

**A BRIEF HISTORY  
RELATIVE TO  
PAST AND PRESENT  
EXERCISES AS TO  
FELLOWSHIP  
MATTERS**

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A BRIEF HISTORY RELATIVE TO PAST AND  
PRESENT EXERCISES AS TO MATTERS OF  
FELLOWSHIP.

June 1970

Beloved Brethren:

In view of present-day exercises as to fellowship matters, may it not be in order, or indeed necessary, to review events leading up to the present time, and the issues before us today? It is not an easy nor pleasant task to do so, and one from which we would naturally shrink. But as these things that concern the saints generally are afresh brought to our attention and reflected upon, we but bow in humiliation before our God and Father, as we realize our part in the failure of testimony to the Lord's Name in these closing days. But surely, the Lord desires that we should be intelligent as to our present associations, as well as to the proposed associations as to which we have been approached, as regards brethren with whom we have not had fellowship for many years. In this account we have sought the Lord's guidance to enable us to present things in as concise a way as possible, and yet with sufficient information, to enable the saints to have a proper understanding of our present position of fellowship. We have sought to do this in the fear of God, realizing our own insufficiency for these things; but we believe that what is set forth herein is factual, and trust will be used for the saints' blessing and the Lord's glory.

Our link with so-called "Glanton" brethren has been rather uncertain from the beginning. In 1909, brethren P. J. Loizeaux, Wm. Banford, C. Crain and S. Ridout went to England and conferred with leading brethren in the "Glanton" fellowship, with the purpose of seeking to unite the two companies: the so-called "Grant" brethren and the so-called "Glanton" brethren. However, opposition to uniting with the "Glantons" was expressed because of their views regarding new birth and eternal life.

Shortly after, three of the brethren returned from England (P.J.L. remained in France for a season), and a meeting was arranged in New York, which resulted in a local uniting of brethren in that vicinity. However, a certain amount of confusion resulted among the assemblies here, and an exchange of correspondence began, seeking to clear up matters. One communication was a letter written by the "Grant" brethren, sent from Guelph, Ont., July 4, 1921, to the "Glanton" brethren, in which specific questions were asked as to doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and fellowship matters. Four "Glanton" brethren responded, and one thing brought out by them was the fact of the lack of unity amongst their assemblies in regard to fellowship matters. They wrote: "We deplore this lack of unanimity. It cannot be defended as a matter of principle. Old prejudices however die but slowly, and confidence is a plant of slow growth. Let us therefore have patience." This was 49 years ago. The two issues involved, however, remained unsettled, and Mr. A. E. Booth writes in a letter dated May 17, 1923:

"Some of the Glantons applied here (Toronto) to come amongst us, and we could not receive them:

1. Because of their teaching on eternal life.
2. Because of independent and uncertain views on fellowship in the assemblies."

In the month of June, 1923, a meeting was held in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and after some eight or nine days a Memorandum was drawn up to promote the uniting of the two companies. However, several of the "Glantons" and "Grants" did not recognize this as a declaration of actually coming together as one company. Mr. J. W. H. Nichols always affirmed that there was never a full organic fellowship established between the two companies. (Of nine British brethren who were written to about fellowship matters, in 1948, only two of them had heard of the Elizabeth Memorandum.)

This condition of indefiniteness has from time to time contributed to the distress of the saints of God in problems that have since arisen, and the Lord no doubt intends this for our humiliation before Him. Yet, proper godly honor would recognize that to what extent our elders have committed us to fellowship with the Glanton brethren, we are responsible to recognize this, so long as the clear truth of the Word of God is not compromised. But if such compromise should threaten, then certainly we must not be ignorant, nor indifferent.

However, soon after the Elizabeth meeting, a brother from the Glantons, A. Westwood, having come to America, was put away from fellowship because of his teaching and maintaining the serious error that the Lord Jesus, as Son of God, was the spirit of His own body, and that He, therefore, did not possess a human spirit.

Following this, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a sad case of business discord arose, which led to the division of 1927-28. A wealthy brother, Mr. C. A. Mory, accused

his partner in business, Mr. Chas. Grant, of embezzlement. At the request of Mr. Mory, Brother Samuel Ridout and Brother A. E. Booth spent some weeks investigating the case. (Mr. Mory offered to pay their expenses, but they both refused any money from either party. At about this time, Mr. Mory employed Mr. W. R. Nelson, a brother in fellowship, who came from Norfolk for the purpose of taking up this case.) The judgment of Brethren Ridout and Booth was to the effect that there was no proof of embezzlement on the part of Chas. Grant, but of such irregularities and lack of proper care, that they considered a public rebuke in order. This was done in the assembly. A letter was also signed by these brethren, including Mr. Mory, to the effect that the case was settled.

However, Mr. Mory very soon withdrew his signature, and he and Mr. Nelson took the case to the civil courts, rejecting the judgment of the brethren. This, of course, was flagrant disobedience to 1 Cor. 6. The judge decided, as the brethren had done, that there was no proof of embezzlement on the part of Chas. Grant.

But Mr. Mory and Mr. Nelson counted this judgment wrong, and insisted that Chas. Grant be put away from fellowship. The larger number in the assembly refused this unrighteous demand. But some brethren, in sympathy with Mr. Mory and Mr. Nelson, separated from the Philadelphia assembly, thus initiating a division locally in that meeting. Large amounts of literature were sent throughout the U.S.A and Canada, seeking support for their case from all the assemblies. Many, in various places, were influenced to follow them.

While this was causing distress, Mr. J. Boyd of England came from the "Glanton" meeting there to America;

and while here published a pamphlet which contained the same error as Mr. A. Westwood had taught as to the humanity of the Lord Jesus. This of course contributed to further distress among the saints. Mr. Boyd was challenged as to this, and soon thereafter returned to England. There he was labored with by some of the leading brethren, none of whom sympathized with his doctrine. He withdrew his pamphlet, and agreed not to teach that doctrine, saying that he now could neither affirm nor deny that the Lord Jesus possessed a human spirit, though he did affirm that He is truly God and Man in one Person. But there was no full clearing of the charge against him. (He was 77 years of age at the time of this defection, having previously been considered thoroughly sound in his teaching. About five years later he passed away, in a mental institution.)

Brethren in America wrote to his home assembly, but received no replies. However, they did receive replies from leading brethren in England, which spoke of their laboring with him, assuring them that this doctrine was not countenanced by any of them, nor allowed to be taught. In spite of this, those in America who were disaffected because of the Mory case, used this as a second reason for division, insisting on rejecting the entire Glanton fellowship on account of Mr. Boyd, and rejecting those who did not take similar action in America. No one from America visited England during this time, so that no first-hand information was obtained, but those now known as "Mory" brethren claimed that this was a just cause for separating. Thus two distinct issues were strongly pressed when this division took place in 1927-28. But the lines were already being drawn before the Boyd issue was introduced. Many letters, sent from those

brethren and assemblies who left at this time, adduced the Mory case as cause for their separation. There is, therefore, good reason to believe that the division would have taken place without the additional case of Mr. Boyd. But it should also be pointed out that it was not simply Mr. Boyd's teaching which was objected to, but the "Glanton" fellowship as a whole. Leaders in this division stated this plainly. Thus the uncertain link with our English brethren was involved in the sad, shameful division which took place at that time.

In 1932 another division took place. Many of those who did not go with the "Mory" brethren in 1927-28, now advocated fellowship with so-called "Open" brethren, and left the "exclusive" position to go with them. Mr. I. Fleming, a Glanton brother, who had ministered among us, took independent ground at that time. In 1938 a brother in America wrote to Mr. J. T. Mawson, editor of "Scripture Truth," asking if Mr. P. D. Loizeaux, who had left us for the Open brethren in 1932, would be received among the Glantons if he came to England. The answer was that he would be, because they did not receive a brother as coming from any particular circle.

As these views among the Glantons became known in America (the same views Mr. A. E. Booth mentioned in 1923, and which were involved in the 1927-28 division), they caused fresh exercise and concern amongst ourselves, who had become known as "Booth-Grant"—Mr. Booth being a leader in firmly standing in 1932 for exclusive principles of fellowship. In spite of the fact that it was known that we, as a fellowship, did not hold principles of independency, and that efforts were being made to come to a godly and proper judgment in the matter, several of the Lord's servants and assemblies

separated from us in 1948. These formed a company known as "Ames" brethren, Mr. L. W. Ames being prominent in that division.

Those of us who remained linked with Glanton sought information from England, and appeals were made to that fellowship and to individuals, but did not bring satisfactory results. In a letter dated Sept. 2, 1948, addressed to our fellowship, after the "Ames" division, we gave this unsatisfactory information to our brethren, and wrote: "That brethren (Ames) have left us before receiving complete information from abroad is a matter of sorrow, yet their course will not lessen our efforts to bring difficulties to a satisfactory conclusion." After this, letters from England, in response to ours, presented nothing in the way of declaring their stand against principles of independency, such as having fellowship in the breaking of bread with those who are associated with what is clearly unscriptural.

For example, a brother H. P. Barker, who had left the "Glanton" fellowship, and ridiculed exclusive principles in a paper entitled, "Why I Abandoned Exclusivism," was, nevertheless, received to the breaking of bread by an assembly in the fellowship he claimed to have abandoned. A leading Glanton brother wrote concerning the above paper, saying that the reception of Mr. Barker was to be deplored, but added, "H. P. Barker cannot be charged with unsound doctrine." Is the teaching and practice of independency not unsound? If not, why are we separated from so-called "Open" brethren? The teaching and practice of independency *is* unsound doctrine, for it is totally unscriptural. 1 Cor. 1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33, are a few Scriptures that show that the apostle Paul gave to the assemblies of God's people the



truth that would produce the same outward order and internal arrangement in all.

At this time again then the Lord was facing us with problems that still had not been satisfactorily met.

About 1960 negotiations between the "Glanton" and "Kelly" companies in Britain were resumed. This led to the Kelly Brethren in America approaching us as to fellowship with them. A number of discussions were held, some private and others where a number from both sides met together, and a good deal of correspondence was engaged in. Two issues have been raised: the Montreal Division in 1884, where F. W. Grant was excommunicated by a majority in that meeting, which took the position of being "the assembly." The second issue being the Mory-Boyd division in 1927-28.

It should be understood that the Mory brethren united with the Kelly-Continental brethren in 1953. In that case, the Kelly company did not at all enquire as to the real causes of the 1927-28 division. But in recent discussions, those who were with the Mory company fully justify the division on the grounds of the Boyd and Glanton issue. They admit that the Mory matter ought not to have been broadcast as it was, but do not acknowledge the wrong of making this matter a ground of division, which it actually was. From these brethren, formerly known as "Mory" only two written communications have come, since being labored with to bring this wrong to their attention. These are from individuals, and both fully defend Mr. Mory in his refusal of Mr. Grant, insisting that the latter was guilty of embezzlement. One of these is Mr. W. R. Nelson, who was responsible for so widely pressing this case, and who is in the "Kelly-Mory" fellowship.

When we consider this, we cannot help asking: What has taken place since 1928 that these same brethren are now seeking fellowship with us and with the "Glanton" brethren? If the division was not a scriptural one, it ought to be acknowledged. We still maintain that it was forced upon our fellowship without scriptural warrant. In view of this, how can we, with a good conscience, unite with brethren who left our fellowship with the charge that we were associated with evil—moral evil, in the case of Chas. Grant, and doctrinal evil in the case of J. Boyd—without an acknowledgment of the evil of dividing the Lord's people unnecessarily? Also, we cannot accept the judgment of some against J. Boyd, applying 2 John 9-11 to his case, but rather consider that he was to be labored with, in desire to set him right. In the case of Mr. Boyd there was no evidence of a system of error developing, but rather of defection in doctrine.

During the exchange of correspondence regarding this matter, there has come to light from some of our Glanton brethren, and confirmed by the Kelly brethren who visited England in 1965, that loose and independent principles as to reception and fellowship are advocated by some men and assemblies among both the Kelly and Glanton fellowships.

Thus, once again, our link with Glanton brethren is under review because of independent principles advocated in letters received from prominent men among them. This has led to deep exercise and, we feel, to the necessity of placing before the saints this, *another* of the issues involved in the matter of the movement of uniting with brethren professedly holding and practicing the same principles we do as to the assembly.

The following are excerpts from personal letters of brethren who are of prominence among the Glanton brethren, the contents of which have given cause for serious concern.

1. From a letter dated Sept. 1, 1967.

“Since the February, 1966 meeting (Kelly and Glanton in England) matters between us in Britain have somewhat deteriorated. The real bone of contention is the insinuation from an influential minority among the “Kellys” that we in “Glanton” are unprincipled as to association with “Open” meetings. This is an old and very vexing question and is quite capable of shipwrecking all the patient negotiations so far accomplished. It is, of course, true of a minority that there is occasional association with “O.B.’s,” but it is also a matter of concern among the “Kellys” as well, where the same problem is found. They admit it as we do also. What, indeed, can be done? In the main, the “Kellys” here and in the U.S.A. desire a tight “circle of meetings.” This, however, “a circle of meetings,” finds no support amongst us (Glanton) who, in the preponderant main, hold a more liberal view of the truth of the “one body” and receive “Christians” as such, known to be sound and godly when such (and it is only very occasional or rare) happen to attend one of our meeting places. It is at holiday seasons that this may take place, when Christian people find themselves without a company of their own in the resort and seek fellowship in some company of “Brethren.” The “Kellys” refuse our people when holidaying in S. W. England, and some have gone to the “Open” meeting instead.

“I cite these occasions as indicating the circumstances which have arisen, and not a little criticism of our “prin-

principles” has appeared. Then, too, our young people (of both companies) rebel in the matters of an “exclusive” fellowship. They have formed warm Christian contacts at school, college and at work with those who attend evangelical churches (mostly Baptist) and cannot subscribe to the demand to keep in separation from them. Great campaigns, like Billy Graham’s in this country, thrilled the young people, and, indeed, they of our companies were numerous amongst those who volunteered for “counselling work” at the rallies and did splendid service, and found a real kinship with earnest Christians from the denominations. They say, Why walk in separation?”

(The above is definitely revealing, as the reader can see, and gives occasion for serious alarm as to principles and practices which are not in accord with those we believe to be scriptural, and seek to follow. Though we should humbly own our weakness and failure as to our spiritual state, we know of no assembly in our fellowship that would tolerate a brother or sister going to an “open” meeting, nor receiving from an “open” meeting or denomination to break bread. Ministry regarding “exclusive” principles of fellowship is constantly deemed necessary in order to preserve and develop scriptural unity amongst the people of God. Proper service to the Lord is encouraged in connection with the assembly, without forming links with others not practicing assembly truths. Paul’s double ministry as set forth in Col. 1 is sought to be maintained; and the assembly, gathered to the Lord’s Name outside the camp, is to be the center from which Gospel activity should flow, and into which the fruits of such labor should be brought. How will young believ-

ers stand, should this Scriptural foundation of “exclusive” principles be removed or not built upon?)

2. From a letter dated July 7, 1968:

“Thus, through years of discussion we now stand almost ready to reunite. Two obstacles remain: One, the conviction that to formally declare ourselves “as one” before our brethren in America have also become reconciled could only produce yet more confusion and sorrow. Secondly, among ourselves we still need to reach agreement as to principles of fellowship and reception. Most of us are quite clear as to this, but both companies have a section of men and meetings of liberal (or loose) associations. These are very few in total. Nevertheless, we are exercised and troubled thereby. The “Kellys” have a “fixation” as to a circle of meetings of agreed behaviour (practice of principles) and to the exclusion of all others. We, in “Glan-ton,” view the “one body” truth with wider catholicity of mind, but we do not intercommune with O.B.’s as such. We rather own the authority of the Lord’s command in 2 Timothy 2 to depart from iniquity and to conjoin with all who purge themselves of evil men and movements within the ‘Great House’.”

(Differences existing between the “Kelly” and “Glan-ton” in England will again be noted. The statement: “we do not intercommune with O.B.’s *as such*” (italics ours), seems to imply that communion would be extended to one on the basis of his own faith and godliness without respect to his association. This is the same principle involved in the statement of the previous letter: “Christians, as such, known to be sound and godly.” Just how 2 Timothy 2 can be brought into reconciliation with this unprincipled basis for fellowship is difficult to see.

2 Timothy 2 has to do with the path of separation the people of God are called to, in separation from those in association with that which is “iniquity,” a word including anything fundamentally unrighteous, hence certainly any principle opposed to Scripture. The fellowship thus formed is “with them” who likewise separate and “call upon the Lord out of a pure (undivided) heart.” This fellowship would necessarily exclude any not following divine principles of gathering.)

3. From a letter written by a leading brother, dated June 19, 1968, and sent in reply to the “Memorandum” of the Dearborn, Michigan, meeting, and “Questions” resulting from that: After writing of the existence of the Body of Christ in Eph. 4:3, the writer continues:

“There is one other entity which has existence—clear and unequivocal—in God’s sight, and that is the *local* gathering, even if a church in someone’s house.

“We would be acting in accordance with these existences (the body and the local gathering) if the local gathering sees and confesses itself in God’s sight as being constituted in relation to the one Body and to nothing else. Its fixed principle would be to receive every member of Christ’s Body presenting himself, unless disqualified on clear Scriptural grounds. These grounds would have nothing to do with the party to which he belongs. By this simple principle this fruitless and grieving raking over the ashes of past controversies would be side-stepped.”

(Two things are pointed out in this letter:

a. The independency of assemblies as standing in relation to nothing else than the One Body in general (including Christians everywhere). The unity as to the as-

semblies for reception, fellowship and discipline is thereby rendered impossible, and fellowship with members of Christ's body would be acceptable irrespective of their associations. This is definitely unscriptural, and opposed to the words of the Apostle: "as I teach everywhere in every church (1 Cor. 4:17), and "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33).

b. The statement, "raking over the ashes of past controversies would be side-stepped" is Scripturally unprincipled. To begin with, the use of "ashes" is an improper simile for the failures and controversies of God's people. "Roots" would be more correct, and certainly it is a Divine principle that the sins and failures of God's people have roots that must be brought up and judged if there is to be any righteous basis for fellowship with those from whom we have been divided. No issue can be honorably "side-stepped." An honest facing of issues in the fear of God, in the spirit of self-judgment, and a bowing to His hand of government upon us would mark any working of the Spirit of God amongst His saints. The past cannot rightly be ignored and separated from the present. To attempt to do so only brings more confusion.)

It may be unnecessary to comment further in detail upon the foregoing letters, or to quote from other letters of a similar nature. However, let it be noted that none of the writers consider the importance of a believer's associations. Is it Scriptural and helpful to souls for us to conveniently ignore their ecclesiastical associations? What is the purpose of separating from the various denominations, including "Open" brethren, if they are at liberty to have fellowship with us as a matter of con-

venience, or for some other reason, merely on the ground of being members of the Body of Christ, with no consideration of their associations?

The refusal of the truth of “a circle of fellowship,” or in other words, of unity among assemblies; and teaching that assemblies are “autonomous,” *is* independency. With this adopted as a standard, it would be impossible to maintain godly order either in the local assembly or among the assemblies. Indeed, if the writers really believe what they say, why are they not in fellowship with “Open” brethren, who are characteristically independent in doctrine and practice?

We might also add that the “Kelly” brethren with whom we met in September, 1969, expressed their exercise as to these principles of independency, and grave concern over the statements in the above letters. As to ourselves, we feel the Lord is bringing before us once again these matters concerning principles of fellowship, to have us face them honestly and faithfully in the fear of God, in accordance with the truth of His Word. We sincerely trust our “Glanton” brethren would likewise do so, and clear themselves of the principles and practices which have again been pressed upon our attention, and which we cannot accept as a basis for the fellowship to which we have been called, and are to maintain (1 Cor. 1:9; Eph. 4:3).

Since a recent letter received from England indicates that some of our “Glanton” brethren have in mind to visit America this year, it seems necessary to us that these issues should be brought out for prayerful consideration and discussion.

In all of these matters, the pain and sorrow of sep-



arations between saints of God is meant to be felt, for our faithful God and Father would impress us with the shame of the ruined condition of the entire church publicly, and bring us to our knees in prayer for *all* saints, every member of the body of Christ, so precious to Himself. "God requireth that which is past" (Eccl. 3:15), and to honestly face the past and present, while crying to Him for the help of His presence and guidance, is a need today for which nothing can substitute. Side-stepping the original causes of division in seeking a healing, would result only in greater confusion. The will of man has caused divisions, and if, in seeking to repair these, the will of man is pressed, such efforts will only increase the sorrow. It is God upon Whom we must depend. What *He* does will be forever. Let us desire and seek nothing else than "that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). How good to hear the voice of the Lord Jesus, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

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