in our hearts what is right, no man can change our hearts. And [?] .

[Bobbi Powers:] Stan let me just tell you this, let me answer this. I'm sorry but I've had a rough day today. But, let me just say this. Today I've been on the phone with really great friends of mine that . . . I really could hardly get a word out. After I tried to just say, I said: First of all let me just say: We do not want to leave the movement. We want to help. I said: I know everyone has called us and said "Ed has left the movement and taken as many with him as possible." I said: That's not true, we don't want to leave the movement. I love you, I want to be your friend. And that is as far as I got, Stan. And it was like: you are in sin, you are divisive. I mean, I never got a word out with both of these people that started out this conversation with: "Bobbi, I love you, I'm there for you." And I never got another chance. And I said: Well, I've got to go pick my son up from wrestling. I can't get a word out that you would even listen, you just immediately judge me. And I said: I love you guys, I don't think you're wrong.

And then Stan, I see my daughter on the phone to her friend in Chicago and she said "How's it going, Alex?" And he said: "Hey, did your dad leave the movement?" Some of our very best friends, that we disciplined, and she said: "No, we didn't leave the movement. We want to be friends. My dad just wants to help make the movement better. Are you still coming down in two weekends?" He said: " Well, if I'm allowed to I'll come down and visit." And she said: "Now am I still going to the prom with Dave from Purdue?" He [replied]: "Well, I don't know. I hope." And then I saw my oldest daughter last night, who likes Billy \_\_\_\_\_ in Cincinnati, crying. So I went in there and said "Who are you talking to?" "I'm talking to Billy, Mom". I said "Did he call you or did you call him?" "He called me". I said "Christy, this costing him a fortune, it's been more than an hour and a half." And she was crying at the time and she said "Mom, I don't know what's going to happen. I like Billy - he likes me; but they said that's wrong for him. If he's divisive, and he believes the same things dad believes." Other than that it breaks your heart. I want these relationships and I want to talk. I want - I wanted to be their friend but I couldn't get a word out. And I mean, I'm the women's leader of this church and they wouldn't hear a word - I was in sin.

Kathy \_\_\_\_\_ is here in town, she called to speak with me today, they told me, but I know she is coming. I love Tricia \_\_\_\_\_, I love [?], \_\_\_\_\_ is in town - all those people and I couldn't get a word in , so - I know. I talked to someone on the phone today who said they called Marty [?], they looked up his number and called. They tried to tell him how they felt and were cut off and he said "It's unprecedented what has happened here." So if I thought [?] would listen to us, I'd say call him.

[Ed Powers:] Here's the thing guys. It's just this simple. In situations like this there are always many different opinions about how to handle some things. Thank God that your in a church where yours can be heard. Because the true is, Stan, your opinion would not be welcome in many of the churches we are talking about. You would not have this opportunity. I know we are not all together - we are not going to be all together. If we stay here all night we are not going to be all together on how to handle this. I think that's where leadership comes in. I think that's where you have to dig down a little bit and you have to say "Ok, let's go with something. We've got to try it." I appealing to you to do that. I'm appealing to you to follow the plan that I'm asking you to. I'm going to say this: If any of you see fit not to do that, I mean, that's up to you. That's your right. But I hope you won't.

[Inaudible comment; laughter; more comment ]

[Ed:] All right, I have a suggestion . . .

[More inaudible comment.]

[Transcribers speculation: Why is not the entire congregation here, only leaders?]

[Ed:] Because, guys, think here a minute. You guys, some of you have not been damaged by this. We would have tons of young Christians here, pulling their hair out and saying "I am so confused, I don't know what to do." It's not - guys, why do we need to do this? We have made a decision on the direction that we want to go in as a church.

[inaudible comment - male]

[inaudible comment - female; applause; more comments; more applause ]

[inaudible comment - male; applause]

[inaudible comment - female; applause]

[Ed:] I want to tell you something. I have been in this for 10 years. And I know how it works. Some of you do not know what we are a part of. (that's right) You do not know.

[inaudible comment - female; applause]

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[Tap

[Female asking inaudible question]

[Ed:] I was having talks with Marty Fuqua, I was willing to sit down and talk with him. I am not going to sit down and talk with anybody who is systematically going through this congregation and trying to pull people away. Until that stops, I am not going to talk to anybody. When that stops - I will talk to anybody, any one.

[Another inaudible question or statement]

[Ed:] I know, but that is not the case. I mean it is simply not the case. Half the staff heard me talk to Marty Fuqua on the phone. Right?

[Female 1:] . . .(inaudible) . . . We went to Ed's house Sunday night, we spent the night. When Marty called [?] the staff were there. It was not on the speaker phone. . . . (inaudible)

[Female 2:] I'm sorry, but any way they heard what Ed said. And he said he was willing to get together. He called him very calmly, the staff said that he handled it so well. That he wanted - that these are things that we can not go against our conscience any more. He stressed over and over that we are not going to leave the movement. And just like he said then, we want to be a part of it. I know without a doubt. I trust in that. I know it to be a fact, and [?]. What I want to share is: several years ago I started to come to some of these convictions. The things that happened to us in reconstruction were sinful. And I ...[?]... I love God and I wanted to do what was right. I listened to things - they told me things about myself that were not true, they said I was ungodly. That all the things that I know that God did in my life, I've seen great things. "That if you want to believe God did them - that's your priority. If you want to believe your saved -

that's fine. Now I had to get [re]baptized. Now it came across as if it was my decision. But in order to survive - it was not my decision. I - there were so many things that happened that destroyed me. Those of you who know how I was, and I can say ...[?]. I had one of the strongest faiths in this church. Everything I prayed happened and I loved God and I did think he was an awesome God - in the right since. I bowed down because of fear, and I prayed, and all the things I worked hard to believe because it must be true because all these leaders were saying it to me. Well you know what? Now that wasn't true and some people - like Jayne and Roger - they apologized, they apologized. ...[?] they said "We were wrong and I'm sorry." ...[?], no one else has ever apologized. Even though you hear that it was wrong. When did Kip apologize? He's the one who said how to do it. When did the Manels apologize?

Do you want to hear a part of my life talk? ...[inaudible]... half way through. "Just stuff it, I can't take this anymore, it makes me sick." And I had to do a two parter because she ran out of time, telling me all the horrible things about myself. I love all these people, I know that they did it because they're trained ..[?]. I know if anybody questioned that - most of you know that I love Dave and Cathy Eastman. [?], you know that. Cathy called me tonight - I went through a lot yesterday - I mean I was ...(inaudible). they said "I hear things aren't to exciting there" and I said "Well I think they are." Then they accused me of [?] (inaudible comment by another) Okay, all right, I'm sorry. But anyway, I did talk to Cathy. And the thing was - I had more convictions on this even before Ed started talking about it. ...[?] I talked to Ed and Bobbi just a few weeks ago before this even started, that I thought there were really some problems with this and what's going on with the kingdom. And Cathy called me today, and the thing is ...(inaudible) ... and to know God. And tonight I came here sad, because I didn't know what to do. Because she made it sound very persuasive ... You know, it's like I'm back and forth ...[?]. I felt like I had real strong convictions on this. And tonight I just decided, I'm going to write Cathy a letter. I started to think about it, I asked if ...[inaudible]... I cried - I can't cry anymore...[inaudible]... But, I know it's right from the scriptures and I feel like together we'll stand and divided we'll fall. That's what I think.

[Female 3] ...[inaudible]...

Ed Powers: Let me say this, first of all, when your sharing with us let's keep specific personalities out of it because that doesn't work. I mean that doesn't work.

[Female 4] Even if we were saying "We are right and they are wrong", but not loving them is wrong ...[?] But please, please don't slander anybody. (applause)

[Ed:] Everybody, virtually everybody that knows me knows that more than any other church leader in the Midwest that I have been a source of irritation. I speak my mind to the point of making people feel uncomfortable. The fact that I have had problems has been no secret. The last time I tried to share my problems with somebody really high-up I said, "Look, I have some serious reservations about what is going on here." I was told, "We all have reservations Ed, but sometimes you just have to be quiet about it, just go along." I said, "Okay, I can do that." It's been a history with me of being quiet about it and so I can't be quiet about it any longer and then speaking up.

It has always been resolved - and think back guys about this system - it's always resolved by the person who is under the other person repenting and changing or apologizing and saying "I was wrong." And somebody said "Let's just go back and try and believe that it's going to work. Frankly right now my first concern is this church because ten years of experience has taught

me that they are not going to change their mind and say "Okay, fine, we agree." It's not going to happen guys and your naive if you think it is going to happen. If you think it is - you don't realize what your up against.

[Male:] I know Kip, he married us, I think he's a great guy. I agree total with Ed though. They're not coming here to listen. (that's right) But that's what we need. We can't not - we're leaving God out here - mess up this opportunity. And even if they don't listen at all, we have got to seize the opportunity, this is the only opportunity that we'll ever have. (applause) You guys know bothers and sisters in other congregations that are going through the same thing that we're going through. (that's right) I've been out of leadership for two years - three years - because I couldn't put up with it anymore. I couldn't do it - it was wrong. So I stepped down to clear my conscience. When I talked to Ed three weeks ago - we think the same way. How about that? You know something? Almost every guy in this room, that's been around for a while, feels the same way. (right) There are guys in the south zone that feel the same way but are afraid to speak up. Because [?], they'd be labeled. We've got a label across our head right now. And Ed's right, we need to stand and [?]. They're our brothers and sisters. (that's right) We don't need to go to the media like some of these other fools have (that's right) and slam them. They need to change and if they don't change now maybe they will in a couple of years. But they're not going to change if we don't stand firm. (right, applause)

Ed: Guys, I don't think some of us realize the impact that a united church will have. (that's right) Because it's going to speak volumes to other churches out there. I honestly believe that this is the hope of the movement. The hope is not all of us going in different directions and everybody doing what is right in their own eyes. This can't become - no church can do well under that kind of a system. If we're united, we can have a tremendous impact. Other churches will set up and take notice, other people will take heart and people will hear.

They have to put this down. Guys, if they don't put this down, the movement is going to change. It's going to change. They have to put it down. Guys, think for a minute. There is no place where this kind of fire power has been sent in to deal with a problem, it's never happened. They're going to have to put it down. And guys if your go off on your own, if we don't stand together, if we don't get on the phones and talk to our people and explain this to them and help them understand "Do not do this". Because we need to be united, it's not because we don't want people to hear, necessarily, what they have to say. It's that we need to speak with one voice.

[Male:] ...[inaudible]...

[Ed:] Go ahead, let's just have the guys who are standing and Tom you stand up too. Start with you.

[Male 1:] ...[inaudible]... [This is an analogy - jv] . . . she called me a couple days later. She said "I still want to be married to you. But I don't agree with some of the things that you are saying. But I still want to be married to you." I love you, my heart breaks. That didn't happen, by the way, it would never happen because my wife lives me and she would sit down and say "Look I've got some serious problems with some things that you are doing. But I love you enough to talk it through. I'm not saying that the intent of anybody in this room Sunday night was to be divisive. What I'm telling you is that that is what happened. I believe division did happen Sunday night, with all my heart I believe it. Persuasion works both ways. I appreciate a lot of the scriptures that you shared the other night Ed. I've gone back over them a number of times and I can say on almost every point that I agree in terms of issues. I did another study this morning personally, I took off work and studied all the scriptures that I could think of in the

Bible that talks about division. And it scared me to death. And I believe division is taking place. I don't want to be apart of it, lines are being drawn. And have been drawn, it's too late, lines have been drawn if we like it or not. I believe God is big enough to salvage this thing - but I don't know how. But it saddens me that the term used so much tonight is "they". These are people that we have loved and have love us with sincere hearts. All of the sudden we're us and they're them - they're they. I can't buy it. ...[inaudible]...

[Male 2:] ...[inaudible]... (speak up please) I don't feel terribly emotional about a lot of these issues tonight because I had to deal with a lot of these about seven or eight years ago. And I've been praying to God, looking forward to the moment when God was going to make it clear. You know when - well, we're not going to bring names into this - we have had other evangelists here who have been once more plugged into the system. And, [?] again it's just a matter of time before this changes, because it's not according to [?]. This is the same approach. If we don't study these things in the scripture and come to our own convictions - we have no faith, we have not a relationship with God. According to this, this is the only standard we have. And to delude ourselves into thinking that people who don't study these scriptures and come to convictions can't even be right. If it's not faith in what's written, what's coming from God. It's faith in an individual or person and it's not right. (right) No matter what part of the kingdom a person is in.

Personally, I think, part of our putting into practice what we preached and what we all said Sunday night is that we're unified - we know that - we said that Sunday night. We're not going to be uniform. My Bible talk is not [?]. Some of my people may be there Thursday night - I don't have control of them. I mean I can try to persuade and all those things but bottom line is - I cannot control anyone who does. However, I can be there to voice what is in the scriptures and I can help people - that's what I am, a servant of God. That's all that any of us are. My conviction is that's the best way that I can serve. You know all these people that are here, I understand, I mean we can look at the size of the movement and recognize the influence that the people have. But God is a lot more powerful. No one would have looked at this church a week ago on Saturday night and thought with all that is said about us, that we would have said "Yes, we are not going to be within this system of authority any longer." No one would have guessed it because everyone was afraid to speak plus they felt [committed -?].

I know people in other churches as well, we are not alone. I kind of relate it a lot like going into an AA meeting where you feel like your all alone, you feel like your the only drunk out there, you go into this meeting and you find there are several thousand who feel exactly like you do. You know we could probably . . . well it's the same thing and we are doing this and I think the power is in our unity - not necessarily in our uniformity but it is in our unity. And we have got get with the people we love and teach them the word of God so maybe they can have some conviction. They are not going to make it to heaven because Ed has conviction, or Roger has conviction, or I have conviction. They will make it to heaven because they have conviction. I think we have a job before God to do - in teaching the Word to people. Weather it be the phone calls, the meetings . . . you know as time goes on people are going to be exposed to every idea that's out there. Every form of teaching. Take precaution [?] the Bible. I think we've got to accept that, accept that we cannot control everyone and try to serve one another and help them to understand. Reality is that people are going to the service. I think that is just a reality. The best thing to do [?].

[Roger:] I want to share what is on my heart tonight. I want everyone here to know that I love this movement, it is a part of me. And I still want to be a part of it. At the same time I want to

be a part of also making it the best movement that it can be. You know I was in Los Angeles with Ed back in August and I'm just sharing my perceptions, I'm just sharing my concerns. And I'll share this with other parties later, but the point is I was very uncomfortable with some of the teaching in Los Angeles and I expressed that to Ed there. I felt very uncomfortable with what I felt like was a shift to teaching not that we are in the Kingdom but that we are the Kingdom. I felt very uncomfortable with that. I felt very uncomfortable with the adoption of the name the International Churches of Christ. Because I always believed that we were not a denomination and I never wanted to join a denomination. I wanted to simply be and still do want to simply be a Christian.

I went there and I left troubled and if some of you feel like I was deceptive with you - I'm sorry for that - I didn't do that to deceive you, I did that because I wanted for the movement to stay together, I wanted us to be a part of it. But I began praying that God would work. I began praying that some of these things that I truly believed were problems would get fixed and I wanted to be a part of the solution. I felt then and I feel now and I've felt every since then that somebody [?]. Somebody needs to stand up and address these issues. I am in total agreement with the four principles that Ed laid out and taught the other night. And I wanted very much for somebody to stand up. Honestly I did not want to be that somebody, I mean I didn't want to be that person. . . I . . . that's not to say that I was taking credit for it. I just didn't want to be that person. I wanted somebody else to go through what I thought and believed to be a very painful situation. I had to make my decision.

You know Ed came to the staff and said what he believed was right and what he thought would be the best thing to do to bring it to the church. And I . . . we batted around different ideas, different ways we could do it. We batted around different possibilities and how to communicate. My concern was, and this was honestly my concern, I didn't know this to be true. My concern was that if Ed went to Los Angeles and expressed his concerns that he would never get the opportunity to express them to the congregation. Some of you have asked the question "Do you think that he would have been kidnapped, I mean what do you think?" But I believe there would be someone sent here. And . . . [inaudible] And I had problems with that, I was very concerned, I love this church. I love the movement and I love this church. I don't want to be divided from the movement, I don't want to be divided from any of you.

I didn't want this church to be divided. I had to make a judgment - I hated it. I hated that I had to make a judgment, I thought "Why me?" I felt like, as Ed said, he wouldn't do what he did Sunday if there was not total agreement from the staff. I respect Ed ...[inaudible]. So I took the day and I prayed and I fasted and I studied out the issues, and I wrote down notes because I don't want to be emotional. I don't want to say things out of emotion I want to say what is on my heart. I hope you don't feel [?] I wrote these down so that would be the case. What I had to ask myself was What is the movement's definition of being divisive and what is the biblical definition of being divisive. Are they one and the same? I don't want to do anything to divide this congregation.

I want to do every within my power, within my ability to keep my conscience clean, to be able to stay in association and work in cooperation with the movement churches. And that's what my heart is. I still believe ... and I want to be a part, I don't want to not be a part of the movement. I quit a job years ago to move to Chicago, Jayne and I both quit our jobs to move to Chicago so that we could be a part of this movement because we want the world to be evangelized then, we do now. I want that very much. But I had to ask myself: What is the movement definition of divisive verses the biblical. Is there a difference? Is it the same? They are different. I sought to do what I thought was best for this congregation. My concern was that if there was another

reconstruction or a change in leadership with more a tighter reign of leadership, my fear was that we would lose a hundred - two hundred - people. Maybe more. I don't know . . . do I know that for certain? No I don't.

I had to make a judgment. Before God I had to make a judgment that I believe was best, was accurate, and what was - I had to keep dealing with this issue of loyalty because I feel very loyal to the movement- I have friends in the movement as well. I love them very much and I want to be in fellowship with them. I want to be in relationships with them. I want that, but I had to ask myself 'Who do I need to be loyal to?' I need to be loyal to God. (That's right) And I need to be loyal to the church that has supported me over the last six years. To do what was best for that congregation .

So I believe the best thing is that we could be unified as a church and bring before the leaders of the movement -These are our concerns, we believe these are the issues that have to be dealt with. We want to be a part, but we just want these issues to be addressed. We want to change them. (that's right) I believe that if we could do that, if we could stay in fellowship - not being divisive, not drawing lines. Being in fellowship, but at the same time keeping this church united. I made that decision.

I believe - I have to admit that I've been very hurt this week. As I sat in Ed's office and heard him talk to Marty, and heard him say over and over again "Marty, I want you to know we want to work in cooperation, we want to [?]." I heard that with my own ears. I heard him [Ed] say "We want to give to special contribution. We want to send you people when we can. We want to be in relationship. We want to go to seminars." I heard that appeal, but he also said "Marty, I believe some of these practices are killing people. And it's hurting people." And he said "I feel like it needs to change. And we believe that as the leadership of this congregation and we believe that we have the support of this congregation, tonight. That we want the freedom to say no to things that we believe are going to hurt this congregation." I also heard him say "Please, make sure that you communicate the way that I have presented this to other people."

I was very hurt the next morning to hear that people in other churches had been told that we were leaving the movement. (yup, that's right) I was very hurt by that. I still love everybody involved, I feel thankful for them today. Because I don't think we should draw lines. I have not drawn lines in my heart. (amen) I love these brothers and sisters, it's just that I've been hurt. But I'm not going to let that hurt stand in the way of unity. I do believe that there has been a lie told, because I heard what was said and I've not yet heard that come back. I have not been called and told where the meeting is, I have not been invited to the meeting. I doubt that I will be. I know that I'm marked. . . (come on Roger) . . . and that kills me, because I love it - the movement.

I don't [?] that I'm going to continue to preach the Word. In my heart, I have not left the dream of evangelizing the world. (amen) I not left the dream of being united to my brothers and I want to be united with them. But I have made a decision that I cannot look the other way and bow down to the ideal and the vision of world evangelism for the sake of truth. I want the world to be evangelized. I want that with all my heart, I know that you do too. But at the same time I want the world to be evangelized in truth. That's what I wanted you and the leadership to know, I was not invited to the meeting so I do not plan to attend. I believe that if we can send a united message to the leadership of the movement that we do want to be a part, but we do believe these principles need to be addressed. And we want to talk. And we want Ed to be able to sit down and study out the scriptures on those issues with the parties involved. I believe that if we could sent

that message that we could stay in unity and yet hold to God's Word.

That is my desire, that is my plea, and that is my prayer. If you decide to go to the meeting, I love you and there is no division in my heart toward you. If you decide not to go to the meeting because you believe that sends a message of unity then that is your right to decide. I just want you to know that is my heart in making the decision in where I stand. (applause)

[male:] . . . [inaudible]

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[male:] . . . [inaudible] It's a hard decision, but it needs to be right. I can't go to that meeting Thursday - I'm afraid. And I'm afraid not of the truth, but of the fire power . . . it's persuasive. Most of you know me, I'm not that persuadable. [laughter] I have total loyalty in my heart for leadership, I've heard things for years. [inaudible] . . . I'm not here to worry about it, pray and get on with business [?] . . . these guys are slicker than [?] and not because they have bad hearts necessarily, but because they are powerful, talented men. I've been lead by some of those guys, but this is an issue of [?] [inaudible] . . .

[male:] . . . [inaudible]

[ A large portion of this tape is mostly inaudible because of distance of speaker to microphone, back ground noise and activity of a child near an open mike.]

[male:] I've been around the movement for about 11 years, in fact 11 years ago this month [?] baptized me. The church was about 140 people then and there were things that I saw there that really drew me in. I knew that God had brought me to the right place. I know I'm just reiterating something that all of you have experienced. We learned over a period of time to be disciples. We learned the value of unity. We learned to have the dream that the world could be evangelized. We've all taken a stand on that dream, we've all invested in that - not only materially but spiritually and emotionally. I think we all have that very much in common. One of the things that struck me is that there are people that we all know that are not here anymore because their roots weren't deep or something happened. . . . [?] . . . I mean I'm not going anywhere - I'm always going to be faithful to God barring my own ignorance. If I become deceived and fall away because I'm stupid, but my commitment is that it is going to take an army of angles or demons to drive me away from God. And I know there are people in this room that are going to be here and I'm going to see you in heaven. With all my heart, because you stand firm in what you believe and what is right. I'm going to keep this short because we've been here a long time and we've all got things to say.

We talked about a lot of things including division - weather it is or not. I think the real issue is what we do on a moment by moment basis. [?] . . . chose to do what is right, follow your conscience and do what is right. Stay with the word of God. In all the great movement of men things have happened and we look back on them and say "Well, they didn't do it the right way." That's where I am right now. I think one of the things that we're struggling with is fear, we have a lot of fear of the unknown. We don't know what is going to happen, we don't know what people are thinking we don't know what's going on in other minds. I got a lot of phone calls too from outside of Indianapolis. It started last night . . . it started yesterday afternoon. But I think we know enough to say "We know what we heard, we know what we feel, we know what we've seen." I've been in the ministry which may help. I was out in Miami, I was in Boston, I know

the people. I know what it's like with those stats, I know all the pressure and all these things. I've talked to Ed. I'm going to stay firm because I love God, not because of any feelings or emotions I have about the movement or about [?]. I believe I know what is right and that is a responsibility that I think each one of us has. [applause]. I don't plan on going to the meeting Thursday night, not because I'm swayed by Ed. I made that decision this afternoon after I sorta started to figure out what it was. I thought: Man you know I've been in that persuasive sorta situation before and I've been through a reconstruction before - mine was in Miami. I've gone back and talked to some of the brothers and been open with them and said this is what I've thought, this is how you made me feel. They apologized and we went on. Those things happen. The meeting Thursday night is something that I don't want to be a part of because the emotional content is something that I don't think I can handle personally. That's a decision I made just on a personal basis, OK. I notice a lot of different people came here tonight about what we ought to do, who ought to, who ought not and what we should and what we should not. My feel is just - let's try this because if we trust God [?] to be. God is going to do what is right. [applause]

Let God do this. I haven't heard us talk a whole lot tonight about getting our groups together and praying. We ought to be praying and fasting [?] on Thursday. Do the [?] thing, let go of the emotion and all of the feelings. Don't be afraid to express them, but submit them to God. That is our only hope. I believe in the nobility of every cause that has brought us to where we are today. I mean the cause [?]. I mean the fact we believe in a principal and ideal that is going to save the world . . . and God's going to carry that through. This is - I'm excited about it. I've got a pit in my stomach, but I'm also thinking "God, man your doing something again." [applause]

I'm excited about what has happened but I want us to be careful too because Satan is very strong. We need to pray that God would do both in casting the demons away and disarming Satan. I think Ed wants to diffuse the situation tonight. Let's help diffuse it and not complicate it. [that's right - applause]

[male:] Now personally I wouldn't say [?]. . . [inaudible]. I've been going to church nearly all my life. I grew up going to church in [?] and I was a member of the largest church organization in the world - the Catholic church. Yet I left that organization cause I couldn't see the truth. I can't see the relationship with God, I can't see the change. I wanted to grow and I can still see change, I can still see the relationship with God, and I can still see the growth. I did not come [?] . . . I did not pledge allegiance to a group. I pledged allegiance to God. I'm seeking truth to continue to grow. And I think all of you have done the same thing in coming here. And the reason I say this is that our allegiance to a movement cannot be greater than our allegiance to God. [amen] [?] We cannot be so [?] about this that people run from doing what is right. [inaudible - baby noise] . . . I want all of us to stop and think where our allegiance lies. When we made the commitment to become a disciples, we said we deny everything - even deny self. We to put [?] to God. I've heard this go around a lot- I hear us refer to us as the kingdom. Now my Bible teaches me that the kingdom came on the first Pentecost after the resurrection. That is the kingdom that I am a part of. This is not the kingdom of God.

And the reason I say this is because there are a lot of people that I know here, it has been shared with me, that if they leave this movement - they fall away from God. They are going to hell. Well, that's not the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God began much longer, way before this thing was ever [?]. When everything came to be. I say that so that you understand - this thing has nothing to do with your relationship to God. God is much bigger than this movement we are a part of today. We really have to come to terms with that. . . [?]. . . And this is the last thing that I want to say, very briefly. I am concerned about this because a lot of people in the world, I

see a lot of people that continue to struggle. I see a lot of people that need to have change occur in their lives, around their lives. But it has not occurred for the very simple fact that those people have not been able to unite on issues. And this happens - all of us know of a situation like this. I think of South Africa for one. You know they are clinging to the rule by 20% minority for the very simple fact that the 80% majority cannot come to terms and unite. And it happens at every level, it happens here in our country, it happens on very small scale and large scale.

If we cannot stand unified, if we do not stand united, we will not be able to make our point and we will end up being the laughing stock. [right] You know we may not agree on all this. In order for us to really have influence, in order for the people in this room to actually stand up and take notice and say "we actually have to deal with this", we are going to have to stay united. We are going to have to stand as one. Together we stand- divided we fall. [?] [applause]

[Female:] [. . . large portion inaudible . . .] and I feel like a lot of people have gotten away from what God has taught and it really concerns me that these people that I feel so close to - and that I love; and I feel that they love me - but it's just that the focus has gotten off of God. [that's right] And I now that when I sat in that baptismal at the Murat and I said that Jesus was Lord, I did not say that Jesus was only Lord if certain people were with me. And I have seen that Jesus is only Lord if people think I'm right. I cannot say that Jesus is Lord no matter what. [. . . ? . . .] if no one goes with me still I will follow, I believe that God calls us to that. [that's right] And I will love my friends no matter what they do. [. . . ? . . .] . . . follow God, he calls us to love each other. [that's right, applause]

Ed: [Talked over by someone else near an open mic who said "He's the only one with a microphone, we probably won't hear most of the people who shared.] . . .who believe in the issues, stand firm, and do what I believe is right. I want desperately to stay part of the movement.

Guys, I want to say in conclusion - I know we've been here a long time - I appreciate what everybody had to say. I know this is emotional, it's emotional charged. I know we feel very strongly. I think we need to sit the emotion aside and to think. [pause while reading a note]

Ya, well just let me through this in before I go on. Lisa \_\_\_\_\_ says, "What about throwing out the idea tonight - if we want to be heard by the people we love - instead of going to the meeting, what about all of us writing letters. To be read - err - to be heard and deliver the letters to the meeting instead of the people.

[male:] We can't make a congregational decision - we don't have the congregation here. We're trying to do something that's impossible.

[Ed:] What we're saying is: as leaders we could make that suggestion to our people. And suggest that instead of going to the meeting that they write letters to be sent. I would rather they do that than to be divided.

You've got to do what you've got to do folks. The stuff that unites the people in this room, however you feel about this issue, you've got to realize the stuff that unites us is so much more that the stuff that divides us. Just keep that in mid and don't let it too emotionally charged between us. We all love God. We all want to do what is right. I believe that with all my heart. I would just like to encourage you to not be overly emotional. That happens to all of us. It happened to me a little bit this afternoon. We need to try to fight that temptation to be overly

emotional. I'd like to ask you to do this: I'd like to ask you to think about the issues that we have raised - and ask yourself "Do I believe that this is the truth?" Because if this is the truth - and all we're saying guys is that we have the right to obey the truth, we have that right.

I think we have to remind ourselves here that we are not asking the movement to change anything. [that's right] We haven't asked them to do anything. I agree with what was said here tonight: that there is disunity here. There's no doubt about that, and I think the question that needs to be asked is "What caused the disunity". The disunity, in my opinion, is caused by those who say "You must do all things that we believe are important, or else we will not accept you." It is not caused by those who say "No, I can't do everything you want me to do but I still want to be your friend." Now I want you to think about that guys. We're not asking the movement to change anything. We're just asking them to accept us. Personally, I believe we are all in the kingdom of God. And I believe the problem is that we are not being accepted as part of the kingdom of God unless we agree with some teachings that, frankly, are positions that some of us can no longer go along with. I want you to think about those things, I want you to pray about it and do what you feel God is leading you to.

[male:]. . . inaudible

[Ed Powers:] I want to close out in prayer. I just want to tell you that what I hope you will do - I hope you will not go to the meeting, I hope you will encourage people you lead not to go to the meeting. and I pray that you will encourage them to write letters instead to state how they feel so that they can be heard.

[inaudible] Ya, your question is: "what do we do about talking to them if they come to your house." My advise - the reason that I'm saying don't go to the meeting applies to any conversation. If I had my way, in light of the fact that the only thing that we are saying is that we want to have the right to practice our convictions, I don't see that that requires any conversing. I think that we have that right and if I had my way - I have subjected myself to many, many, many conversations in the past several days. Call waiting, two lines on each phone, I going just like this - literally - just as fast as I can. And it's hard, I'm telling you it's hard. There are some very persuasive people out there. Go home and get your notes and look [amen] and ask God to give you your own convictions. That is what I want for this church and as you leave here tonight remind yourself - and remember this - the reason you got to speak here tonight is because you are in a church that is different than what we are talking about. We are different already. You would not have this opportunity that you have had tonight, there is no such thing as a meeting like this that goes on. The leaders meet and make the decisions and then you carry out the decisions. If you disagree tonight, I know that some of you disagree with how things are being handled, you at least have the opportunity to listen and to be heard. I think you need to remind yourself of that. That's one of the things that we are advocating. I pray that we will stay united. Bow with me as we pray.

Our Father in heaven, we love you. This is a very difficult time in our lives, a time when we need your guidance and your help. Father we need your wisdom. I pray God that you would move in a powerful way. But I believe that you have lead us to this point. And we don't know exactly how your working or what you plan to accomplish, we don't know. And we know that as in any situation such as this, we don't all agree. But we know Father that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, we know that we do love each other. Father, I know that we do love this church and we do love your kingdom, we are a part of it. And Father I pray that you would help us Father to get into your word, even tonight, and to develop deep convictions about the issues that are before us.

And Father, lead us and guide us as we make our decisions and as we are people - many people out there that we lead in this church, they need to be . . .

[end of tape 2 ]

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