

(First paper from Bob Harrison, dated 5/7/05)

Key Points Needing Clarification Regarding Religious Incorporation Concerns

Context: The 1999 change in how funds, in particular, are being handled among saints we know across the USA and the use of 501c3 corporations in a broad range of ways have raised a number of concerns.

The Concerns:

These concerns have been voiced and answered by the writer many times since the change occurred. The most recent time was a general men's meeting at the Dec 04 VA camp. The main topic of the men's meeting was how the 501c3 was functioning and what the current status was. Most of the concerns addressed below were publicly voiced and publicly discussed. The concentration on the 501c3 topic lasted for 2 hours or more according to the memory of the writer. The following 14 concerns are discussed in writing below to provide an understanding that saints can use to settle these concerns in their own minds if they have the concerns. For those who do not have the concerns the discussion can increase their convictions. But whatever is the case for each individual reader the writer is desirous of edification for members of the Body of Christ. Let us first take an overview of the current confusion generated by the concerns.

1Th 5:11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Ro 15:2 let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.

Eph 4:29 let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Overview: Key Distinction between the 1961 Position and the 1999 Position

This overview will attempt to consistently use the term "**Position**" to represent the combination of the "**Key Issue**" being advanced at the time and the "**Stance**" which has generated the confusion. So paying special attention to key issue when it is mentioned and stance when it is mentioned will aid in following the discussion.

In the 1961 position taken by brethren the key issue being advanced by them was the **INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE** of a spiritual embodiment of Christ on the earth today. Much testimony was given to support the proof of this independent existence. The facts were both compelling and convincing. This effort by brethren resulted in the outcome of "A Federal Court Acknowledges Christ's True Church". *The acknowledgement was the affirmation that the embodiment of Christ indeed exists totally independent of Caesar but was present in a form that could be seen by Caesar.* This was and still is a thrilling testimony! The existence of the Body of Christ required nothing from Caesar. The existence of the Body of Christ was totally of God. Of the above points there has not been any disagreement voiced of late that is known to the writer.

The current disagreements come directly from the following. Prior to the trial, a **stance** was taken by the brethren. This **stance** was that they were against "**any and every form of incorporation**" with Caesar by the Body of Christ. This **stance** was very persuasive evidence to Caesar of the brethren's strength of conviction about the "independence" part of the key issue being advanced. This was then and still is now, as seen in hindsight, *very persuasive* among saints. Was this specific **stance** the ONLY Scripturally sound position? It is claimed by some not currently leading among saints that we know that this is the case.

And here is the key distinction as understood by the writer. This **stance** taken in 1961 is more restrictive than the Scriptures require or direct. It is essential to understand this point of the stance being more restrictive than mandated in Scripture if one is to be clear about why there is the current confusion.

In the 1999 position taken by the brethren the key issue of **independent existence** from the 1961 position was never in question. It was a matter of record with Caesar and did not have to be taken up and re-established. It was and it still is a **proven** matter. This was the base from which reasoning could

commence. The key issue in 1999 was what adjustments as to “**how**” a part of this **independent existence** would function in its interface with Caesar might be prudent at the present time. Further could such adjustments be made without compromising either our testimony or our position? However, addressing interfacing with Caesar immediately confronts the **stance** taken in 1961.

There never was a time when an interface with Caesar was non-existent. Therefore, how this interface was addressed was very much a function of the times and the rules of Caesar existing at the time. Caesar is concerned with material aspects such as money, property and liability. Activities of the Body of Christ have always involved these material aspects. We have to comply with Caesar’s methods in obedience to God’s commands. But at times we have been forced to be somewhat creative and finesse the compliance. This finesse springs from the fact that both common practice (which is based in part on modes of trust) and “acceptable risk” with respect to material things is viewed and handled differently over time. This finesse also involves using Caesar approved mechanisms in ways that were not directly compatible with what Caesar had in mind as is discussed below.

Caesar has primarily 2 modes of interface directly relevant to this discussion. One mode is an interface with a specific individual. Individuals can own property, accept funds and disburse funds. Individuals can be held liable for damages. Individuals can enter into contracts with other individuals or with corporations. An individual can be a sole proprietor of a business and so forth. And the other mode is made with a collective person. This interface with the “collective person” (a legally recognized entity) is constructed around the “corporation” model. Corporations can own property, accept funds and disburse funds. Corporations can be held liable for damages. Corporations can enter into contracts. Thus corporations conduct business matters of material interest for the collective person in the same manner that individuals conduct business matters for them self.

Since members of the Body of Christ are in this world and subject to Caesar by command of God we must be in compliance with Caesar’s rules in our functioning. But the reality is that members of the Body of Christ function in 2 modes as well. We have both an individual functioning and a collective functioning. We readily submit to Caesar’s model for the individual mode. However, the **stance** of 1961 directly prohibited submission to Caesar’s model for the collective mode. This was obviously not consistent.

The crux of the deliberation leading to the 1999 position revolved around this issue of how to properly interface with Caesar in our collective mode of functioning. This required revisiting the **stance** of 1961 toward avoidance of any form of incorporation. This generated much discussion. The fears of compromise and undermining of the Headship of Christ were definitely addressed. But the key issue was how to lawfully and ethically address our collective interface with Caesar as commanded by God. Was there a method for collective interface to Caesar that did not compromise the 1961 key issue (independent existence) but did allow for compliance without finesse?

The 501c3, provided by Caesar for this collective interface, was found to be the answer to the question. This did require adjustments. Adjustments to interactions and reporting approaches with Caesar did not “**UNDO**” the established fact of acknowledgement of independent existence by Caesar that was a matter of record. This fear or assertion on “**UNDO**”-ing what has become a matter of record as proven fact in Caesar’s domain is misplaced fear and assertion. Independent and equal (in the sense of autonomy) parties (in this case a portion of the Body of Christ and Caesar) **may** (*but not must*) enter into mutually acceptable arrangements. They are not forced to have any arrangements. Neither is one party dependent on or subservient to the other. This is the **position of strength** we had in 1999 based on **the accomplishment of 1961** which again was the *acknowledgment by Caesar of the independent existence of the Body of Christ from Caesar.*

To build on this 1961 base of established fact is a prudent thing to do. When building on this type of base if one claims that this building is a “carnal denial” of the base then this is a mere straw man at best to cause fear or panic or discredit the effort in building. The cries of “carnal denial of sublime truths”,

“idolatry”, “compromise” and “cowardice” are all unwarranted. But the cries are very compelling and persuasive given the “appearance” of wrong based on a “change” that is clearly visible for all to see. Change is visible. If the previous position was such a splendid testimony then to “change” *appears to be* in error. At least this is a compelling argument that must be answered directly and decisively.

The failure to see distinctions in what would constitute **an extremely persuasive stance to Caesar of rejection of incorporation of any kind or any form** (in 1961) and what would constitute a *Scripturally sound but possibly less persuasive* position to Caesar (in 1961) are at the root of the confusion. Therefore **adjustments for this independent existence’s interaction with Caesar** (in 1999) that abandon the *extremely persuasive position* (which was more restrictive than necessary) for the more *Scripturally balanced position* have raised the concerns about which position is right and have we been or are we now wrong. The 1961 effort put us collectively on “high ground” with the key issue being confirmed by Caesar. It was a marvelous achievement of humble men in a testimony before Caesar. The **Key issue** advanced in 1961 was not wrong, But the **stance** against incorporation was more restrictive than necessary to be godly. The 1999 effort merely made adjustments to the **stance** to properly interface on the collective front with Caesar. This adjustment eased the over restriction and brought explicit (without finesse) compliance with Caesar’s rules consistent with Scriptural guidance. It **did not** abandon the “high ground”. The assertions of carnal denial, idolatry, compromise and cowardice are just confusing claims that obscure the reality of what was done. Those causing this confusion by making these claims are not helping themselves or anyone else that gives them an ear. Hopefully edification will remedy this situation.

1. Is Use of a 501c3 of God or could it possibly be godly conduct:

Is God the author of a 501c3 organization? No. Since He is not, then it is not of God. Correct. Then is the 501c3 of Caesar? Yes. Does the 501c3 direct how the Body of Christ is to function? No. What does direct how the Body is to function? The Scriptures direct this. What then does the 501c3 do? It demands the disclosure of the use of funds and the business interactions of the activity (of the local church in VA, for instance) which is supported by this lifeless legal entity. There is a **“bold”** declaration before the fact of what activities (*based on Scriptural guidelines*) are intended to be supported and then subjection of the *execution* of the activities thus supported to public and government scrutiny. This subjection takes the form of did the 501c3 support the activities it declared it would or did it support undeclared things. This is **more boldness**. I would think that **total disclosure is quite a bold stance** to take. Current leadership is not asking Caesar for permission to do these things. Current leadership is asking Caesar if these things we will and are doing are consistent with the rules of a 501c3. Caesar can say yes or no. But we will be doing these things regardless.

So use of a 501c3 is godly conduct at this time. It is **not** demanded by God. It may at some point in time become ungodly conduct due to changes in Caesar’s rules. Thus its use *is a convenience* that must be watched and monitored. Like so many areas of life, things change with time and become more or less significant based on what is going on in the world. Things in this world are not static but dynamic. We must understand both our times and the trends of our times to give a current and understandable testimony to an ever-changing world of unchanging truths.

2. Caesar’s Domain:

Money, property and liability are all part of the world in which we live. The rules that apply to these domains are Caesar’s rules. When we interact with these things that belong to Caesar then we must “render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar”. People and corporations (legal entities representing or supporting collective groups) alone can render these types of things to Caesar.

The trends in activities and risks associated with these activities have dramatically changed over the last 40 years. In 1960 it was standard practice that a man’s word was his bond. Today a man’s word is worthless as regards standard practice. We live in a society that is litigation prone. Frivolous suits abound. Fear of civil suits drives the demand to be “covered” with liability insurance prior to use or rental of

property. This liability coverage is becoming nearly impossible to obtain as a **personal** item that would extend coverage to others outside one's own family. Thus camp rentals for hundreds of families are becoming more difficult to obtain. However, liability coverage is easier to obtain with a corporate entity (even one without members). Thus to do this could **require some corporate definition** that has legal standing in Caesar's eyes that can purchase liability coverage for the rental. We could cease the practice of gathering together corporately for camp times. This cessation of camp times has more risks than benefits in my thinking. *Community, fellowship*, development of *relationships* and *service* to one another are what the Church of Jesus Christ has been called to do. Stopping large camps seems like an idea that is contrary to our calling. To continue camps is facilitated by a modification of how we accommodate entities within the domain of Caesar. This is change but not compromise. Ceasing the hosting and conduct of good things, such as camps, would be at least squelching godly activities if not compromise.

Where we know of saints among us that own such property that can host a camp they have procured such insurance. They do this sometimes to meet the demands of financial institutions and not out of personal fear. This is not compromise on the individual's part but understanding the times in which we live. Sometimes we simply operate at risk. If a liability is realized then we just have to make do as best we can. This is not hypothetical but our actual experience. Where we do not know saints but rent from other legal entities (such as corporations be they religious or secular) they demand we obtain coverage prior to use of their asset. This is just prudent business on their part. It is also fear of litigation on their part. Our compliance to their demands is not compromise on our part but is change required by the times in which we live. And Caesar defines what prudent business rules apply. So clearly this is Caesar's domain. Corporations interact with corporations. This is the world of business. This is Caesar's realm. The world and its various governments is not God's realm of direct control today as it will be in the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Our obedience to these things is a godly truth however.

One can wax euphoric about sublime truths and spiritual no-profit organizations but in the world of business this is just worthless talk that **does not address the issues of property, money and liability**. Since we are "in the world" we must interface with the world. We should "not abuse the world". Neither should we compromise on the key issues. So there are lots of aspects to consider here. We should not expect them (the world, be it religious or secular) to understand and use our rules. They cannot understand because they are not of God. Therefore, we must use Caesar's rules which the world does understand and saints can understand as well and that God has commanded saints to obey.

3. Is Christ Divided by a 501c3:

Has the Body of Christ been divided by the incorporation of any of the 501c3's among us at the current time? We know that "Christ is not divided" in spiritual reality. This is a glorious truth. But not everyone knows and has this understanding for sure. Manifestation of this glorious truth is severely compromised by the sectarian spirit in all of its manifestations. We know that an idol (a lifeless entity) is not a representation of the embodiment of Jesus Christ. Would the unsaved or even the religious but saved be possibly confused on this point? Of course they might. Does a sect that incorporates members of the Body of Christ into itself represent itself as the Body of Christ or at least part of it? Yes. Is this godly conduct? Absolutely it is not. It is sin as defined in the Word of God. Does this make the use of a 501c3 which has no members a sin? No. Does it make it advisable? This requires further consideration.

Does the use of a 501c3 constitute a "carnal denial of sublime truth"? How would this be the case? How does the incorporation of a lifeless entity (a body, if you please, by definition of the word only) deny the existence of the Body of Christ? In the mind of those that now see two bodies that are representing the same thing are they rightly seeing the two things? Are both bodies (the Body of Christ and the 501c3) representing the same thing? Spiritually intelligent Christians must answer this with an emphatic NO. The Body of Christ is living. This is a glorious truth. The 501c3 is mere lifeless legal entity. Can the world and carnal Christians see a 501c3? Yes. Can the world and carnal Christians see the Body of Christ? They do see people (individual members) but they may fail to see the Body as a whole. Would those using

carnal minds (the world and carnal Christians) be likely to be confused about clear spiritual discernment of things of God vs. things of Caesar? Yes.

The activity of the Body of Christ is the fruit of members functioning consistent with their God-given abilities. The *business interface* itself (of this activity if incorporated as a 501c3) is not a *member* of the Body. It is a *legal mechanism* that functions consistent with the rules of Caesar for business transactions of a collective person. This is Caesar's rightful domain and saints are commanded by God to obey these rules. The activity of the Body of Christ is nor dependent on Caesar for existence or direction. But where the activity involves the areas over which Caesar reigns (at least those involving money, property and liability) then Caesar's rules apply. This is not a "carnal denial of a sublime truth". This is a spiritual submission to a sublime truth of God. Is a 501c3 a corporation and thus by definition of the word itself a "body" (a legal body actually). Yes. Does this say anything good or bad about a 501c3? No. One must make claims beyond the mere definition of the word "corporation" for the 501c3 to violate scriptural principles. Current leadership makes no such claims. Those that are contending with current leadership make such claims and then accuse leadership of making these claims. This is confusion on the part of the accusers or downright dishonest conduct. The reader may decide for them self which is most appropriate.

Using mechanisms that Caesar has defined for the lawful conduct and tracking of activities that pertain to the concerns of Caesar (money, property and liability) are merely a manner of obedience to the glorious truths of God regarding members of Christ and their association with the world. This does not "divide Christ". This is not establishing an "idol" that represents a local Church. As Aaron said to Israel, "these be your Gods that have brought you out of Egypt" there have never been nor should there be recognition of a 501c3 as anything but a lifeless business mechanism. To say that the 501c3 is an "idol" is to give it a status that is totally contrary to revealed truth which does not recognize the idol as representing God or another god at all. Who or what mind would advocate elevation of a 501c3 to such a status? Not the minds of current leadership.

The strongest argument that has been raised, which is very, very weak, is that a corporation is by definition a "body". Yes, this is true. Actually it is a legal body. So there is more than one body involved in the discussion of the issue here. Yes, this is also true. But for spiritually mature and knowledgeable saints (such as ministers) my question would be, do you have no knowledge? Do you have "consciousness of the idol and a weak conscious" as well? Can you not see both God's domain and Caesar's domain? Do you not recognize that the affairs of members of the Body, both individually and collectively, will need to be subject to Caesar's rules by command of God? Is this idolatry to function consistent with the rules of Caesar? Or is this godliness consistent with the times in which we find our selves? Can you not see that a 501c3 is no more a member of the Body of Christ than a vehicle that we drive? Can you not see that a non-member 501c3 cannot divide Christ? Do you see a lifeless legal entity when looking at a 501c3 or do you see a living entity (with members of Christ embodied in it)? If you see the latter then your vision is blurred. If you see the former then it is no more carnally denying sublime truths than a checking account, a credit card or cash that one would use to contribute to the funding of the local manifestation of the Body is a carnal denial of a sublime truth.

4. The Billy graham Connection:

This is clearly guilt by association type of charge. Billy's conduct was one of gross compromise. This is true. Have those that minister among us been likewise conducting them selves? No. Did Billy rent facilities? Yes. Does this make us guilty like Billy when we rent facilities? No. Did Billy accept money from those that were denominational and had no intention of disengaging from sects? Yes. Do we knowingly accept such funds? No. Did Billy accept money from those that were denominational and had no intention of disengaging from sects? Yes. Do we knowingly accept such funds? No. Does Billy have hymns sung that we sing? Yes. Are we guilty of following Billy in this respect? No. Did Billy use a business mechanism that Caesar approved? Yes. If we use the same one are we guilty of following Billy?

No. Are we following the rules of Caesar on how to conduct business within Caesar's realm? Yes. Is this a sin before God? I think not. How could it be in light of Rom 13?

5. the MMJ Stance toward Incorporation:

Did MMJ contend for the existence of a spiritual body (the Corpus Christi) that was as real as the human bodies that could be seen to have life and was functioning according to the design that God ordained? Yes he did. Do we still see and contend for this very same truth? Yes. Did MMJ contend that for this spiritual body to exist and function it required NOTHING from Caesar? Yes. Do we still believe and contend for this today? Yes. Have we through the use of 501c3's denied the existence of this spiritual body? I think not. Have we merely used some of Caesar's approved legal mechanisms to support the interface of activities of the spiritual body (the collective person) with Caesar's domain? Yes. Is this consistent with the commands of God to members of the Body of Christ both individually and collectively? Yes. Is this a sin? No. Is the above clear and simple to a spiritual mind? I think so.

We have affirmed the key issue of 1961. We have built upon this foundation. We are **more open** and **more vulnerable** than previously was the case. **This is a courageous** move to open up to both government and public scrutiny. Has this brought challenge and criticism both from within and without? Yes. Does this show cowardice? Not to me.

6. Compromise Concerns:

Not One Hoof left Behind Example: MMJ did not compromise. He was totally consistent. Could he have used then in 1961 what we use now and still not have compromised? This is the question at hand as I see it. For Moses the "not one hoof" was clear. God was establishing a new people (His people) in a land He was giving to them with a set of laws that He would give them. This was a step in setting in motion the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. The establishment of a Kingdom of God on earth where God reigns and His rules apply. Did God want Moses or any of Israel to submit to any of Pharaoh's rules? No. Does God want members of the Body of Christ to submit to any of Caesar's rules? Yes within the realm belonging to Caesar. Why the change? The Body of Christ is in the world but not of the world. The Kingdom of God on earth will be "of the world" in the sense that government will be in the world and ruled by God (Emmanuel) on earth.

So our current situation is one of submission to God by obedience to Caesar in the realm of Caesar's concerns. This clear and godly Christian living as the Scriptures command.

Thus are we compromising by using Caesar's mechanism for business conduct in the world today? Not if we obey Caesar. Are we carnally denying sublime truths by submission to Caesar's rules within Caesar's domain? Not in my mind. Have we separated members of the Body of Christ by standing up another body and claiming it is the "ministering brethren" of the Body of Christ? No, we have not done this. Are some brethren asserting that this is what we are doing? Yes. Why are **they** asserting this? This is a point that needs further examination. But they need to answer this for them self.

But concluding this discussion regarding compromise, have we compromised in the use of 501c3 corporations? How could this be? Where is the compromise other than in the assertion of compromise? I see no compromise. We are functioning consistent with God's commands for us as members of His Body. We are functioning consistent with God's commands for us as members of His Body. We are merely rendering to Caesar things that are Caesar's without compromising in the things that belong to God.

To contend otherwise is to give credence to a lifeless entity by declaring it to be an "idol" (the 501c3 Corporation). Furthermore, at least in the minds of some, that this "idol" is indeed a living body with some of the members of Christ separated into this lifeless body. How absurd. Or to give credence to an "idol" that it is being put forth as a representation of ministering brethren among us. Likewise is this absurd. Who is contending that the "idol" represents ministering brethren? Is it the ministering brethren? No, it is not. Then who is it? Do those who contend that this "idol" represents ministering brethren really

believe what they are saying? Are their consciences so weak that they cannot discern between an “idol”, if this is what they really believe it is, and the living embodiment of Christ? Who is giving prominence to something that according to the Scriptures is nothing? Not the current leadership.

It would at least be consistent with their contentions of idolatry, on the part of ministering brethren, if those so charging ministering brethren with idolatry would admit to their weak conscience (consistent with 1 Cor 8-10) and desire that those that are strong in conscience not cause them that are weak, like themselves, to stumble over this “idol”. But those that are charging (both compromise and idolatry on the part of leadership) are likely to view themselves as the strong ones who can see the “idol” and also see the sublime truths that are reputedly being carnally denied by current leadership.

7. Current Confusion is Evidence of Error:

Obviously this is a true statement. The need is to discern “who” is generating the confusion, the manifestation of which substantiates that error is present. In the situation back here in VA there is confusion in the minds of a few vocal individuals that is making the “appearance” of error on leadership’s part a very compelling and persuasive posture to advocate. However, we are to judge “righteous judgment and not according to mere appearance” (John 7:24). The facts still support the posture that current leadership took in 1999.

The appearance of the “uncompromising, courageous and absolute denial of any use of incorporation vehicles of any type or form as in 1961” being abandoned by current leadership’s cowardice of legal suite threats is heady stuff to put forth. One starts their answer to this charge immediately in the position of “being in error”, being a coward, being a lightweight in spiritual warfare, being a compromising and weak brother devoid of clear spiritual vision of sublime truths. This appears at first glance as an impossible position from which to recover. But **the facts if reviewed and understood in light of the truths in the scriptures**, which were also faithfully preached by MMJ and others, support what is being done currently. ***Listening to the facts and letting them speak as they apply to scriptural principles brings one to a righteous judgment.***

The current error is the inability to see clear scriptural guidelines for what is currently being done. This is “rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s. If we cannot adjust our “practical functioning in our interface with Caesar as Caesar changes” not our position on truths that are unchanging then as the world evolves around us we sooner rather than later will become irrelevant and marginalized in our ability to effectively and truthfully represent the living embodiment of Christ in the world today as a practical reality. To not evolve on the interface front with Caesar who is evolving is to disconnect and become dysfunctional. Becoming dysfunctional in our corporate testimony seems like **compromising** the integrity of being at least a part of what we are called to be.

8. Righteous judgment considers timeless truths and circumstances:

KKJ and others in 1961 could have done what we did in 1999 and still would not have been in error in their position according to the Scriptures. But times were very different in the early 1960’s. I believe the additional stance that was taken by brethren in 1961 (*against any and every form of incorporation*) certainly aided the brethren in *persuasively* making their case of independent existence to Caesar. But as times change we have new challenges to face. The position we took in 1999 built upon the key issue of 1961 (*proven and acknowledged independent existence from Caesar*) that MMJ and others had laid for us. We did not abandon this base. We upheld this base and built on this base. But we did not sustain the additional stance of rejecting any and every form of incorporation.

To me there is a *fear during periods of change* that leads to certain types of *perspectives* in the minds of those thoroughly familiar with what is being changed that can be gleaned from the scriptures. The discussion in Romans 3 of “making void the law” was countered by the affirmation that the law was confirmed and established. It is not being voided and abandoned as it seemed to the minds of some. Righteous judgment requires that we be able to focus on all the relevant issues and see each of them in

light of the whole set. To focus on a single or even a major subset of issues without regarding the entire set is to not have the vision for righteous judgment on the entire set. Righteous judgment for the time of decision-making often times involves both timeless truths and current circumstances. To leave either out, when both are relevant is to not consider the entire matter. The 1999 position was not abandonment of the 1961 accomplishment (acknowledged independent existence which is timeless truth). But the 1999 position was considering both the times in which we are living and changes in Caesar's rules of interaction (i.e., addressing and making adjustment for the current circumstances).

9. The Necessity to revisit previous statements based on a change in understanding:

It appears to me that the position being advocated by some among us is *any change is wrong*. Thus it must be concluded that under MMJ's ministry he personally evolved to and arrived at the ultimate understanding of truth that is timeless and unalterable regardless of circumstances. Furthermore, the study of ministering brethren in the future will not be able to add anything to this. This was quite an achievement if this indeed was what was done. I wonder if MMJ would be resolute in promoting this position. Others now are not capable of doing now or are not allowed to do now what MMJ alone did then which is grow over time in their understanding and arrive at a new position at least in the area of their previous understanding in their younger years. The concept of benefiting from the efforts of others and building further on them is thus disallowed. Even building on MMJ is disallowed since all was now known through his personal study and ministry.

When positions and understanding are changed due to further study and prayerful consideration of the Scriptures as taught and lead by the Holy Spirit as promised then previous statements made or printed obviously need to be reviewed in light of the new understanding. This should be a matter of course and *not a cause for panic*. It does not, of necessity, discredit what was done before. Neither are those who did what was done before, of necessity, dishonored. ***Rut this is the fear and anxiety that I believe fuels the assertions of compromise and error levied on current leadership by former leaders and others with either confusion in their minds or axes to grind against leadership.***

10. Objections to what has been stated above:

What would be the objection to the previous statements? It could be that sublime truths do not change. This is true. Therefore if someone has previously found a sublime truth then changing it is not a building on this truth that God authorizes. But it would be a compromise and the introduction of error rather than godly building. This would also be very true. But does that establish that any change is error? This is NOT true.

When can change be accommodated? When we can discern in a judgment—

1. what part was sublime truth and
2. what part were practical considerations for the time then present

Then we could consider updating those practical considerations when necessary. If we cannot see that all judgments are potentially based on both of these aspects then we fail to understand all that the scriptures teach us about making good decisions.

It is true that "Men who understood the times" were not **ever** needed in God's view? Is it true that the only thing that matters is **men who understand the sublime truths**? This is the crux of the confusion on the matter of incorporation as it is becoming clearer to me based on personal review and personal fielding of questions.

11. Is Any and Every Change Error:

have we separated members of the Body of Christ by standing up another body and claiming it is the "ministering brethren" of the Body of Christ? No, we have not done this. Are some brethren asserting that this is what we are doing? Yes. Why are they asserting this? This is a point that needs further examination.

Perhaps the old adage “*if its new it isn’t true and if it’s true it isn’t new*” is coming into play in the minds of some. When change happens then this is new. And since it is new it is not true. And since it is not true then it is the embodiment of error. So a hunt for the error is undertaken. This is not solid and godly logic being employed. This is flawed logic because it is based on the faulty premise of “any change is wrong”.

Clarity on previous positions is a good thing. Insight as to specifically what was being said before and what was not being said before is also a very good thing. Later review and consideration of other possibilities that were just not considered before or were irrelevant at the time before is a good thing as well. The latter is what was done during the 1990’s relative to the 1955-61 judgments.

How the 1961 base was used to build the 1999 decision may be helpful to explore. A clear understanding of the sublime truths was revisited and affirmed. Current circumstances were also assessed. Consideration of additional actions or changes were evaluated as to whether they violated any scriptural truths (in which case they would receive no further consideration) or how to institute such changes in a manner that upheld the scriptural truths without compromise was evaluated.

12. Building on the 1961 Base:

The 1961 base of hewing to the Holy scriptures’ definition of what and how the Body of Christ is and is to function was our guidance. We used this to define what activities would be supported. These supported activities then were disclosed for critique by Caesar as to whether they were acceptable within the definition of a 501c3. If they were then we would consider using a 501c3. If they were not then we would not use a 501c3. The activities were not negotiable and up for compromise. If we could use the 501c3 corporation mechanism then okay. If not, then okay as well. Caesar would not be allowed to say what the Body of Christ would do or would not do. Caesar would only be allowed to rule on whether our activities conformed to 501c3 guidelines or not. The functioning of the Body of Christ is not to be submitted to Caesar for approval or for incorporation. This is the position of current leadership. This is scripturally sound. It is able to stand examination. It is not immune to criticism or slander. Nothing is.

13. What Name is being Manifested:

In Col 3;17 **we** are admonished to do all that **we** do in the name of the Lord Jesus. Doesn’t the use of 501c3’s introduce another name? Yes. Does this not confuse the issue? Somewhat it obviously does. Does it need to be clarified for others and ourselves to clearly understand? Yes. Do we leave the confusion alone or do we attempt to be clear? We attempt to be explicitly clear.

Let us look at an example. On the VA Dec. Camp Handouts we have a statement that reads as follows:

“This “camp” is sponsored by **Christians** Meeting only in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and is funded by Robert A. Grove Ministries...”

The statement clearly addresses two very distinct aspects which are “who” and “how”. Clearly Caesar does not care “who” but is very concerned about “how”. So something that God is concerned about is addressed by the “who” part. And something that Caesar is concerned about is addressed by the “how” part.

“**Who**” is doing this? **Christians** meeting **only in the name of the Lord Jesus** are doing or sponsoring this. Is this consistent with Scriptural truths? Absolutely it is. This is rendering unto God the things that belong to God.

“**How**” is it paid for? RAGM supplies the funds. Is this Caesar’s concern or God’s concern? Caesars concern is with money flow and allocation. This is rendering unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar. We are using one of the mechanisms that Caesar sets up to allow us to be clear to Caesar as to what is going on. We should want to be legal and proper and above board in our functioning in the eyes of Caesar as well as the world (both religious and secular). We should also do this. This is our aim.

Do religious people mix the two concerns regularly? yes. Are some among us still somewhat confused as to what is being done? yes. Do religious corporations with members regularly mix the two aspects? Yes. Do they satisfy God on the “who” part? No. Do They satisfy Caesar on the ‘how’ part? Yes. Should members of the Body of Christ be concerned with both the things of God and the things of Caesar? Yes.

Current leadership is concerned for both. We have addressed both. I believe we have satisfied both God and Caesar to the glory of God. Obviously there are those that feel and contend otherwise. There likely will be increasingly more contentions in the days ahead. But where we honestly and scripturally are following the scriptural truths of “what” the Body of Christ should be doing we should and do have boldness and confidence.

14. Seeking a Tax Deduction is Driving Compromise:

The issue of how the 501c3 is being used far exceeds the tax deduction consideration. Tax deduction authorization is included within the 501c3 approach. But those involved in the late 1990’s discussion were unanimous in willingness to abandon tax deduction if it meant compromise in any way. Such claims as the title to this concern states are a mere cheap shot that is meant to imply covetousness on the part of those that have for years been willingly generous in support of ministry. Such claims also wrongly impugn ministry. Those making these claims will answer to God for these claims.

As has already been addressed the issues of reporting to Caesar, handling of money, contracting, liability and property holding are all considerations required of the collective person. This broad range of issues is real and must be addressed in a legal, ethical and honest manner for us collectively to be godly and have His blessings upon our endeavors.

My Hope:

Hopefully this discussion will bring more edification and more understanding on this issue to the hearts and minds of those that have been disturbed by the contention or have not been clear in days past in their own minds on this issue. Saints who earnestly contend for the faith once delivered should exhibit the boldness and confidence consistent with these scriptural truths.