Norman - Wilcox Discussion on the Eldership Question

J. W. NORMAN and T. C. WILCOX

NORMAN - WILCOX DISCUSSION

on

The Eldership Question

Conducted at

FERNDALE, MICHIGAN

(Metropolitan Detroit)

FEBRUARY 15 TO 18, 1944

MODERATORS:

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For Brother Norman

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INTRODUCTION

This debate is sent forth under the advice and counsel of the Elders of the Church of Christ, Ferndale, Michigan. There seems to be many honest people in the church today who are disturbed over these issues. We believe if they will study this debate in the light of God's Word, all will be able to see the truth on these questions.

This debate is the result of Brother Norman's request to speak on the Eldership question at Ferndale, April 13, 1943. Brother Wilcox spoke on this subject at the same meeting. After this they decided to have a series of discussions on this subject. The questions were agreed upon and the debate held February 15 through 18, 1944, in the Church of Christ building, Ferndale, Michigan. Months passed and the disputants could not agree on the correction and publication of the debate; therefore, the Ferndale Church selected a committee which asked a number of brethren to read and criticize the speeches. The following brethren read, either all, or parts of the debate: W. C. Anderson, Harmon Black, L. T. Holland, G. C. Pugh, E. P. Watson, and Claud F. Witty; then it was given to Robert M. Alexander and A. B. Keenan for additional correction. This having been done, Brothers Norman and Wilcox signed an agreement for its publication.

We pray that much good may be accomplished as the result of its distribution.

H. O. Coffman
R. R. Maley
Cecil Russell
Wm. F. Schmehl
C. C. Youngblood
Publication Committee.

NORMAN'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

The Bible Authorizes That We Today, Select, Appoint, and-or Set In Elders.

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am profoundly grateful to God for His providence and to you for your presence. I sincerely hope that lasting good will be accomplished for the cause of Christ because of this discussion.

I certainly think that no personalities should enter into this debate in any way whatsoever, either by the disputants or the audience.

I stand before you tonight as the result of a challenge issued to me on July 29th, 1943, by Tipton C. Wilcox, of Ferndale, Michigan, and after much negotiation over a period of approximately seven months, we agreed on the propositions to be discussed during this debate.

I believe with all my heart that Brother Wilcox and I will behave ourselves during this discussion; that we shall conduct ourselves in a way that will be profitable to each and every person present. I hold no malice in my heart toward Brother Wilcox or any other member here at Ferndale. I certainly think, however, that Brother Wilcox is scripturally wrong as regards the eldership question. If I didn't think that, certainly, I would not be one of the disputants in this discussion. I want to state first of all, before I shall read the proposition under discussion, that I believe the Bible to be the infallible will of God to man; that what you and I need to

know about how to become a Christian and how to live a Christian life, or all you need to know about church organization, we can find it written clearly and plainly upon the pages of God's truth unto man. We find in II Timothy, chapter 3, the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, the following statements:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

In I Peter, chapter 4, verse 11, it says in part: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ."

The proposition has been read very ably and clearly by Brother L. N. Moody, but I shall read it again for the benefit of those who might not have heard all of it—although I am sure you did.

"The Bible authorizes that we today, select, appoint and-or set in Elders."

Some of the words in the proposition are superfluous but that is all right, it was written in and I shall not argue about that in any way whatsoever.

The first rule of Hedge's Logic has committed me to define my proposition so clearly that there will be no misunderstanding regarding the point at issue.

What I mean by the "Bible", it is the word of God. It authorizes—the right to act or command. We are all involved in selecting and apopinting elders in the Church.

What I mean by "today", the time in which we live, being, of course, the time of the Christian dispensation, or as the apostle Paul put it in Ephesians 3:2: "The dispensation of the grace of God."

I hope I'm clear thus far in the proposition. "Select: chosen, appoint, ordain, name, set in, cause to function."

Before I say other things in this discussion I want to lay my foundation well, deep and broad. I'll not be able in the few minutes allotted—twenty minutes duration—to say all I would like to say about the subject in the laying of my foundation. I'll have to be brief, and that, of course, I intend to do. I want to picture first of all Christ's standing and position in the Church we read about in the word of God. In the book of Ephesians 1:21 and 23, Paul said that Christ is the head of the Church; in him is seated all authority—authority in the absolute!

All authority we have today has been given to us by way of delegation, delegated authority, and if we speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent, and call Bible things by Bible names, and do Bible things in Bible ways, we have all the authority that we need for any and all things that preachers, elders, deacons, members, individually and personally, need to do.

In the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, verse 18 it says "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen." Christ is the head of the Church; He has all authority.

In Hebrews 3:1, He is referred to as the apostle—the great apostle—whom you and I have been authorized to consider. In the Book of Matthew, chapter 10, Christ selected apostles, but the great apostle is referred to as Christ. These other Apostles that are referred to had reference to those whom Christ selected. I think Brother Wilcox and I will not have any disagreement regarding

this point at all in my speech. In Hebrews 4:15 Christ is called our High Priest who "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Yet my Bible says, In I Peter 2:5, "Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood . . ." and it tells for what purpose we will serve in the kingdom of God as priests "to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Christ is the High Priest, and we in the church are priests. The Bible says that.

In I Peter 2:25 Christ is pictured as being the Bishop of our souls. In Philippians 1:1 we have Bishops in the plural or elders of a local congregation.

In I Peter 5:4 "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear . . ." that has reference to Christ in that connection, and those who have been placed under him to function by his authority, as we have today, in his word, are under-shepherds, under Christ, from whom they get their authority, which has been given unto them in the word of God.

Now, I shall give you the names by which the officers of the church are called in the Bible, just a few. They are called elders of the church in the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 17, they are mentioned as overseers in the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 28; they are called bishops in Philippians 1:1. I understand the eldership is mentioned and pictured in the following statement taken from I Timothy 4:14. "The laying on of the hands of the presbytery." So the words "elders," "Bishops," "presbytery," "overseers," all have reference to the one scriptural ruling body in the church.

Of course, we understand that elders are placed in a local congregation.

In Philippians 1:1—I want to quote that for further

emphasis—Paul addressed himself to the Church at Philippi, and here is the way he put it, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of God and the church at Philippi, together with the bishops and deacons."

So we have preachers to evangelize, saints to congregate, bishops to rule scripturally, and deacons to serve in the capacity which meets the approbation of Him who does all things exceedingly well.

Back in the long, long ago, and what was true then should be true now, there was a plurality of elders in every organized congregation. In the fourteenth chapter of the Book of Acts, verse 23, King James Version, I quote: "And they ordained them elders in every church." There was not a New Testament church scripturally organized in the sense that I have in mind without a plurality of elders.

It is not an elder over a plurality of churches, but a plurality of elders over one local church.

The qualifications of these overseers, bishops, presbyters, or elders, are found in I Timothy 3:1 through 7; in Titus 1:5-9, in I Peter 5:1 to 3 inclusive. There are 20 or more qualifications that must be characteristic of those selected, appointed or caused to function in local congregations.

I hope that I am clear thus far with my remarks. The question I want to introduce is this: How are they made? That will enter into this discussion sooner or later, and I want to begin with it. How are they made? I turn to a very plain, pointed passage in the scriptures that tells. In the twentieth chapter of the Book of Acts, verse 28:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-

seers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

There we have it. Elders are overseers, and are made by the Holy Spirit. Does the Holy Spirit today make elders? Yes! Does the Holy Spirit today make Christians? I answer, yes! Does the Holy Spirit make men Christians just like men are made elders? I think there is a very beautiful parallel, that, if I have time to bring out, will prove conclusively and beyond all doubt that the Holy Spirit makes elders just like it makes Christians.

Is there any human instrumentality involved in people being made Christians by the Holy Spirit? I answer, Yes!

What is the scriptural procedure? Briefly, I give this. First, the Holy Spirit reveals the conditions with which the unsaved must comply; secondly, the conditions are made known to those who become Christians by someone preaching; teaching the gospel of Christ unto them. Then those who have a strong desire to put off sin and accept the teachings of Christ, become added to the church by being baptized into Christ. When all of that takes place, what do you have? Someone changing positions. Well, what do you mean by that, Mr. Norman? I shall quote Colossians 1:13: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." You have been taken out of something and put into something.

Now, what is the parallel regarding the Spirit's procedure of making elders? First of all, the Holy Spirit has outlined the qualifications for scriptural elders. There are men who have the qualifications which are given in the Word of God. Men possessing these qualifications,

being approved, and selected as taught in the Word of God are appointed elders. When they receive that appointment, what are they? They are not taken out of the church, but they are taken out from the congregation as mere individuals, and put over the church to rule well. (I Timothy 5:17): "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor..." They automatically, by virtue of that appointment given them, become the overseers in the church, according to the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 28. If not, why not? If men are made elders or overseers in a local congregation by the Holy Spirit just exactly and absolutely like individuals are made Christians by the Holy Spirit, how do you account for human instrumentality being involved in individuals becoming Christians, and then argue that human instrumentality has no part in the selection and appointment of elders?

I want this to sink deeply into every heart tonight that is both honest and good, and I think that Brother Wilcox will agree with this.

Now, I must ask this question, still talking regarding elders: How were elders placed in or over the Church during the days of the apostles? There will not be any disagreement as to when the church was begun. We both agree. There will not be any disagreement about the Apostles not having the supervision of the church for quite some time after it was established; how long afterwards, I do not know. I do not know of any scripture that tells me, and in the absence of scriptures that so state, I shall not speak where the Bible has not spoken.

How did all of that take place back there? I turn to the Book of Acts, chapter 14, verse 23, American Revised Version of the Book of God: Paul and Barnabas appoint-

ed "for them elders in every church." Who did the appointing? Paul and Barnabas. Who were they? Human beings. What did the Spirit do? He directed them. Through whom did the Holy Spirit direct? Through human instrumentality; namely, Paul and Barnabas. Notice the force of this language; Paul and Barnabas "appointed for them" . . . for the local churches. It does not say they selected, my brother it says "They appointed for them."

I thank you.

WILCOX'S FIRST NEGATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am delighted with your presence tonight, and I hope all have come to study the Word of God.

I want to agree with practically everything Brother Norman said in his introduction. I desire to call to your mind one thing, namely; that all we need in matters of religion today is found in the Bible. I intend to hold him to that statement and bring it to your minds again. He said it is clear and plain. That is fine. I agree with him, and I want you to remember it.

In his definition of the subject we have under consideration, "The Bible Authorizes," that is, it commands, or teaches that we should do certain things.

"That We Today"—. The word "today" means now, the twentieth century. "We" who? Men and women, local congregations (all who make up the church), preachers, or what-not, in the church, "We Should Select, Appoint, and-or set in Elders."

I think we should either change our slogan or else change our practice. We claim to speak where the Bible speaks and to keep silent where the Bible is silent. If Brother Norman believes this he will never again be guilty of appointing Elders by human authority, because I am telling you now, friends, this debate will come to a close and Brother Norman will not read one word in that book that even hints at HUMAN APPOINTMENT of Elders. And, lest he forgets, I want to study the

Scriptures that he has considered. I call to your minds Acts 14:23: "Paul and Barnabas appointed for the church Elders." (American Standard Version). Question: If a congregation ever had any authority from God to appoint Elders, pray tell me why the Holy Spirit did not let the CONGREGATION at this place do it? It was the best opportunity I ever saw.

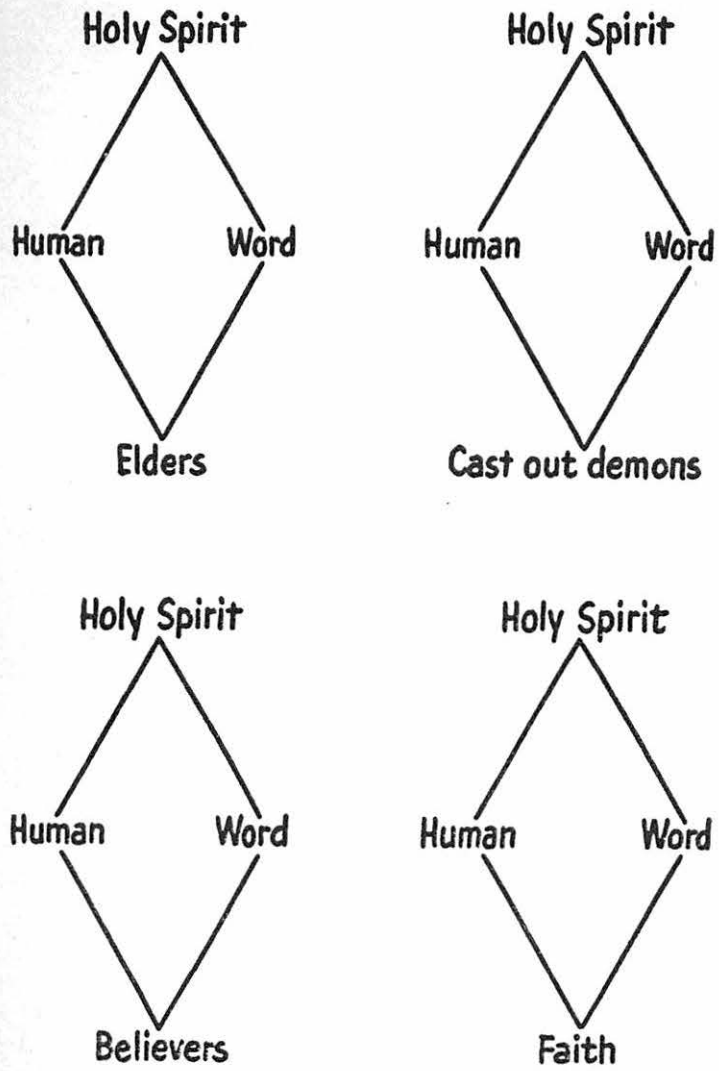
Brother Norman said that Paul and Barnabas did the appointing. I deny this one hundred per cent. The Holy Spirit did the appointing and only used Paul and Barnabas as instruments. Turn to Acts 13:1-3 and you find that Paul and Barnabas were under the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. If Brother Norman had the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, I wouldn't open my mouth about his appointing Elders.

I turn to Acts 20:28. The Bible says the Holy Spirit makes Elders. We talk about women making biscuits and cakes. How much do they do from start to finish? What part do human beings have in making Elders? Not any.

We consider Titus 1:5. Was it Titus that appointed Elders? No! The Holy Spirit, through Titus, did the appointing, and I defy Brother Norman to deny it. If he believes that Titus did not have the Holy Spirit I will prove it to him before this debate is over.

Therefore, summing up these three scriptures, Acts 14, Acts 20, and Titus 1, it was not the human beings doing the appointing; but the Holy Spirit through the human instrumentality of the individuals.

I would like for you to notice the chart. In the first century the Holy Spirit appointed Elders, but He did it through human instrumentality. In the twentieth century, today, the Holy Spirit appoints Elders, but He does it



through the instrumentality of the Word. In the first century the Holy Spirit, through human instrumentality, cast out demons. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit, through the Word, casts out demons. In this debate we are talking about appointing Elders TODAY.

In the first century the Holy Spirit, operating through human instrumentality, performed miracles that people might believe, (I Corinthians 14:22, "Tongues are for a sign to the unbeliever.") In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit works through the Word and people believe; (John 20:30-31), "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written that ye may believe . . ."

In the first century the Holy Spirit operated direct, that is, on the speaker to produce faith in those who heard the Apostles. (Acts 2:4). "And began to speak—as the spirit gave them utterance." When they heard, they were pricked in the heart (Acts 2:37). It was the Holy Spirit speaking directly through human instrumentality. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit speaks through the Word to produce faith (Romans 10:17).

The Holy Spirit selected Elders in the first century. The Holy Spirit selects Elders in the twentieth century. The only difference is the medium through which the Holy Spirit works. You might just as well go to some individual who claims divine healing, and ask him to perform miracles for you today, or to have demons cast out, as to ask our brethren to appoint Elders now as they did in the first century. I want the Scripture that says we appoint Elders TODAY as they did in the FIRST CENTURY. That is the argument. Do you see what I mean by the Word? It is not a case of whether the Holy

Spirit does it. It is the MEDIUM through which the Holy Spirit works. It worked in the first century through HUMAN INSTRUMENTALITY. It works in the twentieth century through the WORD. Brother Norman preaches just as I do, that we get the Holy Spirit today through the Word only, (John 6:63).

I am thankful he mentioned that the Holy Spirit makes Christians and Elders. You heard him say it. Here is the argument he made that I want you to get. He said in the making of Christians there is the NECESSITY of human instrumentality, and in the making of Elders, today, there is the NECESSITY of human instrumentality. I want to show you the absurdity of this argument. In the first century and in the twentieth century we are told to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, make disciples and baptize them. How long will that be good? To the end of the world, (Matthew 28:18-20).

Now, Brother Norman, I want just ONE Scripture that tells us TODAY to appoint Elders, and this part of the debate will be over. He said that the Holy Spirit makes Christians today. Amen! Where do I get my authority for the human instrumentality in making Christians out of people? Jesus said go BAPTIZE them (Matthew 28:18-20).

Does the Holy Spirit make Elders today? Yes. He agrees with that. Where is the Scripture that says WE APPOINT them TODAY in the church? That is your proposition, and that is what I want. I have the Scripture for mine. Do not forget that the Holy Spirit makes Elders, and, hear me, the only thing that is absolutely necessary in making a Christian, as far as a human being is concerned, is the baptism. I want the Scripture that

says WE need to APPOINT ELDERS TODAY in the church of the Lord.

Brother Norman said that Christ has all authority. Brother Norman, tell me where Christ gave you the authority for appointing Elders, and, when you read it, I will accept it. If Christ has ALL the AUTHORITY and He did not give any to you, where did you get it? I know; it came from the Devil by way of the Roman Catholic Church. Hence, it is the doctrine and precept of men.

In Mark 7:6-7 Jesus said, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, but in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

You never read in that book in all your life where God Almighty ever told anybody, other than those directed by the Holy Spirit, to appoint Elders; however, you are doing it in this twentieth century. Where did you get your authority? You left the commandments of God that you might hold to tradition. Be it said to our discredit that since we have been in existence in the United States as the Church of Christ, we have TRADITIONALLY appointed Elders in Churches, and, if we were called on for the Scripture, we could not give it to save our lives.

Why practice it? Brother Norman did not get his authority from the Bible. He said in the beginning, however, the Bible was all we needed. That is right. Where is your authority then for appointing Elders? We are supposed not to go beyond that which is written (I Cor. 4:6). Brother Norman, where is your authority?

Let me say, for your benefit, there are some things

God Almighty never did permit a human being to do. He never permitted us to appoint Apostles, ordain preachers, vote members into the church, or select Elders. Brother Norman believes we have no right today to appoint Apostles, but there are people in the religious world who appoint them, and Brother Norman condemns the practice.

Brother Norman believes it is not right to have human ordination for preachers. He believes that we should not vote members into the church, but he refuses to accept the Bible that says the same thing with reference to Elders. Tell me, Brother Norman, why you reject one thing and accept another thing that God Almighty has said?

Jesus Christ appointed Apostles, ordained preachers and adds people to the church. The Holy Spirit makes Elders, and there is no reason why any human being should attempt any of these.

Brother Norman has no right to be preaching tonight, according to his argument. If you never had human ordination, you have no right to be preaching.

His argument is that WE ought to SET-IN Elders, and they cannot function until they are set-in. Then, he would have human ordination before he can preach, and we should vote members into the church. Bless your heart, you should quit condemning the Baptists for voting people into their church, the Methodists for ordaining their Ministers, or the Mormons for appointing Apostles. You are in the same boat. They have just as much authority for their actions as you have for appointing Elders. Are we going to speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where it is silent?

Let us notice another thing. This proposition says

that WE SET-IN ELDERS. I Corinthians 12:18 says that GOD SET-IN EACH MEMBER of the body. That is the difference between Brother Norman and God. He says WE can set them in, and Paul says GOD sets them in.

The Baptists say they should vote people into the church, and I agree with them—into their church. I, also, agree with Brother Norman. He can humanly appoint Elders in any church he wants to, but it is not done in the Church of the Lord.

The Lord ordains preachers. He never gave us that authority. Who sets the members in the Body? God does. I want you to notice, in Acts 2:47, Christ adds the people to the church. In I Corinthians 12:18, God sets them in and places them as he wants them. These things will be perfect if we get our minds out of the way.

I heard him quote a passage, which said, "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor." I say myself LET THEM RULE—NOT FORCE THEM—LET THEM.

In I Corinthians 12, God Almighty is illustrating a spiritual body with a human body. Here is my human body composed of many members, but is one body, and so far as I know, God Almighty placed every member in this body just as He wanted it. He put my right arm where He knows it will function, He put my eyes, ears, nose, feet and so on where He knows they will function. He placed over these members the head to rule and govern the body. You know even this old body of mine does fine as long as I leave the members where God placed them. Would it not be absurd for me to cut my right arm off and place it over somewhere on my left leg?

In the spiritual body, every member is set in as it pleased God. Pleased whom? God! Whoever heard of

spiritual members voting on somebody to govern them? Bless your heart, Jesus Christ is the head of the church, Ephesians 1:22 and Colossians 1:18. The head of the spiritual body should rule and govern the body. We do not need human governors. Let Christ do it.

Is it not absurd to think that members of the spiritual body can vote on whom they want to govern them? Why do we not call on our physical members to decide whether the feet, hands or ears shall govern that body?

Brother Norman said something that amuses me, and if I am wrong, he may correct me. He said the Elders were under-shepherds. Now, tell me, whoever heard of a flock of sheep selecting its shepherd? However, that is what he says. He says God makes shepherds, but the sheep must vote them in office. Well I never heard of a drove of sheep doing that. You said the Elders were shepherds, and I accepted it, but I understand the OWNER of the sheep selects the shepherd, and that is what the Book says. The Holy Spirit selects or makes Elders, and that will include everything needed. Do you believe the Bible is infallible? Is it all we need?

Brother Norman spoke of the oracles of God. Where do the oracles of God speak of US putting Elders into the church? If he is going to stick with his proposition, he should give us just one Scripture which states that WE TODAY can select and appoint Elders.

Do I think we should have Elders in the church? Yes. Who puts them in? The Holy Spirit, and if we will just let Him alone He will do a good job of it. Brethren, all the trouble in the religious world today has come about by men getting wiser than God and trying to help him. If we let the organization of the church alone as God has it, it is perfect. But when we try to help God out we al-

ways cause confusion and strife. That is why we have so much trouble in the organization of the Church of Christ in some localities today.

There is scarcely a congregation anywhere—and I say it with shame—that is not having trouble because of the leadership of the church, and I don't wonder at it. If the brethren would let the organization alone as God has it, it would be fine, but we want to do as Abraham and Sarah. We think God is not wise enough to bring the thing about Himself, and we want to put our little minds in the matter. Brethren, I am in favor of permitting God to manage the Church. I want Brother Norman to put the scripture up here that justifies his position. I have never yet been able to find it.

I thank you!

NORMAN'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

Brethren, moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, I hardly see the necessity of having this debate at all, since Brother Wilcox has shown no improvement since the other debate, and why not have the other debate published? I just say this that you may think about it while I am delivering my message.

He made a play, remember, awhile ago, on the word "today". I am going to ask Brother Wilcox this question: What did the word "today" mean two thousand years ago?

He says there is no scripture for human appointment of elders in the Bible. He made that statement, or I took it down wrong, I am going to give the human instrumentality in the appointment of elders. He said it is not in the Bible.

In the fourteenth chapter of Acts, verse 23, Paul and Barnabas, human beings, "appointed for them elders in every church." I should like to ask my worthy respondent this one question: Were not Paul and Barnabas human beings directed by the spirit of God? Were they something else by virtue of the Holy Spirit operating through them?

There is your book, chapter, and verse now, Brethren. Do you get it?

Now, I am going to give you another one. I am going to give one extra. I do not charge you extra for it. In the Book of Titus 1:5, Paul, a man, speaking as the Holy

Spirit directed his every utterance to Titus, (a man whom Brother Wilcox will not say was inspired on a par with Paul) says: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city which I gave thee charge."

I am going to make this statement tonight, and I want Brother Wilcox to wrestle with it. The same charge that Paul has to preach the Gospel was the same charge he had when he found men possessing the qualifications to see that they were placed in the congregation. He had a charge to preach the Gospel, and he had a charge to appoint elders, Titus 1:5. He had a charge for both of them, did he not? Now, there you are. I am mighty happy to be with you in this endeavor.

Now, then, he says Paul and Barnabas were human beings. He said they were human instrumentality, but he says, "How did all of that thing start, anyway?" I went right back over to Acts 13:1 and picked them up. Now, I want to turn back there and read it. A part of that verse will suffice for this point: "Now, there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas . . ." That is one of the men.

In verse 2: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said," . . . said to whom, Brother Wilcox? The Church does not have a thing to do with it, you know—"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." I ask Brother Wilcox this question: Who did the separating? The Holy Spirit called, but who separated? That is a question that I am going to let ring in your ears, and it will when this debate shall come to a close. Not only is that true, but I want to see if the Church had anything to do with sending the preachers away when they appointed elders.

Acts 13:3: "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." They sent them away. Well, what did they do, being called by the Holy Spirit, separated by the Church at Antioch?

Acts 14:23: "They appointed elders in every church."

I want Brother Wilcox to separate the Church from the appointment there. I want you to do that, Brother Wilcox. I am not denying the Holy Spirit doing it, but he did it through something, did he not, and through human instrumentality. All right.

Then he said, "Yes, it is true that in Acts 20:28, Elders are made by the Holy Spirit." Now, there is no use in saying more about that. I said they are made by the Holy Spirit with human instrumentality involved. I proved it by the Bible. I said individuals are made Christians by the involvement of human instrumentality. I proved it by the Bible and paralleled it. Now, he is in a predicament tonight, from which there shall not be, in the future, any recovery; and I just want to say this to you as kindly as I know how. Brethren, I want everybody to listen now. The very thing for which I am contending, the very thing which Brother Wilcox and some four or five others in the brotherhood are opposing is the very thing that has been outstanding in the church of Christ for approximately one century.

Men have written upon that matter, scholarly men, men that are not shallow, men who have brains, common sense, outstanding reasoning powers, their intellect not dulled by any sort of reasoning or having any hobbies to ride, or new doctrines to foster, or new charts to ride the Church on. Listen, they are contending for what I am making a contention. Who are some of them?

B. C. Goodpasture of the "Gospel Advocate" teaches substantially the same thing on the eldership.

There are such great men as H. Leo Boles, long time president of David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tennessee, and one of the writers in the "Gospel Advocate"; C. R. Nichol, still connected with George Pepperdine College in Los Angeles, California. They teach the things I do, or I am teaching what they do, because they have gotten it all from the Word of God.

G. H. P. Showalter is an outstanding editor for lo, these many years, without a peer in the periodical journals, and he stands pat on the things that I teach.

Brother Whiteside has written for years in the "Advocate" and other papers and teaches the same thing.

There is John T. Lewis, at Birmingham, Alabama, who was responsible for the beginning of the work in Birmingham. He has made this contention for thirty years, approximately speaking.

G. C. Brewer believes the same way, one of our great preachers in the brotherhood, whom Brother Wilcox adores. I understand you came very near getting him some two years ago for a meeting. How true that is I do not know.

I want to ask this audience a question. Such men as G. C. Brewer, N. B. Hardeman, President, Freed-Hardeman College, H. Leo Boles, Brother Whiteside and C. R. Nichol, men who have defended the church for years and years, who have forgotten more than Brother Wilcox and I will ever know. These men say what I do on the proposition. They have committed themselves in periodicals as I have stated. Now, is it a fact that all of these men, great, outstanding men, noble preachers have been just sapheads down through the ages? Just pure sapheads?

It takes a learned Doctor like T. C. Wilcox of Ferndale to correct them. Brother, I believe you ought to withdraw.

These great, outstanding men have made these contentions through the years, and Brother Wilcox and a few others have come along and waged an opposition. Now, which one shall I believe? Brother Wilcox of recent date, or these men who were in former times and in our time, making the same contention that I made in my opening speech, and shall make in my other speeches.

Is it true that these men do not know? Would it not be fine, shall I not say, if we could get some of the twentieth century wisdom they have in the church?

He says that he would admit and agree—I believe he used the word agree—that the Holy Spirit made elders in the first century through human instrumentality. Now, he said the only difference is that the Holy Spirit does it today through the Word of God. That is exactly my contention. It does it through the Word of God. The difference now and back in the long ago is in the location of the Spirit. It was located in men then. It is located in the Word of God now.

How does the Holy Spirit make men elders in the Church? The qualifications are given by the Holy Spirit, being written in the Word of God. Men who have wisdom and sense enough, I state kindly, that know these qualifications; see the type of men the Holy Spirit now wants in the Church, and then, like Titus, someone appoints them, and they become elders in a local congregation. If not, why not? That is exactly how it is done. The only difference, is in the location of the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit today makes Christians through the Word of God, but is it not a fact, I should state, that peo-

ple who are unsaved desire to become Christians? Then is it not likewise true that people assist those desiring to become Christians?

Then is it not likewise true, when that assistance is rendered they are brought out from the power of Satan's kingdom, Colossians 1:13, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son? Acts 2:47: "... and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Now, there you are. Brother Wilcox asked me this question awhile ago: "Brother Norman, have you ever had any human ordination?" No, I have not had any human ordination to preach the Gospel, but I do want to say that because of my desire to preach I expressed it, and the congregation got behind me. In getting behind me they selected me, and I have an endorsement from my home church with me.

It does not make one ounce of difference, Brethren, how badly I might have wanted to preach. If the congregation at least had not recognized me, could I have successfully gone away knowing that my home congregation would not endorse me? They selected me in that sense. I want you to get that. So there is no human ordination.

He says that every member is set-in the Church. That is true. God sets them in. In I Corinthians 12:18 every member is set-in as it pleased God.

Now, why did he not go to verse 28 and get the order, I Corinthians 12:28; "And God hath set some in the church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly teachers, etc." They are given in order. God set them in. Who were the first members? Apostles.

I have a question I want to ask. To whom were the three thousand added on the day of Pentecost? If the Apostles had not been set-in, to whom were the three

thousand added on the Day of Pentecost? Can you add three thousand to nothing? Why, of course not.

In Ephesians 4:8 through 16, God gave some Apostles "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." God set them in. Brother Wilcox, without the involvement of human instrumentality? That is the question. That is the question that should ring in your ears. Of course the apostles were set in on Pentecost.

Now, then, he said, Brother Norman was right when he said, in I Timothy 5:17, "Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor ..." and he said, "Do not force them, but let them." Now, then, I want to ask you a question. Who does the letting? If you do not force them, who lets them? Who lets them rule? "Rule well." Does the Holy Spirit force them in over the people? That is the thing that I want you to see. I want the elders to rule well.

Then he asked a question: Where do I get my authority for appointment of elders? In the word of God. For preaching the Gospel? In the Word of God. For ordaining in the Church? In the Word of God.

Did human action have any part in the appointment of Apostles? No, sir, nobody is arguing that at all.

Now, I want to read you something that I think will be worthy of consideration, from each and every person. I want you to listen while I quote. I want to just quote it right from memory. Then maybe you will be able to enjoy it all the more. The Bible says, in Mark 3:14, that Christ appointed Apostles. He did that without any human instrumentalitly. The Bible says that God appointed priests for men (Hebrews 5:1). Who selected and appointed the Apostles? Christ.

All right now, I want you to watch this one. In Titus 1:5 the record says that men were directed by the Holy Spirit to appoint elders in every church.

I want to bring forth this conclusion. In Mark 3:14, Jesus did the ordaining and appointing. In Hebrews 3:3, God the ordaining and appointing. In Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5—listen—members of God's church did the ordaining and appointing.

So you have God appointing, you have Christ appointing, you have God's people in Christ's Church, by the authority of the Spirit, appointing and ordaining elders. If not, why not?

Now, there you did not have anything intervening between Christ and the selection of the Apostles. So far as I know there was nothing intervening between God and the appointment of Priests. But there were men intervening between the Spirit's work and the appointing of elders in the Church. He did it through human instrumentality. I want you to see a parallel . . . I want every one of you to get it now. When the men, Paul and Barnabas, in Acts 14:23, appointed elders in every Church, the Holy Spirit was speaking through them. If it meant that nothing was involved, and the Holy Spirit was doing it, without any human involvement, why could you not say that on the day of Pentecost the three thousand were converted by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Why would it not have been conversion by direct operation?

I thank you.

WILCOX'S SECOND NEGATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I appreciate the fact that Brother Norman said there is no improvement in me since the last debate. You cannot improve upon the Bible and I appreciate the fact that he recognized it.

He asked me what the word "today" meant two thousand years ago. If I had lived then I would have thought it meant twenty centuries ago. That is what we are arguing. That is in the proposition.

You are trying to appoint Elders in the church TODAY.

Brother Norman talks about human instrumentalities in I Corinthians. (See chart, page 17). In the first century the Holy Spirit worked through the medium of human beings and the result was Elders. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit works through the medium of the Word, and the result is the same. What Brother Norman should do is keep his hands off and let God alone.

In the first century the Holy Spirit worked through human instrumentality to cast out demons. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit works through the Word in casting out demons.

Again, the Holy Spirit in the first century performed miracles that people might believe. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit operates through the Word and people believe. In the first century the Holy Spirit

operated through human beings to produce faith in those who heard; today the Holy Spirit works through the Word and people believe.

I want us to follow God Almighty's pattern. I deny that in Acts 14:23, Acts 20:28 and Titus 1:5 the human beings selected the Elders. It was the Holy Spirit operating through them.

Let me ask you, when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, Acts the second chapter, was he giving the law of entrance into the church, or was it the Holy Spirit? Peter, left without the Holy Spirit, could have done nothing, and that is why I maintain there is so much trouble in the Church of Christ today. Men, without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, cannot select Elders. That is why you, Brother Norman, selected a Baptist as Elder in Ferndale several years ago.

Brother Norman talked about Titus being an inspired man on par with Paul. I do not teach that Titus was on PAR with Paul. Also I do not know that I can find in the Bible anywhere that you appoint Elders today. Neither one is in the book, and your eldership goes out in the same rubbish with your PAR business.

Notice, we are talking about what is done in the Church. We can talk about our practice as well as our theory, Brother Norman.

Titus was not on PAR with Paul, as far as I know, but Titus did have the Holy Spirit to the extent that he could do what Paul sent him to do, and if you had the direct operation of the Holy Spirit today you, Brother Norman, would not have made the mistake of selecting a Baptist as an Elder.

In Acts, the thirteenth chapter, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Paul and Barnabas." Brother Norman

read it. Why did he not find where the Holy Spirit said to appoint Elders today? He is good on finding some Scripture, why can he not find the other?

Brother Norman said the Holy Spirit makes Elders PLUS the human instrumentality of appointing them. Paul said, in Acts 20:28, the Holy Spirit made Elders, and he did not say plus anything. That is the difference between Brothers Norman and Paul. Which one is right?

Brother Norman said "the thing Brother Wilcox condemns is the thing that has been practiced for a century." Amen. Then he brings to mind Brothers Goodpasture, Boles and others. That is what I told you in my first speech. He is following the tradition of men. Why did he not find what Brothers Peter, John, and Paul said about it? Are you following men? You admitted it. That is what I have been trying to show you.

He is following men. I am thankful he admitted it, and I did not have to tell you. I remember reading, one time, about a young prophet that heard what God said, but listened to an old prophet and God had a lion make a breakfast out of him. I am afraid that is what is going to happen to Brother Norman.

Whom are we following? God or man? He admitted that he is following the brethren and it certainly is true, for he has not found one Scripture that justifies his position. That is what I want him to find. He can find all that the brethren say in the Gospel Advocate and Firm Foundation, but he cannot find where God says anything about it. Whom are we following? God or man?

I knew he would do it. He said, "Are all these fellows sapheads?" Well, let me ask you; are all the Methodists, Baptists, Catholics and others sapheads? They ap-

point Apostles, ordain preachers and vote members into the church. Are they sapheads?

He asked, "Which are you going to believe, Brother Wilcox or these other men?" Don't believe any of us. Accept what God Almighty says, and that is what I gave you. I want you to quit following men. If he had quit following men he would not have made the mistake of appointing the Baptist elder in this congregation.

He said what we need in this twentieth century is wisdom. That is right. We need some of God's wisdom and to quit relying upon the Advocate and these other papers. If you brethren would quit reading them and go to reading the Bible you would be much better off.

Instead of reading the Advocate why don't you read where the church appointed Elders without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit?

Brother Norman says the Holy Spirit makes Elders, and then the congregation sees that they fit God's requirements and appoints them. Now, that is the thing I want the Scripture for. We agree the Holy Spirit makes Elders, but I want the Scriptures that say we look around until we find men of these qualifications and put them in, vote them in at that.

While I am thinking about the voting proposition, Brother Norman talks as if he does not want politics in the church. Then, what are you doing voting men in as Elders? I do not care which way you do it, whether positively or negatively, you still vote them in. Where did you get your authority to do this, and, when you vote Elders in, tell me, can you vote a man in that has LESS than one hundred percent of God's requirements?

Why, he put a man in as Elder that was not even in

the church. I grant you he needs the Holy Spirit or something to guide him.

Here is the thing that I want you to notice. If I am wrong I want information on it. A congregation where big, little, old and young vote men in as Elders, these men do not have any authority until they are voted in, just as soon as they are voted in, the congregation loses its authority and the Elders dictate to it. If that is not the dog chasing his tail I cannot understand it. Here they go: the Elders cannot act until they are voted in, and the congregation cannot act because the Elders are voted in. Where did you get the idea? Bless your heart, it did not come from the Bible. It came from the Roman Catholic church. The Pope does not have any authority until he is voted in, then everybody in the Catholic church loses his authority and the Pope dictates.

The Methodists have their sprinkling, the Digressives their music, and the Catholics their appointing and voting. Therefore, be honest and say that you received your authority for appointing Elders from the Catholics, where sprinkling and music came from. You are on a smaller scale, is the only difference. I know, and you know, that whenever we vote a man in as Elder, he dictates to the church and he would be foolish if he didn't. If you delegate that authority to him and he has any sense at all, he will dictate, and you cannot do anything about it.

Where did Brother Norman get his authority? From the brethren, Roman Catholic Church, Denominations, etc. It did not come from God. Then the Church cannot do anything, and the Elders can hire and fire preachers. They can enforce God's Will and do anything they like. They do it, those humanly appointed Elders, and I don't blame them.

Do not forget, I want to know if you can appoint a man who is LESS than one hundred per cent of what God said for him to be? Let me ask you something: Did God Almighty ever demand anything of a Christian, the doing of which God will not accept until that Christian has human ordination? Examples: God tells the Christian to feed the hungry, but the hungry cannot be fed by anybody in the Church until the individual has human appointment to feed the poor fellow, and if they do not have an Elders' and Deacons' meeting soon, the man may starve to death.

There are four groups of people that I call to your attention just now; the young men, the young women, the elderly men and the elderly women. In Titus 2:6-8 and I Timothy 4:12, God Almighty instructs the young man to be an example in every good work. Who told him to do that? God.

In I Timothy 5:14, God tells the young woman to bear children, guide the house, etc. In Titus 2:4 and in I Timothy 4:10, God tells the elderly women to "Teach the young women, rear children, wash the saint's feet, use hospitality to strangers," and so on.

In I Peter 2:5 God tells the elderly men to tend the flock of God and take the oversight. Tell me why that poor woman must do what God says without any ordination from the congregation, but her husband cannot do what God said for him, until he has human appointment by the congregation? You believe in woman suffrage, (suffering) do you not? The more the better.

Brother Norman teaches that young men, young women, and elderly women should do what God says, but elderly men cannot do a thing until they are appointed by the church.

He almost said that he would not be preaching today if his home congregation had not told him to. Whom is he following? God or man? I do not wonder now at his making some of the statements he does.

Tell me, you other preachers who are present, are you going to preach the Gospel unless your congregation appoints you? I wrote to a preacher of the Church of Christ who lives in Indiana. I told him there were some saints at the edge of his city that needed the Gospel—they needed some help. Do you know what that man wrote me? He said, "I have told the Elders about it and, if they will let me, I will go. If they don't I guess we can't help them." In other words, if the Elders tell him to sprinkle, he will sprinkle; if the Elders tell him to have instrumental music he will have it; and if the Elders tell him not to have the Lord's Supper on Sunday he will say, " I am sorry, but we just cannot have it." Whom is he following—God or man?

I want you to see the absurdity of such a thing. You know where the trouble is today in the religious world? It is where people dethrone God. In Romans 1:21-24 the people professed themselves to be wise, and changed what God said; therefore, God gave them up. Brother Norman has done the same thing. In verse 28 of Romans chapter 1, they refused to have God in their knowledge. We are witnessing, tonight, the very thing that Paul said we would have. In II Thessalonians 2:4 Paul is talking about the Devil and says he is going to sit down in the temple of God, showing himself to be God. I used to think that had reference to the Roman Catholic Church. Bless your heart, the Catholic Church is not God's temple. It is the Church of Christ that is God's temple, Paul said that somebody would sit down in the church, tell you he

was God and dictate the policies of the Church. That is exactly what Brother Norman and his Elders are doing. Where is his authority for human ordination of Elders? He has not read it, and when this debate is over he will not have found it, and it is not because he does not know the Bible. There is not an individual here but what knows that Jewell Norman knows the Book and he is keen when it comes to remembering, but he will not even find that Scripture, much less quote it.

What is wrong? He is trying to dictate the policies of the Church, and that is exactly what Paul said would happen: that somebody would sit down in the Church and tell you that he was God speaking. That is what Brother Norman has done. The Scripture is not to be found for his position.

Yes, he wants to help God out. That is what Abraham and Sarah wanted. God said he would give them a son through whom the world would be blessed, but Sarah was barren and Abraham thought God could not fulfill his promise; therefore, they took Sarah's handmaid, Hagar, to be the mother of this child. Evidently they thought God was not able to fulfill his promise.

What was wrong with Moses? He dethroned God. When God said, "Moses, speak to the rock," he said in his heart, Oh, no, God, you don't know what you are talking about, I know what I will do, I will strike the rock.

What does Brother Norman say? "God, you don't know what you are talking about when you say the Holy Spirit makes Elders." Oh, yes, the Holy Spirit makes Elders, but we have to appoint them. That is the same thing Moses thought, the same that Abraham thought.

Where has all the trouble arisen in the religious

world? Where people get too smart to accept God. God told David to carry the Ark of the Covenant with staves, and David thought God did not know what he was talking about, so he put the Ark on a Cart. What does God say to Brother Norman? "The Holy Spirit makes Elders," Acts 20:28. Brother Norman says, "That is all right, but they must have human appointment." Where is the scripture for it?

Jeroboam was just about as wise in his day. God told him and all the people to worship at Jerusalem. What did Jeroboam think? "It is all right for them to worship at Jerusalem if they want to, but it is all right to worship at Dan and Bethel." He changed God's plan, and it became a sin. (I Kings 12:30).

Brother Norman wants to change God's plan with reference to the making and appointing of Elders. There is no scripture for his position and he will not find any; therefore, his is the same type of sin as those mentioned above.

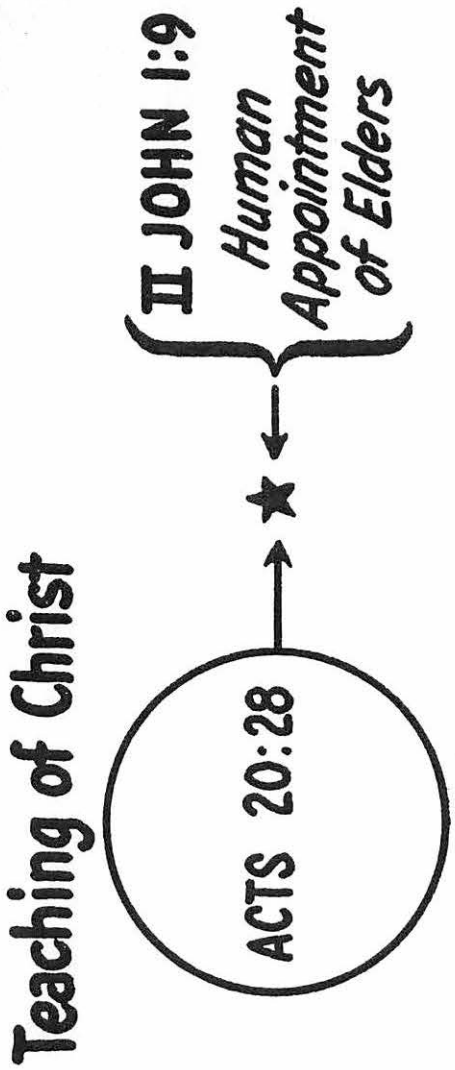
If Brother Norman can find the scripture where congregations or people appoint Elders today without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, well, but if he cannot find it he is doing it without faith. Faith cometh by hearing God's word. He cannot possibly appoint Elders today by the word of God. Therefore, it is done without faith, for faith comes from hearing God. Where did God say for us to appoint Elders today? I am not condemning the fact that they had the human instrument in the first century. I believe they did. They also had the human instrument in casting out demons in the first century, and in performing miracles too. But in the twentieth century they are done through the Word of God, and God Almighty does not need your help.

What is the difference in the making of a Christian and the appointing of an Elder? Here it is. I gave you the Scripture in Matthew 28:18-20, showing God demands that we make disciples and baptize them. There is the human instrumentality today in the making and baptizing. I want the Scripture that says there is human instrumentality in the making and appointing of Elders today. This (referring to board) is the Scripture that says we make Christians. I want Brother Norman to write in here the Scripture that says we make and appoint Elders today.

You cannot use the Scriptures in Acts 14:23, Acts 20:28 or Titus 1:5 because they were under the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost Peter was speaking as the Spirit gave him utterance, and he was not responsible for what he said. When Paul, Barnabas and Titus selected Elders they were not responsible for what they did. It was the Holy Spirit working through them. I want the Scripture where God tells ME to APPOINT ELDERS TODAY just as He told those people back in the first century. I gave you the Scripture which tells us, today, to baptize people into the Church. Brother Norman cannot produce his Scripture. He cannot because he has none. All the Scripture he uses will be those where the men were under the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

What he is doing does not pertain to life and godliness, (II Peter 1:3). What he is doing is beyond the teaching of Christ. I would have you notice in II John 1:9 (See chart, page 43). John says the person who goes on and does not abide in the teaching of Christ has not God. What is the teaching of Christ on the appointment of Elders? That it is done by the Holy Spirit, Acts 20:28. Brother Norman should either find the Scripture that says the Church does it, today, or else he should admit that he has gone beyond the Scripture and does not have Christ or God. I thank you.



NORMAN'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, I never was happier in my life to come before you, and I never had as little to do in debating in all of my life.

Brother Wilcox, I want you to look at me a minute. I am ugly, but you look at me. The Holy Spirit, he says, worked through human instrumentality. Result: An elder. The Spirit works through the Word. Result: An elder. Now, look how he parallels. He parallels the human element with the word of God. Your parallels break down, or else you say that this is through human instrumentality. It is there. You put the instrumentality in place of the word and your argument breaks down. Now, you will either have to change that or get up and take it back. It does not make a bit of difference to me. I will tell you what you should do. You should admit of being wrong. You know you are wrong. The audience knows it.

He brought up a personal thing. I am not going to mention the man's name. He said a certain man who was appointed an elder in Ferndale Church while I was here was a Baptist. Let me tell you exactly how the thing was, and I want to ask Brother Wilcox what he would have done had he been in my place.

I did not know this certain man had been baptized by a Baptist preacher. Some church of Christ preacher that had a wishbone for a backbone received him in, so to speak, into the church—I will use it that way. I did

not know one single solitary thing, Tipton, but just as soon as I learned, do you know what happened? I baptized that man into Christ. Could I have baptized him before I knew? If he had not been willing to be baptized into Christ there would not have been but one thing to have done—withdraw. How would I have known? You would have to have a knowledge of the thing. I want to ask you this question. I want it to be in the record. Did you ever, in your preaching experience, receive one into the Church as ordinarily spoken of who had had sectarian baptism? I never did in my life. I never in my life did take a Baptist in. He was already a member when I came here to Ferndale, and I righted the wrong as quickly as I knew. How could I have done more.

He really thought he would get personal and he would bring it in, do you not see, to try to throw me off, but listen, ladies and gentlemen, that carried its weight with but a few of his own members. The people are too intelligent to be led astray by that method in handling the negative. No one was led astray by it.

Now, watch what he said. He said it, and if he wants to take it back it will be all right with me; I wish he would. Now, listen everybody. You heard him say in Acts 20:28 they were made elders by the Holy Spirit plus nothing, Yes, he said it. Now, if men are made elders by the Holy Spirit plus nothing, and since you agree that people are made Christians by the same Holy Spirit, then does the Holy Spirit make Christians without human instrumentality?

He talked about voting and majority rule. Bless your heart, I am against voting. I am against majority rule. That is why I want Elders that will oversee and deacons that will serve and preachers that will preach,

and members that will submit themselves to the elders, scriptural rule.

He threw off a little on the Firm Foundation. I will tell you right now, God Almighty in heaven droops his head tonight at such endeavor upon the part of my worthy respondent. Brother G. H. P. Showalter, an aged man who, through these years has stood against every departure in the Church, and were it not for men like Showalter, N. B. Hardeman and John T. Lewis, and a few of us younger men that have a backbone instead of a wishbone, and have a mouth that cotton cannot be rammed in, where would the Church be tonight?

What man in Detroit has risen up in defense of the truth? I have come from a different state to take care of this thing. I do not know how you feel about it, but I think I am doing a pretty good, reasonably nice job of it.

When Brother Wilcox asked, awhile ago, how much more time he had, and Brother Watson said, eight minutes, I said to Brother Moody, "He has more time than he needs." He is like my dad about every Fourth of July: He lays his corn by and then he is up with his work.

Oh yes, I am after you, God bless your soul, and the souls of Ferndale members. I am after you. I have come from Ohio to take care of it and I am doing it.

Then he says, "That is the trouble with Norman. He is following men. He is traditional." No, I am not traditional. I wonder what the people would have said at Corinth when Paul said unto them, in I Corinthians 11:1, "Be ye followers of me." I suppose if Brother Wilcox had been there he would have said if you follow Paul you follow human tradition. You cannot follow men. Those men that I have mentioned are not inspired men,

but they speak as they have it from the word of God, and it certainly is the truth whenever I speak and they speak, as given in the word of God. But he said the ones that I need to follow are Paul and Barnabas and others in the New Testament. Well, I want to say this kindly and respectfully unto each and every person within the sound of my voice tonight. I am following Paul and Barnabas in appointing elders; I am following Titus and Timothy in appointing elders. Oh yes, I am doing it. There is not a case recorded in the word of God where a man ever became an elder in any local church without the involvement of human instrumentality.

Now, the thing he would like for me to say is that since the Holy Spirit is no longer located in men, I do not speak as I am directed by the Spirit. Neither does my worthy respondent so speak, but if I speak the same word of God which the Holy Spirit revealed and has recorded, and has come down through the stream of time in a well directed chain of God's providence, why would I not be appointing elders like they appointed elders? Why would I not do it?

Then he goes to II John 9: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." I want to ask this question: Is appointing elders by human instrumentality in the doctrine of Christ? Is the appointing of elders within the doctrine of Christ? I say it is. Why? Because Paul evidently preached the doctrine of Christ, and Titus did, and no one would doubt Timothy doing it. We all believe Paul did it, and all of them were instruments being used by the spirit in the appointment.

I want this debate published to the Brotherhood

too. I am not ashamed of my commitment in this debate whatsoever.

Then he asks me, "Whom should I follow—God or man?" It says in the fifth chapter of Acts, verse 29, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Where do we find in this twentieth century of ours, such outstanding men as I have mentioned that believe as you do concerning eldership. I want to make the thing personal. Do you believe that Brother H. Leo Boles is a sound man? Do you believe that Brethren G. C. Brewer and N. B. Hardeman are sound men? I am just going to wait the time to see what he says.

Now, you talk about the church riding a new cart. Who is riding the Church tonight on a new cart? It is none other than my worthy respondent, Tipton C. Wilcox, of Ferndale, Michigan. He is taking you for a ride, and he is moving with a momentum of speed, and I am going to put the hydraulic brakes on before this thing is over, and I am going to check the speed here at Ferndale, and you see if I do not.

Then he said they need to rule by example. Now, I know why, but maybe you do not, and I shall tell you why he pulled that off now. He ran out of soap, so to speak, and he jumped from the first night in the negative to the last night in the affirmative. He is supposed to affirm they rule by example only.

God bless your heart, Tipton. If elders rule by example only—that is what you brought out and I am going to take care of it now—and they have no authority over anyone in the church—you have said that—you committed yourself—if the elders have no authority over anyone in the Church, and all are equal in the Church, how in the name of Heaven would you ever exclude a

member? One man has as much authority as another. How would you deal with a disorderly member?

Well, somebody says a few of us would get up and withdraw from him. Then do you have more power, a few of you, than the others? If you all are ruling by example only, how could you carry on the work?

I will tell you exactly the only way it could be carried on, brethren. It could only be carried on by a democratic form of government, and I am going to ask Brother Wilcox this question. I shall not charge it to him. Do you have, in Ferndale, a democratic rule of church government? Do you have elders in Ferndale Church? If you do, I would like to see the color of their hair and the bat of their eye. Do you have elders in this church? If you do, bring them out. I should like to take a good look at them. I may be seeing some of them now. Possibly I am, but I should like to know them.

Had you been living back in the days mentioned in Acts 11:30, and certain men wanted to send money over here to help out, and they sent it to the elders of the Church who would get it? If I wanted to send a twenty dollar bill to the church here at Ferndale, to the elders, to whom would I send it? Do you have nameless elders, or are they unseen ruling men? What kind of elders do you have in Ferndale?

I would not have brought that out but you forced me to, and I shall ride you through Friday night. Yes sir, I want to know the names of these elders.

Then he went to Romans 1:22 and quoted several verses about the condition of some of the Gentiles and the depths of degradation into which they plunged themselves, and he said they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Then he came over and made the personal

application and said, "Jewell Norman does not want to retain God in his knowledge." Listen, Tipton, you would have a hard time making the membership of Ferndale think that Jewell Norman is not up to par, even after all of your talk. I still have friends in Michigan and in Ferndale that I can number by the scores, and after this debate is over I shall shake hands with new ones that I have not greeted before, and you wait and see if I do not.

He keeps throwing at me, all the way through about human ordination. I am against human ordination, as the term is generally known by the sectarian world. I am against that. Whenever it comes to selecting and appointing qualified men to the eldership of the Congregation, I am for it. Why? Simply because it has been recorded within the sacred pages of God's book unto man, and I have read it time after time.

I noticed that he mentioned Abraham having a child by his handmaid. Now, Abraham, God bless his soul, the old Patriarch has died and gone on, and I shall not dig up the grave and bring Abraham's bones from the slumbers of death.

Now, so much for all that. I have tried to deal just as fair and square as I know how and I shall continue.

Then he asked this question: Can I prove about being selected by the Church? I want to ask this question, and it will be for emphasis and also to bring Brother Wilcox out in his next speech, being the last negative speech. He cannot bring up anything new in the final negative. I want to let him work on this just a little bit. Now, inasmuch as deacons and elders are officers in the same Church—I want you to get that—and inasmuch as their work overlaps in the church, then would it not be scripturally true to select elders the same way deacons are

selected, since they both are placed in the same local congregation over the same body of people?

I am going to read from Acts, chapter 6, and if he denies this I am going to bring in some scholarship, although I cannot do it tonight because I will not have another speech. Here it is: "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve (of course, it means the Apostles) called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, "It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you, seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." I want you to see, first, these brethren in the Church at Jerusalem were given the qualifications of the men to be selected; secondly, the apostles, who could have done it, but did not do it, but told the brethren, "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report," possessing the qualifications given, and after they looked them out—it does not say how they were looked out, but it was not by majority rule. I will say that.

Then, in Acts 6:3, it says, "Look ye out disciples whom We may appoint over this business." Now, there is your scripture for the congregation doing something, Brother.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S THIRD NEGATIVE

(February 15, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Brother Norman said he never had such a little job in all his life. Why, then, does he not use some of that time in finding where the Bible says WE should appoint Elders TODAY?

He said I should acknowledge that I am wrong. Why does he not bring the Scripture showing that I am wrong? He wants me to acknowledge something that is not true. Instead of trying to make me admit something that is not true, why does he not SHOW where I am wrong?

He mentioned the man in Ferndale that was made and Elder and said, "I did not know anything about his being a Baptist. As soon as I found it out I taught him the truth." Well, that is fine, but he did not help the man much, because he let him walk around in swaddling clothes and still retain his Eldership. Why did you not teach him that a novice could not be an Elder?

He wishes I would take back some things I said. Sure he wishes it. I am glad he acknowledged he feels the weight of the Gospel, which is God's power to save.

I cannot take it back, because I have given you chapter and verse for what I have said tonight.

He says I threw off on those church papers and good men. I want you to get the straight of it. There is not one of those men but whom I honor because he preaches the Gospel. However, what I AM condemning is Brother

Norman's taking THEIR authority for appointing Elders, (if perchance they teach it) instead of GOD'S.

I am not condemning all the good things those papers do, but I am condemning Brother Norman for going to the Advocate and Firm Foundation for his AUTHORITY in appointing Elders. I think instead of wasting that time he should see what GOD said on the subject.

The Methodists go to their Discipline for authority to sprinkle babies, and you go to our church papers for your authority on the Eldership question. Bless your heart, both of you should go to the Bible for your authority in matters of religion. The sad part about it is to have a preacher in the Church of Christ who claims to do what the Bible says, yet he cannot find the Eldership with human ordination in the Bible; therefore, he lays it aside and takes the Advocate or Firm Foundation to get his authority; and if he does not get it there, he will write to some of the Brethren.

Brother Norman, you asked why I would not accept man's word. I cannot accept the doctrines and precepts of men (Mark 7;6-9). That is what I want you to quit. You are following tradition. You admitted that for ONE HUNDRED years we have been doing it, but up to this time, Jewell, you have not found one verse in that Book that authorizes US TODAY to select Elders and set them in, and you acknowledged that God set them in. What then are YOU doing setting them in?

Brother Norman, you say you are following Paul. Well, tell me where Paul said YOU were to make Elders TODAY? May I call to your mind, again, there never have been any Elders selected by human beings. It was always done by the Holy Spirit using human beings as instruments. I call to your mind, Acts 20:28. (See Chart

page 17) where it says the Holy Spirit makes Elders. How? Through human instrumentality. That was in the first century. The Holy Spirit makes Elders in the twentieth century. How? Through the instrumentality of the Word. The only difference in the two is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works.

The Holy Spirit casts out demons. In the first century it did this through human instrumentality. In the twentieth century it does it through the Word. The only difference is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works. The effect is the same.

The Holy Spirit in the first century performed miracles so people would believe. The Holy Spirit in the twentieth century has the written word that people may believe. The only difference is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works.

In the first century the Holy Spirit operated directly on the speakers to give people faith. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit operates through the word and people have faith. The only difference is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works. The effect is the same.

I know you understand this. Why is it we do not have human ordination today? We do not have direct operation of the Holy Spirit today. If we did we could perform miracles as well as appoint Apostles and Elders.

Brother Norman said we had no Elders in the first century without human instrumentality. That is right and we had no Elders without the direct operation of the Holy Spirit either. Therefore, why not accept one if we accept the other? Brother Norman admits we should obey God. Why doesn't he do it, then, and quit appointing Elders? He has gone through this debate and has

not put the Scriptures on the board one time that tells us to appoint Elders. It is not because he does not know the Bible. It is because it is NOT IN the BIBLE. He finds the Scripture that says the human instrument plays a part in the twentieth century in making Christians; namely: teaching and baptizing them, Matthew 28:18-20, but he has not found any Scripture for the twentieth century that says we should make and appoint Elders. That is what I want.

I am not against any man we have in the brotherhood preaching the Gospel, and I thank God we have so many doing it. The thing I am condemning some of my brethren for is doing things they cannot find in the Bible, just like Brother Norman in appointing Elders.

He mentions that he would like to see the color of the hair of our Elders and look in their deep blue eyes, that he does not know who they are. How do you find out who a shepherd is? You know he is a shepherd when he leads the sheep. If he refuses to lead the sheep is he a shepherd?

While we are talking about sheep, he never did answer me when I asked if he ever knew of a drove of sheep selecting its shepherd, but that is what he says the church should do. God does not say it.

I knew he would go to Acts 6. Listen to me, brethren, there is not one word mentioned in Acts 6 about an Elder. Why does he want to use it? He said, "I GUESS they are appointed like deacons." Well suppose he reads to us where they ARE appointed like deacons.

I would also like for him, while he is finding that scripture, to find where a church ever did appoint Deacons, also where a church ever had an Elders' and

Deacons' meeting. There are many things I would like to have him find.

Who does the setting-in of Elders? God! He admitted it. Christ adds to the church. God sets them in or places them where he wants them. He places my right arm where he wanted it. I had nothing to do with it. As long as my arm is subject to the head it does fine. God Almighty placed every member in the spiritual body just where he wanted it, and he placed Christ as head to rule that body. As long as the members let the head alone he rules well. It is when the members get smarter than the head that friction and confusion are in the church. There should not be any schism in the body and there will not be as long as the members let the head rule.

I call to your attention that God Almighty has never permitted people to appoint Apostles, ordain preachers, vote members into the church or select Elders. Brother Norman believes in the first three, but he will not accept God in the fourth one. Why?

If we need to appoint Elders today in the churches, why is it that we do not vote members into the churches, ordain preachers, or appoint Apostles? All four were done in the first century. God Almighty and Christ, his Son, did the first three, and the Holy Spirit does the last one. Brother Norman is willing to accept the first three, but he rejects God Almighty's Word in the fourth and says human beings should do that today.

I asked you whether God ever demanded of a Christian anything, the doing of which God would not accept until that individual had human appointment? And I used as an illustration—feeding the hungry. God Almighty told us to feed the hungry; however Brother

Norman says an Elder cannot do it until he is appointed. He said the Holy Spirit makes one an Elder, but he cannot function until he has human appointment.

I brought to your mind the fact that God Almighty gave each of the following his work: the young man, the young women, the elderly woman, and the elderly man. Brother Norman says the first three should function as God wants them to, without any human ordination, but the elderly man cannot function until the church ordains him. What an absurdity.

Bless your heart, his poor old wife, that has corns on her toes, has to walk all over the country and do what God said, without anybody praising her, but her dear, old husband cannot do anything until the church appoints him to do it. Tell me again, is there anything that God demands of you, a Christian, the doing of which He will not accept until you have human appointment?

Then why appoint Elders? If they do what God told them to, they would feed the flock, and that is what I maintain they should do, what God says, without any HUMAN appointment.

Why, you are telling me I cannot preach the Gospel until some church sends me to preach it. Christ said to his disciples to go and preach the Gospel. He did not tell them to wait until they were ordained. The thing I am condemning is HUMAN ordination.

THIS CHURCH HAS ELDERS. I believe if they are good, functioning Elders they do have control of the Church. They are overseers and guardians of the church, but I deny they must have HUMAN APPOINTMENT before they can function. That is the subject we have under consideration.

Brother Norman says the Bible authorizes US to

APPOINT ELDERS TODAY. Where does it authorize it? He has not shown us yet even though he has had three twenty-minute speeches. He has not produced one Scripture.

I put on the board the Scripture that says the Holy Spirit makes Elders, but he has not put one Scripture on the board that says WE should ORDAIN Elders TODAY. All the ordination he can read about in the Book is with regard to the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. It was not the individuals doing it, but the Holy Spirit through human instrumentality. I want him to find the scripture where the Holy Spirit is operating indirectly, through the Word, telling us to appoint Elders.

The reason we have so much trouble in the different congregations today is because they have gone beyond God's commands and have humanly ordained men that are not fit for God's Kingdom, much less to be Elders. That is what I am condemning.

May I call to your mind again, that the trouble with the religious world, today, is they have dethroned God. When God gives a pattern, His Will, they transgress it and say, "We know that God says thus and so, but we are going to have it some other way." That is exactly what Abraham, Jeroboam, Moses and David did and that is what such men as Brother Norman are doing today.

May I remind you again that in II Thessolonians 2:4 Paul said Satan would sit down in the temple of God, the Church of Christ, and dictate the policies of the church? We are living to see that fulfilled. What I want is to dethrone the MAN in there that is dictating and get back to the Bible.

Tell me what is wrong with GOD'S PLAN, after all? I asked Brother Norman the following question: if he

could appoint Elders, could he appoint them short of one hundred per cent qualifications? He did not answer. Why?

I also asked him, without receiving an answer, "How is it that an Elder has no authority until the good, bad, indifferent, young and old vote him into office, how they immediately lose their authority and he has it all? Again there is your dog going round and round after his tail.

It is exactly what the Roman Catholic Church teaches. Brother Norman did not get his idea in the Bible, but from them. The Cardinals vote the Pope in. He does not have any authority until he is voted in. They immediately lose their authority and he has it all. You talk to me about teaching the Word of God. Why don't you do it?

May I call to your mind I Corinthians 12 where the Holy Spirit is talking? He pictures the human body with all of its members. Imagine the members of a human body voting on one or more members of the body becoming its head, and giving them authority to control and dictate to the body. That is just as wise as saying the members of the spiritual body can vote a man in to dictate to them.

Brother Norman never did tell us why he is preaching. He has not had human ordination, but he is preaching. However, he will not let the Elders function until they have human ordination. Tell me why the difference? If one is all right, why not the other?

He did not tell you that he is out of this circle either. (See chart, page 43). The teaching of Christ is inside the circle. What is the teaching of Christ on the making of Elders? The Holy Spirit makes Elders, (Acts 20:28). Why is it that he did not find the Scripture for human ap-

pointment? It is not in the Bible. John shows that Brother Norman is here without God. (Indicates chart). He is in exactly the same place as the Catholic Church, because they do not have any authority for what they are doing. He is in the same position as the man that uses instrumental music. He is outside the teaching of Christ with the Methodists when they sprinkle. They are all on the outside looking in. He has not produced the Scripture for his position. He cannot find the Scripture in the teaching of Christ that says an ELDER MUST HAVE HUMAN APPOINTMENT.

The Bible says the Holy Spirit makes Elders, Acts 20:28. Brother Norman will not find where HUMAN APPOINTMENT is necessary regardless of how long this debate may continue.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

(February 16, 1944)

The Bible Teaches That the Holy Spirit Selects, Appoints, or Makes Elders Without Any Action on the Part of the Local Congregation.

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are glad, indeed, to have you here tonight. I hope that all have come with open minds so we may study the Word of God, and find out what it teaches concerning things the Christian should do.

We should not have but one thought in mind, and that is to find out what GOD wants. Of all people in the world who should accept the Bible, it is the Church of Christ. I believe all Christians do accept it.

Our subject for discussion tonight is the one before you (on long chart) which is readily seen; namely: The Bible Teaches That The Holy Spirit Selects, Appoints or Makes Elders Without Any Action on the Part of the Local Congregation. That is what I believe and teach. The only authority we have in matters of religion comes from Christ. He is the head of the Church. He is the one that has all authority, both in heaven and on earth. Therefore, it must come from Christ. If there is anything we do which does not come from Christ, it is of no value and therefore a sin.

The Bible is the only pattern we have to guide us in matters of religion, and John, in closing this Book, said in Revelation 22:18-20 not to add to nor take from it.

I am convinced that he was not referring solely to

Revelation, because it was the Spirit speaking through John. Therefore, the Spirit was closing his Revelation to mankind, and just before he did so said not to add to nor take from the Bible.

Why is it that I make the statement which is our subject for consideration tonight? Because I do not find in the only authority we have, the Bible, any demand for congregations selecting Elders; and I do not find any example where congregations ever selected Elders. When the Holy Spirit was selecting Elders through human instrumentality in the first century, it never did permit a congregation to have one thing to do with the selection. Why then is it practiced today? I find no command or example, but I read in Acts 14:23, when Paul and Barnabas were under the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, (American Standard Version) they (Paul and Barnabas) appointed for them (the church) Elders. If the Church could select its Elders, why didn't the Holy Spirit let them do it under the supervision of Paul and Barnabas? Yet we, in the twentieth century, are trying to do something which the Holy Spirit never did permit a Church to do. I would like for Brother Norman, who denies this proposition, to give me one Scripture where a CHURCH ever did have any part in the selection of Elders.

If he finds NO COMMAND for it, and NO EXAMPLE, pray tell me why he does it? We claim to speak where the Bible speaks and to keep silent where it is silent, but on the subject of appointing Elders, many of the churches of Christ have gone beyond that which is written; they have paid no attention to what God says.

Let us notice. Why is it that we do not use instrumental music in our services today? Brother Norman believes, and so do I, that God condemns it, because we have no teaching on the use of it, and we have no example; hence, we say it is a sin.

Why is it the Church of Christ does not practice sprinkling and pouring for baptism? We have no Scripture commanding it, and we have no example where churches ever used it.

Why not have the Lord's Supper on Friday? We have no example where the Church ever met on Friday, and we have no command to meet on Friday.

Why is it we do not have human ordination of Elders? We have no command for it, and we have no example of it. I am asking you again: Why is it practiced?

Why is it the Church of Christ does not appoint Apostles today? Other religious organizations do it. We find no example where churches appointed them, and we find no command for such practice.

Why not vote members into the church? Other churches do it. We find no teaching to this effect, and we find no example.

Why not vote Elders into the Church? We find no teaching along that line, and we find no example. Listen to me! If Brother Norman wants to follow the teaching of our Lord, he will quit the practice or else produce the scripture. You heard him in three speeches last night, and he never did write any scripture on the board. When this debate closes the board will still be empty; the scripture will not be found. It is not in the Bible.

By the way, just for emphasis, I heard today, through the underground railroad, that some preacher went away from here last night and said he could write that scripture on the board. Bless your heart, you just

funnel Brother Norman, and let him do it. If he cannot find it, he should call on you. It is a free-for-all in that respect. There is not a preacher of the Church of Christ in Detroit or anywhere that can do it. If you can, give it to Brother Norman; let him write it up here.

Why do we sing in the public assembly? The Bible teaches us to sing, and we find where the churches did sing.

Why is it we baptize by immersion? We find this teaching, and we find the example.

Why do we contribute as we are prospered? We find the teaching. We find the example.

Why do we have the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week? We have the teaching, and we have the example.

Why do we have the bread and the fruit of the vine as the Lord's Supper? We have the teaching. We have the example.

Why is it when we come into our public assembly we have the men pray? We have the teaching and the example that men should pray everywhere.

Why is it that Brother Norman does not have women praying in his services? He has just as much authority for this as he does for appointing Elders. The passage of Scripture that says he should appoint Elders in churches today will say in the very next line to have women pray. He will find both of them in the second chapter of Jude. They are just not in the Bible, and for a Church of Christ preacher to affirm something that he cannot find one Scripture for is beyond me. I would not be much disturbed if it were the denominational world, but for the Church of Christ to practice it is absurd.

When I turn to Acts 20:28, I find the answer to the

proposition that is in front of you. Paul, guided by inspiration, said the Holy Spirit makes Elders, and that is what I believe about it, and that is what I accept.

In I Corinthians 14:37 Paul says, "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Now, you will find out tonight whether or not Brother Norman is a righteous individual. Paul said if he is, he will acknowledge the things I write are the commandments of the Lord.

What did you write, Paul, in reference to how Elders are made? The Holy Spirit makes them. Where did you write that, or where did you say it? In Acts 20:28, and Luke the beloved physician penned it.

May I say for your benefit, that when God SPECIFIES how a thing is done, you CANNOT do it any other way and please Him, and Brother Norman teaches this also in everything but Eldership. Why are you not consistent?

God Almighty said in the Old Testament dispensation that the Ark of the Covenant should be carried with staves. He SPECIFIED HOW he wanted it carried, and when David put it on a cart, God condemned him.

God Almighty has SPECIFIED HOW ELDERS ARE MADE, by the Holy Spirit, Acts 20:28, and Brother Norman cannot do it any other way and please God. God specified how the Ark should be built: out of gopher wood. Brother Norman teaches that Noah could not have used any other kind of wood and pleased God. That is right, but the same God that specified in Noah's case specified in our case, and He said, "The Holy Spirit makes Elders." Brother Norman says we have to ap-

point them. That is the difference between God and Brother Norman.

When God specifies, you cannot change it. God told Moses to speak to the rock, but Moses struck it, evidently thinking it made no difference; however, God condemned him. Why will He not condemn Brother Norman for changing His plan in the appointment of Elders? Brother Norman teaches that you cannot baptize people any way except by immersion. Why? Because God specifies a burial. When it comes to the appointing of Elders, Brother Norman says the congregation can do it. Well, where is your Scripture? "Oh, I do not have any." Don't you know God specified and you should not go beyond? Well, this is different. Why? Because it suits him to bury people in baptism, and it does not suit him to let God Almighty control the Eldership question. He thinks he should help God out. I don't know what God did until the last forty years without Brother Norman to help Him.

Let me ask you, brethren, and I especially want Brother Norman to notice it. When we come to the Bible today, what does it mean to us? Do we believe it or disbelieve it? I am saying that we cannot go beyond what God has said, and we cannot do other than what He has specified. We must please Him if we go to heaven. In Romans 12:2, Paul said the will of God is perfect. In II Timothy 3:16-17 Paul said, "It makes a man perfect." Now, if God's will is perfect, if it makes a man perfect, and it does not mention the selection of Elders by human hands, or by human ordination, pray tell me what Brother Norman is doing having Elders appointed by humanity? Do you believe God's will is perfect? No, he does

not believe it. How do I know? Because he is going beyond it.

In II Peter 1:3, Peter says all things that pertain to life and godliness have been given us, and he never said one word about a Church appointing Elders. Therefore, when a Church appoints Elders, it does not pertain to life, but does pertain to death. When a Church appoints Elders, it does not pertain to godliness; therefore, it pertains to ungodliness. If he would find one scripture that says a Church could appoint Elders, I would accept it, but until he finds that scripture, I will believe that human ordination does not pertain to life and godliness.

Let us go back to II Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." How is a man going to be furnished completely? From the scriptures. What man? God's man. We are talking about this now, because we are talking about Christian men and women appointing Elders, and there is not one word said in this Book about a Church or a congregation appointing Elders. God's word makes His organization perfect without it; therefore, you have gone outside of the thing that is perfect. Brother Norman does not believe the Bible is perfect. Let me call your attention to this circle (indicating chart, page 69). You cannot add to or take from a circle and leave it perfect, and Brother Norman cannot add to or take from the Bible and leave it perfect. God Almighty has given us the Bible and said, "It is perfect." It does not mention from Genesis to Revelation anything about a congregation appointing Elders. Therefore, Brother Norman has added something to it. Notice

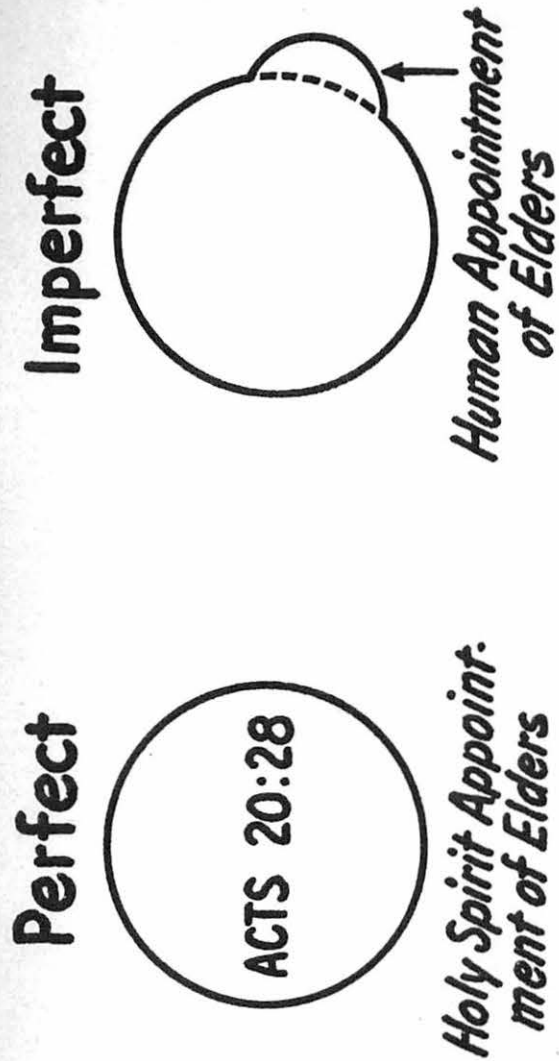
this diagram (see chart circle, page 69), is just as good a circle now as the congregation where he works, when he goes beyond that which is perfect and disobeys God in the human appointment of Elders.

Some of the Churches of Christ have a theory that in all matters the Bible is perfect; however, when it comes to something they want, they can do as they please. If we can transgress God Almighty's will in appointing Elders, the Baptists can transgress His will in baptism and the Christian Church can transgress His will in matters of music. Then anybody under heaven can transgress what he wants to. If I can transgress God's will, you can; if God Almighty will not permit me to transgress His will, He will not permit you to transgress.

What we want in this debate is one scripture that says a congregation can or should appoint Elders. I asked for it last night and did not get it. I will ask for it tonight, and when this debate is over, it will not be on this blackboard, because it is not in the Book. It is not in his Book either. As Brother Norman belongs to the Church of Christ and claims to accept the Bible, that it is the perfect will of God, he should either produce the scripture for the appointing of Elders today or quit the debate and tell the people that he is dishonest. If Brother Norman belonged to the denominational world, he could be expected to dodge the issue, but as he claims to stand with the Bible, and not to go beyond it, he should give chapter and verse for his position or take it back.

There is one other scripture that I want to call to your minds, and that is I Corinthians 4:6 (American Standard Version). In it Paul says "that in us ye might learn not to go beyond that which is written." What did he say? "Not to go beyond that which is written." Do you believe Paul?

In I Corinthians 14:37 he said, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." I thank you.



NORMAN'S FIRST NEGATIVE

(February 16, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen: I want to give these nice young men a little workout tonight. I certainly am very thankful indeed to have been privileged to be back with you for this occasion, and to deny the speech which Brother Wilcox made wherein I think he did not teach the truth regarding the subject of the Eldership.

I shall just begin at the very last and go to the first, while this is fresh on your minds. I want to show you what he drew on the Board, chart the circle. He first had a nice circle and then he made this (indicating) and, if I understood him rightly, he let this represent, this botched way of arrangement, the Church of Christ, and he used the expression "in the aggregate," and talked about people here that would ordain elders and talked about human ordination of elders.

I want to say this just as kindly as I know how, that all through last night's speeches, and tonight thus far, he has talked about the Church of Christ, letting me be a member of the church of Christ, and talked as though he is not a member. I want to ask my worthy respondent this personal question: Do you claim to be a member of the Church of Christ? Do you claim to have any connection, Brother Wilcox, with the Church of Christ?

You talked about the thing being Roman Catholic, and have talked about Catholicism, and thew off about appointing elders and about Roman Catholics doing certain things, and then termed the whole thing contrary to God's will. Now, I will admit that Roman Catholicism, with all of its proud and boastful ways of doing things is contrary to the will of God. I am against anything that conflicts with the Bible. I am likewise opposed to, and stand against, any departure from God's way of doing things in the Church, and I want to ask you again, lest the audience might have forgotten it, do you claim to be any part of the Church of Christ?

I used men's names, such as N. B. Hardeman, C. R. Nichol, R. L. Whiteside, John T. Lewis, and other men, but I had a perfect right not to say that I myself was following them only as they themselves followed the will of God. I tried to let the audience see just as clearly as I possibly was able to make it, that I am following these men insofar as they are teaching in harmony with the word of God, and there is not one of them that I have mentioned, so far as I know, or can now recall, that believes the doctrine that Brother Wilcox is advocating here in this debate and has been advocating for some time prior to this.

It looks strange to me, strikingly strange, that men who are as well versed in the Bible as those I have mentioned, would not have been able at some time to have run across something along the line he has preached. Many of them have lived to be old men, and some that I have mentioned, practically all that I mentioned tonight are now living. Some of them are quite aged, and well versed in the will of God, and I do not know of any time, anywhere, of their teaching the things that are characteristic of Brother Wilcox.

So he can term me Catholic all he wants to. He can put me outside the will of God all he wants to. I

want to say that what he says about me and my brethren does not make it so.

I am glad indeed to state to this nice, intelligent, audience that I propose to be a member of the Church, and I stand opposed to the set-up that Brother Wilcox has here as respects Church organization. Now, I want you to get that, brethren, and let it sink deeply in every heart that is honest and good.

Now, then, he talked about II Peter 1:3 and I Cor. 4:6, where it speaks of all things which pertain to life and Godliness. That is, the Bible does that? Certainly it does. That is the reason we appoint elders. We do it by the authority of God. It is life and Godliness. It is within the will of God.

And he said we should learn not to speak of men above that which is written. I am refraining from speaking of any man or set of men above that which is written in the word of God. I am talking about men who conform to the will of God, and that alone.

Then he said the will of God is perfect. Certainly the will of God is perfect. Who would dare deny or would like to deny the will of God being perfect? I do not. Certainly, the appointment of elders by the authority of God revealed in the will of God, constitutes, at least in part, the Will of God. I use that "in part" because the will of God embraces so many other things besides the appointment of elders. I believe the will of God is perfect.

Then he said that God told Noah to build the Ark, and he specified the kind of wood to build it with—gopher. Yes, Brother Wilcox, he specified the kind of material to appoint in the Church, being first selected by

those that have a part in that selection, and that is the local congregation.

Then he said that David went wrong, the people did, because they took the Ark on a cart; they went wrong because they transgressed the will of God and refused to do what God bade them do. Brother Wilcox is wrong only when he departs from the way that God specifies. There is not a book, chapter or verse anywhere in the Bible that shows elders were made without human instrumentality, and I challenge Brother Wilcox to produce it, too.

I am going to draw a circle. I can draw one, too. It will not be as nice as that one, I am confident. I want Brother Wilcox to put in this circle the book, chapter and verse where any man ever became an elder without human instrumentality. I want him to put that in there. He cannot do it to save his life. Of course, he cannot do it. He cannot find in the Bible where any man ever became an elder without the involvement of human instrumentality. The Holy Spirit worked through human action.

He made the statement awhile ago that God makes elders, men in the congregation, overseers, by a direct operation. Now, if I misunderstood him, I am man enough to take it back. I am going to ask him to also put in this circle book, chapter and verse where elders were ever made overseers of the congregation by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

And he said last night it was by the Holy Spirit plus nothing, and I asked him, and I am asking him now, does the Holy Spirit make anyone a Christian plus nothing?

Is human instrumentality involved in becoming a

Christian? Certainly so. Is human instrumentality involved in becoming an elder? Absolutely so.

Well, why do you state that, Mr. Norman? Simply because in the same Bible where it teaches the Holy Spirit works in conversion, it teaches that the Holy Spirit works in making elders by human instrumentality. The Holy Spirit is involved in both procedures. Do you have it, audience? Yes, you do. Of course, you do. Whenever he produces a scripture where no human is involved, then you will have a direct operation.

"Direct" means, my worthy respondent, nothing intervening. If he calls what Paul and Barnabas did in Acts 14:23 a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit was located in men then, why would not the same thing make the three thousand souls on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2, converted by direct operation, since the Holy Spirit spake through Peter?

He talked about voting. I just hate to say this, but all along in the discussion he looks more like people that advocate a democratic form of rule. It looks more like that all the way through, and that certainly is the truth, I am sure, if he means what he says, and I do not question his honesty or integrity in the matter whatsoever. I do question his setup. I do question his wisdom in trying to be wise above that which is written in the Bible.

He says, in I Corinthians 14:37, that if a man is spiritual, let him acknowledge that. Now, I want to say that I propose to be spiritual; not only spiritual but scriptural, and everything for which I have contended thus far, and shall make a contention tonight and tomorrow night and all the way through, I am able to read

my titles clear to mansions over there in the Bible, the word of God.

In the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 28, he said the Holy Spirit made elders or overseers in the Church. No one denies that. The Holy Spirit makes Christians. There is the human instrumentality in both of them, and if he removes it in the eldership, I will be bound to remove it in conversion.

Then he says that I ought to ask the women to pray. God bless your soul, a woman that is not willing to pray when someone leads the prayer at least ought to be able to voice it by saying Amen, even though it is not outspoken, is not doing her duty as a Christian, since all Christians ought to pray.

I never said, "Get up and lead the prayer." I never said that, but all women in the Church ought certainly to have a right to be able to listen to the man leading the prayer, and make the prayer, if it is scriptural, their sentiments. If not, why not?

Do you believe that a woman ought to be able to voice a sentiment in the prayer? Do you believe that, Brother Wilcox? Well, I would just like for you to grapple with that.

(Discussion off record)

I thank you.

WILCOX'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

(February 16, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am glad to have the privilege of returning to this platform.

The subject under consideration is: The Bible Teaches That the Holy Spirit Selects, Appoints and Makes Elders without any Action on the Part of the Local Congregation. Brother Norman denies this. He spent twenty minutes up here but did not find one passage anywhere that denied it.

Listen to me. If he could have found it, he would have done so instead of wasting his time.

You know when a person cannot find any scripture for what he is doing, he will waste his time some way. He must kill time: so Brother Norman did.

He talked about women praying in the Church. I made the statement that there is just as much authority for a woman praying in Church, that is, leading in prayer, as there is for the Church appointing Elders, and he knows that is what I said, but he evaded it. Will a Christian do that?

He said I challenged all preachers in Detroit. I challenge any man on the globe to read the scripture that says a Church should appoint Elders today. That is my challenge. He did not find the scripture and none of these other preachers are going to find it for him. It is just not in the Bible. Don't tell me they would not find it if they could. They find everything else in there.

While he was looking, why did he not find something in the Bible that endorses a congregation appointing Elders? That is what he is teaching tonight. That is the issue.

He mentioned his practice in this Church (appointing a Baptist as Elder): said it was innocence on his part. Brother Norman, if you had been guided by the Holy Spirit, you would not have made that mistake. You asked what I would have done. When I found what the Bible teaches, I would have been honest enough to obey it, and quit my practice.

I used to practice what you do, but I read the Bible for myself and I could neither find the example nor the command. I was honest enough and tried to serve God enough to quit it. You are going to do what you were brought up to do regardless of what God Almighty says.

Tell me how anybody could have the face to go out in the denominational world and condemn their practices when he is in the same boat? It is not anything new for the people in the denominational world to deny God, but for a Church of Christ minister to deny God is terrible. I think it is worse for him, because he knows better.

He showed you this circle (chart, page 69) and maintained that I said this represented the Church of Christ. No! When this circle is perfect it represents the Church of Christ. When you change it by the human appointment of Elders is when it becomes imperfect. Everybody else here saw this but you. You have added to the word of God. Now, either erase this little bump (indicating chart) you have on the circle (Church), or give me the scripture for it. Remember that we are talking about things divine.

He keeps complaining about the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Notice this chart a minute. (See chart, page 17). The Holy Spirit in the first century operated directly through human instrumentality, and the result was Elders. The Holy Spirit in the twentieth century operates through the Word, and the result is Elders. The Holy Spirit is the same; the result is the same. The only difference is the instrument through which He works.

The Holy Spirit in the first century operated directly through human instrumentality, and the result was casting out demons. The Holy Spirit operates in the twentieth century through the Word of God, and the result is casting out demons. The Holy Spirit in the first century operated directly through human instrumentality in performing miracles, causing people to believe. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit operates through the Word, causing people to believe.

In the first century the Holy Spirit operated through human instrumentality and produced faith on the part of those who heard. In the twentieth century the Holy Spirit operates through the Word and the result is faith in those who hear.

It is not a question of the Holy Spirit. It is a question of HOW HE OPERATES. Today he operates through the Word. Brother Norman preaches this and will tell you that is the only way the Holy Spirit does operate. I believe it and so do you. He does not operate directly today. He operates through the Word, (John 6:63).

In the first century He operated directly through the human being; therefore, when Paul, Barnabas and Titus appointed Elders for the Churches, it was the Holy Spirit doing it, and not the men. When Peter preached

on the day of Pentecost, it was the Holy Spirit preaching and not Peter.

Why will you not be honest, Brother Norman, and tell these people the truth about it?

You know, the thing that disgusts me is to have one of our preachers, who claims to speak where the Bible speaks, to KNOWINGLY misrepresent God's Will. I expect it of people in the denominational world, but not of you.

He wants me to tell him something about where the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from human beings, ever appointed Elders. What about Acts 20:28? The Bible says the Holy Spirit made you Bishops. I want Brother Norman to tell us HOW it did.

He talks about voting in the Church. Who is it that votes in the Church when Brother Norman votes in Elders? I do not believe in voting in the Church. There are plenty of people who know how the Elders were appointed in the Ferndale congregation when Brother Norman was here. I do not care how he does the voting, whether it is negatively or positively; it is still voting. I defy him to show how he can select men and place them in any office without some form of voting.

Who is it that believes in politics in the Church? There is the man. (Pointing to Brother Norman) I am not guilty of voting Elders into the Church. Let the Holy Spirit alone; let Him make them, and the Elders are just as they should be.

He said he questioned my wisdom when I went beyond that which is written. He has not shown you one time where I have gone beyond that which is written. I have asked him to give me chapter and verse for the human

selection of Elders, and he has not done it. Who is it that is going beyond that which is written?

He said, "I am a member of the Church," talking about himself. Well, I haven't said you are not, but I do want you to put some scripture on the board for your position—or take it back.

My Lord said in John 10:4-5, 27, "My sheep hear my voice, I know them, they follow me, and a stranger will they not follow." Where has the Lord ever said, "Select Elders?" Whose strange voice have you heard? I will tell you whose voice he heard. He admitted it. He heard all that list of names he used last night—brethren in the Church. What did the Lord say? He said, "My sheep hear MY voice and a stranger they WOULD NOT follow." Now, where do you belong? Don't ask me. I did not tell you. It was the Lord telling you. You heard somebody's voice, because the Lord did not say, "Do it;" and, Brother Norman, if the Lord had said, "Do it," you would have the scripture.

If we were debating on baptism, and I asked you for the scripture on the remission of sins, you would quote it at once, but you notice he has not quoted any scripture where the congregation should select Elders. Why? It is just not there and he knows it.

There is not a preacher in Detroit, Michigan, that has any keener memory on the Bible than Brother Norman. Why does he not find it? Well, the poor fellow cannot. That is why he does not. He ought to be honest and quit the practice.

Who has heard the strange voice? Brother Norman heard the voices of Boles, Goodpasture, etc., but he did not hear Christ. Tell me, where is the scripture? You admitted yourself that you were following men.

I believe the Lord, and He said His sheep would not hear a stranger's voice. Brother Norman may be somebody's sheep. I am not saying he isn't, but I am asking you, is he the Lord's sheep?

He says he appoints Elders by the authority of the Word of God. Where is it, Brother Norman? Now, you cannot fool this crowd all through the debate. They want you to give them chapter and verse for your proposition, and you have not done it. Why is it that you keep saying you believe the Bible is complete, and then go outside the Bible to get your authority for appointing Elders? That is the issue. I am telling you that no congregation in the Bible ever did appoint Elders.

Notice how smooth he was when he came to quoting I Corinthians 4:6. Don't tell me he did not know. He is not ignorant of what this passage teaches. He quoted the King James Version and dodged the American Standard. Brother Norman, do you accept the American Standard Version? You know just as well as I that it says not to go beyond that which is written. What does that mean to you?

You were so good to draw circles on the board. Draw one up here and put in it the scriptures that say to appoint Elders.

Paul furthermore said that if you were spiritual you would acknowledge what he said, but you have not acknowledged it. Question: Are you righteous?

Did you see that nice dodge he made about the Ark? I question a man's honesty in the church of Christ when he makes an argument like that. God specified the material out of which the Ark was to be made, and the point I was making on it was that when God specifies a

thing to be done, you cannot do it any other way and please Him.

God specified how Elders are made. How? By the Holy Spirit, Acts 20:28, and you cannot change it. God specified how the Ark should be built and the material to use. Why did you not talk about that?

Why didn't you get to baptism and how we baptize by a burial? Why not say something about it? Listen to Brother Norman and me, and we will both tell you the only way you can be baptized is by immersion. Why? God SPECIFIED.

When it comes to the Holy Spirit making Elders, God SPECIFIED, but Brother Norman says it doesn't make any difference: you can do as you please. However, on baptism, you have to obey God. Such reasoning!

He said he did not accept me when I departed from God's will. Where have I departed from God's will? Show me.

He brought up the question of David and talked about his carrying the Ark—said that David transgressed God's will. That is exactly right, and you transgress in the matter of appointing Elders. You go across God's will, because the teaching of Christ does not have the human selection of Elders in it. You go outside the Bible to get your authority.

He tried to tell you, in last night's argument, that I said the church of Christ is as bad as the Catholic Church. Here is what I said about it. I knew everyone else got the point, but that I would have to repeat it for his benefit. I am glad to do it, because it will bring the argument to those who were not here last night. This is what I said: In II Thessalonians 2:4, Paul, an inspired man, said the time was coming when Satan would sit

down in the temple of God. I said I used to believe this had reference to the Roman Catholic Church, but it (Roman Catholic Church) is not the temple of God; the Church of Christ is God's temple.

Paul said Satan would sit down in the Church and dictate instead of God. That is exactly what Brother Norman is doing. He is telling you that you can appoint Elders, but he did not give any Bible authority for it. Therefore, it is not God speaking, but it is Satan speaking through Brother Norman. He should retract things like that. I am wondering if he will.

He said that I was against God's way of doing things. Show me one place where I am against what God is doing. I affirm what this proposition teaches, and I have given you chapter and verse for it. You affirmed all last night the opposite; namely, that we should appoint Elders today, and you never did give us one scripture for it.

Brother Norman, I wrote on the board Matthew 28:18-20 for the only part the individual plays in a person's becoming a Christian. You never did write the scripture that says we have human beings appointing Elders today. Do not tell me this congregation does not see it.

Who told you it is a true parallel, (making Christians and Elders)? You are talking about two different things: a man on the outside of the church coming in, and another doing things on the inside of the Church.

I asked you this question: Is there anything God demands of a Christian, the doing of which God will not accept until that individual has human ordination? You notice he did not mention it last night, and he will

not tonight, but I will put it on the board for your benefit.

God Almighty instructed young men and young women; He instructed older women and older men. Now, is there anything that God told these people the doing of which He will not accept until they have human ordination? Brother Norman said, "No," in three of the cases; they all should do what God says without a human being voting on them; but the Elders cannot do what God told them until they have human appointment. What a foolish argument.

I also asked him last night if the congregation can appoint Elders; can they appoint them with less than *one hundred per cent* of the qualifications God gives? He never touched that, and he will not tonight.

I want to ask you, furthermore, if there are twenty-five Elders in a congregation, and you appoint five to do the work of God, tell me if you have not said to the twenty that they cannot serve God; also, tell me where you obtained that right?

There is not one word of truth from start to finish in the position he holds, and the only reason he is holding it is because of the tradition in the church of Christ; the brethren say so. Bless your heart, we should quit following tradition.

He tries to compare me with some brethren in the Church. You know Paul says in II Corinthians 10:12, "If we compare ourselves with ourselves we are not wise." That should be enough. I care nothing about what "the brethren" teach. The things are in their Bible the same as in mine. Instead of going back to those men for authority, why do you not go to Peter, Paul, James, and John? They are pretty good authority. Somebody

asked Brother Lipscomb one time, "Who is the best authority in the Church on baptism?" He said, "Brother Peter is the best I know anything about." Instead of going to these men you mention, why do you not go to Peter, or Paul, James or John? I will accept their authority more quickly than the men you mentioned.

I know why he quoted these men. He knows the only authority under heaven he has for his practice is of men. There is not a bit of it in that Book we call the Bible.

I thank you.

NORMAN'S SECOND NEGATIVE

(February 16, 1944).

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The thing now is getting well heated up, is it not? However, I shall not become angry during the discussion.

I want to ask Brother Wilcox, with all the power that I have, to quote Scripture where men ever become elders without human instrumentality. It is still blank, and it will be blank when the debate is closed. Where is the book, chapter and verse that says elders are appointed by direct operation? He could put it in there if it were in the Bible, but it is not in the Bible, and he wanted me to prove it. Listen, I am not in the proving business. You are the one that is leading out, I am supposed to follow.

I had to ramble around by David's cart, Noah's Ark, and around the rock that Moses struck in the other speeches. Why? Because I had to follow my worthy respondent, and where he went I naturally had to go. If he would like to see some real debating, let him get down to business. He is in the lead. I am in the negative. He is not going to throw me in the affirmative while I am in the negative, like I did him last night. No, this is not my first experience in debate, brother. I have met Baptists, Methodists and men of the Church of God, so-called, and then Latter Day Saints. It is a shame that I have had to meet Tipton C. Wilcox of Ferndale, Michigan, on this question, but I am confident that this debate will go down in history as one that shall forever silence

Tipton C. Wilcox, not only in this state, not only in this city, Metropolitan Detroit, but it shall sound and resound and reverberate throughout the length and breadth of the Brotherhood, the loyal part of the Church that we read about in the Bible.

So much for all of that. I want you to notice his chart. I will not notice all of these, because he paralleled them. He says the Holy Spirit, through human action, made elders, and the Holy Spirit, through the word, makes Elders now. I want to show you now where all of this breaks down. Listen. The Holy Spirit made elders through the word, but the word was located in man. The Holy Spirit was directing it through men. The Holy Spirit, today, is the word, and therefore, when men comply with the qualifications, and appointment is given, the result is eldership. I am going to deny the Holy Spirit making elders by direct operation.

Now, here is what he meant: that the fact of the Holy Spirit being present, the result being elders through human instrumentality, was the same as a direct operation. That is exactly what he said. Now, I want to ask him again something which he will not notice, and the debate will come to a close and it will not be noticed. If the Holy Spirit, through Paul and Barnabas, made elders, and that would make it direct, even though it came through those men, why would not the Holy Spirit, on the Day of Pentecost, when it spoke through the Apostle Peter make Christians by direct operation?

You are forever sealed on that. This argument is broken down. The only difference, ladies and gentlemen, between then and now, is the difference in the location of the Holy Spirit. It has all been by the word of God. So your argument breaks down; the parallel just simply

does not level up to Bible truth. That is all there is to it.

He referred to the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, verses 19 and 20, for his authority for preaching the Gospel today. I believe we are under the great Commission today.

What did the Holy Spirit do then? It controlled men. What did it make men do? It made them preach the word of God. Does the Holy Spirit control men in the sense of speaking through them and handling them in a direct way today? No. Does the Holy Spirit make Christians? Absolutely so. How does He do it? He does it through the word. By direct operation? No. I want you to notice that the parallel is broken down.

Listen, Ladies and Gentlemen. He wants the book, chapter and verse where a congregation ever appointed. Here is what I have said, Brother Wilcox, that God through the human instrumentality does the appointing but they are selected by the congregation.

I am going to read the book, chapter and verse where they actually did it, and I am going to give you more than one, and you will not deny it. I have Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, and there is no finer lexicographer recognized by the brotherhood. I am going to prove it by that. I am going to read the word of God. I am going to let that Greek scholar tell you what it means. Here it comes. I want everybody to listen. I am going to begin with verse 7 of I Timothy, chapter 3: "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without (talking about elders); lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

Now, watch it: "Likewise (likewise: in the same way and manner. Now you will not deny the word likewise. If you do I am going to pick you up in another

passage of scripture) must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these (also making the elders included with those spoken of in this verse of scripture) also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

Now, listen—"Likewise" and "also." I want to ask him a question. Was the Holy Spirit to do the letting? No. Was Timothy to do the letting? No. Why? Because Timothy told the people to let. Well, who were to do the letting? Those to whom Timothy spoke. Now, watch it. What did he say to do "let these also first be proved?" Who does the proving? The Holy Spirit? Timothy? Titus? Paul? Barnabas?

I knew you would look sick as a man with the three-day measles before it was over. Listen. In I Timothy 3:10, I will read to you again. I have the book, chapter, and verse. Watch him wrestle with it. "And let these also first be proved." But you know that he says in a ten-thousandth part of a split second, men possessed of qualifications automatically become elders. Well, when are they proved? Before they possess the qualifications or after?

Now, I want this to sink deeply into every heart that is honest and good. (Reading) "And let these also first be proved: THEN let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless"—"likewise" and "also."

Now, what does Mr. Thayer say, and if you want the Greek word I will give it to you right now. Do you want it? Do you?

Here is exactly what he says in commenting. It means to test, examine, prove, scrutinize and then in

parenthesis he emphasizes scrutinizing thus; to see whether a thing be genuine or not; recognize as genuine after examination; to approve; deem worthy." Where? Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon. On what page? 154.

There, now, you have it right down plainly in the will of God, and Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon says that is exactly what it means.

Now, who does the proving? Who does the selecting? The Holy Spirit or Timothy or men to whom he wrote? I want you to deal with it now.

I am quoting, also, from B. W. Johnson, not because he is B. W. Johnson, but because he is recognized as a scholar, and this is what he says. From Acts 14:23: "And when they had ordained them elders . . ." observe that elders were not appointed as soon as the churches were planted. Time must be taken so as to know what men were fitted for the office; two, elders were not appointed to preside over a district, but in every church; three, that there was a plurality; four, that they were set apart with fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands. It is not here stated who selected them, but from Acts 6:6, we would infer that they were chosen by the Church under the advice of the Apostles." (unquote).

In Acts 14:23, the American Standard Version, "Paul and Barnabas appointed for them . . ." Listen, Brother Wilcox, you are in the affirmative. I want you to tell me what process the Holy Spirit uses in selecting and appointing elders. How do you know the Holy Spirit has ever operated on anyone's heart and mind in this congregation. Who are the elders of this congregation?

In Acts 11:30 some money was sent to the elders. If I were to send money here, who would get it? I am asking you who would get it?

I challenge him with all the force that I have in me to name the elders of this congregation, and I am going to deny his having them until he produces their names. I want to see the color of their hair and blink of their eye. Bring them out from under the seats and produce them, please, to me. I am very much interested in seeing what kind of eyes they have. He said, last night, deep blue eyes. Well, that may be a good way for me to know whom the Holy Spirit has appointed. If they have deep blue eyes I will have one way of identification.

I did not notice, last night, this statement about the sheep selecting their shepherd. Now, I have debated enough, if you will allow me to say it, to know that was not relevant, but I am going to answer it for you. He asked the question, do the sheep select the shepherd? I want to ask him, does a sheep grow into a shepherd? Now, I want to show you where the parallel breaks down. Sheep are dumb animals. They are under the shepherd, not because they want to be, but because they are forced to be.

He is trying to make the application between men and dumb animals.

God's people are partners with God. In II Cor. 6:1 "We then, as workers together with (God) . . ." In I Cor. 3:9: "For we are laborers together with God . . ." "Christ is the Great Shepherd," (I Peter 5:4). In that same connection, the elders are pictured as being the under shepherd.

In the one hundredth chapter of Psalms, verse 3, the Bible says we are the "sheep of his pasture." In the tenth chapter of John, verse 27, "My sheep hear my voice." I am asking you, do you have sheep hearing the voice of elders in Ferndale? Do you?

Then he talked about one hundred per cent qualification of elders. Listen, right here in I Timothy, Chapter 3, those men whom Timothy was to appoint had to first possess the qualifications. Then, being proved, they were let to use the office—"Likewise"—"also"—having in mind the same class.

I am asking Tipton C. Wilcox this question: Since deacons and elders are members of the same local church, and since the same group of people must be under the elders and deacons, then, too, since these same offices overlap, is it not true that the way the deacons were selected would be the way for the elders to be selected? Would it not be true that since the Holy Spirit talks to us through the word of God, and all we know about God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, heaven and hell, we learn either directly or indirectly from the word of God, would it not be all right for us to appoint men after having been selected just exactly like that? If not, why not? He went way back there to get his authority to preach the Gospel, way back during the days of miracles, but he would not let me go back, or at least tried to restrain me from going back to get the book, chapter and verse for the elders. I say the same place you get the authority for preaching the word of God I get for elders. If not, why not?

We are going to have some debating, and I want you to get right in now, being in the affirmative, and give me plenty of things to do.

Then he talked about the people having to first go to the elders before they did anything. I want to tell you this, Brother Wilcox, the Bible says if you give a cup of cold water in His name you shall not lose your reward. If you are out and meet someone that is hungry you would

not have to go to the elders. Of course, if he were to come here to Ferndale the man would starve to death before he found the elders. I do not have to go to them and ask, "Could I feed them?" I can take my money out and buy that man a lunch and do it in the name of Christ and get the reward, but when it comes to congregational work it is under the elders.

So you have a difference between an individual and a collective body of people functioning.

Talk about a man debating. Oh, yes, I am right in after him now. Listen, for the last two nights he has accused me of voting in the Church. I am going to ask you to tell the audience when and where I ever did authorize voting in the church. Tipton, I have my sermon outlines from which I preached three sermons here in the City of Ferndale several years ago, and I emphasized in those sermons that we do not have majority rule in the Church, and I was against them voting. I am against it now. There is not a man or woman, regardless of their age or the color of their hair that can produce one iota of proof relative to my authorizing voting in the church.

Thank you.

WILCOX'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

(February 16, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I believe this is the circle in which Brother Norman wanted the Scripture on the proposition I am proving. Well, sir, it is Acts 20:28. Now, Brother Norman, I want the Scripture that says we appoint Elders today, and all you need to put up here is just ONE.

He said he is not leading in the debate tonight. He was last night, and he did not find one Scripture to prove his point then. Yes, all know I am leading tonight, but, why did you not put up your Scripture last night?

He said, "I hope that I can forever silence Tipton C. Wilcox." Bless your heart, there is not a man living on this globe that can stop me from preaching the Gospel. I just do not know anything you can do about it. I know you would like to stop me from exposing you, and, there are a great many other people who would, too, but they just can't do it. There are a great many people around Detroit who would like for me to stop, but I don't know anyone who can stop me until my toes are sticking up in the cemetery somewhere.

Jesus said that people were afraid of the light and would not come to it, lest their works be reproved. Of course, you would like to get rid of me. Thanks for the compliment.

He was talking about the operation of the Holy Spirit and agreed with me before he quit speaking that the medium through which the Holy Spirit worked is the

only difference in today and the first century. That is what I am saying. The Holy Spirit, in the first century, appointed Elders directly through human instrumentality, but today he does it through the Word. I want you to give me chapter and verse where he does it otherwise, Jewell. That is what we are discussing.

Here is the parallel; you did not mention it, and you will not mention it. The Holy Spirit, operating through human instrumentality, cast out demons in the first century, but the Holy Spirit, today, operates through the Word to cast out demons. Why do you not get some Divine Healer to cast them out? You have just as much authority for casting out demons today in this manner as you do for appointing elders by human authority. Neither is in the Word of God.

He wants me to tell him where my authority is for preaching the gospel today, and he ridiculed me for using Matthew 28:18-20. I want Brother Norman to tell me where he gets his authority for baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He gets it right in the same passage which he condemned me for using. That is the one passage in this Bible he quotes that gives him authority for baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I get my authority from it to preach the gospel. The Lord said, "I will be with you." How long? From now until the end of the world. But I would like to have one scripture that says the Elders are going to be appointed like they were in the first century to the end of the world. If you will just read that *one* I will be satisfied.

Matthew 28:18-20 is where you get your authority for baptizing in the name. We get our authority there

for preaching, but Brother Norman has been very careful not to find his authority for appointing Elders today.

He talks about proving things by Thayer. You know that is a bad thing for Brother Norman to say. I have been exposed to several years of foreign language, but I would be ashamed to say I could read Greek well enough to really diagnose a passage of Scripture. Everybody here knows, Jewell, that you never had a year of Greek in your life. Why, I would be ashamed to pull a stunt like that.

I want you to notice that he tries to prove things by Thayer, B. W. Johnson and others like them. Pray tell me, why you don't prove something by Paul? I believe Paul, Peter, James and John knew more about it than Thayer and Johnson.

You know why he does not use Paul, Peter, James, and John? They do not tell him anything about his proposition, and he has to go to other men for help. He actually stated that Mr. Johnson said we INFER. That is the trouble with Brother Norman. He has been INFERRING for two nights that it is all right to appoint Elders by the congregation, but he never did show us the Scripture.

The Methodists INFER, when they read that a household was baptized, there were infants in it, and they miss it as far as you do when you infer it is all right for a congregation to appoint Elders.

Brother Norman, we do not want an inference. We want Scripture. Your inference is not worth much.

Did you hear what he said about I Timothy 3? I am glad he read this Scripture. The Book says, "Let him serve." Why did you not read one that says "APPOINT him to serve?" That is what you are trying to prove.

The Book says, "Let him be proved." That is what I say. If you had LET that fellow be proved you would not have put a Baptist in as Elder. That is where you failed. You should LET him be proved and LET him serve. You get in front of twenty men and say, "No, you cannot serve, but the five can." Where did you get the authority for that? It is practiced all over the Church of Christ. We select five to serve and prevent twenty from serving. Where did you get your authority?

I say LET them serve. That is what I have been trying to get you to do. LET them.

The Holy Spirit said, "Let them serve," and we should.

Brother Norman asked if we do not know the Elders, how are we going to send money to them? I want to ask you, Brother Norman, would scriptural Elders, when money is sent in for relief, give ten dollars to a poor widow in a flooded zone and send from seventy-five to a hundred dollars to a preacher that lived outside of the zone? Would scriptural Elders do that? Would Holy Spirit-made Elders do that; give ten dollars to a poor widow inside the flooded area, and the above amount to a preacher outside the flooded area?

Let us reverse that thing and look at it on the other side. Would a Gospel preacher receive it?

He wants me to tell him how we know Elders, and wants me to bring the Ferndale Elders out so he can see them. What is the use—he would not know the difference between a Baptist and an Elder. That is like sending a man for apples when he doesn't know the difference between an elephant and a bushel of apples. I would hate to send him for apples.

What is the use of my naming the Elders? He does

not know the difference. He wants me to expose myself just as he has exposed himself. He appoints them and realizes he does not have any Scripture. Now, he wants me to transgress God Almighty's Will, too.

I go into a barber shop and there are twenty or thirty men present. How do I know the barber? Jesus said you know people by their fruits, Matthew 7:16. Christ said, in Matthew 20:27, the ones who were greatest were the servants. You could not possibly be a servant unless your job was that of serving.

How do you know the greatest man in the community? The man that serves. How do you know what anybody is? How do you know a farmer? I will tell you how Brother Norman knows. He puts a badge on him saying "R. F. D."

How are you to know a Christian? Maybe you had better put a badge on him. I will agree with you in some cases.

I tell you, brethren, some types of Elders the Church of Christ has today SHOULD be labeled, because the Bible says Elders are apt to teach. However in some churches they are apt to do most anything.

I am not condemning the church that Christ bought with his blood, but I am condemning men that sit in the Church and dictate its policies, contrary to God Almighty's Will. Of course, Brother Norman would like for me to stop condemning his practice. The Methodists would like for me to stop preaching immersion for baptism. Seldom a week passes that some good sister doesn't write me about something I have taught on the radio. Certainly, they want me to stop it. The men down at the radio station said they did not want the Bible taught on the air. Of course, they don't. Brother Norman does not

want the Bible taught which shows his error in the human selection of Elders. Write one Scripture on the board—I am leaving it blank for you, that even mentions where the church ever did appoint Elders. You went over to I Timothy 3, and there is not one word in that Scripture that says anything about men being appointed to the Eldership and you know it.

Tell me why he would do this. You talk to me about a man being a Christian that will deliberately disobey God and deny the Scripture. There is not one word said in I Timothy 3 about the church appointing elders.

Of course, Mr. B. W. Johnson said, "We infer," and Brother Norman took B. W. Johnson instead of Paul. I think it is time the brotherhood should wake up and stop the mouths of some preachers.

He said he GUESSES the appointment of Elders and of Deacons is the same. That is what he guesses, but he did not read it. May I say that God Almighty never did give us a plan in this Book to appoint Elders. God, in His infinite wisdom, always gives us the exact things He wants us to do. He said to baptize, and told us HOW. He said to have music, and told us what KIND. He said to commemorate the death of our Lord. He identified the DAY, and what to have as the TABLE. He said the Holy Spirit makes Elders. Brother Norman said he GUESSES we can appoint them like we appoint Deacons. I would like to have him read where either Elders or Deacons were ever appointed by a Church. There is not one word mentioned, not one verse or chapter, about Deacons being appointed by Churches. He will read what some more men said about it, but not what God says. He talks about majority rule in the Church. Bless your heart, when you have a Church voting on Elders, you have

majority rule. I never saw any Church, anywhere, that was unanimous in its selection of Elders and he never did either. If that is not majority rule, what is it?

May I ask you again, if a person came into the Church yesterday and you vote on Elders tomorrow, will you let him vote? But Brother Norman says he does not endorse voting. Well, he practiced it when he was at Ferndale. Don't tell this audience you did not, because there are too many people here tonight who were present when you did it, and I believe them.

Brother Norman says he can do what God said about feeding the hungry without appointment, but an Elder cannot do what God said about supervising the Church until he is appointed. Who told the Elder to supervise the Church? God. "Take the oversight thereof"—I Peter 5; then the congregation should LET him do it.

Who said for disciples to do the different things today? God. Brother Norman says they can feed the hungry and clothe the naked. It is all right, but the Elders cannot do their work unless they have human appointment. He SAID there is a difference. I notice, however, he did not give us any Bible for it. I think his word is not worth very much when it comes to deciding how a man should obey the Lord.

When God SPECIFIES a thing to be done you cannot do it any other way. How did He specify Elders are made today? By the Holy Spirit, and we get the Holy Spirit today through the Word only. You cannot get it any other way.

What does God mean when He says in I Corinthians 4:6 not to go beyond that which is written? What is written? That the Holy Spirit makes Elders, Acts 20:28. But YOU go beyond that and appoint them by human ordination.

What does the Bible mean in II John 1:9, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the TEACHING OF CHRIST hath not God?" What about that man? He does not have God. What is the teaching of Christ? The Holy Spirit selects, makes, appoints Elders. (Chart page 43). Brother Norman goes on, takes what some man says about it and appoints Elders. What has he done? He has gone beyond that which is written and does not have God. That is why I want him to quit the practice, because it is just as bad for him to go beyond that which is written in this matter as it is for anybody to go beyond that which is written on any other matter. When a man sprinkles he goes beyond that which is written; when he appoints Elders in the Church, today, he goes beyond that which is written; when he uses instrumental music he goes beyond that which is written. One is as bad as the other. All disobey God.

Do not forget the Bible is perfect, and, being perfect we have to stay within its teaching or disobey the Lord. If we must accept the Bible, and that is what Brother Norman believes, except in the appointing of Elders, then to go on means condemnation. I believe we must remain within its teaching in the matter of Eldership, just as well as in everything else. I would like for him, before he leaves tonight, to write on the board just one Scripture that tells a congregation to appoint Elders today. Brethren, he will quit this debate, having had two nights, and will not tell you ONE time where God Almighty ever authorized the Church to appoint Elders.

Do you really believe we should not go beyond that which is written? Do you think the Bible is perfect? Do

you believe in matters pertaining to the Church, that God tells us exactly what to do? Then, we should either practice it or take back what we teach. May I refresh your memory again on this point? When God SPECIFIES anything you cannot go beyond it. He specified about the Ark. He specified about baptism. He specified about everything else that we have, including Elders: therefore, we must leave it with God and let human ordination of Elders alone.

I thank you.

NORMAN'S THIRD NEGATIVE

(February 16, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am certainly thankful for the privilege given me, once again, to come before you in denial of what Brother Wilcox has said insofar as what he said contradicted the teachings of the Bible.

Now, about three or four different times he referred to me, I thought, in a very unbecoming way, about a Christian—"if he is a Christian." "By their fruits ye shall know them," is his pet passage. I believe that passage, the seventh chapter of the book of Matthew, verse 20.

I am going to say this to Brother Wilcox. That passage is too general. It includes the elders. But whom did it include before there were any elders? Do you know what this had reference to? You talk about a man taking a passage out of its setting. That was talking directly regarding false prophets. However, I think the general application can be made to include all people. I believe that. I knew I could not bring up any new argument in the last negative, being the final speech. I talked to him like a man to tell me how the Holy Spirit selects, appoints and makes elders. Now, how does the Holy Spirit select them? How does the Holy Spirit appoint them? Give book, chapter and verse. All he gave was Acts 20:28, and he said they were made overseers. I gave that very passage of scripture myself to prove that elders are made such by the Holy Spirit. Why, of course, I believe that.

Let me give you something to think about here. Here, for an illustration, is a young woman. She qualifies herself to teach school. She makes herself a teacher. The trustee and someone else desires that girl to teach their school. They select her. Does that young lady become a teacher as soon as the trustee and some of the people of that school selects her? No. When does she become the teacher? When the county superintendent appoints her. There is the selecting and appointing. She could not have been selected before she was qualified. If that had been true you would have had an unqualified teacher, would you not? And after the selection she received the appointment.

Elders are made. How? By compliance with the qualifications given in the Book of God. Who selects them? Those that are to be under them. Overseer implies someone to be overseen. Whom do the elders oversee? All under them. Well, who are over the overseen? The overseers.

I have been asking him to please give the names of the overseers of the overseen in Ferndale Church. I do not know why he abhors that; why he is as afraid of that as a man possessed of hydrophobia is of water. I do know why. It is loaded. There is something wrong. Just why will he not name the elders? I should like to see them. I worked with this congregation for over three years—not all that you have here. It is not the same thing to me, simply due to the fact that there have been things transpired that is unbecoming in my people. I want to ask again, who are the overseers of this congregation? Does the congregation know them?

The Bible says, "Know them that have the rule over you." Does the congregation know them? Do you know them?

In Acts 20:28 not one word is said in that verse about selecting and appointing elders, not one word. He never did give the verse. He did not give the process by which the Holy Spirit does the work. Why did you not do it, Tipton? You had the right to. I have been asking you to do that. I have pressed you to do it. You could hardly stand here for the last twenty minutes. Why did you not give it? The audience knows why you did not give it. Why? Simply because, ladies and gentlemen, it is not in the will of God. The process of his set up is not in the will of God.

Of course, I shall not impugn his motives. He probably intends to scatter it from Maine to Mexico, and I certainly want to be one of the number to get a copy. Yes, sir, I want a copy, and I will have to have one, brother, before it is published, and I am demanding that it be published.

Then he talked about what I thought of men. He said it was traditional! I am following them only so far as they follow the word of God. I mentioned Paul and Barnabas, Timothy and Titus, did I not? I mentioned them time after time.

Now I did it. The brethren here cannot be any longer hobbled by the theoretical teaching and doctrines advocated by Tipton C. Wilcox of Ferndale, Michigan.

We have a number of great men I will not undertake to mention all of them. I will mention Brother N. B. Hardeman, Brother H. Leo Boles, Brother Coleman Overby, Brother G. H. P. Showalter, Brother John T. Lewis, and Brother G. C. Brewer, and I could mention a number of younger men in the great Brotherhood that

makes up the New Testament Church, with all its glory and beauty, if I had a mind to, that are sound and loyal. These men that I have mentioned repudiate vehemently the doctrine advocated by Tipton C. Wilcox in Ferndale, Michigan, relative to church organization.

It was said I would never get to preach again in Michigan. I have had some calls from up here for regular work. I never would come back here any more, but I did show up. I showed up unexpectedly to my worthy respondent too. Yes, I showed up unexpectedly, did I not? The issue was closed and I came forward.

Listen, Ladies and Gentlemen. Talk about a man being a Christian. Tipton I want to say this to you—

Brother Moody: (Interposing) I would not do it.

Brother Norman: I hold no malice. I am not going to throw off on him.

Brother Wilcox: Let him continue.

Brother Norman: I hold no malice in my heart toward Tipton. I love him and respect him insofar as he respects the Will of God, but I certainly abhor his attitude that contradicts and contravenes the teachings of God in reference to the eldership.

Now, then, he came along and threw off by saying I said I wanted to silence T. C. Wilcox. Tipton said I would like to see him out of the brotherhood. I did not make that statement that I would like to see him out of the brotherhood. I mean to say that so far as his doctrine is concerned with reference to the eldership I want to forever silence him in Ferndale and in the entire brotherhood.

Then he said he wanted me to give the scripture where elders were appointed. In Titus 1:5, in Acts 14:23. Brethren, there it is.

Then he said that he would guarantee, or in so many words, that Jewell W. Norman had never had a year of Greek. Listen, I never made a very extensive study of Greek. I have had some Greek, Tipton. I have had some Greek. I have enough Greek to keep Baptist preachers off me, and to keep preachers of your type off me in the church. Listen, why should I spend two thousand dollars or three thousand dollars graduating in a Greek University or in Greek, when all I have to do in the world is to turn to King James Version, and I have the authority of forty-seven Greek scholars in the King James Version, turning to the American Revised Version, and I have the authority regarding the eldership of one hundred one Greek scholars, and I have a Goodspeed's translation of the Bible, a professor in the University at Chicago, and I have some more. I can get more. Then, too, I have Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, and I brought you these good men whose names I repeat with emphasis, and whom I revere because of their loyal stand for the truth of God in reference to eldership.

Then he says I did not give the book, chapter and verse where the congregation ever selected them. I gave you I Timothy 3; I gave you Acts 6; I furthermore gave you Acts 14:23 and Acts 20:28, where they are made; Titus 1:5: Paul said, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." No, I am going to correct that. In the American Revised Version we have, "...and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee change."

Now, there was the Holy Spirit using the word, involving human instrumentality, the result being eldership; the Holy Spirit using the Word of God for the

medium makes elders, but Tipton says they are made elders by the direct operation by the Spirit of God plus nothing.

Then you have a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. What did he say about it? I asked him to give me the book, chapter and verse for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit: give me the book, chapter and verse where elders ever become overseers over the Church, without human instrumentality, and he could not do it. I want him to put up in this little circle, or anywhere on the board, his process of selecting and appointing elders. Where did he do it? I challenge him or any other man in Detroit or in the United States to produce the Scripture where the Holy Spirit selected and appointed elders by direct operation. It cannot be done.

And you are going to feel the force of this. Then he says, "How do we know an elder? And I gave the illustration, "like you would know a barber." Listen, a barber cuts hair, does he not? An elder oversees. Now if you have no elders overseeing in Ferndale, how under heaven would I know them? And are you ashamed of them? Are you afraid to bring them out? You have elders, you say, but are they invisible elders? I should like to see them. I have a right, Tipton. That will ring in your ears tomorrow night: that will ring in your ears the next night, and it will not cease after this debate. I am calling for the elders of this church.

Then I asked him to give me book, chapter and verse where men grow into the eldership. If they grow into it why did the Holy Spirit bother Barnabas and Paul to appoint them?

If a man becomes an elder the very moment he is

qualified then would he not become an elder before he is proved and scrutinized?

Now, what type of men do I believe should be selected? Those possessing the qualifications given, I Timothy 3; Titus 1; I Peter 5. What type of men do I believe in appointing by the authority of God's word? I say those that are selected, men possessing the qualifications, so to speak, should function as elders.

Now, is it not strikingly strange, brethren, that God Almighty did not give the Bible without human instrumentality? (II Peter 2:21). Is it not strange that God would not let the Gospel be preached without using human action (I Corinthians 1:21)? Is it not strange that the Holy Spirit would not use the man or, at least, did not do it at the Church at Antioch without separating the men and sending them away (Acts 13)? Is it not strange that God did not have anyone in the local congregation without someone being used of him to bring that about, but when he gets ready for elders he performs a direct operation and puts these men over local churches? Listen, even in the days when you had a direct operation to put the elder in you would have to declare him to the audience to let them know whom the Holy Spirit had put in. How would they know it if they could not tell by the Word of God?

Where does he get his authority for preaching the word of God? The very same place back there during miracles that I get the authority for appointing elders, but he will accept one and deny the other.

Then he accused me of voting. I deny having voted in Ferndale. Let him produce the evidence. Listen, Tipton, there is a difference in voicing and voting. Ten men go out to look for a car. They all voice the same

car. Do they vote? No. But then six men select this car and they buy it. It would be the majority. They vote. The four do not buy but they all agree on the same car. They do not voice, they vote. There was not a dissenting voice.

When the elders were selected and appointed at Ferndale—and I challenged him to produce the evidence —they voiced, they did not vote. Now, there is a difference, friends, in voicing a thing and voting for a thing.

We have the thing given right here in the Word of God, in Acts 14:23 "Paul and Barnabas appointed for them . . ." Acts 6; the congregation selected men and the Apostles appointed them. We select them; we appoint them. By what authority? The word of God.

I thank you.

NORMAN'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

The Bible Teaches That Scriptural Elders' Rule Includes the Enforcement of God's Will.

Brother ~~Norman~~ Wilcox: Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, I trust that you have gathered for one purpose; namely, to sit and listen attentively unto what we shall have to say regarding the subject under discussion for this evening. I trust that everything will be carried out effectively; that only good will be done and no harm in any way whatsoever.

We should believe the word of God with all of our hearts, and have a strong desire to practice the word of God as we find it given in the Bible in our lives. If we thus do, our lives will be profitable to God and likewise unto men.

The Bible teaches that Scriptural Elders' rule includes the enforcement of God's will. What I mean by that, the Bible, the Word of God, teaches—impartation of knowledge—Scriptural Elders, the type of men mentioned in the Bible meeting God's requirements and having God's approval stamped upon their rule—authority—given them to govern, control, and manage the local congregation in matters respecting their realm of work —includes — contains—embraces—enforcement — execute, put into effect. Elders are to make no rules of their own. They have no authority save to enforce the law of God, and so set an example of fidelity to God to be followed by the Church. A fundamental and all-pervad-

ing principle is that nothing is to be taught or practiced of the precepts of men. The elders are to guard and preserve the purity of God's word, the faith and peace of the church, and so promote the salvation of man. These Elders neither make nor unmake laws. As servants of the church, they simply execute the law of Christ. They rule by the word of the Lord. They assume no authority. They manufacture no expedients. No congregation can long survive without authoritative rule and regulation. What is everybody's business is certainly nobody's business.

Elders are required to feed the flock the unadulterated word of God. They must allow no adulterations of error or false philosophy or theological speculation or of human tradition or of any kind of fancy notions. They must not only preserve the word of God intact, but must resist the introduction of all innovations and false methods. In no event should they ever step aside from the Law of God or allow the authority of the King to be trifled with.

I hope, with this explanation of my proposition for consideration tonight, and the introduction given, that all of you are now ready to appreciate the arguments that I intend to put forth with all of the love that I have in my heart for but one purpose; namely, that you who are in the audience may come to see the glory, grandeur, and beauty of Him who died that mankind might live here and might live in that land across whose path the clouds of darkness have forever been driven.

I have always taught and if I, of course, change my mind not, I shall evermore teach that elders' rule does include the enforcement of God's will. Friends, I would hate to know that it would be wrong to enforce God's

will. I certainly would hate to know that no one had the authority to enforce God's will.

Is God tyrannical? Does God demand things that are not meant for us? Certainly not. Then, if elders put into effect—hence, execute God's will—would not what they do be absolutely scriptural and all right? If not, why not?

I want to read to you for the first proof texts, from I Peter 5. I am reading now from the American Standard Version of the Scriptures:

> "The Elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not by constraint, but willingly . . ."

How must you exercise this oversight given you? Peter emphasizes it thus: "According to the will of God."

There is my proposition right there, in book, chapter, and verse. Watch it.

Further quoting from the same chapter:

> "Not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you . . ."

Do not lord it over the charge or the heritage. Do not do that. Why? If you were to so do, you would be enforcing whose will? Not God's, because He is not tyrannical. Then whose will would elders be enforcing were they to lord it over the church? Emphatically, their own will. So I am against dictatorial rule in the Church, lording it over people. There are certain things for which there are no Scriptures whatsoever in the Bible (Continuing reading).

"... but making yourselves examples ..." To whom? The answer: The flock. Who is the flock? The Church of God, the local congregation.

In the immortal Psalms 100:3, when David was standing underneath the pendant gems of twinkling stars, he burst forth with the rich expression: "We are the sheep of His pasture." In other words, that Christians are partners with God, fellow workers, (II Cor. 6:1), fellow laborers, (I Cor. 3:9), and they are told not to lord it over the church but be "ensamples"—examples.

Now, what kind of men should elders be to enforce God's will? Answer: Ensamples, or examples, which, of course, mean one and the same thing.

Now, men who are examples, living examples having the testimony that is right from without and from within, why would you care being under their rule? Why would you care for these men enforcing the will of God only in matters respecting their realm of work? "And when the Chief Shepherd (still quoting from the same connection) shall appear or shall be manifested (this version says) you shall receive the Crown of Glory that fadeth not away." That is a promise awaiting those who rule acceptably in that land where we shall never grow old.

Then, someone may ask the question, "Brother Norman, would you mind just giving the book, chapter, and verses, please, where it talks about elders enforcing the will of God?" Why, of course, I am glad thus to do. Listen patiently. Quoting from the epistle of Paul to Titus, beginning with Verse 5 and reading through verse 11:

> "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:
>
> "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.
>
> "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;
>
> "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate:
>
> "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

This is the King James Version. The American Standard Version says, "... to convict the gainsayers." Continuing reading from Titus, Chapter 1:

> "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision."

Now, what must be done when thus you find men of such character and caliber?

(Reading) "Whose mouths must be stopped who subvert whole houses ..." Doing what? Answer: (Continuing reading "... Teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Who is to do the convincing or convicting of the gainsayers? The elders. Who are to stop the mouths of the unruly? Answer: The elders.

If that is not carrying out and putting into execution the will of God, I ask you, kind friends, where under heaven can you go to find it more convincing?

Not only are these things so, but I want you to turn with me. I am reading this purposely so that no mistake can be made, since this debate is to be published, and I want the brotherhood to read it as I have delivered it, word for word.

Now, in Verse 17 of Acts, Chapter 20, Paul, speaking at a place called Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the Church. Now, at Ephesus they had elders. They evidently knew their elders. They were not ashamed of their elders. They did not care to give the color of their hair or the color of their eyes. They were proud of them. Who should not be, of godly elders?

Now, then, what did Paul want them for? Well, he tells you for what purpose he desired to talk to them; regarding some matter. What did he say? In verse 28 of Acts, chapter 20: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers..." To do what? (Reading) "To feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this (says Paul) that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." Where did Paul say they would arise? From among you. Speaking what? Perverse things. What does that mean? You know what it means without my having to define same: "To draw away disciples after them."

Then what did Paul want the elders at Ephesus to do when these came into that congregation? He says, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God

and to the Word of His Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Paul stated specifically and emphatically that the time would come upon those brethren—yes, at Ephesus—when men would arise from among them teaching perverse things. Well, I wonder why they wanted elders? I wonder why Paul wanted those elders to watch? That they might, at the earliest possible time, put a stop to it. Why? Because a stitch in time saves nine. If we had godly elders, and we do have a host of them, that watch the congregation, all designing preachers would be soon given their walking papers when thus they sprang something new in the church, and therefore, they would have authority to enforce the will of God.

I turn to I Timothy 5:17: "Let the elders that rule well..." How? Well. Do what? Rule. Then what must you do concerning those elders, or how should you think of them? He says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor..."

How would some congregations know whom to count worthy of double honor, since the elders' names are never mentioned? I should like to have someone deal with that thing tonight in a forceful, plain, concise way and manner.

In the nineteenth verse, I Timothy, chapter 5, it says, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

Now, will you turn with me, brethren, to Hebrews 13. I want to deal with that in a very brief way. In Hebrews 13:7: "Remember them which have the rule over you..." What? Rule. Over whom? Over you. You who? People of God. Where? Local congregation,

since every congregation is to be independent, separate and apart, distinct from all others, a self-perpetuating institution, if you please.

(Continuing) "...Who have spoken unto you the Word of God (not only remember them): whose faith follow..." How would you know whom to follow if you did not know the elders that had the rule over you? I want that to go down in your minds and thus register and be retained permanently throughout your lives.

Not only does it say "remember them" and "follow their faith," but "considering the end of their conversation."

Now, in verse 17 of the same chapter, "Obey them that have the rule over you..." But how would you know whom to obey if you did not know those ruling over you? (Reading) "...and submit yourselves." To whom? "The elders." Why? Answer: "For they watch for your souls, as they (elders) that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: For that is unprofitable for you."

Now, dropping down to verse 24 of Hebrews, chapter 13: "Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the Saints. They of Italy salute you."

So you have it given, brethren, without any doubt whatsoever regarding this matter that I desired to get across into your hearts.

Turn with me to I Thessalonians 5:12: "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." What? Be at peace among yourselves, the thing for which I am contending, have been, my friends, a contention made by

faithful men of God during the long ago and the faithful men of God now. I am making a contention for things that are within the boundaries and borders of the will of God, and you and I certainly should be deeply interested in this sort of an arrangement.

I am proud indeed to tell you with all of my power that I believe God wants elders in the Church; that these elders must rule, and they have scriptural jurisdiction over matters respecting their realm of work, and I, for one, will be under them insofar as elders conform to the word of God Almighty, and that certainly will not be asking too much of anyone, but will make all of us submissive to God's Will as we learn it from the Bible; be governed by it, being able to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent; to call Bible things by Bible names; and do Bible things in Bible ways.

May God bless all of you. I thank you.

WILCOX'S FIRST NEGATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The proposition under consideration tonight is, that part of the Elders' rule is to enforce God Almighty's will. Brother Norman spent twenty minutes in reading the Word of God and did not read ONE verse that said anything about ENFORCING God's will.

In his opening speech he said that all should believe the Bible and desire to practice it. That is right. Then he said the Elders have no authority except to enforce God's will. I am certain he did not mean to say that, because he believes they should rule by example and by the enforcement of God's will. He said that he intends forevermore to teach that Elders rule by the enforcement of God's will. Well, if he believes the Bible and wants to practice it, he will not teach this after tonight.

He read I Peter, the fifth chapter, beginning with verse 1. Here Peter says, and he was talking as the Spirit gave him utterance—there are two ways to rule. One of them is enforcing God's will, dictating, lording it over the charge allotted; the other is by example. Brother Norman, if your proposition is true, you should have read where God says for an Elder to ENFORCE His will. Peter, an inspired man, the fellow with the keys of the Kingdom said there are two ways to rule. One is to enforce, dictate, or lord it over; the other is by example. He said it is done by example in the church. I believe what Peter said; therefore, I am erasing this one

(indicating board), "enforcement," which leaves only one, and that is "example."

Why didn't you read a little further down and find exactly how, in Titus, Elders are to enforce God's will, as you say? The Bible says an Elder should be able to convict the gainsayer and that is right. How does he convict him? In Titus 1:13 he says he does it by reproving him sharply. How make a man sound in doctrine? Reprove him. Brother Norman says FORCE him. That is the difference between you an Paul.

What does Paul say? "Reprove them to make them sound in doctrine." How does Brother Norman say make people sound in Doctrine? Force them, and for a gospel preacher to make such a statement!

What was wrong with the people spoken of in Titus? He said, in verse 11, they were teaching things which they ought not. How stop a man from teaching things he should not? Brother Norman says, FORCE him to quit. Brother Paul says REPROVE him sharply and he will be sound in doctrine.

How are we to reprove a man? Paul is fairly good authority. In II Timothy 3:16 and 17 he said use the Bible. Brother Norman says use force. That is the difference between Brothers Norman and Paul. That is going some for a gospel preacher, to say, "And Elder can ENFORCE God's will!" I want Brother Norman to tell this congregation where God Himself ever did FORCE anybody to serve him.

Brother Norman has Elders he put in by human appointment with more authority than God Almighty, because God never did exercise the ENFORCEMENT of His will. I certainly would not have made that blunder.

God never did let Jesus Christ have any such

authority. There never was an apostle on earth who had that authority, and there never has been anybody on earth with such authority except the Elders whom Brother Norman votes into the Church. They have more authority than God Himself.

What can such Elders do? Enforce God's will. What does enforce mean? To compel, drive, or put in action by violence. Who can do that? The Elders of the church of Christ, according to Brother Norman. Well, I guess he believes it. He said it.

What is the meaning of enforce? Power exerted against a man's will or his concept. Bless your heart, if God had given Paul that power, he would have baptized everybody in Europe. Paul dragged men and women to jail, but after his conversion he never again used force.

When my brethren are converted they don't use force, either, because they are all of the same mind and judgment. If God had told Paul to use force, there would not have been anybody but Christians in Palestine. He would have dragged all to the creek and baptized them. Listen to me. If Elders can ENFORCE God's will on the church, they ought to force people to obey the Lord. We would soon get Detroit worked over. You just stay up here a few days, Brother Norman, and with your humanly appointed Elders, we will get the job done.

Why did you not read the scripture which proves your proposition instead of reading what you did? You read Acts 20:28, and my Book says to FEED the church instead of FORCE it. You ought to remember a little better. You read FEED and you meant FORCE.

Brethren, you know for the last two nights I have

begged Brother Norman to put a scripture on the board that says Elders have human ordination. Now, I am asking him to write the scripture which says Elders rule by the ENFORCEMENT of God's will. Those spaces will be blank when the debate is over, and, too, with all these men that are helping him, they will not find any scriptures that teach what they want.

What does he claim? You heard him say a few minutes ago that we speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where the Bible is silent. Well, either produce the scripture that proves your proposition or take it back. Brother Norman, when this debate is over, you will not have written the scripture on the board and you know it just as well as I. Why are you not man enough to tell this audience? James said, "Be not many of you teachers,—knowing that ye shall receive heavier judgment." Who has the authority to enforce God's will? Brother Norman's Elders. Where did they get it? He said in the Bible. Where is it? You read Acts 20:28; I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:1; and not ONE word is said about "enforce." You had better look again. Maybe your God is musing. Maybe He is asleep. Why don't you read it out of THE Book?

You know, brethren, if someone were to ask Brother Norman what baptism does for a believer he would say it remits sins. How long would it take him to find the Scripture? Just about one second. If somebody were to ask him HOW we baptize, how long would it take him to find the Scripture? Just long enough to quote it. But I have asked him for two nights to find the Scripture that says Elders should have human appointment and he has not found it. I intend to keep asking him until this debate is over to give me ONE Scripture

which says Elders rule by enforcement. I know he will not do it. Why? It is not in the Bible.

Last night, in his last speech, Brother Norman said when he called on me to put the Scripture in the circle showing how Elders are appointed that I only gave one Scripture. Well, you did not even get ONE in this circle on your proposition.

I put Acts 20:28 in the circle last night. You notice, however, he did not get even one up here.

Do you see his position? He is arguing something for which he cannot find even ONE Scripture. The Methodists argue sprinkling for baptism. You call on one for the Scripture, he looks everywhere but cannot find it. Ask the Digressive to give one Scripture for instrumental music; he looks all day and cannot find it. Ask Brother Norman for the Scripture about Elders enforcing God's will and he cannot find it. They are all in the same boat. Do you wonder that churches are doing no better today with preachers like this man?

He saked me how I know an Elder. He read I Thess. 5:1 which says something about those who LABOR in the Word. Do you know a laborer when you see him? If you saw a man digging a ditch you would know he was not a doctor, lawyer, or preacher. Well, certainly you would know he was not a preacher. (laughter)

You do not know who the Elders are? You do not know a laborer when you see him? What good would it be for me to tell you he is a laborer? If a man is qualified to be an Elder, but will not function, is he an Elder?

You mentioned something about David saying we are sheep. You know, Brother Norman, the thing that shocked me last night, and I had a number of people ask me about it today, was when you made fun of what

Christ said about our being sheep. I tell you now, brethren, when I get to the point that I will make sport of what my Savior said, God forbid that I live.

Brother Norman would not know a laborer unless he wore a badge. You know, Brother Norman is in the same class with the fellow that went to teach school. The superintendent asked him whether he taught the world round or flat, and he said, "I am prepared to teach it either way."

What does he think about Elders' rule? They rule by example, and by enforcement. They teach it either way, round or flat.

What did Peter say? They rule by example and not by lording it over the congregation. However, Peter did not know much about it, according to this man.

Brother Norman is in the same class with the Digressives. They say you can sing or play; it doesn't make any difference. He is in the same class with the Methodists. They say a fellow that is immersed is saved, but sprinkling is okeh; teach it round or flat. Yes, teach it either way. Sprinkle a man or immerse him. The Elder can enforce, lord it over the congregation or rule by example—just any way he cares to.

He is in the same class as the denominational world. They tell you one is saved in any church; it doesn't make any difference. Take the one you want. Brethren, before I would deny God Almighty's plan like that, I would get out of the pulpit. Preachers in the church of Christ cannot afford it. We must preach the Bible as it is.

Brother Norman is in the same class with the fellow that says you can meet on the Lord's Day if you care to, or on Thursday, Good Friday, etc. Just do anything you please. He is in the same class with the people who say

you can contribute as you prosper, or we will put a tax on you. He admits that Elders rule by example. He said they did, but he says they can go further and enforce God's will. If that be so, if they can teach it round or flat, then you can sing and play. You can immerse and you can go beyond God's will and sprinkle. You can belong to the church of Christ and to any other you like. Tell me, is God a respecter of persons? Brother Norman, where did you get your liberty to teach it either way, when you do not allow the Methodists, the Digressives and others to do what they please? Where did you get your liberty?

The Bible I read, and it is also in yours, in Acts 10:34, says that God is no respecter of persons. If this is true with reference to the Eldership question, will He let you do what you please and not let the Digressives and Methodists act as they wish? Maybe that is too general? Do you know what he said about Christ last night? Some of you were not here. He said Christ made a mistake in Matthew 7:20. He did not mean to teach this on the Eldership question. He said it was too general. It fits everywhere but the ruling of Elders, so says Brother Norman.

He said Christ made the thing too general. Sure, why didn't God ask you about it? When did you get smart enough to know more than God?

I knew he did not want me to expose him, he said that Matthew 7:20, was too liberal. Certainly it is for him. He can do what he pleases about selecting Elders and their ruling and it is all right. For other churches to disobey God is wrong.

What you should do is take back some of the things you have been saying, because they are not in the Book.

I don't blame you for being ashamed of such a statement. I would be, too.

If he were in the denominational world it would be different. Brother Norman, did God ever have two ways of doing any one thing? You say he has. God did not have but one way to carry the Ark of the Covenant. David thought he did, and carried it the way he wanted to. Brother Norman comes along in the twentieth century and says, "I know God said to rule by example, but I will do as I please." The Methodists say, "We know God said IMMERSE, but we think it doesn't make any difference; we will do what we please."

I thank you.

NORMAN'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

Brother ~~Norman~~ Wilcox: Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to tell the audience kindly I am not angry in any way whatsoever with what he said. I think I know the record will show that I did not say Matthew 7:20 was too liberal. I said it was too general to apply to the elders.

Then I asked Brother Wilcox this question kindly. That applied then to false prophets, but when we make the general application elders can be included as well as other people. I ask you, Whom did it include, then, before there were any elders?

Now, if I said it was too liberal, it was a slip of the tongue. I mean, too general is what I meant to say. I said too general. I know what I said. I hope you will stand corrected in that, Brother Wilcox. If I said too liberal, I certainly did not mean to.

Brother Wilcox: All right.

Brother Norman: Thank you. That is one way of getting the job done.

Now, then, he said I never put the Scripture up there. Listen. I gave scripture after scripture. I hardly ever use the blackboard. Neither do I ever use a chart. I said "ever." I should modify that. Back several years ago, I used charts. I speak extemporaneously, but try to be logical in my remarks, and I never thought really about the blackboard last night.

He wants some scriptures put up where it speaks about men selecting their elders. I gave it to him last night, in I Timothy, Chapter 3. I said Verses 7 and 10 and told you what they said.

Now, listen, all of you: "Moreover, he must have a good report of them that are without (speaking, of course, of elders); lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Deacons, in like manner, include someone else. If my worthy respondent should disagree with that, I will furnish him some scriptures that will give him plenty of trouble.

Now, watch me: "Deacons, in like manner, must be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." Someone else besides Deacons certainly were included, since two words were used—"likewise," "also."

Watch it: "And let these also first be proved..." Whom? The men here with the qualifications. In I Timothy 3, the first seven verses. Then, after they have the qualifications and are proved, which means they are tried, I read from Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon and offered to give him the Greek, and he did not call for it, and he just passed it by without referring to it practically at all.

(Reading) "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless." He is talking here, in this connection, about Deacons, but includes elders also, likewise, in like manner.

Now, there is the book, chapter and verse for it.

He said he wants to know where they had human ordination. Of course, I know his play on human ordination. I am just going to change it like this. I am going

to give you book, chapter, and verse where the Word of God made them elders speaking through men, the Holy Spirit directing the Word of those men.

In Acts, the fourteenth chapter—I want you folks to get that now, and see that it is down here, and when he rubs it out it is coming back on—"And he appointed for them . . ." For whom? The churches—"Elders in every church." The proposition is up to him, since I dealt with that last night, to prove the congregation did not select them. It is up to you. I called on you in all three speeches, Brother Wilcox, last night, to give the process of the Holy Spirit's selection and appointment of elders, and you let the debate close without giving it, and I do not know why. Oh, there is no use in my telling that. I do know why. It was not in the Bible. And nothing new since last night has been added thereto. It is not in the Bible to cite.

All right, now, then, he said he wants me to give the book, chapter, and verse where they rule by the enforcement of God's Will. Well, I will just give you that. I am an accommodating man tonight. It is in I Peter 5:2. When you rub that one out, I will put another one on, and if you get sick of that one, I have some more to give you.

It says, ". . . Taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly . . ." according to the Will of God. If that does not enforce the Will of God and allow the elders to exercise the oversight—according to what? Their will? No, but according to what? Answer: The will of God. Question: Would you mind being in a congregation and being overseen by men possessing the qualifications, selected by those who have proven them, and appointed them? Would you mind their ruling over

you if they only executed and enforced, exercising their rule, their work, according to the will of God?

I think that thing has been taken care of.

He said he put one over here. Well, I am just going to rub that one out, because I am going to quote it to you, and if you put it back I am rubbing it out again, because it does not fit your theory. Now, watch it. In the twentieth chapter of the Book of Acts, verse 28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves (and over the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers), to feed the Church of God. . ." Listen, now—". . . to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own Blood."

He said that the Holy Spirit made them overseers. I said that is right, and he came along and said, when I pressed him first—I pressed him to it—he did not want to say it, but he is an accommodating man when he is pressed. He said it. He said the Holy Spirit makes them elders plus nothing. Is that not a direct operation of the Spirit? I should like for you to tell me why. If it takes a direct operation of the Spirit to make the elders, then would it not require the same direct operation upon the congregation to know the elders before they bore fruit?

I have been saying all the way through, Ladies and Gentlemen, I believe with all of my heart that men, people, are made Christians by the Holy Spirit. Plus nothing? No. Involving human instrumentality? Absolutely so. I am asking Brother Wilcox now to tell me if the Holy Spirit makes elders like it makes Christians. If it makes elders by the Spirit plus nothing, then are people made Christians by the Spirit plus nothing? If so, then he is committed to the direct operation of the

Holy Spirit, and instead of bringing up the fact that I am digressive, that I am like the sectarians would it not be a little akin to a sectarian if you teach the direct operation of the Holy Spirit? If not, my brother, please state why not.

I am not angry. I am in good humor. I never had less to do in my life in a religious discussion than I have had to do tonight. It is a pleasure to me. I dread seeing tomorrow night. I mean that.

Now, then, he asked how they are going to enforce the Will of God. I have answered that. How would a highway patrolman enforce the traffic laws? Here is a man driving 55 miles per hour. The highway patrolman comes along. He curbs the man or takes him to the side of the road, and the man is fined. Does that highway patrolman lord it over the man in fining him? No. Why? The man, first, has violated the law. Well, what did the highway patrolman do? He only enforced the existing law. He did not make the law by which the man was arrested, but he put into effect the law that was already existent, and there was no lording at all. It was putting into effect that law.

He said that I believe in forcing. I do not believe in forcing. There is a difference between force and enforce as respects elders' rule. I know that Webster's dictionary defines enforce, giving one definition to force, to compel; and it gives enforce, the part I believe fits the word of God. It means what? Just exactly what I have told you. Now, if he wants me to take all the definitions that Webster gives when he talks about enforcing, then I ask him if he will take all the definitions that Webster gives when he defines baptism?

He wants to know what I mean by enforcing, and to

give him an example. Bless your life, I turn to I Cor. chapter 5, and there we find the Church of God at Corinth and, listen. Talking about a man that committed incest, he says, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

Who did that? Well, all in the world that I have to do to find who did it is just turn to II Corinthians 2:6: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many."

I will not make the argument on him until he commits himself, and when he does I have a book, chapter, and verse that will ruin him.

There is where they got rid of a man if they did not have elders to do it. How was it done? If they had elders, should the members have gone ahead and put the man out without the elders advice? Brother Wilcox can handle that thing when he comes forward, and then I will have an answer for it just as surely as his name is Wilcox.

He said, "Brother Norman votes elders in." Listen, Brother Norman has never voted elders in a congregation in his life. There is not a man, woman, boy or girl in this audience, or in the State of Michigan, or in the United States of America, or in the entire world, that ever heard me preach, teach or practice voting in the Church. I say this, Brother Wilcox. I say it kindly. The Church tonight in which the majority rules is not akin to the New Testament Church. The Church that votes is not the scriptural institution.

Then he said Brother Norman made fun about people being sheep. No, I certainly did not. I made fun of your comparison and your parallel. You asked this

question, Brother Wilcox: Whoever heard of sheep selecting their shepherd? Now, I turn the thing right around and ask you this question: Whoever heard of a sheep growing into a shepherd?

Then I made this comparison, and he wanted to throw off. I said it could not be parallel because he is talking about literal sheep. You had reference to literal sheep. You have to have two things to compare.

I said that sheep are dumb animals; they are forced under their shepherd. The shepherd protects them. However, God's people are co-workers, partners with Him in the great work of saving human souls in church government.

I think I have answered everything on the board, and I never made fun of people being called sheep. If I made fun of that, why did I give the 100th Psalm, verse 3? When David was swept by the immortal Spirit, he burst forth in sweet refrain and said, "We are the sheep of His pasture."

In the tenth chapter of John, verse 14: "I am the Good Shepherd . . ." And in John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice . . ." It is the voice of God, and what Christ has said, what the Apostles have said has been recorded in the Bible, and if you disrespect the Bible you spurn the voice of Christ.

I ask you, are you hearing the voice of Christ or the Apostles through the word of God today? If so, wrestle with that, my worthy respondent; play with that and take care of it. You are in a predicament.

Now, he says, "Teach it any way." Then he talked about the teacher that applied for a position, if I have it right, and he was asking whether the world was round or flat, and, of course, the teacher, I presume, by his

statement wanted to be popular and he or she said, "I am prepared to teach it either way." Back four or five years ago, or about eight years ago, maybe less than that—you taught like I do, but you teach it differently now, so you are the one that sings the notes either round or flat. And don't you deny it, Tipton, because if you do I will pull the goods on you.

Who is it that sings it round or flat? Thou art the man. That is the way I like to see debates carried on, where we can be friendly.

And he told that joke about the teacher being prepared to teach the world either round or flat. Now, I do not ordinarily say things like this, but this is not out of the way, and I want to just drop this thought in. Do you know what Brother Wilcox reminds me of? The soldier who enlisted in the Army, and when the day came for the soldier to march, he looked over at the captain and he said, "Captain, I cannot do this, for all of them are out of step but me." And that is the way Brother Wilcox talks.

You are the lone eagle, the lone wolf. I am not calling you a wolf now; I am just using that expression. I want to invite you into the full fellowship of the Church of Christ. You made all manner of fun about my being in the church. I am going to ask you—I asked you last night and you never answered—Are you in the Church of Christ? If you are, and I do not doubt it, you are my brother; but I believe, Tipton, you are an erring brother in Christ. I certainly do believe that.

Then he classed me with Digressives. He said last night I was not a Christian, or did not act like a Christian —maybe he used that expression. He referred to what

we taught or what we teach as having come from the realm of Catholicism. I deny it.

I am just letting you classify yourself and place yourself either in a dictatorial or in a democratic form of church government. It is just left up to you. I do not know why you would do a thing like that or say a thing like that, since what I read from the Bible awhile ago are things that have been written unto us, having come down through the well-directed chain of God's providence, and thus protected by the Holy Spirit, revealed in the Word of God; so much so, that if I do things and say things for which I cannot find scripture written upon the pages of God's word, I go beyond God, beyond Christ, beyond the doctrine which means the teaching of Christ.

I want to thank you.

WILCOX'S SECOND NEGATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen: I was not aware that I had said "liberal." I meant "general," because I thought that was what he said, and I am willing to take back anything that is wrong. However, he did say that Christ was too general. Well, who asked him to say it was too general? So this is just as bad.

Who asked him to interpret the Bible? God did that for us to save him the trouble.

He says he can put the Scripture on the board that proves his proposition; namely: that Elders can ENFORCE God's will, and he went to I Peter 5:2. Instead of this Scripture saying that Elders can ENFORCE God's will, it says exactly the REVERSE. And it is in his Bible as well as in mine. Why did he misrepresent this?

It says in this chapter they are NOT to lord it over God's heritage, but are to make themselves ENSAMPLES (examples) to the flock. When a man lords it over God's heritage, he enforces God's will—he compels the people. However, when he makes himself an example, it is everything but enforcement.

It reads in your Bible just as it does in mine. Why did you DENY what Peter said? You know, the Bible says the time is coming when people will wrest the Scriptures for their own destruction. "Wrest" means to turn or change. Peter said it is not lording it over God's heritage, and Brother Norman says Peter didn't know what he was talking about; that he meant to say it WAS

lording it over and dictating. Your Bible says just what mine does and, in I Timothy 3:7-10, it does not mention ENFORCEMENT of God's will. Why did you use that text? You knew it was not in there.

When you people go home read I Timothy 3:7 to 10. Brother Norman says Elders can enforce God's will, but there is not one word in this Scripture that mentions the enforcement of God's will. Get your Bibles and read it now.

Brother Norman, you are a member of the church of Christ, a preacher in the church; therefore, you should acknowledge your sin. You know what you have said is not in the Bible.

Brethren, it sends a chill down my spine when church of Christ preachers deliberately deny what God says. I expect it of the world, but I do not expect it of a church of Christ preacher. You said one of your proof texts was I Timothy 3:7-10 and your proposition is not in there. Now, you ought to take it back when you get up here, for you know better.

He played around a great deal on last night's scripture. He was saying last night that congregations appoint Elders, and Acts 14:23 is the very one he should not have used, because Paul and Barnabas appointed FOR THEM Elders in every church. The church did not do it, but you said last night they did. The Bible says that somebody is going to wrest the scriptures. There is the man (pointing to Brother Norman). He completely changed this scripture from what God says. I have found when a person will deny one thing, he will deny anything that doesn't please him. When a person will deny God Almighty's word, there is something wrong with his heart. It is corrupt.

He went to I Timothy 3:7-10 again and said, "Let these fellows serve." That is what I say, LET them serve. You need a passage that says, "Vote them in and have them serve." The Bible says, "LET them do it." Here is a good old sister who is TOLD to wash the saints' feet. God said, "Let her do it." Brother Norman does not know the difference between "let," "tell," or "force," her to do it.

What does your Bible say? LET them do it. What did you say, TELL or FORCE them to do it. That is the difference between you and Paul.

I say LET them serve. You say they should have human appointment. The church should TELL them to serve. He furthermore says they cannot serve until the church tells them. God said, "Let them do it."

Did you hear him say that, as many times as I put the Scripture up here, he is going to erase it? Certainly he is. He doesn't want to see it. I was proving last night that Elders are made by the Holy Spirit, and my proof text was Acts 20:28. Now, erase that, Brother Norman. Bless your heart, it is in every Bible in this audience, including yours. Erase that one, will you?

Yes, he can erase it on the blackboard. If I had up here that immersion is baptism, the Methodists would erase it. They don't want to see it. If I had Acts 22:16 here, the Baptists would erase it. Were I to put Eph. 5:19 here, the Digressives would erase it. Brother Norman is in the same group. He erases Acts 20:28 because it does not suit him. What is the difference? You may erase it from the board, but you are not going to erase it either from the minds of these people or the Bible.

You know, he is very kind hearted. He said he

would read the Greek for me. I will not comment on that.

He dreads to see tomorrow night. I am persuaded he has dreaded every night of this debate. I did not expect him to enjoy it.

Did you hear him say that Elders can enforce God's rule like a patrolman can enforce the law? You know you said it. I will tell you how a patrolman enforced the law on me. He had a gun strapped on his side, and, I did what he said.

Brother Norman said that Elders rule that way. If your Elders have guns strapped on them, I don't blame you for believing in enforcement.

You say it grows comical. It is, but it is far more comical for a church of Christ preacher to affirm it.

While I was driving down the streets of Nashville, Tennessee, one day, a man pulled me to the curb and said, "Brother, come on." Well, I blinked a few times, saw his gun, and said, "Yes, sir, where do you want me to come"? And I was about the nicest little boy you ever saw. He could ENFORCE the law; maybe he was one of Norman's Elders.

I was going to Lincoln Park, to preach a few years ago, and ran a red light. Two cops got me, and, believe me, I walked the line. Why, Brother Norman? Because I knew they could ENFORCE the law.

You asked for it and I gave it to you. The very idea of a church of Christ preacher saying that an Elder can enforce God's will! Why not buy them some machine guns and really do the job?

I mentioned last night that some Elders are apt to teach and others are apt to do anything; the last ones must be Brother Norman's.

He said in I Corinthians 5, those Elders were going to deliver some bad fellows to Satan. I know how they are to do it, according to Brother Norman. They will strap guns on their hips and take them down to old Satan.

He does not believe in majority rule. Brother Norman, if five of those Elders you select come in with guns on them to enforce the law, and twenty others say, "Let us not do it," which are you going to take? A majority or minority?

He tried to pull a pun on that round or flat business, and said I was the man; He is the fellow teaching it, round or flat, both at the same time. His Elders can rule by example and if that works, fine; if it does not, they will enforce.

I was honest enough, Brother Norman, when I found that I was following tradition, to quit it. You arrayed all of those preachers against me. I remember one time in the Bible when Elijah had four hundred and fifty false prophets against him, but Elijah was right, and so am I on this proposition.

I did not get my authority from the men you mentioned last night. I got it from Peter, Paul, James, John, and Christ. Who is right? The man that has these on his side and condemns the rotten practice in the church, or the man that is a victrola record and does what the church says, irrespective of what God says?

I have read to you verse after verse in the Bible these three nights, and you have absolutely ignored them. When you were pressed, you would go back and say, "Well, the brethren say 'so-and-so'." Sure they do. And if you want scholarship, go to the Catholic church, or to the Baptists. They have plenty. You can prove any-

thing you want to by them. However, we claim to speak where the Bible speaks and to use the divine record as our guide. If that be true, let every man be a liar. I am guided by the Bible. Do not quote these men to me.

You said as far as you knew, I was a lone wolf. May be so, but I am not a wolf in sheep's clothing. I suppose Noah was a lone wolf when he built the Ark, but he and his family were saved, were they not?

Did you ever read where Jesus said, "Broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many enter in thereby?" I would rather stand with God Almighty and stand alone than to stand with ten thousand "big men," and be lost.

You know, he said I was an erring brother. Well, why has he not been able to show it in the last three nights. God help him! The funny part about it is, all the other preachers here can't help him either.

He said last night that he had to come up here to do this job. I would not have made that statement. I do not know a preacher of the church of Christ in Detroit that wanted to hinder the cause by coming to Ferndale and arguing these questions. That is why they didn't do it. They may all believe as you do, but none can find the scripture for it. If you ask them privately for the scripture that says the congregations should appoint Elders, they act just like you; they quote the scriptures that don't even mention it. If somebody asks, "Well, where is the scripture that says an Elder can enforce God's law," they don't find it. The preachers that we have in Detroit have too much respect for God Almighty's word to affirm what you are doing here to the hurt of the church.

He mentioned that I said something about his not being a Christian, or not acting like one. I say Brother Norman is exactly in line with the Digressives, the Methodists, and the other Denominations. Why? Brother Norman says a man can rule by example, or by the enforcement of God's will; two ways,—teach it round or flat. The Digressives say you can sing or play. Where is the scripture for playing? They do not have it. Where is the scripture for the enforcement of God's will? He does not have it.

The denominational world says you can be saved in the church of Christ or in any other. The Methodists say you can baptize by immersion, by sprinkling, or by pouring. Brother Norman's argument on eldership is the same thing.

Now read me one Scripture in your Bible that says you can enforce God's will or take it back. The very idea of a man saying that an Elder can enforce God's will when he knows the Bible does not teach it anywhere.

He said "enforce" does not mean to force. Well, I don't care how much you wilt under that argument. You know just as well as I do, and everybody here knows that "enforcement" means "to compel by force."

Imagine his predicament. A person does not want to take the Lord's Supper. What can the Elders do? They can strap guns on their hips and make him take it; if he doesn't like this, they open his mouth, pry it open, and pour it down him. Why? They have the authority to enforce. There is the absurdity of his argument.

If a man does not want to contribute, the Elders force him to do it, and the denominational world has nothing on us. They tax the people, and, if they don't pay it, they go out after the money. If, in the church of

Christ, an Elder can enforce God's will, he can make the members contribute, whether they want to or not. That is the predicament you are in. When Brother Norman says he does not want to enforce, he should have written some other word in the proposition. He should not be arguing it now.

What does e n f o r c e mean? To overpower by strength. He says an Elder can overpower. God Almighty never did use that power, Christ never used it, the Apostles did not have it; yet an Elder in the church of Christ has it. The Pope has this same idea, and that is what the Catholic Church does, but JESUS CHRIST SAID THIS WOULD NOT BE IN HIS KINGDOM? (Matt. 20:20-28). The mother of James and John came to him and said, "Let my sons sit on the right and left hand side of you in your Kingdom." Christ said, "The Gentiles lord it over the people, but it will not be so among you." What were they talking about? His Kingdom. The right and left hand of authority means the first and second power. What kind of power? The power the Gentiles have of lording it over. Jesus Christ said it will not be so in my Kingdom. Peter said it is not that way. How many scriptures will it take for you to believe God? God has to say it more than one time for Brother Norman to believe Him and then he will not accept it unless he likes it; and the brethren say so.

Jesus Christ said it is not enforcement. Peter said it is not. Brother Norman says it is, and they can even enforce it like the patrolman.

You must believe in laying on hands, because the Elder can lay hands on a fellow if he can enforce God's will. If that doesn't make him a dictator, what does it make him?

While I am talking about this, please tell me if your Elders have power enough to perform miracles? You would be closer to proving that than you are in proving your proposition. In I Timothy 4:14, the Bible says Timothy received a gift by the impartation of the Elders' hands. What kind of gifts do your Elders have? If they can enforce God's law they can lay hands on a person, but the only gift he receives is a black eye. The Elders in the Bible times could lay hands on him and impart a Blessing.

I thank you.

NORMAN'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen, he said that I gave I Timothy 3:7-10 to prove that elders enforce God's will. Did I do that, audience? Let some man in the audience speak out. Did I give that to prove that elders rule by enforcement? Here is the one I gave, Tipton. I gave I Timothy 3:7-10 and Acts 14:23 as the Scriptures where they selected and where they had a human ordination, and I gave you Acts 14:23, where humans were used in the appointment. Did I not do that, brethren?

Twice tonight he has turned the thing around on me. Tipton, will you look at me? Will you take that back? Just give me a nod, will you?

He says I will rub this out. Yes, I am going to rub this out. Why? Because the twentieth chapter of Acts, Verse 28, is the Scripture that he has given to prove that the Holy Spirit selects and appoints Elders, makes elders plus nothing. Now, Tipton, you read in Acts 20:28 where the elders were made by the Spirit plus nothing. Read where it says they were appointed.

Christians are not made by the Holy Spirit without human instrumentality. How are elders made? By the Holy Spirit, with or without human instrumentality? I am going to draw a circle here for you. I put it on the board last night. I want you to put in this circle—I mean it to look like a circle—I want Tipton to put in this circle, book, chapter, and verse where a man in Bible times

became an elder without the involvement of operation, or put it in this one. Fill both of them up, you have so many scriptures dealing with it.

He says that I evidently believe in elders laying on hands, and he talked about forcing them. No, I do not believe in elders laying on hands as you have in mind.

Brethren, some two nights ago he dealt with my practice. I told you about that man whom he termed a Baptist. I did not know about it. Now, it looks to me, if the brethren here do not want us to deal in personalities, why do we not leave that off and discuss things that pertain to our subject? Brethren, I am not going to deal along that line any more due to the fact that I have so many important things to say and state that time forbids my doing so, and if I did have time I am going to refrain from doing it.

Then he came along and talked about enforcement that meant to compel. I was man enough to say, brethren and friends, that one definition given by Mr. Webster does say that. I disavow that. I take the definition of the enforcement of God's Will to mean the execution, the putting into effect. Do you take all of Mr. Webster's definition on baptism? Do you pick out a part of it? Do you deny the truth in Mr. Webster's definition of baptism?

Now, if you will pardon the expression, I am going to "funnel" you a little. I want to help you. Listen, Tipton, when are you going to come in the church of Christ. I would like to acknowledge you as a loyal preacher. At least, I feel that down in the depths of your heart, Tipton, you do believe that you are wrong. I do. I believe down in the depths of his heart Brother Wilcox does believe that, but I am not impugning his motive.

I say I feel that way about it. I referred to him merely as an erring brother simply because I think he has erred. From what? From first principles? No. From points that deal with the Christian life? No. In what way and manner, friends, has he erred? He has departed from the church organization as taught in the Bible, revealed by the Holy Spirit and practiced by the early Church.

Then, coming on down, we have Alexander Campbell, Moses E. Lard, E. G. Sewell, David Lipscomb, and a host of others; then, later on, brethren, N. B. Hardeman, J. W. Shepard, Coleman Overby, John T. Lewis, and a great many others that I could give, and I do not mean to exclude any faithful preacher. I do mean to only include the faithful preachers, and a great many of us younger men who stand tonight for the things for which they stood, not because we are adoring them to the extent of putting them up as the ones to follow, except as they follow Christ. I never offered those men last night or the night before last as proof text. I never did that. I offered them as men that are teaching like Peter and Paul and Titus and Timothy. That is what I did.

You talked about my wife having corns on her toes. You made that statement the other night, yes, you did, and I know why, and you did not mean any harm by it, but you said it.

BROTHER WILCOX: I did not say that,

BROTHER NORMAN: It is in the record.

(Discussion off the record).

BROTHER NORMAN: The only record I have, brethren, is the notes I've taken. Since the work being done by this fine young man has not yet been transcribed

I cannot produce the record, and I will, therefore, take it back gladly.

BROTHER MOODY: Thank you.

BROTHER NORMAN: It will show in the record. All right, I am man enough to take back a thing.

I have met Baptists, Methodists, Holy Rollers, Latter Day Saints, and Brother Wilcox, who does not like the Church of Christ.

(Discussion off the record).

Now, he says that when he said I taught like the preacher teaching it round or flat, he says that teacher was doing both at the same time. Now, I am going to ask this question. Was there ever a time in your life when you taught what you do now but practiced like I believe it to be taught in the word of God? If you deny it, I should like to remind you of a time when I heard you preach. We will just see what effect that has.

Then he said, "At one time I did teach it like Brother Norman, but I ceased to teach it." Now, listen, it is not important what Brother Norman taught or what Brother Wilcox taught. It is a question of what does the Bible teach. What does the Bible teach now? If he ceased to teach it like I teach it, humbly, I believe he has ceased to teach it like the Bible authorizes it.

Then you remember that he made the statement about the authority from men. I will just answer that. I did not get my authority from men. I got my authority from the Bible. Those men were and are walking in the narrow path, and by virtue of their being in the narrow path, I looked upon them as faithful men.

You know, the Bible says, in I Corinthians 11:1, the Church at Corinth was told to follow Paul, and in I Cor. 1:2 "...In every place that call upon the name of the

Lord . . ." That includes us today. I am still following Paul as he followed Christ.

Now, he made the statement about the lone wolf. I did not mean to call him a wolf. I said that I did not mean that. I meant by that he was alone outside, so to speak, in the cold. Being in the cold, he should be like a wolf, hungry for the truth. To what extent? To the extent that by virtue of being hungry and thirsty, he seeks for the word of God.

Do you hunger and thirst for the truth of God?

Then he said it was no disgrace to be alone. No, if you are right in being alone. Noah was right in being alone. Now, what made Noah right?

In Genesis 6:22 "Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him . . ."

Can you give the book, chapter, and verse for the Holy Spirit making Christians plus nothing? Can you give the book, chapter, and verse where the Holy Spirit selected and appointed men independent of human instrumentality. If you cannot do it, Tipton, who is within the boundary of God's truth? Who has both the Father and the Son? Who is following the teaching of inspired men as given to us in the word of God? We will just have to wait and see what he has to say regarding this matter.

He says that I said I dreaded tomorrow night. I first shook my head; I did not say it, because of the way he said it. It made me shake my head. Now, I shook my head wrong. I did say that, but I am not dreading it like Brother Wilcox thinks I am. I am dreading to see the thing come to a close, since I will never probably have another chance to try to right his wrongs. It makes me sorrowful. Listen, Tipton, I want to tell you something.

You may think that I am trying to bolster up a bold front. I am going to tell you, in the northeast corner of my heart, if you will pardon the expression, I love Tipton Wilcox. I know I do. I mean that. He may question it. He baptized my wife, my father, my sister, and preached my dear old grandmother's funeral. I love him for it. I love him for all the good that he has done.

It breaks my soul and grieves my heart to know that as fine a young man, capable, educated, clean morally—I never heard one word against that man's character—has so far departed from the will of God in reference to church organization. It grieves me, brethren. I hate to look in the dim distance of the rugged future to the time, I am fearful, of his being marked by the loyal part of the great brotherhood of the New Testament Church.

I call him back. The Bible says, you know, in the 16th Chapter of the Book of Romans, Verse 17, "Mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine (of Christ) which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Just how far God will let you go, I do not know. I certainly would not want to hinder you in anything that is good.

Brethern, I am sincere; I am earnest. You may not believe it, but I am. I have never made a more earnest appeal to the unsaved than I am making to my friend, Wilcox, and those of you in this congregation who are aligned with him in your present set-up, I am going to say to you just what the Apostle Paul said to some people, in 2 Corinthians 6:17: "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will recieve you." Verse 18: "I

will be a father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Come out from among them. Line yourself up with the Church of the New Testement.

Now, someone said last night that I said in some pulpit that Tipton C. Wilcox, of Ferndale, Michigan, had gone digressive. I do not remember having made that statement publicly, but listen, I am going to say this: I do candidly, earnestly, and honestly believe he has digressed, departed from the path of right and rectitude, and fundamentally he is not teaching like we have it recorded upon the sacred pages of Holy Writ.

That registered, did it not?

My opponent threw off on the elders, and I do not like to hear any man do that. Of course, he had reference, friends, to the way I teach, regarding which I believe to be in harmony with the Bible; not only to be in harmony with it, but actually to be taught in the word of God, and he said that Paul said, in I Timothy 3, that one qualification was that an elder is apt to teach, and he said, "Elders are apt to do anything." Well, I want to say I know of a preacher not one thousand miles distant that is apt to teach anything in reference to church government.

I know another thing; that the elders of this congregation are apt not to be seen during the discussion. Do I see their deep blue eyes, brethern? Listen, Brother Tipton, am I looking into the faces of some of them? Have I seen them?

In the 20th Chapter of Acts, Verse 17, Paul stopped at Miletus and called for the elders at Ephesus, and they came. If I were to stop at Flat Rock and call for the elders in the church at Ferndale, would you give me the

names of the men that would come down to greet me.

You know, there are some brethern who are right; there are some brethren who have erred. But we ought to be just as anxious and desirous of trying to right the erring brethern as we are to keep those who are in the right safe and sound.

I want that to register, brethern, and it will never be mentioned again. If it is mentioned, I will tell you something.

You mentioned the elders or the patrolmen who strapped the guns on the side and arrested you. Tipton, I want to know what you were into when you got into jail and so many other things, when he arrested you. You know the Bible said, in Romans 13—you know what it says about obeying the law of the land. When you disobeyed the law of the land, you disobeyed God.

So while you are out there looking in, and I am looking out, so to speak, because I try to be in the Church of Christ, are you out there with the digressives and the Methodists? You are out of jail, I know. I see you.

He asks, "Do your elders have guns strapped on them, and pour the wine down the brethern's throat?"

Now, the elders that I teach have the Word of God strapped on them, and they exercise the oversight, not by constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God. Here we find the enforcement of God's will. Here we find the selection of the elders. Here we find the ordination or the appointing of the elders. Here we find not what Wilcox set up. We do not find in the word of God men who became elders without the involvement of human instrumentality.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S THIRD NEGATIVE

(February 17, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Brother Norman used twenty minutes in his last speech. How much Bible did he read that proved his proposition? He spent a great deal of time tonight telling how good a fellow I am. He said he loved me. Yes, and how! Instead of telling how good a man I am, why did he not read the Scripture that says Elders can enforce God's will?

This is the last chance he had, and he did not read one Scripture pertaining to the subject. I am willing to go to Blue Ash, Ohio, right in your pulpit and take you on, and I will be tickled to do the job.

You know, he said an Elder could enforce God's will; then he read they are NOT to rule by CONSTRAINT. The very last thing he said was they could not rule by constraint. But his proposition says they rule by constraint, enforcement. He turned right around and read the Word of God which said Elders could not do it. I would change my proposition or cut that out of the Bible.

He does not have enough time. I know it. If he were to have three or four weeks, he would not have time to find that Scripture in the Book, because it is just not there.

Brethren, he is trying to prove that Elders rule by the enforcement of God's will, and he asked me if I would take Webster's definition. You know why I will not take Webster's definition on baptism. Because he defines the

word as used today. Paul said baptism was by burial (Rom. 6:4).

You find in the Bible where the word "enforcement" does not mean to enforce, and I will accept it. Will I take Webster's definition of baptism? No. Why? Paul says it is not the way Webster says it is.

Where did Paul say the word "enforce" does not mean to force? Brother Norman says it does not mean to enforce, and then said the Elders are to constrain, or restrain the congregation.

He asked me what was wrong when I was arrested? I broke the law, the policeman said. I ran a red light. Did you ever do anything wrong? I admitted it.

You are doing wrong tonight; trying to prove something not in God Almighty's Word. Why do you not admit your error? He is going to tell me something in the future. That is what he has been promising all through this debate and has not told it, yet. He had all this time to read where Elders enforced God's will, but he did not find the Scripture.

He wants me to show him the deep blue eyes of our Elders. He said Paul called the Elders of the church at Miletus to Ephesus. I want him to tell you if Paul called them by name or sent word down there for the Elders to come. I wonder if Paul asked about their deep blue eyes.

He has inferred that Paul picked out the Elders and said, "Send them down here." How do you know Paul knew them by name? If you were to come to Ferndale and do what Paul did, maybe you would have the same effect, unless you aimed to use this information in a corrupt way, and that is exactly why we have not told you.

Are the Elders in Ferndale doing their work one hundred per cent? No. Neither is Jewell Norman doing

his work one hundred per cent; but our Elders are doing it as well as they know, and everything is running fine.

He said that Wilcox is digressive, or "He has departed from the old path." I have departed from the path of listening to men. Why do you not show where T. C. has departed from the Book?

You quoted Romans 16:17 and said, "Mark them that cause division contrary to the doctrine which you have learned." If I am contrary to the doctrine, why can't you show it?

I have shown tonight, and these people see, where you are wrong, in trying to enforce God's will through the eldership. Why do you not come back to the old path? If I am so wrong on this, why is it that somebody cannot read the Scripture that says I am wrong?

Yes, I have departed from the old path of listening to those men who have no more respect for God's Word than you. All they KNOW about it is found in this Book, and even one of them said, "We infer;" I have quit infering when it comes to what God demands.

He said Noah did everything according to God's commands. That is right. Are you doing it? Where did God command that Elders should enforce God's will? Yes, I stand with Noah. He did what God said, and I stand with God today. You asked me last night to put the Scripture on the board that proved my proposition, and I did. What was I proving? That the Holy Spirit appoints, selects, makes Elders, and all the Scripture I needed was Acts 20:28. I asked you to read ONE verse that says anything about human appointment of Elders, and to this hour you have not done it.

He said I would be marked by the brotherhood. Bless your heart, when the brotherhood tries to preach something that is not in the Word of God, I want them to mark me; I don't want to be in the group. And whenever they find the Scripture, Brother Norman, that says Elders can enforce God's Will I will get over in the pen with them. God knows I do not want to be there until they can find it.

He appealed to me and to this congregation to come from the Digressives or come out from among the world. Maybe he would like to affirm this congregation is digressive. He certainly could have the opportunity.

He said I talked about his wife's corns. I don't know how many corns she has. If I did talk about her, I humbly beg your pardon, but when you get the record you will find that I was talking about the old woman in I Timothy 5, when I said, "Bless her OLD heart, with corns on her feet she is going around, limping, to do what God said without any honor, but her good OLD husband has to be appointed before he can do what God said." I do not know anything about your wife. I think she is a good woman but I have a wife that has me right under her thumb. God knows I can't get along with one, much less two. (Laughter).

He said we are not after what Brother Norman or Brother Wilcox either teaches; we want what the Bible teaches. That is fine. Brother Norman teaches that Elders can rule by enforcement. I would like to have him read where God said it. I do not have much faith in what YOU say religiously. I want you to tell me what God said.

He quoted again tonight from Alexander Campbell and others. Why did he not quote from Christ? Why didn't you tell us where Paul said Elders enforce God's will? Because it is not in the Scriptures. Peter said

they are not to enforce God's will; they are not to lord it over the charge allotted. Brother Norman says they are. He cannot read the Scripture. It is not in his Book.

Peter said it is not by dictation; it is not by lordship; they cannot enforce. Brother Norman says they can. I told you that when a man would deny one truth, he would deny anything that does not suit him.

He said that I misrepresented him in regard to I Timothy 3:7-10. If I did I will take it back. What was he trying to prove last night? That congregations can select, make or appoint Elders. This Scripture does not touch on it and there is not a word said in there about a congregation appointing Elders. So you did not help yourself any.

I am glad to correct anything that I have done wrong. What he teaches about Elders enforcing God's will is not in I Timothy 3:7-10.

Listen to me, we don't aim to have men misrepresenting the truth like this. You want me to walk the straight and narrow way. Tell me, what about a preacher receiving seventy-five dollars donated for flood sufferers when he lived on the outside of the flooded area, and a poor widow receiving ten dollars from the same donated fund when she lived in the flooded area? Would a Gospel preacher accept such money? And would a scriptural Elder be guilty of such division?

There is an element in this city that would like to see Ferndale go down. We have prospered too much for Satan to be satisfied.

Brethren, I want you to see the position Brother Norman is in. What is he teaching? That an Elder can enforce God's will and he can rule by example. The Digressives teach that you can sing and play. They have

just as much Scripture for their position as Brother Norman has for his. He has Bible proof that an Elder can rule by example. He does not have any Bible proof that an Elder can rule by enforcement.

What does enforce mean? To compel by force; to overpower one against his will or strength; to drive a person. If an individual does not want to contribute, Elders can force him. If he doesn't want to take the Lord's Supper, they can force him. If one of these good old sisters has a corn on her foot and cannot walk or does not want to wash the saints' feet, they can make her. How do they force them? He said like the patrolman. If my position is wrong, why does he not produce one scripture that mentions his proposition?

Did God ever have two ways of doing anything? Can you both sing and play and please God? Does God let you be saved in the church of Christ and in any church you may select? Can a man immerse or sprinkle people for baptism and please God? Brother Norman has just as much scripture for sprinkling as he has for Elders enforcing God's will. He and the Methodists will not take God's word.

If I could not find the scripture, I would take it back. He cannot find it. Brethren, the Methodists have no scripture for sprinkling and Brother Norman has no scripture for Elders enforcing God's will. God is no respecter of persons. Will He let you get by with enforcing God's law and condemn the Methodists for sprinkling?

You ought to be consistent. If God is no respecter of persons, He will not let you get away with the enforcement of God's will and condemn the Digressives because they play.

That is one trouble with the church today. We want to force the Digressives to walk the straight and narrow way, also the Methodists, but WE can do as we please and still go home to God.

Where did you get your authority? Your proposition is not in the Book. You claim the only authority we have is the word of God. Let us go back to it.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

The Bible Teaches That Elders Rule by Example Only.

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The subject under consideration tonight is on the chart before you, namely: The Bible Teaches that Elders Rule by Example Only.

Why do I make this statement, or why affirm it? Does the Bible teach that Elders rule by example only? The only method of ruling I find in the Bible for Elders is by example. Therefore, it is by example only. Take the Testaments out of the bookracks in front of you. In them you will find a slip of paper at I Peter 5:3. I want you to look for yourselves while I am talking, so that you may KNOW. There may not be a Testament for everybody, but there will be one for most of you, and if you will scatter them, everybody will be able to see.

They are the King James version. I use the American Standard.

In I Peter 5:3, the Holy Spirit says there are two ways to rule—one lording it over the charge allotted, and the other making yourselves ensamples to the flock.

The Holy Spirit says that Elders rule by example, and not by lording, dictating or enforcing God's will. When the Holy Spirit takes one from two, He leaves only one way to rule, and says that is by example.

I would like for you to turn now to the Bible and see for yourself what I am talking about. The Holy Spirit

says that ruling is NOT done by lording it over the congregation. What is the Holy Spirit talking about? The rulership of Elders or how Elders rule. Question: Do we believe the Holy Spirit? When the Holy Spirit says there are two ways to do a thing, and says it is NOT by one of the ways, how many will that leave? Only one!

In Matthew 20:20-28 the mother of James and John came to Christ and said, "Command that these my sons may sit, one on thy right hand and one on thy left hand in thy Kingdom." Notice, they may sit—future tense. Where? In thy Kingdom. What position are they to occupy? The most prominent places in the Kingdom—other than the throne—the right and left hand.

Jesus said in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses that it would not be in His Kingdom as with the Gentiles. How do the Gentiles rule? By lording it over the people; they exercise authority. But "it will NOT be so AMONG YOU." What shall not be? "The places of authority for the rulership in My Kingdom. It will not be like it is in the Gentile kingdoms or the kingdoms of the world." How is it to be? Jesus said, "The person who is greatest is your servant." Hence, Jesus said it would not be by lordship, dictation, or enforcement, but it will be by serving people, by example. Therefore, the Holy Spirit and Jesus both said it is not by lording, dictating, or enforcing, but it is by example or service.

Sometimes Brother Norman goes into different sections of the country for meetings or to do church work. We can visualize his going into the home of an individual, staying there for a week or two, a month, or even a year. He is in a nice home; they have a maid; he sees her sweep the floor, wash the dishes, dust the house, serve

at the table, and so on; but about the time he leaves he says, "Well, Mrs. Smith, I understand you have a servant. I wish you would bring her out from under the benches so I could see the color of her hair and the blue of her eyes."

Jesus said the greatest man in the Kingdom is the one who serves. Brother Norman has been asking me, "Where are those fellows around Ferndale that serve?" He does not know people when they serve. Maybe if he would stick around awhile he would see.

I want you to notice this diagram (chart, page 164). Brother Norman and I both preach that immersion is the ONLY form of baptism that is valid today and the Bible endorses it (Romans 6:4).

We both teach that singing is the ONLY kind of music we can have in the Church of Christ today and please God (Ephesians 5:19).

We both teach that the first day of the week is the ONLY day on which we can meet and partake of the Lord's Supper. (Acts 20:7).

We both teach that the Lord's Supper consists of the bread and the fruit of the vine ONLY; there can be no other things on the Lord's Table and it remain His Table (Luke 22:14-20).

Both of us believe we get the Holy Spirit today through the Word ONLY (John 6:63).

We both teach that the church of Christ is the ONLY institution found in the New Testament that will save people (Matthew 16:18).

The same Bible that teaches these six points, teaches the ONLY form of rulership that an Elder can exercise today is by example, (I Peter 5:3). Tell me why he accepts and uses THESE SIX (chart, page 164) and refuses

ONLY

Immersion_____Rom. 6:4 Lord's Supper__Lk. 22:14-18

Singing_____Eph. 5:19 Holy Spirit_____John 6:63

First Day_____Acts 20:7 Church of Christ__Mt. 16:18

Example_____I Pet. 5:3

to accept THIS ONE, when the Holy Spirit made the one as plain as the others? Don't tell me that he will deny these (chart, page 164) statements. If I were to call on him to give chapter and verse for the word "only" after each of those statements, he could not do it to save his life. He teaches these six things but refuses to teach the same principle when he comes to the rulership of Elders. Why?

I know why. He told you last night when he quoted from all those brethren in the Church of Christ. If they would okay the eldership question, he would accept it; however, because some of our preaching brethren will not accept the Bible, he, too, will refuse it. Brethren, if we are looking for the truth, we will accept what the Bible teaches on this thing just as well as on any other thing—regardless of what some preachers think.

Tell me why Brother Norman says God will condemn the Methodist for sprinkling and not immersing only, but will give HIM authority to go beyond that which is written and use force and not example only in the rulership of Elders? If God will condemn the Methodist, why will He not condemn you? If God will condemn our Digressive brethren who believe in both playing and singing, why will he not condemn Brother Norman for using force and example in the eldership? If Brother Norman refuses God, but accepts the doctrines and precepts of men, he is following that which is vain.

You will recall that in Mark 7:6-9, Jesus said, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching AS THEIR doctrines the precepts of men . . ."

You, Brother Norman, leave the commandments of

God that you may keep your traditions. What are you following? Something not in the Bible, but the teaching and doctrines of men when you go beyond that which is written. Why do I say that Elders rule by example only? When God SPECIFIED HOW a thing must be done, there is no other way you can do that thing and please Him. How did God specify Elders were to rule? By example. Can they do it any other way and please God? God specified that we should have the Lord's Supper on the FIRST day of the week, (Acts 20:7). Can you have it on Friday and please God? He specified that we baptize by a burial. Can you baptize any other way and please Him? God specified that the Elders should rule by example. Can they rule any other way and please Him?

He specified that we have singing in the Church. Can you have any other form of music and please Him? God specified that Elders rule by example. Can they rule any other way and please Him?

If this will hold good in the Lord's Supper, in baptism, and in music, why will it not hold good in the ruling of Elders? Tell me, was God jesting when He said the Elders were to rule by example; and meant what He said in the other things?

The thing that seems so inconsistent to me is that Brother Norman believes God meant what He said in talking about music, the Lord's Supper, and baptism, but He was joking when He said for Elders to rule by example.

I call to your mind again God specified that Israel worship in Jerusalem, but Jeroboam built an altar at Bethel and had the people meet there. This thing became a sin. Why? Because the people listened to Jeroboam and did not obey God. God authorizes that Elders rule by example, and Brother Norman says they can rule by enforcement or by example. You heard him make three speeches on that last night. He has done exactly what Jeroboam did. HE decided they could rule by enforcement. He never gave ONE VERSE in the WORD OF GOD that even intimated God authorized anything but ruling by example.

Let us notice the building of the Ark; God specified that Noah should use gopher wood; if he had used anything else it would have displeased God. He specified how the Ark of the Covenant should be carried, with staves; and when David transgressed His will and carried out his own ideas, namely; by putting the Ark on an ox-cart; it displeased God and caused the death of an individual.

Jehovah is a jealous God and would not permit the Ark to be carried any other way. Why is it He will permit Brother Norman to have Elders rule by enforcement and by example? If the only way they could carry the Ark was with staves and please God, why is it not true that the only way Elders can rule today in the Church of the Lord is by example? If one is true, why is not the other?

The thing I cannot understand is that Brother Norman is so inconsistent and will not accept one as well as the other. Of all people in the world Church of Christ preachers should be consistent.

If you will turn to I Corinthians 4:6, you will hear Paul say not to go beyond that which is written. What is written on misic? The Lord said, "Sing." What did Paul say? Not to go beyond that which is written; there-

fore one cannot play. If he does he sins, for he is going beyond that which is written.

What is written about baptism? That we immerse (bury) people in baptism. You cannot go beyond that, sprinkle people, and please God. Paul said not to go beyond that which is written.

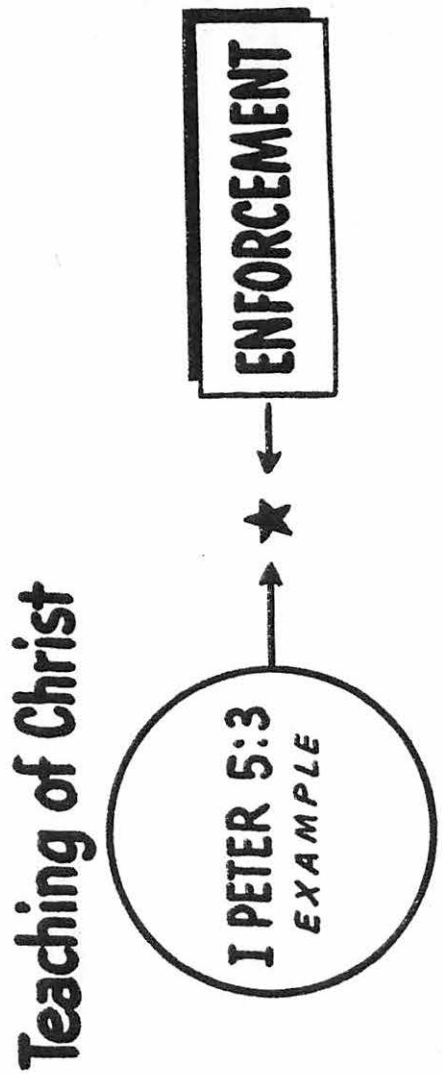
What is written with reference to the Lord's Supper? That we meet on the first day of the week to break bread. You cannot go beyond that, meet on Friday, and please God.

What is written with reference to the rulership of Elders? They rule by example. You cannot go beyond that which is written, have them enforce God Almighty's will, and please Him. If you can go beyond in one thing, you can go beyond in any number of things. We have no reason to deny the Digressives playing, the Methodists sprinkling, and anybody from taking the Lord's Supper at any time he wants to, if we permit Brother Norman to go beyond in the rulership of Elders. If he can go beyond that which is written, in matters regarding the ruling of Elders, then anybody in the world can go beyond that which is written in anything he wants to and be acceptable.

I wonder if he BELIEVES PAUL when he said NOT to go beyond that which is written? (I Cor. 4:6).

There is another chapter and verse I want you to get. It is I Corinthians 14:37. Paul said, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Are these the commandments of the Lord? (Chart, page 164).

Paul said if he is spiritual, he will acknowledge it. We will wait and see whether Brother Norman acknowl-



edges it or not. I want you to forever remember one thing: If Paul told the truth, you cannot go beyond the rulership of Elders by example, any more than you can go beyond baptism by immersion, singing in music, or the Lord's Supper on the first day. If one is true the others are true.

What is said in II John 1:9? John says that, if you go beyond you do not have God. Brother Norman is the man that has gone beyond and used enforcement in the rulership of Elders. What does the Bible say? (Chart, page 169). By example. What does Brother Norman say? By enforcement. That is the difference between God and Brother Norman.

Paul said, "Not to go beyond." John said, "If you do you don't have God." Do you believe the Bible? Oh, somebody will say, "I think that is a small thing." That argument has been used in the religious world for doing anything under heaven they want. The Methodists think it is a small thing when they sprinkle. The Digressives think it is a small thing when they play, and Brother Norman thinks it a small thing when he enforces God's will. "You ought not to quibble over little things like that." What difference does it make? I am asking you, when Paul said not to do it, and John said if you do it, you are without God, does it make any difference? Brother Norman had three speeches last night and never did find where we should enforce God's will. He has also gone beyond that which is written. What is written? Ruling by example. Where did he find enforcement? From the brethren, outside the Book; for it is not in there. Has he gone beyond what God said?

We claim today to do things by faith, because without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to God, (Heb. 11:6). How does faith come? By hearing what God said, (Romans 10:17). What does God say about Elders ruling? They rule by example, (I Peter 5:3). If it is not by faith—hearing what God said—it is a sin (Romans 14:23).

I thank you.

NORMAN'S FIRST NEGATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It certainly is a pleasure for me to be back with you to deny everything that Brother Wilcox has said wherein I think him to be opposing the word of God.

Allow me, first of all, to read Hedge's *Rules of Logic.* Rule No. 1. After I read it, I am going to commit Brother Wilcox to something that will be new for him, since he has never tried this method in debate thus far or, rather, in this discussion.

(Reading) "The terms in which the questions of debate are expressed, and the precise points should be so clearly defined that there can be no misunderstanding concerning them. If this be not done, the dispute is liable to be, in a great degree, verbal; arguments will be misapplied, and the controversy protracted because the participants engaged in it will have different apprehensions of the question."

He has been in the affirmative the second time in this debate. Not one single solitary time in his affirmation has he ever defined a point. Now, Brother Wilcox, when you come back to the floor, I have three words that I want you to define. One is, what do you mean by the word "rule"? We will bring Mr. Webster on that. What do you mean? I ask with emphasis tonight, Brother Wilcox, about the word "rule". Define that. I have a right to demand that you define it.

What do you mean by "example"? I want a definition of the word "example." We might agree upon that.

If we do agree upon "example," I want you to define, in particular, with emphasis, the word "only." What does that include? What does it exclude?

We will get down to some real debating when he defines his proposition.

Now, friends, I want you to turn with me—I can quote this by memory, of course, since I have done it, but I want you to read it. Why? I will answer, for but one purpose; namely, that since this debate is being taken down for publication, I want to forever silence this new set-up, unlike any other thing in America, by this discussion. Will you turn with me to the first text in his affirmation, which is I Peter 5:2 and 3: "Tend the flock of God which is among you." What were the elders required to do? To tend it. What is a shepherd supposed to do to his flock? Tend it.

What do we mean by "tend"? Look after it, manage, govern, control, protect.

Now, watch me: "... Which is among you exercising the oversight ..." What does a man do when he exercises the muscles in his body? He puts them into effect. We talk about people taking physical exercise. Something is put into effect. We all can understand that. Exercise what? Elders exercise the oversight. The oversight of what? The flock, the heritage, the charge allotted them. (Continuing reading) "... Not of constraint ..." .. do not be forced to do it. But how, Peter? "Willingly." How must elders exercise the oversight or tend the flock of God? Answer: "... According to the will of God, not yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind (exercising the oversight according to the Will of God)."

Now, in Verse 3, I quote: "Neither as lording it over

the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock. (Verse 4). And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away." It is the American Standard Version from which I am reading.

Now, there you have what he has read tonight, and the thing upon which his affirmation this evening has been based principally.

He says there are but two ways. I am going to take all of these things away from him. I want you in the audience to look at this chart. This is the place from which I read I Peter 5, lording it and by example. I have ever been against lording it. Will anyone be lording it over the charge allotted them if they merely enforce God's Will? Who would want to be under any other will but God's? Would it be wrong for elders to enforce God's will? Would it be lording it for them to do it? Would it be tyrannical? I want my worthy respondent to pay his undivided attention thereto. I am against lording it.

Now, he says, "by example." Yes, it is by example, but not by example only. We are saved by faith, but not by faith only. The very same place, Brother Wilcox, that you put "example only" I propose to put "faith only." I am going to leave this right here. It is not exactly square, but you can certainly have room enough to put the Scripture in it if you can find one. I want him, when he comes to this stand tonight, this platform, to put one Scripture in this square that I have drawn on the board, one Scripure that says elders rule by example only. When you do that Brother Wilcox, I will find the Scripture for "faith only."

What qualifies elders to Scripturally enforce God's

Will? First, being proper examples or ensamples. What qualifies a man to be scripturally baptized? He must first have faith, and the result of that faith leads him in to being baptized for the remission of sins.

Would you baptize a man for remission of sins if you knew he did not have any faith in God? Why, of course not. So if you could have found an addition to the "example only," you would have proven this point; but since you did not find it, this one is gone by the board.

Next I want to take this one. He has "lording over a servant," and he read that from Matthew 20:20. Now I am going to read that. Of course, he is talking there about things that I think will be interesting to the audience. I shall read only one verse that counteracts all that he said, the twentieth chapter of Matthew, verse 25: "But Jesus called them unto Him (that is, these men who wanted preference and notoriety, as indicated in previous verses), and said 'Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them'."

Now, what kind of authority did these people in Matthew 20 exercise? Lording authority. What kind? I answer: Lording authority. Am I against the exercise of lording authority? Yes.

Where else do you find it opposed in the Bible? (I Peter 5:3) You must not lord it over them.

What kind of authority did the Gentiles exercise? Lording authority. Well, what kind would that be? That would be a kind that did not meet the approbation of Him who does all things exceedingly well.

I want to ask Brother Wilcox this question. I am going to make it simple, since he is in the lead and he

got personal all the way down with his speech, and I shall conduct this thing on a high plane, but there will not be any harm in my being personal. I want to ask you, Brother Wilcox, this question: If elders rule according to God's Will, will they be lording it over the Church? Now, those Scriptures have been answered and he will never get any more comfort out of them in this discussion. All right, so much for that.

Then he said instead of lording it over them, as the Gentiles did, they were servants. That is exactly right. I want to give you the book, chapter and verse to prove to you that every redeemed person in the world is a servant of God. Romans 6:17, 18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

I want to ask him a question. Can these servants of God carry out, execute, and enforce God's Will? Since all are servants, and by virture of being servants if it means that they cannot enforce God's Will, how then, would the business of the Church be carried out? I am going to charge one thing on you. I am going to open the door and push this one thing in on you, the democratic rule of government. What you do will have to be determined by the majority, and I want to register my protest against this in the following language. The church of Christ in which there is the majority rule is not akin to the church of the New Testament. The Church of Christ that votes is not a scriptural New Testament Church. We will now see how much comfort he will get out of this. You will notice what he said about a certain house, if Brother Norman were to go therein,

a fine house, everything quite elaborate, and the woman has a servant, and I see that servant working around in the house, would I have to know her name? I would not have to know her name. I want to tell you that it does not fit his case at all. Suppose I go into that house and the woman should say, "Brother Norman, I have a servant," but I do not see that servant, and I call for her name and she says, "Well, she has deep blue eyes." I would say, "She has what kind of eyes?" "Deep blue eyes." "Will you trot her out from under the kitchen cupboard? I want to see the color of her hair, and the twinkle in her eye." Well, she has beautiful blue eyes. Now, if she were to go ahead and give me other marks of identification, I might know who she is should I see her without her name being given.

I have been here, this being the fourth night. I have not asked anything unreasonable of my worthy respondent. I am asking him this one question which has been ringing through his ears, reverberating, if you please: Will you please name the elders of this local congregation? Are you ashamed of them? Does the congregation recognize them? Do you know them? Do they have any authority? If they cannot enforce God's Will, pray tell me, brother, whose will do they enforce.

You should be the last man to talk about lording it over somebody, at the same time refusing to tell me anything at all about the eldership. I am going to deny this Church of Ferndale having elders until the evidence is produced. I want that to sink deeply into every heart tonight that is both honest and good.

Then he mentioned singing, and we had a long trip in the New Testament, and then we went back into the Old Testament. God specified the Lord's Supper. Right?

I can read that in the Bible. God specified a certain type of music—vocal—in many places in the word of God. Certainly I believe in the Lord's Supper and the type of music mentioned in the Bible, and, likewise, I believe baptism as taught in the scriptures of God.

Then he tried to parallel the whole thing by example. If he will produce the scripture in the word of God where it says what his Proposition calls for, I will accept "example only," but until he puts the scripture here in this blank space where elders rule by example only, I cannot accept him. I shall not accept that which is not taught in the divine will of God. I want him to produce that now. I should not even have mentioned this, since it is not germane to the issue at all. It was merely a plan to try to get the audience turned away from the terrific force of the gospel blows that I humbly waged against him in my affirmation last night as regards the elders being examples and able to enforce the will of God. This is the plain truth about the matter.

Then he talked about the Holy Spirit through the word of God. I am going to read you something now that might be of interest to you. I want you to turn with me to Ephesians, Chapter 3, and I shall read to you from three or four verses.

> "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles, if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given to you-ward; how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words" . . .
>
> Listen attentively, all of you—
>
> "Whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ."

How, then, was this thing first given to Paul? By revelation. How did the people that Paul wrote to get it? Were they to get it by direct revelation? No. But how? By that which has been revealed unto us in the word of God.

I want you to go sweeping back through the long centuries and stand with me at the very beginning when God opened up the very halls of Creation and threw into existence the world upon which we live, from which we get our support, and into which some day we expect to pillow our heads and be made to dwell in her tender and encircling arms. God Almighty, long, long ago, before the morning stars ever sang together, or the sons of God clapped their hands for joy, looked down through the stream of time to the beautiful unfolding of the redemption of man, and He thought out that plan and later on Christ came and executed that plan. Following that the Holy Spirit revealed that plan, and we have the revelation of the Holy Spirit, things which Christ executed, being the things which God had in His mind at the very beginning of time, recorded, penned, written in the Bible to be read by man.

All the authority that you and I have for doing anything is to take it absolutely and exactly as revealed upon the sacred pages of Holy Writ. No man or no set of men—it does not make any difference how big they may be—can find a case of elders ruling by example only in the Bible.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I want to start with the last thing Brother Norman used. The only auhority we have for anything in the religious world is the Bible. I wish Brother Norman would put on this board ONE Scripture saying Elders rule by the ENFORCEMENT of God's Will.

I called on him last night but he never did read it, and he is not going to now. Why? Brother Norman knows as well as I that it is not in the Bible.

He wanted me to define the proposition. I defined it to everybody in the audience, and all understood it but him. I will define it for his benefit.

What I mean by "rule" is exactly what the Bible means; taking the oversight, looking after the Church. However, I do not mean the ENFORCEMENT of God's will on the Church for that is not in God's Word.

What do I mean by "Example"? It is a pattern or a model for imitation. I wonder if some of those Elders you selected would be a model for imitation; for instance the Baptist?

What do I mean by "only"? It is the ONLY way I find in the Bible for Elders to rule. If you can find another, please produce it.

Brother Norman made light of what the Holy Spirit said. In I Peter 5 there are two ways to rule; one is by ENFORCEMENT or by LORDING it over the charge allotted, and the other is by EXAMPLE. The Holy Spirit

said it is NOT by ENFORCEMENT or LORDING. You take one from two and it leave ONE.

He says that he agrees with this, but he will NOT ACCEPT it. By the way, you said you wanted me to find a verse that says "example only," did you not? Well, brother, the proof is on you. In James 2:24, James said, "It is not by faith only."

You find a Scripture that says the ruling of Elders is not by example only, and I will take it. Find where Paul or Peter or somebody, other than the brethren living today, said it is not by example only, and I will accept it. While he is finding Scripture, I have six up here (chart page 164) teaching this lesson and he does not have one that says "only." You find half of yours, and I will find one hundred per cent of mine. That is fair, is it not?

Brother Norman teaches that immersion is the ONLY form of baptism we have today. I dare him to read one word in that Bible that says anything about immersion ONLY or burial ONLY, but he teaches it. I have heard him say that the Church of Christ is the ONLY institution on earth in which we can be saved. Read that to me, please.

You should be consistent. You claim to be demonstrating the Christian plan—that you are a preacher of the Church of Christ. All I am asking you is to be fair and honest.

He preaches that SINGING ONLY is pleasing to God, and he puts the word "only" in there. Why not do the same thing here?

He gets on the Digressive brethren for having the Lord's Supper on Friday, and says you cannot meet on any day except the first day for this purpose. Well, then

treat yourself the same way and take what the Holy Spirit says about Elders ruling.

God did not say there are two ways to have music and it is not by playing, which would leave singing only, but it is in your Bible where he says there are two ways to rule and it is not by lording, which leaves only one—and this is example. Then he makes a play, and I am persuaded he knows better, if Elders follow God's will, are they lording it over the Church?

He says they cannot inject any of their own will into the ruling. Now, how are they to give the Bible to people? Are they to enforce it or are they to teach and live it in front of them. He says they are going to enforce it, and he said last night they enforce it just like a patrolman enforces law. Of course, I happened to think about the man that had two guns strapped on him and pulled me to the curb, and that is exactly how Elders rule, he says, when they enforce God's will. Let me tell you, God Almighty said there were two ways to rule. The Holy Spirit said it. I am not the author of it. Well, if the Holy Spirit only gives two ways and says it is not by one, how many does that leave? (I Peter 5:1-3).

The church is following God's will, and who are leading in it? Who are overseeing it? The Elders. How are they doing it? Peter says they are doing it by example; making themselves models.

Here is what I mean. If there is a building to be erected, they lay the money on the barrelhead thus giving me an example and do not command me to do it. If there is someone who needs advice they give it. If there is somebody to be convinced, they do it.

How do I enter into the picture? I see what they

do and follow them. Yes, we must follow the Elders. Why? If they are Scriptural Elders, they are in the straight and narrow way. They have been here much longer than we have and we MUST follow them if we go to heaven, because they are showing the way.

How are they ruling? Brother Norman says by enforcement. Brother Peter says by example (I Peter 5:3).

Why didn't you tell the people you went outside the testimony of the Lord to obtain your authority for the enforcement of God's will? Peter said it is NOT enforcement. You say it is. Who told the truth, you or Peter?

Listen to me. If we have only the fruit of the vine and the bread composing the Lord's Table, read the word ONLY to me. You cannot. Why do you not put ham and eggs on the Lord's table? You talk about a fellow who would be the first to take it off. If Brother Norman were to worship in any church that had ham and eggs on the Lord's Table, he would not dare preach for them, but he will worship in that same church with human ordination of Elders, when he has just as much Scripture for the one as he has for the other. Why are you not consistent?

Listen again. I am talking about the twentieth century, 1944, in Ferndale. We receive the Holy Spirit through the word ONLY, and that is what you teach. Now, don't get up here and tell the church of Christ you don't teach this. Every preacher of the church of Christ in this building tonight teaches that we receive the Holy Spirit through the word ONLY. Read the word "only" on THIS subject. It is not in the Bible. Be consistent!

I am sorry to say this, but when my brethren say

they want Elders to enforce God's will, they do exactly what the denominational world does; they twist the scriptures and wrest them to their own destrucion. If God will let Brother Norman put the word "only" on these (see chart, page 164) why would He not put the word "only" on this? (I Peter 5:3) Tell me why.

Brother Norman ought to sprinkle and pour people instead of immerse them. He should use the piano. Why? The Bible does not say "only," on these subjects. If his argument is true, he had better never again fight the Digressives about instrumental music.

I want Brother Norman, when he comes back in his next speech, to write the scripture for the word "only" on just half of these, (see chart, page 164), and I will put it on one hundred per cent of mine.

While you are thinking about it, go back and ask Peter how many ways there are to rule, and tell this congregation what he says. He, through the Holy Spirit, said there are two—by lording and by example, and that it is NOT by lording. Brother Norman says as long as they are following God's will, they are not lording it. Don't make that dodge any more. The Elders are to guide the flock in following the Bible. Here is what I mean, they meet on Sunday for the Lord's Supper; they preach the gospel; they lead in prayer; they contribute of their means. That is following the pattern, is it not? Now, according to your theory last night, the Elder can MAKE the members do them. If they don't want to contribute, etc., they can FORCE them to. And he said force them just like a patrolman.

I wish we had some of your Elders with us here at Ferndale for awhile, and we would go on up with this building. Brother, if the people did not contribute when

we passed the hat, we would call on the Elders who would walk down the aisles with their guns and take it from them. Why, he said the Elders could do that way and would still be following God's will. You say they can enforce God's will, and that means to overpower the people even with violence. If we had a few Elders like that, we would get contributions. That is a pretty smooth trick in your argument. I believe I will get over on your side of the fence for awhile. If I could force the brethren to do what God said, I would go to town, believe me.

If they do not want to take the Lord's Supper, force them to. Elders are still following the will of God. I believe Christians should take the Lord's Supper, but Peter said the Elders were NOT to enforce or lord it over the people. Brother Norman says they are. Whom are you going to believe? I believe Brother Peter; I think more of his wisdom than I do of Brother Jewell's.

In your next speech I want you to straighten up the predicament you are in. Tell these brethren about going beyond what is written. Don't forget it. It is in I Corinthians 4:6, if you do not know.

Paul says not to go beyond that which is written. Brother Norman says it is okeh with reference to Elders ruling. He can teach it round or flat; it doesn't make any difference. He can meet on Sunday or stay at home.

Wherein does he go beyond that which is written? In having the Elders rule by enforcement. Jesus Christ himself said it was not by enforcement (Matt. 20:20-28). Peter said it was not by enforcement (I Peter 5:3). If you will tell me how a man can enforce God's will and not lord it over the charge allotted him, I will take it back.

You told me that enforcing God's will would not

make a dictator but, in III John, Brother Diotrephes was a dictator. If they didn't do what he said, he forced them.

John said not to imitate that which is evil. That doesn't mean a thing to Brother Norman, because he is going beyond God's will whenever he wants to.

He will not let the Methodists, the Digressives, or the Baptists go beyond God's will; but Brother Norman is a SPECIAL individual, God will let him do what he pleases when it comes to the Elders ruling. That is his argument. He has not found the scripture and he will not find ONE place in that Book where God ever did permit anybody to ENFORCE His will.

Show me where God himself ever did enforce His will on anybody, much less permit an Elder to. Brother Norman tells you that these humanly ordained Elders have more authority than God himself. Christ never did have that authority. The Apostles never had it; but the humanly appointed Elders have it, according to Brother Norman.

He said he did not believe in democratic rule. Well, why then are you voting people in as Elders? I don't care how you vote them in, whether positively or negatively. You still vote on them. If that is not democratic what is it?

You said last night to LET them serve, and I say LET them serve. If you will just LET them alone, they will do fine. He believes in LETTING them serve when they serve like HE wants them to.

He read I Peter 5:2 and 3 and said those Elders were exercising; also said he could see a fellow exercise. Now, which are you talking about—physically or spiritually?

Here is an Elder who feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, etc. He is exercising and I can see him. You said when you see a fellow going through all those twists and crooks, he is exercising physically. When an Elder does what God tells him, he is exercising, but you cannot see him; you have to be TOLD who he is. He wants the fellow to NAME his servants. Why not find out who the Elders are, like God said? When a man is wrong he is wrong in every field. He wants me to NAME God's Elders. God said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Brother Norman says that is too general. Is that right. Then Christ made a mistake when He said it. Norman says "by their fruit" does not apply to the Elders. God says LET them rule—and LET them be known by their fruits. I see a man feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and visiting the sick. So I see his fruits and I know him. YOU want me to know him by his NAME, and by the color of his eyes and hair. You ought to put a badge on him.

He wants to know who is going to do our enforcing here in Ferndale, if we do not have any Elders. Well, the church of the Lord does not force its will on people. Brother Norman, all I can do is preach the gospel; if people don't accept it, I cannot force them to. When people are in the church, if they will not obey God, there is not a man under heaven who can force them.

All an Elder can do is teach, persuade, show by example, etc., and if the people will not do what God says, he has reached his limit; however, if he is your Elder, you would have him force the people to obey God.

I have stated several times and I am going to emphasize it again, that God has given to the young man,

the young woman, the elderly man and the elderly woman exactly what he wants each to do, and when the old man is qualified and functions as God wants him to, he is doing the work of an Elder and does not have to have human appointment. He is ruling by example. Brethren, God Himself never did force His will on anybody, and we ought not to try it today.

Brother Norman said he is going to deny that Ferndale is a good place until HE okehs it. We don't care what YOU deny about Ferndale. You are not God and we don't have to answer to you. We are trying our best to please God; it makes no difference what you think of us.

He said he was not going to recommend me unless I came over on his side of the fence. That makes no difference either. You know, through the mercy of God, I have been eating for several years and I imagine I will continue to do it. I am not looking to Brother Norman for a recommendation and this church is not going to Brother Norman to tell us whether we are right or wrong. We are not looking for the doctrines and precepts of men to know whether we are right. We are having our lives governed by the Bible, and so should he.

If Brother Norman cannot read in this Book where Elders rule by enforcement then he is doing it without faith, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. If he is not preaching what is in this Book about Elders, then he is preaching a different gospel and even angels will he condemed for it.

When the Holy Spirit says there are two ways to rule and only one acceptable to God, how do you know there are half a dozen ways? I believe what the Bible says, and there is just one left out of two when you take one away from two. I thank you.

NORMAN'S SECOND NEGATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I think first of all tonight, I should tell you which side of the question Brother Wilcox is on. I think you need to know. The reason I am going to do that is because you could not have listened to him for twenty minutes and have known what he was talking about. I will tell you so you can get it.

He is supposed to be in the affirmative. He tried, in his very weak way and manner, in his second affirmation tonight, to throw me into the affirmative. Now, Brother Tipton, I have been in debates before tonight. The proof is not on me. It is on you. I might just say right here that if I were debating the Lord's Supper, the music question and baptism and the other things connected, and I were in the affirmative, then it would behoove me to produce the Scriptures. However, he is in the affirmative. All in the world that we are talking about tonight is what is in the rule of elders. Not the Supper, not Baptism, and not the Music question. That is the thing. If I were to begin to affirm the Lord's Supper, Music, Baptism, and other things connected therewith I would be thrown automatically into the affirmative, and I am not going to be, and the audience can see it.

Now, everyone look. How many scriptures do you see here in this blank space? I want you to open your deep blue eyes now and look at it. How many scriptures

did he put here in this blank space where the elders rule by example only?

Brother Tipton, whenever you produce the scripture where they rule by example only, I will produce, in the same square, where we are saved by faith only. If Brother Wilcox were meeting a sectarian preacher on the plan of salvation, and he called upon the sectarian preacher to find in the Bible where people are saved by faith only, where would the sectarian man go? He would ramble over the Bible, and here is one scripture they usually give, (in Romans 5:1) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God..." and he says, "There it is, Ladies and Gentlemen. I have found my proposition." What have you found? "I found where people are justified by faith." How would Brother Wilcox answer that? Here is the way he would do it. He would come back and say, "Oh, yes, the word 'faith' is in there (Romans 5:1), people cannot be justified without faith, but the thing that I want you to do is to find 'faith only'."

I want to turn the thing now and let you see the other side of the picture. I will agree elders rule by example, but I want you to find where they rule by "Example only." Tipton, this will be ringing in your ears after this debate. You will spend a sleepless night over it. It will go down in book form, to be read by men that I have mentioned and they will see how miserably far you are from the real truth concerning the eldership question.

That is the truth about it, friends. I love him or I would not be after him like I am. I love my boy and my girl, but sometimes I have to use corrective measures. If I did not love them I would not do it. I hate to have

to do what I am doing, but I will spank just as easily as I can.

He wants me to find where elders rule by the enforcement of God's will. Right here in the same scripture that you put up: "Exercising the oversight not by constraint, but willingly." How? According to the will of God. Now, wherein is there exercise to be had? The will of God. That covers the entire will in which the elders must sway their exercise or oversight.

You know that you talked about my not grasping things too quickly. You have a mind too that may not be too keen along that line and I will give you another passage so that if one fails to register this one certainly might be able to lodge in your mind.

I want to turn to Titus 1:5. This makes the connection with what I intend to talk about: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge." There is the human instrumentality used. I will drop that in answer to this other argument.

Now watch me. It goes on here in this connection and talks about the qualifications of the bishop or elder, Verse 9: "...holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able to both exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." That is the American Standard Version. The King James Version has the word "convince," whereas this version has the word "convict." Both of them say gainsayers must be convicted or convinced.

Who must do that? The elders. What kind of elders? Scriptural elders. Ruling in what way? Well, I Timothy 5:17. When they rule well what do they

exercise? Their will? No. If they were so to do they would be lording it over the people, but when they rule well they put into effect the will of God. Tipton, do you care to be under elders who are true, loyal, Godly, faithful, qualified men who sway authority within the boundary of the will of God?

(Reading) "For there are unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers (now, watch the class that he has mentioned here), especially they of the circumsion, whose mouths must be stopped." I ask you, will they have to enforce God's will if they close somebody's mouth?

Then he says what he means by "ruling" is looking after the flock. Now, Webster gives a definition of rule. Listen: To exercise supreme authority. Now, you are in the affirmative. Will you take Webster when he says "to exercise supreme authority?" You know that you tried to ride my back last night on Webster and I threw it off and laid it on your shoulders, from which you have not been able to extricate yourself.

Then he says that if you take one from two it will leave one. Well, that is the way I learned it back some few years ago. That is right. Now, what does it leave after you take off lording. It leaves example, and by virtue of being example they have authority to enforce the will of God. So the rule of God's will, when you remove the lordship leaves example and this example qualifies them to enforce God's will just like faith qualifies a man to be scripturally baptized.

Wrestle with it, Tipton. Yes, I want this debate to be read by these brethren here in Ferndale in particular.

He says, "Brother Norman believes that an elder in the church rules like a highway patrolman." Listen, the illustration I gave is not parallel with his explanation.

Now, then, a highway patrolman can do what I said, and he, by virtue of being a physical man in a physical kingdom over physical people, can take his gun out and force. However, elders are spiritual men in a spiritual kingdom, and they exercise their authority by the spiritual divine word of God, and it is by the enforcement of God's will, qualified by example.

Then he says if I will do thus and so he will get over on my side. Well, you have been on the outside all the way through looking in. You talked about your being out. You talked about what the church of Christ does. I want to ask you this question, Tipton. It is rather personal, but since you like things to be personal, I feel I should be privileged to ask. Do you consider this institution here in Ferndale a church of Christ? I stood here, ladies and gentlemen, a little more than one week ago and offered to deny that Ferndale is a church of Christ as respects its organization, and he would not affirm it. I offered to do it. I was willing to deny it then, and by virtue of being on this side I still deny it.

Listen, this institution you have here, this present set-up, according to my understanding of the word of God, is not scriptural as respects church organization. I can say it and then laugh. It does not bother me. I have told you kindly about those things.

Then he talked about I Corinthians 4:6. We might learn not to go beyond the things that are written. I want to ask you a question. Have you gone beyond the things written when you signed the proposition to find "Example only" and you cannot find it in the word of

God? Yes, friends, how can a thing be scriptural and not one time be mentioned in the scriptures?

Now, he talked about their having elders. I deny their having elders until he produces their names. But he has almost told me how I can tell them. He says they have deep blue eyes. How tall are they? What is the color of their hair?

And he said that if he had my kind of elders. I do not like that expression "my". That denotes possession. I do not possess elders. I am under the eldership. I am in the church of the New Testament. I believe as a preacher, I should be under qualified elders. I am not dictatorial in my teaching, my preaching and my exercises as a preacher, but I believe in being under Godly men. That is exactly what I believe about it. But he said if he had my kind he could put the building up, and then right before that, just a few words prior to that, he said, "The way to get the thing done, is for the elders to lay it on the barrelhead." Why do you not trot your elders out and have them lay it on the barrelhead and you fellows put it on up? There is your argument.

Then he came to my teaching it round or flat. Now, I do not propose to teach it round or flat, since round and flat are opposed, one to the other. I teach it. How? Just exactly like it is given in the word of God.

Now, question: Do you teach it round or flat? Have you ever taught it round or flat? Have you ever preached what you are doing now and practiced differently?

Then he said that the elders must visit those who err. How many of the elders here have visited them? I heard one tell me but a few hours ago about being termed one who had strayed from the path of right and rectitude, and not one time have the elders, if such they have

here, been to see the party. Now, do you have elders that are not functioning? If so, are they scriptural elders? I should like to have you grapple with this issue.

Then he talked about III John, Brother Diotrephes. I am not going to be personal on that. That is not germane to the question at all.

Then he came to humanly ordained elders. Now, I believe just what the Bible teaches about that. In Acts 14:23, American Standard Version, Paul and Barnabas appointed for them elders in every Church: Titus 1:5: "For this cause left I thee in Crete (Paul said to Titus) that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every (church) . . ." Now, the Word of God did it, being directed by the Holy Spirit through human instrumentality.

While I am on that, I am going to draw this. Please put the book, chapter and verse in there where a man ever became an elder in the word of God that did not have human instrumentality involved.

He mentioned Matthew 7:20: "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Of course, I have been asking him for the last two nights to whom it did apply before there were any elders in the New Testament Church, and he has not answered me. I just cannot make him answer. I just cannot force him. I do not have a gun strapped on me to make him, and I cannot make him produce the elders of this local congregation.

I am going to ask him this question, because my next speech, being the final negative, I will not be able to ask it. Tipton, please answer this question: Who are the elders of this Congregation? Does the Congregation know them? Are you under them? Are they over the

Church? I Thessalonians 5:12 and 13 speaks about those that are over you, and it speaks of esteeming them, and I Timothy 5:17 speaks of "Elders that rule;" Hebrews 13:7: "Obey them that have the rule over you. . ."; Heb. 13:24: "Salute all them that have the rule over you . . ."

Now, what kind of a rule? A scriptural rule. In what? Within the boundary of the divine will of God. Would it be wrong for an elder to enforce nothing but the will of God. In the Book of Titus, Chapter 2, I want to get that now, and then I will have answered everything that he has put up.

Here in the Book of Titus he is talking about the work of individuals. In Chapter 2, Verse 1, it says, "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine; (2) That aged men be temperate, grave, sober minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience; (3) That aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers not enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; (4) That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children; (5) To be sober minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed"—the elder women, younger women following; elder men, younger men following. Now if he means to make the elder men in this connection the elders of the church by virtue of the young men following, what does he make the elder women whom the younger women should follow? I want you folks to get that. This is exactly what he has put up tonight in his affirmation.

Now, then, friends, I want to call your attention to II John 1:9: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God, but he that abideth in the doctrine (which means the teaching) hath

both the Father and the Son." Am I abiding in the doctrine when I teach that elders are appointed by human instrumentality through the Holy Spirit? Am I not abiding in the teaching when I say that elders must exercise the will of God? Am I overstepping the boundary of the Holy Spirit of God when thus I hold up the elders as qualified men in the Church that are doing their work? That is just exactly what God desires them to do.

I thank you.

WILCOX'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

Brethren Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I want you to notice that the subject under consideration is regarding Elders ruling by example only. Brother Norman wants me to give him a Scripture.

The word "only" means ONE, so far as I know. I am not giving you what I think about it, but what the Holy Spirit says and He says there is one way for Elders to rule. How do I know? It is in your Bible; it is in Brother Norman's and he knows it. Being a Church of Christ preacher, he ought not to dodge what the Bible says. What did the Holy Spirit say? "Not lording it over the charge allotted you, but making yourselves ensamples," (I Peter 5:3). How many possible ways did the Holy Spirit say Elders could rule? Two. And He said they cannot rule acceptably to God by lording it over the charges. So the Holy Spirit eliminated one from two, and that left only one. That is exactly what I am talking about—one way to rule, just one, and not but one.

Then you made a great play on the word "faith." You should have been finding the Scripture which says an Elder can enforce God's will instead of preaching on faith. Remember that James said, "It is NOT by FAITH ONLY."

You said, "Find the Scripture that says it is not by example only." Before God I would be ashamed to be a Church of Christ preacher and dodge the issue. The

Bible says there are two ways to rule, and the Holy Spirit eliminates one. That leaves one and only one. I asked you if you did not preach these things (see chart, page 164) and, Brother Norman, you know that you dodged the issue. You claim to be a Christian, too.

Brother Norman preaches that immersion only is baptism, and he puts the word "only" in there. Now, give me Scripture for it. You said you are not in the affirmative. No, but you claim to know and we are talking about what the Bible teaches. Tell me, do you believe in singing ONLY? Yes, you do. But why does he not preach it now? He is debating, he says, but these people see why you don't answer. I am using the word "only" exactly like Peter used it, and exactly like Christ used it. They both said there are two ways to rule, and they took one away. When the Holy Spirit took one away from TWO, that left ONLY ONE, and when Christ spoke of TWO and took one away, it left ONLY ONE. You are making fun of Christ and the Holy Spirit. You are not making fun of me. If the Holy Spirit meant what He said in these cases (see chart, page 164), why did He not mean what He said about Elders ruling? Now laugh that off.

You say we have to meet on the first day of the week ONLY; we cannot take the Lord's Supper any other time, and you put the word "only" in there. Read it to me. "Oh, but I am not in the affirmative." Don't think this crowd is going to accept that little gesture. We are supposed to be Christian men.

You tell me the Lord's Supper is composed of the fruit of the vine and the bread, and you say those are the only things we can have. Now, read the word "only" to me on that subject. Oh, that is different. Yes, God

will let you do what you please about Elders, but He will not let the Digressives do what they please about the Lord's Supper on Thursday, "sez you!"

You should be honest and fair. Take that argument back and tell these people that you have been dodging the Scripture. You preach, and so do I, that the ONLY way we get the Holy Spirit today is through the Word. You use the word "only." Read it to us. He goes around all over the country and says the church of Christ is the ONLY institution in which one can be saved. Read the Scripture where the church of Christ is the ONLY one.

I know why you preach that the church of Christ is the ONLY one. You find that teaching in the Bible. You say there is just ONE church. The ONLY way I find for the Elders to rule is by example, and that is why I preach they rule by example only. You find another one and I will accept it.

He said I would spend many sleepless nights over it. He should not judge me by himself.

Brother Norman said these great men will see how far from the truth I am. I am not doing anything to be seen of men. You are wrong on everything you have used in this discussion. I am trying to please God. Paul said if I were pleasing men I would not be a servant of God. If you would quit paying so much attention to the brethren, you would get closer to God.

I knew all the time he wanted to play into the hands of the great men. I think Peter and Paul, James and John are greater than those he has been naming in this debate. I tell you I would not go to the judgment bar of God and misrepresent I Peter 5:2 and 3 as he has done for all the brethren. I will quit the pulpit before I do.

He made one dodge that I am persuaded he and every other preacher here knows is untrue. He said, "Why, if they follow God's plan, they can enforce God's will." No. If you don't know any better, I will be glad to teach you. In I Peter 5 God, through the Holy Spirit, talking about two ways to rule, said it is not by lording it over, dictating, or enforcing, but it is by example. How are they to rule? What is the pattern they are to use? It is the Bible. God Almighty does not give any man the right to enforce His will. According to Brother Norman's theory, when they meet on the Lord's Day the Elders have a right to force people to take the emblems. If they don't want to contribute, Elders can force them.

Read to us where the Elder can strap a gun on his side and use it. You go to Titus I where it says their mouths must be stopped—you ASSUMED they use force. There are two ways to stop mouths, one is with your fist, the other is by teaching and instructing. You said Elders could force the brethren, but Peter said to reprove them sharply. Do you know what they used to reprove? The Bible, II Timothy 3:16, 17. They taught them.

Where did you get the idea that Elders can force anybody to accept God's will? That is YOUR THEORY, and is as far wrong as the Methodists are.

Brethren, I hope you see his theory. He has been trying to deceive you by quoting Scripture, even though it does not apply to his proposition, but he is not going to get away with it. He has been trying to tell you Elders can force God's will upon you. There is not a man living who can. If he is right, they can make you contribute, or make you sing, and they can make these

good sisters wash the saints' feet, whether they want to or not.

If, however, he is God's Elder, he will teach by example; he will rule by example. He will SHOW us HOW it is done. The Elder is doing what God told him, and I, as a younger man, am watching and learning what to do.

You talk to me about men in the church of Christ being able to force anybody to serve God. That is ridiculous. How do the Elders rule? By example, and don't you forget it.

Brother Norman says they rule by enforcement and Brother Peter says they rule by example. I have never seen any church troubled with Elders that followed God's plan. What do I mean? God tells them to take the oversight. He tells them what to do and they obey Him, but the way you have Elders ruling is by forcing God's will on people. That is the difference. You signed the proposition that God's Elders can force His will on the church; however, you have not found the Scripture. I doubt that you believe it. One of your Elders came to me last night and said, "Brother Norman does not believe an Elder can enforce God's will." I said, "Why, then, did he sign the proposition?" This man knows you do not believe such a thing. Why aren't you honest enough to admit it?

What do I mean by "example"? I mean the Elders follow God's plan, and I, as a young man, or a young woman, a boy or girl, can observe them. There is not one word said in that Book anywhere about anybody forcing a Christian to do anything. God does not rule that way. "It is not going to be so in my Kingdom."

Brother Norman said he wanted me to wrestle with

Scripture. I think one, wresting with Scripture, is enough, so I will let him do it.

Why did he not tell us that God said not to go beyond that which is written? What is written? That Elders rule by example.

Why did you not tell the brethren that your Elders force the will of God on people; therefore, go beyond that which is written? You cannot, to save your life, read one thing in the Bible that even intimates that Elders can enforce God's will. That came from your mind. It is not in the Book, and you are not going to misapply I Peter 5:2, 3 by saying it states your position. Peter said it is not by lording, nor dictating, nor enforcement. It is by example.

Every time he gets up he tries to misapply this Scripture. I am persuaded he knows better. You know, brethren, when the Scriptures say there are two possible ways to rule and the Holy Spirit takes away one, He leaves only one. I am not saying it, but Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit. I want everyone of you to remember that Brother Norman is saying it is by enforcement. Peter said it is not by enforcement. I don't know which you are going to believe, but I know whom I believe.

Then he said, "How could a thing be scriptural if it was not mentioned?" That is what I want him to tell me. He is affirming that Elders can enforce God's will. I want to know how that can be scriptural. He cannot find one place in the Bible that says they can enforce God's will, but HE says they can. Brother Norman can affirm up and down it is not by enforcement, lording it over the charge allotted, and turn right around and say you can enforce and laugh about it. There have

been people in all dispensations that scoff at what God said, and we have one present tonight.

He still wants to know the physical traits of people in order to know whether they are Elders or not. He is still harping on eyes and hair. We do not judge Elders in Ferndale by the color of their eyes and hair, and whether they are in or out of sight; we judge them by what God said about them, their fruits.

He said if we had his kind of Elders we would put up the building. Yes, but what kind of people would we have as members?

He talks about the human instrumentality in appointing Elders, and goes to Acts 14, Titus I, and Acts 20. Listen, Brother Norman, you keep harping on the instrumentality in the making of Elders and say those were made back in the first century through human instrumentality, but those Elders were made by the Holy Spirit, (Acts 20:28). They could lay hands on people and impart the Holy Spirit, (I Timothy 4:14). Can your Elders do that, today?

Oh, but you said there were some men selected by human instrumentality in the first century. That is right, in this sense: The Elders in the first century were appointed by the Holy Spirit working through human instrumentality. That is what I am talking about. Those same Elders had the power to lay on hands and impart the Holy Spirit, (I Timothy 4:14). Do your Elders have that today? He refuses to talk about it.

He says they should be selected like they were back in the first century—but that was by the Holy Spirit. Today, Elders do not have the power they had back there. There again is where he uses his own mind to suit himself. He is exactly like any person in the denominational world that has the idea he can twist the Scripture to suit himself.

Now, I want you to tell this audience—I will not have any other chance—and please be honest and fair about it. I want you to tell this audience if your Elders today have as much authority in the impartation of spiriual gifts as they did in the first century. You keep saying they ought to be selected like they were back there.

He said he could not force me to give the Scripture. Well, if he gets his Elders they could. While they are forcing me, I wish they would force you to dig up the Scripture where Elders can rule by force. The kind you have could do it. You know, we ought to be consistent.

I want you to tell me, Brother Norman, when God specifies the Lord's Supper to be on the first day of the week, can we have it any other time? When the Lord specifies a burial, can we have any other form of baptism? He says no. But when the Lord specifies EXAMPLE with reference to Elders ruling, he says we can have example or enforcement, either.

When God specifies singing, can we have any other kind of music? No, but when He specifies EXAMPLE for Elders, we can have lording and example. When God specified that Noah build the Ark out of gopher wood could he have used anything else and pleased God? But Brother Norman's Elders can rule by example and they can also rule by enforcement. That is what he says. Peter says not so. Why don't you say what Peter said, that they have only one way to rule? When God said there are two possible ways to rule and said it is not by one, if that did not leave us JUST ONE, I cannot understand the English language. I thank you.

NORMAN'S THIRD NEGATIVE

(February 18, 1944)

Brethren, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am now coming to my last speech in this debate, and I want to just say a word or two at the very beginning lest I should forget at the close.

I have enjoyed this debate immensely. I have, in my weak, humble way, made an earnest contention for the truth of God. I have proven everything by book, chapter and verse. There is not any doubt in the world about that. Any unbiased person in the audience knows that to be a matter of fact, and I certainly am happy indeed to notice the speech to which I just listened.

Now, I want to say that Brother Wilcox has had three speeches and this square is blank. What is blank? The square here where he was to put the scripture that said elders were to rule by example only. I offered to put where we are saved by faith only in the same place. I have left mine blank because he did not put his in.

This one over here is blank, Ladies and Gentlemen. This is blank, where I called for any man back in the long, long ago that ever became an elder in any local congregation without the involvement of human instrumentality.

Brother Wilcox has said in Acts 20:28 they are made by the Holy Spirit plus nothing. An elder is not made by the Holy Spirit plus nothing. An elder is made by the Holy Spirit just like a Christian is made by the Holy Spirit.

Now, then, he said that back in the long, long ago there were elders that had the gift, and they could impart those gifts. Why? Because that was back during the days of miracles.

BROTHER MOODY: Brother Norman, Brother Wilcox says he forgot to put that Scripture in there.

BROTHER WILCOX: It is I Peter 5:3. Put yours up there where it says "faith only."

BROTHER NORMAN: "These things move me not," says Paul. I am not very easily excited. I am going to read that now. What is that, brethren and friends? I Peter 5:3. Here it is, American Standard Version: "... neither as Lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock." Is the word "only" there? Listen, Tipton, I want to ask you like a gentleman, is the word "only" there? Can you not give me a little nod?

Ladies and Gentlemen, is the word "only" there? If it is in there and he puts it there I will close my part of the debate. All of you good people in Ferndale who are wrapped up in his teaching, is it fair? No. Listen, I have them walking and talking. That is not there, and his proposition says—listen—"The Bible teaches that elders rule by example only." Now, if he were meeting a sectarian man in debate, and the man were to say, and they do invariably say it, "You are saved by faith only," Brother Wilcox would come back and say, "Look what you have excluded: Repentance, the blood of Christ and salvation by grace, all the other things." He says, "I do not deny people being saved by faith, but I do deny—what?—The word that you have added, which is not in the Scripture, of course, "only."

Listen, I do not deny, Brother Wilcox, that elders

rule by example, but I do deny the word "only" being in there. If the word "only" were in this passage it would exclude "enforce," but it does not do it.

You were talking about the Lord's Supper and baptism. Now, God specified the Lord's Supper, and the Lord's Supper, within itself, meets the approval of God. Now, the "Example only," since it is not in the Bible, does not meet the approval, so I have broken the parallel, Ladies and Gentlemen.

He said, I said I could laugh at the Scripture. I do not remember having said I could laugh at the Scriptures, but after I gave the argument which Brother Wilcox had concerning the Scriptures, I looked over at him and said I could laugh it off. I did not mean I could laugh the Scripture off, no.

You would like mighty well by being personal to get me ruffled up, but these things move me not nor disturb. I am not the least bit worried nor bothered, and I want to say it kindly and thoughtfully I want what I am saying to register in the hearts of you good, honest people in Ferndale and elsewhere.

Now, he said that if I had my elders here—denoting possession, which I deny. I do not possess them, but I am under them. He said where I preach I could, by physical force, with the elders having a gun strapped on them, make them do so and so. Brethren, I want to say he has charged me with that time after time. I cannot, by force—I have no gun strapped on me, and if I did have I would not be that mean to try to do it, to make him stop saying it.

Brethren, do you believe I am honest? I am going to appeal to you. I do not believe that elders should strap a gun on them and do what Brother Wilcox says

I said they should do. Brethren, I am earnest and honest, and the man said that only because he was pressed to the guard and did not have anything else to say. It has evermore been apparent in this discussion that the man could hardly fill his time in any speech. Now, that is evident and apparent. There is no doubt about that. I do not believe that elders should strap guns on them.

He says that I go back to the days of miracles to get the eldership, and he said they could perform miracles. Did you notice that he has been quoting Matthew 28:19, 20? If he gets his authority to preach the Gospel from Mark, Chapter 16, can he do what those men did: "And he said unto them, go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. (Verse 16) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (or condemned, in the American Standard Version). (Verse 17) And those signs shall accompany them that believe: In My name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; (Verse 18), They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Now, brethren, I want to ask this man one question. You went back there to get your authority today for preaching the word of God. Those men that did the preaching back during the days of miracles could perform miracles, signs and wonders. Can you do that, Tipton?

If you should ask me whether I am under the commission that is mentioned in the word of God, and I would be bound and compelled to say, Yes. Can I perform miracles? No. Well, how do I know that I ought

to teach and preach the word of God? Paul said to Timothy; "The things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).

Then, during the days of miracles, those men of course, absolutely performed them. For what purpose? To confirm that which they taught the people. Now, what do we have today? The written Word of God. Do we need miracles now? No. Why? Since miracles have confirmed that which we are able to read, the word of God, and we are told, you know, in II Timothy 2:15: "To study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." So if you are going to parallel that then stay within the parallel.

Then we are going to turn right over here and find something else that he said. Brother Wilcox said I said "force." I never remember one time having said "force." I have always said "enforce." If a man forces, that which is not the will of God, he will be what? He will be lording it over the church, but if he enforces the will of God, what will he be doing that would be wrong? Is it not right to do God's will? Would it not be wrong not to do the will of God. I have asked him that all the way through. I have asked him to give the names of the elders of this congregation, and this debate is soon to close and thus far he does not have any other speech to make and he has failed, refused to give me the names of the elders.

I asked him in the other speech, "Does the congregation recognize the elders? Does the congregation know the elders?" All the scripture he has ever given is Matt. 7:20: "By their fruits ye shall know them." That is too

general to only apply to the eldership. To whom, my friends, did that apply before there were any elders? And that has not been answered. I am just taking things away from him as I pass along in my speech.

Then he talked about elders having authority. I want to make myself clear, exceedingly clear. All the authority an elder has is to enforce the will of God. In enforcing the will of God you are carrying out the things that are given in the New Testament, and no one certainly can object to anything along that line.

He wanted to know how those men stopped the mouths of people. Tipton, I am going to read it to you word for word. Turn with me to Titus 1:9. Everybody listen: "Holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both (both what?) to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." Now, watch it. How does he do it? By holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, and in his teaching he exhorts and in his teaching he stops the mouths of the gainsayers and the unruly. There it is, brethren, in Chapter I of Titus and Verse 9. I just read it. I am the most accommodating man that has probably been in this pulpit for some time. I just read it and gave it to you, book, chapter, and verse.

We will see what he has to say. He said I threw off on Ferndale. Listen, I do not mean members, naturally, when I mention Ferndale. I mean what? The church government, the church set-up that is characteristic of this particular place. I say this place, Ferndale, Michigan with its present set-up, is not the church of Christ as respects church government. I call upon Brother Wilcox like a man. I have been fair, nice and kind to him. If the elders have no authority over anyone in the

local congregation, and no one can exercise any authority, even though it be the will of God, then would not a thing like that be reduced to a democratic form of government? I told you that the church in which the majorities rule is not akin to the Bible church: the church that votes is not the church of the New Testament. Now, that is what I have said, and I have not gone behind the pulpit to say it. I have said it openly and above board, and certainly that thing is made to stand out just exactly like I have given it tonight.

Then he said, "You have softened up some" or he probably said, "You have changed some in your parallel about the patrolman, with the gun strapped on him, arresting the man. Notice, I said that the patrolman was a physical man in a physical kingdom exercising a physical law. I did not say that. Then I paralleled that by saying the elders are spiritual men in a spiritual kingdom. Exercising what? The word of God. Yes, the word of God strapped on the elders is the thing that does the job.

How do elders stop their mouths? I have already answered that.

I only have five minutes and I want to go back over some things. Ladies and Gentlemen, and all of you have a vast appreciation of what I have said thus far in this debate. I have shown you by the infallible will of God, that men never became elders in Bible times without human involvement; that no one becomes an elder tonight without the involvement of human instrumentality. The only difference between now and then is in the location of the Spirit. The Spirit back there was located in men. The Word of God, my friends, was taught. The Spirit directing them, using human instrumenality, got the job done. Therefore, now that the Holy Spirit is located in the word of God, the Holy Spirit does its work now, but it does it like it did then —by using human instrumentality.

I have shown you, by giving book, chapter, and verse about the elders. We need elders and the authority of elders, and all that the Bible has to say, practically, regarding the subject I have given.

Then I have taken you, like a man, and explained the rule of elders, showing you by the Bible that I have followed Paul and Barnabas, Titus and Timothy. I have walked down the path of inspiration with them without adding to or taking from God's Word. Such men as E. G. Sewell, David Lipscomb, Alexander Campbell, and a host of others back there, and Brethren N. B. Hardeman, C. R. Nichol, J. W. Shephard, H. Leo Boles, Coleman Overby, all the Douthits, so far as I know do not agree with Brother Wilcox. And then other men have come down the line following Paul and Barnabas. I am following Paul, Barnabas, Titus and Timothy. I gave these men not for a proof text, but to show you that beyond a successful glimmer of any sort of a doubt that these men are doing what I am tonight authorizing to be done. I merely gave these men to prove this one point. These men I have mentioned stand for the eldership like I do.

I likewise have shown you that Brother Wilcox is like the lone agle, like the lone wolf that stands out all alone on the cold, bleak mountainside without any comfort, without any association, without any fellowship, so far as I know, to the extent of agreeing with him one hundred per cent regarding the eldership. He stands along calling upon you beyond a glimmer of a doubt that

the things for which I stand are taught in the divine word of God Almighty.

I want to close this lesson this evening with this one thought in mind; that the word of the Eternal God shall stand forever. When time and timely things shall have passed away the word of the Lord will only have begun to live. Matthew 24:25: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." I Peter 1:25: "But the word of the Lord endureth forever." The word of God is one thing that is incomparable to all the other things of men, and this eternal living word of God will stand through the ceaseless ages of eternity itself, and if I do exactly what is in the Bible will I not be absolutely right?

May God bless you, and I hope all of you have enjoyed this debate.

Thank you.