

A Reply to a Reply

J. T. Smith

On the preceding pages you have read brother Mike Willis' article in reply to my challenge in the December issue of Gospel Truths. I am going to number [in brackets] the paragraphs in his article and reply to his arguments. I am anxious, as always, for people to hear both sides of any discussion so that they can make up their own minds on the facts presented. Study both sides and reach your own conclusion. I am sure that most people are not even aware of his article being on the web page of Truth Magazine. I wasn't aware of it until someone called me long distance and asked me if I had seen it. Yet, it is in reply to my article. I would think that at least Mike would have notified me about it. On the other hand, if I were in Mike's shoes I might not. Let's not discuss this "behind closed doors," as it were, but out in the open. I wonder why our brother didn't print it in Truth Magazine or at least send it to me so I could print it? Truth Magazine has obviously revised its policy of publishing both sides of controversy that arises and threatens to divide brethren? It certainly appears that way to me. Will he print both his article and my response in Truth Magazine? Perhaps the board has made the decision against printing both sides. From what Mike said in his article he couldn't change it. He doesn't have any "yes" men or women. (Sorry about that Mike). But that is the point! It is a board decision – not an individual decision. There is a difference in individual and collective action. (cf. Matthew 18:15-17). These passages set forth the difference in individual, concurrent and collective action.

Mike's [1 - 4]

Brother Willis thinks that I am opposed to Guardian of Truth Foundation because it is Incorporated. Not so! That has never been my objection. I am opposed to an organization separate and apart from the church receiving contributions and organizing worship services aka Guardian of Truth Lectureships. God has set up an organization for that. It is called the Church. Acts 20:7 "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight." Paul speaks of them "coming together in the church (assembly) I Corinthians 11:18 "For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it." He also mentions speaking in tongues and prophesying "in the church" in I Corinthians 14." May we worship in a denominational assembly and be pleasing to God? A thousand times NO! No other organization has the

scriptural right to do what God has assigned to His church. That's the problem.

Brother Willis seems to know more about why I sought to incorporate than I. In my editorial in the December issue of GT, I said:

“This is no different than that of many states that require incorporation of churches in order to hold title to property. This is true in the state of California. When I lived in Long Beach, each year there was a vote taken by the congregation on some of its members who were selected as members of the corporation. This is simply a formality that must be adhered to in order to satisfy the state. It has nothing to do with the organization of the church. The church is still under the oversight of the elders with the special servants (deacons) and members. It still functions in the same way without the interference of those who are members of the board of the corporation. Gospel Truths, Inc.

“As I have illustrated on the front page, there is a world of difference between Guardian of Truth Foundation and *Gospel Truths*. Even though my wife, my daughter Joy and I make up the board for incorporation purposes, *Gospel Truths* was founded for the purpose of giving me a medium through which evangelistic work can be done.”

Brother Willis did not deal with this point in his “Response.” He said that the reason he wasn't able on his own accord to cease and desist Truth Magazine (even though I could do so with GT) was because he didn't have a “yes women (or men)” on his board. (Oh brother, if he only knew these women on my board)! No, brother Willis, that is not the point at all. You see, contrary to what you have made up your mind to believe about Gospel Truths, they KNOW WHY it was set up. As I said, it was incorporated so that I could satisfy the state of Oklahoma and the postal service to get a mailing permit. The purpose: to further my work of evangelism and give others the same opportunity. They also KNOW that I can stop it when it is no longer feasible to publish it. Again I say, just as churches in other areas are forced to incorporate by the state in order to hold the title to property that does not change either the purpose or organization of the church. It seems that Mike is determined to “measure my corn in his half-a-bushel.”

Mike's [5 & 6]

Brother Willis wonders why we are singling them out from all the other institutions that are doing the same thing they are doing. Let's stick with the subject, Mike. Does Gospel Truths, Inc. or Guardian of Truth, Inc. as human

institutions have a right to receive contributions and call an assembly for worship? The answer is NO! That's the issue for which you need to find scriptural authority.

Mike's [7-10]

Brother Willis again know more about what I am doing than I do.
Brethren Make A Contribution

At least that is brother Willis' argument. Because brethren send in articles to Gospel Truths to have them published, he argues they are making a contribution to the corporation. But that which proves too much proves nothing.

Observe: Churches send in reports to Truth Magazine from time to time. Sometimes they use Scriptures in their reports. Some teaching is done. Does that mean that churches are sending contributions to Guardian of Truth Foundation? Does that mean that churches could send monetary contributions to them?

The facts are these. Those who send articles to Gospel Truths use the paper as a medium to give others the benefit of their knowledge on different subjects." If Mike wants to consider articles the same as monetary contributions to Guardian of Truth Foundation that is his prerogative. I do not.

Again, let's not lose sight of the problem. Does Gospel Truths, Inc., Guardian of Truth, Inc. or any other human institution have a right to receive monetary contributions and call an assembly for worship? The answer is NO! That is God's mission for His church and It alone.