

September 12, 2003

Dear Ministers of Louisiana:

Blessings upon you in our Lord's great name!

You have heard me say these are great days of challenge and advance for the Kingdom of God. We are certainly facing some unique challenges. But I can also report that the Kingdom of God is experiencing revival as never before around the world and here at home! Several of our Louisiana churches are currently "in revival" and reporting good results - sinners saved by grace, saints strengthened and renewed, backsliders reclaimed - It's revival time in Louisiana!

I regret that some of our UPCI brethren have, in a misguided attempt to stand for what they believe is a right course of action, begun a letter-writing campaign. This effort attacks not only the leadership of our movement, but the very principles of "unity in diversity" on which our organization was founded and built. Rather than following the Biblical instruction of Matthew 18, or the guidance provided by our Manual, or the Roberts Rules of Order instructions for times of disagreement, someone made the decision to take the discussion into a public forum. Rather than limiting the correspondence to the men involved, the letters got sent to the entire ministerial body. I apologize for any consternation this has caused our pastors in dealing with questions and misunderstandings among local licensed and other ministers who may be members of your congregations. I have had calls from pastors who were dismayed that lay preachers in their church would receive this attack on leadership. Spirits are contagious and this could filtrate down into local churches.

In my over 50 years of ministry I have never seen anything like this perpetuated by men we previously esteemed as men of utmost integrity. Brother Haney affirms that many of the accusations against him were never discussed with him before the letters were sent out. Brother Kilgore was not contacted before his personal letter to Brother Price was mailed to the entire constituency. I was never contacted nor asked for an explanation before the allegations were made against me. This action is contrary to the Scripture and to all my mentors taught me. I want our local preachers who are in covenant with good pastors to know this is not the way we do things. I apologize to you and you pastor for this action. Stay close to your Shepherd and know "this too shall pass." These things will be addressed in the proper forums. Truth will prevail. Revival and unity must not be hindered.

Because the letters are filled with misinformation and untruths, our neighboring District Superintendent, Brother David Bernard sent a letter to the brethren of his District to simply clarify some of the issues at hand. You will note that Brother Bernard himself serves on the Commission which has addressed the "divine flesh" issue. I felt his insights on the matters at hand to be keen and helpful to all of us. Since he is a member of the last Commission to deal with this I chose to, with his permission, send a copy of his letter along with this one.

Again, I am sorry for any problems or distress this has caused you. As Brother Bernard stated in the closing paragraph of his letter, I can assure you that "We shall endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit until we all come into the unity of the faith, at the same time admonishing all brethren that they shall not contend for their different views to the disunity of the body."

I ordinarily do not bother to defend or explain myself. However, since misinformation was given in one of the letters I feel I need to correct it. I was not contacted by the brother who wrote the letter and questioned concerning this. As with other correspondence, this is a violation of Matthew 18.

I did not have Oral Roberts write the introduction of my latest book. At this level of printing, the publisher sends the manuscript to various other authors for their critique and perusal. I have no idea how many received the original manuscript and/or how many responded to the publisher. Oral Roberts wrote a letter to the Editor concerning the manuscript. His letter so impressed the editors until, without my knowledge, they included part of it in the book. However, let me quote what Oral Roberts said: "I knew, also, after reading the title of this book that I was going to read every page. I smiled and spoke out loud to myself and said, 'Oral, T. F. has you again! He's going to probe, search, reveal your innermost being to yourself.'" I'm glad he read the

book. You may not know this, but he was indeed probed and he has searched. In a recent conference before 10,000 people Oral Roberts said as he closed his message, "We must get back to the Book of Acts. We must get back to Acts 2:38." Now I have a question: What's wrong with that? Could it be that he, along with all of us, hungers to get back to original Apostolic Christianity?

As to my appearance on a television broadcast, it was unsolicited and it was an interview concerning my book. I would be happy for you to have a copy of the interview and to see and hear me as I spoke of Acts 2:38 and prayed publicly that God would bring a great revelation of truth to all who heard. This was an international broadcast and viewed by thousands of unchurched people around the world. It was not in violation of the Bible or the Manual.

I will say this, I have had multiple opportunities to interact with pastors and others who saw the broadcast and were moved by it. One pastor of a denominational church a thousand miles from here saw the interview and searched for two months for a way to contact me. When he did finally contact me by phone, he prefaced his comments by saying he didn't even like TV preachers. He explained that on that particular night he just happened to see that broadcast. He said while he was watching me speak, the Holy Spirit said to him, "Find that man and he will tell you what you need to do." He came 1,000 miles to see me in person. What a thrill to lead this man through the scriptures and see the revelation of more truth than he had known come to him! No, I am not advocating TV. I am just reporting what actually happened.

It was stated in one of the letters that the General Board condemned the teaching of Brother Teklemarian as heresy. The General Board has not even received the report of the Commission on the Unity of the Faith. How could they condemn something when they haven't even been given the report? This, too, is misinformation.

Let me say as your District Superintendent I am thankful for our Louisiana family of ministers. We may not be perfect and we certainly do not agree on every proverbial "jot and tittle" but we have a strong unity of the faith which allows us to fulfill the Scripture cited last by Brother Bernard. Thank you for putting on charity - that bond of perfectness. Thank you for letting the peace of God rule in your hearts...for being called in one body...and for being thankful. I am grateful to God for you!

I urge you to go to Conference if you can at all manage to arrange your schedule to go. If you cannot attend, please spend special time in prayer for us all! Our General Superintendent, Brother Kenneth Haney, especially needs your support and prayer.

Yours In His Name,

T. F. Tenney  
District Superintendent