

# Reply To Weldon

By Jeff Belknap

Brother Weldon Warnock recently wrote an article in *Truth Magazine* entitled, “*Debate Challenge Accepted*,” (July 21, 2005, Volume XLIX, Number 14). In it, he made strong personal accusations against me by name, although he offered no proof for his assertions. Proving one’s innocence against misrepresentations takes more space than asserting half-truths and baseless accusations. Therefore, my reply will of necessity, be longer than Weldon’s article. Most of the charges that Weldon made against me have been made in the past and previously answered in *another venue*.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I invite the readers of *Truth Magazine* to view the cited documentation that proves his charges to be blatantly false.

The verified facts clearly manifest that it is Weldon’s own, self-directed “*prerequisite*” that stands in the way of our coming together for debate! Moreover, his allegation that “*Jeff has already taken care of*” “*dividing the church in Beckley*,” and “*It was not until brother Belknap arrived on the scene and cranked up his computer that confusion and dissension on MDR started*,” shall be examined and exposed (Proverbs 18:17)!

When I began the [www.MentalDivorce.com](http://www.MentalDivorce.com) website in the Spring of 2001, I notified the brethren in Beckley of the website and its web-address in the Carriage Drive bulletin and no objections or concerns among the members were raised. Absolute harmony reigned among our members! On June 25<sup>th</sup> of 2002, Weldon wrote a letter to the brethren at Carriage Drive, in which he objected to my website inclusion of his 1985 quote and a portion of a reply to it.<sup>2</sup> He also complained that I did not publish the entire exchange he had with brother Deason. Therefore, I obtained permission from all involved, and posted the complete exchange along with brother Connie W. Adams’ editorial.<sup>3</sup> However, even after his letter of complaint, the brethren at Carriage Drive were still united on the truth regarding this issue.

After Weldon’s letter, the brethren were becoming aware that other influential preachers (whom many would have never suspected) were pressing the “second ‘putting away’” doctrine and were seeking to malign me for maintaining a website which documented and examined their public teaching of error (Ephesians 5:11; I Peter 4:4).<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the men at Carriage Drive *unanimously* agreed to inquire of men who were scheduled to hold meetings with us regarding this dangerous teaching, lest we inadvertently become partakers of evil and provide an occasion for teachers of a doctrine which advocates *adultery* to potentially influence our members (Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 15:33; Ephesians 5:6-8; I Timothy 5:22b; II John 9-11; Revelation 2:14, 20, 22).

Subsequently, the men of the congregation made the decision to cancel a gospel meeting with a brother in October of 2003, due to his repeated refusal to forthrightly answer specific questions about his stance on this issue. Shortly thereafter (January 25, 2004) on brother Warnock’s weekly radio program which is aired on a Beckley radio station and sponsored by the Beech Creek church in Mingo County, brother Warnock began a *weekly* tirade in which he repeatedly vilified “*the preacher in Southern WV, in Beckley*,” whom he calls “*JB*,” who preaches at the church where he used to preach “*for ten years*.”<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, just as he alleges in his article, Weldon stated on his February 22, 2004 radio program that “*he causes dissention in the church, and unrest in the church, and confusion in the church. And you know, brethren, there’s something to think about. When members of the church give on Sunday of their money, and you pay somebody of this kind, you’re having fellowship with him*”<sup>6</sup> (emp. jhb).

At this time, I had already sent propositions to Weldon, inviting him to have a *written* exchange with me in two publications that had agreed to host it (*Gospel Truths & Preceptor*).<sup>7</sup> Please note an excerpt of the minutes from the Carriage Drive February 23, 2004 business meeting, which proves that the church was united at the time that Weldon began to *step up* his “Sunday evening” radio campaign:

“**MDR Web site, Sunday Evening Radio Program, Debate Challenge:** During a long but very congenial discussion on the above headings Bro. Belknap reported that some things that were said in the Feb. 22 broadcast were not true. With regard to the debate challenge, bro. Belknap said that he is willing to engage in a written debate. Bro. Belknap stated he would post the

written debate material on his web site so that all who are engaged in the MDR question could have access to the arguments made by each debater. **The men who spoke up during this discussion voiced displeasure for the Sunday evening radio broadcast.** Some indicated they had not listened to the program. **Those men also voiced support for the work bro. Belknap is doing on his web site and his teaching and preaching as well**” (emp. jhb).

On more than 20 radio programs, Weldon continued his efforts to manipulate the “*brethren*” / “*members of the church*” and community with his emotional (fictitious)<sup>8</sup> scenarios instead of scripture, and repetitive claims that my teaching on this issue was “*absurd.*” Moreover, he described my teaching that “*he who marrieth her which is put away doth commit ADULTERY*” as “*indefensible,*” “*ludicrous,*” “*radical,*” “*extreme,*” “*invalid,*” “*sophistry,*” “*fallacy,*” “*nonsense,*” and “*one of the most irrational, absurd positions that’s come along in a long time.*” In fact, I have already published over 100 such audio quotes taken from Weldon’s radio program.<sup>9</sup>

Additionally, brother Warnock *admittedly* provided the brother whose meeting had been cancelled in October (2003), with a directory of the congregation’s members (and some non-members). With Weldon’s assistance, this brother sent an eleven-page letter filled with slanderous charges and evil surmisings regarding me to *everyone* in the directory.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, after Weldon’s letters to all those in the church directory, and the letter by the brother whom Weldon provided addresses for, a *third* advocate of the post-divorce “putting away” doctrine (documented on the MentalDivorce.com website) also sent a letter of the same nature to all in the church directory.

When considering Weldon’s incessant radio assaults, as well as the continued barrage of letters to all the local members from outside sources, is it any wonder that the church was negatively affected by the constant *pressure* from outside sources? Unfortunately, as everyone knows, *casualties* are inevitable in spiritual controversies (Jude 3-4; I Corinthians 11:19; cf. Proverbs 28:4).

The effects of Weldon’s carnal actions to incite and influence members at Carriage Drive became evident in Beckley by August of 2004 (cf. Jude 16). Note an excerpt from the September 20, 2004 business meeting minutes, which were approved of and initialed by all of the men who had been present, before it was printed and distributed:

**“Web site, Beech Creek Radio Program, etc.:** The discussion of **unrest and discontent with some was continued (as reported in last month’s minutes)** and concluded this month. **Almost all of the men** continued to express appreciation for the work bro. Belknap has done and continues to do. Additionally, many men spoke up to say that Jeff was only teaching the truth on the topic of controversy. In addition, several men pointed out that **the Beech Creek radio program was responsible for inciting the recent problems at Carriage Drive.** Bro. Belknap wrote a two page statement to be handed out (with three pages of quotes from the Beech Creek radio program, which reveal the basis for the recent disturbance here). Included within the body of the statement were quotes from the business meeting minutes of Feb. 22, 2004, **which acknowledged the same, unopposed agreement among the men at that time** (regarding the website and Beech Creek radio program).” (emp. jhb).

Now brethren, it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out what *really* happened at Beckley when provided with the *evidence* instead of brother Warnock’s *baseless* accusations. Prior to Weldon’s tactics, we had a good thing going in Beckley. During my six years with the congregation, we may have suffered several deaths *and* losses due to church discipline, but we also enjoyed 39 baptisms and 13 additions through those who denounced institutionalism and identified with us.

When I began the website, I notified the brethren of it via the weekly bulletin. Several expressed appreciation; none expressed concern or dissent. Weldon wrote a letter of objection and sent it to every member in Beckley. The brethren remained united. The preacher to whom Weldon provided the church directory, sent an eleven-page, railing letter to each member at Beckley,<sup>10</sup> while Weldon continued his three-year campaign against me and the website. Many *other* phone calls and e-mails to individual members from outside sources were brought to light as well. After that, “*unrest and discontent with some*” ensued.

During this time, due to the men's recognition of the true cause of our congregation's difficulties, they concluded early-on that a debate within our area would only fan the flames of unrest which *Weldon* had *ignited* among our members. Therefore, during one of our business meetings, the men asked me *not* to have a debate *in* or *near* Beckley, which *Weldon* was notified of by different members. I have honored the men's request, and believe that *their* decision was reasonable and perceptive, under the circumstances.

Therefore, I carefully worded my offer to the six men (including brother *Warnock*) who have publicly advocated the false doctrine of post-divorce "putting away" for post-divorce fornication as follows: "*Let the record reflect that I am offering the following propositions (which are harmonious with the focus of my website, as well as with the numerous documented examples of their error) for debate (oral or written) in various journals or at a location central to both participants*" (emp. jhb).<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the fact that brother *Warnock* had been told many times about the men's decision, he continues to ignore the facts and has *again* twisted reality by accusing me with being "*afraid*" to "*come up to the lick log.*" In his article to which I am replying, he disregards the verified facts and states, "*He evidently does not want to be exposed in Beckley. What is he afraid of in Beckley?*" and claims that, "*Our brother Belknap is most eager to shelter the brethren in Beckley that they not hear both sides on the MDR issue.*"

If *Weldon* believes that my refusal to debate in Beckley is because I "*evidently*" *do* "*not want to be exposed in Beckley*" and because I am "*afraid of*" debating "*in Beckley,*" then what does that say about *his* refusal to debate *anywhere* and *everywhere else* in the whole US of A? Amazing!

Moreover, it is incredible to think that *Weldon* believes that even his 20+ no-holds-barred radio programs in Beckley were *not enough* to "*expose*" me in "*in Beckley.*" Furthermore, he apparently believes that exposure to *merely* 20+ of his radio programs on the topic are equivalent to a "*shelter,*" which prevented members from hearing "*both sides on the MDR issue.*"

Moreover, his above statement reveals the true reason why he will not agree to debate anywhere else but the Beckley area: his interest is not in debating *the issue* per se, but clearly in *exposing* me "*in Beckley.*" This is, and has been transparent to the brethren from the beginning. Nevertheless, when brother *Warnock* departs from his "*city of refuge,*" then we can get on with the debate!

Regardless of these facts, brother *Warnock* continues to claim that I am "*afraid of*" public discussion because I will not *disregard* the men's genuine and reasonable request "*in Beckley.*" Such thinking is simply beyond my comprehension. The only conclusion that can be drawn from such statements is that *Weldon* believes that I should violate the joint decision of the men in the business meeting in order to satisfy the *unidentified* "*several ladies*" and "*other men*" whom he has "*learned*" are not satisfied with the men's decision. Surely he does not believe that every judgment of expediency by the leadership of a congregation must be approved of by *all* members (men and women alike), before complying with it. Yet, he asserts that because *I* will not operate in such a disorderly way, that I am "*afraid of*" debate.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004, when *Weldon* was speaking on his Beckley broadcast about my computer, he advised, "...it'd be a good thing if somebody walked in over there, **and stole the thing.** The brotherhood would be a way ahead..."<sup>12</sup> Now, he is encouraging me to *defy* the decision of a congregation's leadership, simply because he asserts that "*other men and several ladies would like to have the debate in Beckley.*" Sadly, when a preacher resorts to publicly encouraging such ungodliness, his *desperation* becomes apparent to all. I regret his state and pray that he will repent before it is *eternally* too late.

1 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/WeldonRefusesToDebate.htm>

2 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/WeldonEWarnockCorrespondence.htm>

3 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/Warnock-DeasonExchange.htm>

4 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/TacticsOfIntimidationAndInterference.htm>

<http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/HeardSomething.htm>

5 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/AudioFiles/WeldonWarnock62.wma>

- 6 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/AudioFiles/WeldonWarnock14.wma>
- 7 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/WeldonWarnocksSeventhAndEightWeeksInARow.htm>
- 8 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/ARaceToTheCourthouse-GFrost.htm>
- <http://mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/TheNevadaStrawman.htm>
- 9 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/AudioQuotes.htm>
- 10 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/OpenReplyLetterToTomONeal>
- 11 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/mdrstudies/WrittenDebateInvitationForVariousMen.htm>
- 12 <http://www.mentaldivorce.com/AudioFiles/WeldonWarnock11.wma>

18 Jonathan Drive  
Fayetteville, TN 37334  
[JeffBelknap@mchsi.com](mailto:JeffBelknap@mchsi.com)