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**Before You Ask - Chapter 8
Appeal to Revelation - The God Card**

**Chapter 8
Appeal to Revelation - The God Card**

**So you don't have "the Revelation"?
You have a "different spirit?"**

The New Testament is the Friends' and Workers' guide and standard for living. They frequently read it, some even wearing out more than one Bible in their lifetime. They claim their doctrine is the Bible. Even so, they are unable to provide scriptural support for some of their beliefs and traditions strongly enforced by Workers.

The Nature of an Appeal

Persuasive appeals are often used when there isn't sufficient proof. A conclusion, belief or viewpoint SHOULD be able to stand on its own merits. An appeal is not evidence and is not justification for a conclusion. Appeals do not address why a view-point is worthy of acceptance or rejection. Appeals may be effective in influencing or persuading, but they are not proof, nor are they good reason to adopt a belief.

Appeals are irrelevant, are not a good reason; yet they are often substituted for good reasons and sound evidence. When proof is scarce or non-existent, attempts to persuade are often made by appealing to irrelevant matters. Some of the more common appeals are experiences, feelings, traditions, precedent, beliefs, preferences and possible consequences. Emotional appeals are also made to shame, pity, fear, sympathy, guilt, pride, hope, generosity, etc. The goal of an appeal is to obtain agreement, compliance or a change in point of view.

Examples of Appeals to Revelation:

It's clear that you just don't have "the Revelation."
You don't understand because you never got/received "the Revelation."
If you're asking that kind of question, then you haven't had a true Revelation.
If you had received 'the Revelation,' you would understand.

WHAT IS "REVELATION"?

*Revelation is a relative concept.
Like beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder.
Like truth, it is subject to interpretation.*

DEFINITION: A Revelation is a truth or understanding revealed from God to man. God's disclosure or manifestation to man of Himself and His will (New World Dictionary).

The word "Revelation" is used 12 times in the New Testament and isn't found in the Old Testament. The Greek word for "Revelation" in the New Testament is "apokalupsis" (Strong's No. 602) and it signifies an "uncovering" and the communication of the knowledge of God to the soul. The word "Reveal" is used in 29 times in the NT and 22 times in the OT. The Greek word "Reveal" is "apokalupto" (Strong's No. 601) and it signifies "to uncover, unveil."

Definitions for the word "Revelation" vary from person to person. What one person deems a Revelation, another may consider as an idea, belief, opinion, brainstorm, concept or theory another has chosen to believe, has bought into, and/or is persuaded is true, right or best. What one person considers as a Revelation, another may consider as the guiding of the Holy Spirit.

Difference in General and Special Revelations

General Revelation is the knowledge of God's existence and basic morality, as well as the knowledge of right and wrong, that can be obtained through nature. Scripture says that non-Christians are provided sufficient general knowledge of God, as well as knowledge of right and wrong, and are without excuse if they act against it.

Paul says people can obtain general knowledge of God in creation. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest [evident] in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen [evident], being understood by the

things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:19-20).

According to Paul, the natural order of morality is innate in humans. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature [instinctively] the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Romans 2:14-15).

Special Revelation, the focus of this article, has been defined as supernatural communication from God that has been given to humanity. It is not innate. The truth revealed by Special Revelation cannot be known by looking at tradition, nature, history, conscience or reasoning.

Revelations Today...in the New Covenant

In the Old Testament, God gave messages to the Prophets and Apostles through special Revelations, dreams, visions, angels, casting of lots, oral and written communication, etc. Some were mysterious future prophecies about Messiah who would come to earth. The children of God expected Revelations given by God's prophets would come to pass and looked forward to the arrival of the promised Messiah.

Revelations of the type received by the prophets in the Old Testament are no longer given in the present covenant or dispensation. In the New Covenant, Jesus promised those who believed in Him would be individually (personally) led by the Holy Spirit, who opens, uncovers, reveals and interprets the Scripture to believers through the Bible.

In the two covenants, God made use of two distinctly different methods: Special Revelation in the old and Illumination in the new. The word "Illumination" describes the New Covenant method where God speaks through the Bible by the Holy Spirit who "guides you into all truth" (John 16:13).

In the New Covenant, Illumination or enlightenment is now found in one place where the Word of God is found, the Bible. Now, spiritual Illumination and interpretation of the Bible come through the Holy Spirit to the reader. "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake IN TIME PAST unto the fathers by the prophets, hath IN THESE LAST DAYS spoken unto us by His Son..." (Hebrews 1:1).

In the past, God spoke through the prophets via Special Revelations, but NOW He speaks to His children "by His Son." Jesus is God's final Revelation to man. "...that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was ONCE delivered unto the saints" (Jude 1:3). The Greek meaning for ONCE in this verse is "once for all" and is a one-time event, with no continuing action that never needs to be repeated. Jesus Words are only found in the Bible (shown in red letters in some Bibles). The Bible is sufficient to show the reader the way to salvation. "The Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salva-tion" (2 Tim. 3:15). The Holy Spirit illuminates the Bible to readers.

Paul provided God's list of ministry positions: "... he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors (shepherds) and teachers" Eph. 4:11. The last prophet was John the Baptist: "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John" (Matt. 11:13). The Workers are Evangelists. Shepherds (pastors) lead, feed and protect the sheep. Teachers instruct, coach and train pupils. Neither Pastors (shepherds) nor Teachers were given authority to rule over others, but rather were to be guides and leaders.

Jeremiah and Isaiah prophesied of a time when there would no longer be human mediators between God and men. Of a time when God's children would not need any man to instruct them in the Lord; a time when God would speak through the Holy Spirit who would guide and teach believers individually (Jeremiah 31:33-34, Isaiah 30:20-21). Of a time when ALL true believers would have God's anointing (2 Corinthians 1:21, 1 John 2:27). That time would be during the New Covenant, which is the present.

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah....I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD" Jeremiah 31:31-34.

"Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" Heb 10:15-16 (citing from Jeremiah 31:33).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" 1 John 2:27 (citing from Jeremiah 31:34).

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" Isaiah 30:21.

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" 2 Cor 1:21-22.

We are living in the times of the New Covenant where "...there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" 1 Tim. 2:5. The Holy Spirit dwells within the heart of each child of God, and believers don't need anyone else to teach them. God has written His laws in their hearts and minds, and the Holy Spirit walks with them, guiding and whispering in their ears which way to turn.

According to Jeremiah and Isaiah, in the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit guides believers INDIVIDUALLY regarding truth (John 16:13). We are unable to determine what the Holy Spirit tells someone else. However, we CAN judge whether or not an alleged Revelation is in line with the Bible, with Biblical precedents and Biblical principles. A true Revelation, Illumination or Inspiration from God will never go against, add to or take from God's Word in the Bible.

God has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus, and His Son's Words are found in the Bible. If your faith in the written Word of God, the Bible, before you accept it as truth, you will likely want to see where an alleged Revelation or interpretation is expressed in at least one other passage to confirm what was revealed to you or to someone else. The Biblical principle of confirmation involved two witnesses. It's wise to thoroughly study and know Jesus' Words, shown in red letter text in some Bibles.

The Foundational Revelation

Peter's Revelation was "Thou [Jesus] art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). This was revealed to Peter and has also been revealed and believed by all Christians thereafter. Jesus told Peter, "Blessed art thou for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven" (Matt 16:17).

Paul's Revelation was: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:1-4).

God gives Christians the Revelation that Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary and Joseph, was the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah and Saviour that the prophets foretold would come to earth and "through his name whosoever **believeth in him** shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43, John 3:16).

What does "believe in Him" mean?

It means that there is one God and His words are contained in the Bible. Men are sinful, separated from God and can do nothing to earn salvation. That Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary and Joseph, is the Son of God, the long promised Messiah, the Christ. That God sent Jesus to earth in the form of man where He lived a perfectly righteous life, died on the cross, was resurrected and ascended to heaven.

That Jesus' actions on earth redeemed and saved mankind from their sins, and reconciled man to God. That Jesus' sacrifice opened heaven to those who repent of their sins, believe in, accept, confess Him as Lord and follow Him. That Jesus provided the only way to God: "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." That the "good news" (gospel) is that if we believe in Him, repent of our sins, trust that Jesus death and resurrection paid for our sins, then we will be saved from the judgment we deserve and receive everlasting life (Acts 10:43, John 3:16).

Each person has a choice to make. Either he will die in his sins or he will trust Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and receive Him personally into his heart.

Verses supporting the details above for "believing in Him" are:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23
For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God... 1 Peter 3:18

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name... John 1:12

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Romans 10:9

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:13

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

Christians believe that God's Way to heaven is through believing in Jesus Christ (John 3:16). The "good news" (gospel) is that all we need to do is believe on His name and we shall be saved from our sins (Acts 10:43). We cannot earn our way into Heaven by doing good works or by being a good person. Salvation is only by God's grace (gift) through faith. "God's Way" is not a method—it is a man: Jesus, period. Christians believe that Jesus' death and resurrection finished the work of redemption and paid the price for the sins of all mankind, which reconciled God with man and saved man from God's wrath.

Christians believe that when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, they open the door of their life, heart and mind to the Holy Spirit, who will "abide with you forever" (John 14:16) and will "guide them into all truth" (John 16:13).

Christians believe that Jesus lived a completely righteous life that was substituted for the sinful lives of mankind. Once a believer accepts Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, He intercedes for them and is the only qualified mediator between God and man.

Every born again Christian has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him/herself. Christians trust in the authority and guiding of the Holy Scripture.

Short Version of Faith statement:

I believe:

That the Bible is the Word of God.

That the promised Messiah was Jesus Christ, who was the Son of God.

That Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, was put to death on the cross, was resurrected and his blood paid for sins of mankind.

I repent of my sins and accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior and will have life everlasting.

Supporting verses for above statement of faith:

Acts 16:31 - And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 10:43 - To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Rom 10:9 - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Romans 10:9

John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Eph 4:4-7 - There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Ephesians 1:17-20 - "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe..."

Most Workers will agree that the above items of faith or belief are necessary for salvation. However, they add stipulations. They believe there is more to it; that Jesus didn't finish the work—he only began it: "... that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1).

From the cross, Jesus proclaimed, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Yet, the Workers believe their sacrificial ministry is necessary to finish the work Jesus began. They have added additional Revelation, commandments and traditions to Jesus' finished work. Some of these additions are the missing Revelation it is implied some don't have or get.

Appeal to Revelation - The God Card

When asked for support in the Bible for a particular belief or practice, if the person knows the answer and doesn't mind telling you the answer, they will answer your question plainly. A simple answer is the easiest way out. However, it's not unusual to be given a "thought stopper" reply to discourage certain or hard questions regarding their church belief system or doctrine.

One of these some Workers use is Appeal to Revelation, such as: "If you had received the Revelation, then you would understand (or see it)." The implication is you are deficient or "less than" because you don't get or have it. If-then statements are verbally abusive attacks. They are a reply, but are not an answer to a sincere question.

Another term used for Appeal to Revelation is "The God Wildcard Fallacy. [It] excuses contradiction in logic or reason by 'divine mystery.' It comes in many forms, and is played when honest questioning leads to absurd or illogical conclusions" (Source: Logically Fallacious by Bo Bennett, p. 226).

Presenting an Appeal to Revelation is used to gain control, to stop the line of questioning, to show who has the power and authority in the conversation and to shame and put down the questioner. An Appeal to Revelation is also an attempt to elevate or boost the Workers' conclusions, preferences or viewpoint, and evade the question for which they have no good

answer. It is difficult to defend yourself against this type diversion, and is best to ignore it and come at your question from a different angle.

Calling a belief a "Revelation" elevates it to a place where it is immune to contrary evidence. It is insinuated that if you can't or don't see it, that proves you don't have or have lost the spirit, your Revelation, your understanding or your vision. It cannot be proven. A stalemate will likely result if both parties take a spiritual high ground claiming they each have knowledge from a Revelation. When the so-called God given Revelations to two individuals are contradictory, it would seem that one or the other is a private interpretation, opinion or preference. Of course, in the 2x2 church, the Workers' Revelation will outrank all others.

Harold Bennett said, "You mean to say that you received divine Revelation that us Workers don't know about?" The scripture does not support the idea that Workers are privy to special Revelation unattainable by the Friends or believers. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to ALL men liberal-ly" (James 1:5).

Does the Scripture say scriptural illumination is confined to a few select people of a certain rank? Or does it say: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost " (2 Pet 1:20-21). "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 3:15).

If you ask a Worker a question and s/he can explain it and provide its scriptural basis, they are usually happy to do so. They don't bring out the God Card because there is no need to. It's times when they cannot come up with a satisfactory scriptural answer that some may make an Appeal to Revelation. It's an evasion, a diversion and a cop-out. The fewer clear supporting scriptural answers there are to a question, the more likely it may become a matter of "Revelation."

To the discerning listener and sincere questioner, the Appeal to Revelation simply doesn't hold water. It's not convincing, satisfactory or acceptable. A reply that doesn't make sense, add up, sound right, click or ring with truth probably doesn't answer your question. It's an excuse to avoid dealing with a question in a spiritually responsible manner and to put the blame on the questioner and an attempt to make them feel bad for asking. The questioner is snookered.

Most Friends and Workers believe the Workers are the only ones qualified to explain the contents of the Bible; that they are God's only true interpreters of the Bible and His will. One of the early Workers, Bill Carroll, Overseer of Victoria, Australia, said the Ws are God's sole interpreters of the Bible. Some believe the way God works is that God reveals things to Workers who reveal them to the people. This is not scriptural.

Some Workers' interpretations and conclusions have been elevated to the status of scripture; and their words are viewed as God speaking through them. Clyde MacKay wrote that questioning him was the same as speaking against God: "And while you think you may have done this to me, Jesus said forasmuch as ye have done it to one of these the least of my

brethren, ye have done it unto me. Just as God said to the children of Israel, ye have not spoken against Moses, but you have spoken against me" (October 25, 1997 Letter to Ross Bowden). This is not scriptural.

The late Overseer, Willis Propp said, "God's servants are the understanding authority of the Word of God" (1979 Olympia Convention). Some Workers have said the scripture isn't the Word of God until spoken by a Worker. Some have declared that the Bible is a dead book unless it is made to live through the mouth of a Worker. Hearing the Workers speak is given far more importance than reading the Bible yourself in the 2x2 church. This is not scriptural either.

The Workers are NOT prophets. God told Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

The people asked: "How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?" God answered: When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him (Deut. 18:18-22).

In other words, the way to tell if a prophet was a true prophet of God was by the message of the prophet. If the prophet's words did not come to pass, then he was not a true prophet. As stated, there are no more prophets of the Old Testament variety, and the Workers are not prophets.

So how can one discern whether a scripture has been accurately interpreted by a Worker? A reliable scriptural test can be applied; that of the Two Witnesses. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor 13:1; John 8:17; Deut. 19:15; 1 Tim 5:19). The scripture does not contradict itself. A rightly interpreted passage will have more than one scripture to confirm it. If it is correct, there will be additional scriptures that confirm the Worker's interpretation. If we find that a

Workers' interpretation of a passage contradicts God's Words in other places in the Scripture, then we can know that interpretation is not trustworthy. The Holy Spirit always reveals truth that harmonizes with the scripture. God is not the author of confusion, and He does not contradict himself. We don't need to fear when we do not believe a man's so-called "Revelation" or any dire predictions against us for not believing it, when we are trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth.

A Worker wrote: "To lose confidence in the ministry would be losing confidence in all we believe..." This is not true. Losing confidence in some Workers' understanding and interpretation of the Bible is not at all the same as losing confidence in God or the Bible. Christians are personally responsible to God for what they believe and do and are only to follow ministers insofar as they follow Christ. As Paul wrote: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1).

Christians believe that they are born again (saved) when they believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the prophesied Messiah (Christ) who died for the sins of mankind and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. They believe in the name of Jesus and His finished work of redemption which paid for the sins of mankind, which reconciled God and man. They accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and king, turn from their sins (repent) and trust and submit their life, heart and mind completely to Him and His teachings expressed in the New Covenant in the Bible. While on earth, the Holy Spirit dwells within them and guides them (John 16:13), and when they die, they believe they will go to heaven.

Friends and Workers believe you "have the vision" when you "see" that their belief system they call "the truth" is God's only right way because they alone follow the true pattern of the original apostles and the early church; because only they have a 2x2 homeless ministry and church in the home with no name, and follow certain required rules and traditions (which have been added by the Workers to the finished work of Jesus' sacrifice). Because they alone do all these things, they firmly believe the Workers are God's only true appointed servants on earth. There is no scripture to support the conclusion there is only one right way to heaven that doesn't mean "Jesus is the way."

The Revelation the Workers want outsiders to "get" is that the Workers are God's Only True Servants and their church is God's Only True Way. This is not a Revelation confirmed in scripture. The Bible says the saving Revelation is to see, believe, accept and trust that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Christ, the sacrificial Lamb that paid for the sins of mankind with His blood sacrifice at Calvary (John 1:1-8; 3:16).

Workers are eager for their converts and followers to become enlightened, to get the vision, the so-called "Revelation" that the Workers are God's only true ministers on earth and that the only way to God, heaven and eternal life is through them. They believe they are the gate through which one must go to enter heaven. In other words, the Workers have a monopoly on salvation. An elderly sister Worker, Edna Blackburn, once remarked that in preaching the gospel, the hardest thing to get across to people was that it was God's only right way

Suggestions for Replies to: Appeal to Revelation

Situation: A 2x2 has asserted that you don't have "the Revelation"...

Don't act the least bit confused or ashamed. First, one needs to learn what the accuser's concept of the word "Revelation" is. Always get the accusatory terms defined clearly.

"Glad you brought that up. Let's talk about Revelation! To communicate clearly, we need to define what the word "Revelation" means to each of us. Would you agree that a Revelation is a truth, understanding or enlightenment revealed by God to a believer in Christ to be saved?"

What Revelation are you referring to? I'm asking for clarification to see if our definitions of Revelation match. The Bible recommends the use of discernment, and supports asking questions to test teachings and practices. So I'm asking you: What Revelation are you referring to?

“What Revelation is it you think I haven’t received?”

“What essential Revelation must one have to become a Child of God?”

Isn’t the ultimate Revelation “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”? This was revealed to Peter and has been revealed to me also. I believe it with all my heart, mind and soul. So what Revelation are you talking about that I never received?

Here’s my Revelation: I admitted I was a sinner, I repented and I’ve turned from my sins. I believe that Jesus Christ died for me on the Cross and rose from the grave, and His death paid for my sins. When I invited Jesus into my life as my Lord and Saviour, I was born again and am now a Child of God. I now trust and submit my life to His control and the New Testament is my standard for living out His will.

It may be difficult for them to put it into words. You might help them along by asking if their “Revelation” is the following four beliefs:

1. That the 2x2 fellowship is God's ONLY right way/church (all others are false)
2. That God only accepts worship in homes (not church buildings)
3. That the Workers are God's only true servants/minister on earth (all others are false)
4. That one must support the ministry in all their decisions--even when the Holy Spirit directs you to do otherwise

Are you saying that the Revelation I don’t have is that I must support all the Workers actions and decisions without question? That’s not what Paul recommended. He wrote: “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1).

So, it’s really not about “Revelation” of God’s way. It boils down to it's YOUR way, or the highway; in other words, be excommunicated.

What’s next if you don’t have “the Revelation” or have “a different spirit?”

You have asked difficult questions? Argued a point with a Worker? Disagreed with a Worker’s decision, interpretation, doctrine or authority? Depending on how widespread, how vocal and how offensive you have displayed your discontent, you may receive (1) a temporary punishment (2) a strong reprimand or (3) a sentencing.

(1) For some offenses, the Workers may not allow you to fully participate in meetings until you have “proved yourself.” The length of proving time is at the Workers’ discretion. You may have married outside, married a divorced person, have become pregnant out of wedlock, or have acted out in an unacceptable manner.

(2) The Workers may conclude that you have “lost your Revelation” (if you ever had it.) However, there is still hope for you. You may be allowed to remain in the fold--PROVIDED you fully accept, comply, obey, and support all the Workers’ decisions, even if they are wrong. You must not cause any trouble, keep quiet about your doubts/questions and not say anything controversial in your testimonies. Being told you’ve lost your Revelation is usually a serious

warning.

(3) If the Workers decide you have “a different spirit,” things are far more serious. This is grounds for being excommunicated, and you will most likely be told not to attend any further meetings. It’s possible you may be able to stop your excommunication, provided you beg to stay and sincerely agree to stop causing trouble and submit to all the Workers’ decisions and requirements without question. You will likely be told to be sure to attend all meetings and may be required to re-profess. A reason given is that “a different spirit” cannot have fellowship with those who have a right spirit. The solution is for the person of a “different spirit” to move on and find somewhere else where they can be satisfied.

If the Workers come to you to pronounce a sentencing or judgment, rest assured the final decision was made beforehand, and approved by their superiors who are waiting in the wings for a report. They prefer there be no witnesses present unless they bring them. Your sentencing will be a kangaroo court where you will probably not face your accusers, there is no jury, no debate, no appeal and you are your only representative. Their goal is to notify you of your excommunication (probably not using that term), and to make sure you understand that it means you’re not to attend any further meetings, except possibly gospel meetings where you cannot speak, of course.

It is not uncommon for others present at the visit to be told not to talk about it. The Friends may be poisoned against the excommunicated person, who is evil spoken of and lied about. The excommunication is justified due to the person having an alleged wrong or different spirit, being unwilling, offended, had a nervous breakdown, etc. Friends may be discouraged from being involved with the person and cautioned they might lose their salvation if they do. The victim is shunned when their fearful friends who unquestioning submit to the Workers’ authority write them off, and act as though they are dead. It is sometimes said this hurtful treatment is done to the victims to cause them to miss the 2x2 fellowship and bring them back. The victim soon learns who their true friends are. Where is compassion?

Even though the victim was forced out, sometimes it is said, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us” (1 John 2:19).

Shunning those who leave the Fellowship has been a fairly standard procedure for a long time (Wm Irvine, Ed Cooney, Joe Kerr, Alberta, Canada, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, etc.) There’s even a sermon on the Telling The Truth website (TTT) by Jack Carroll giving instructions to do so.

LINK: http://www.tellingthetruth.info/Workers_early/carrolls2.php#shunning

The following is how highly the Workers think the Friends should view their authoritarian decisions: “The right thing [is] to respect that decision because of where it has come from and to work with it no matter what our own thoughts might be on the subject...We may think that we are "obeying men" and not "obeying Christ" when we submit to something that seems wrong to our own thinking. However, the scriptures teach so much about submission...We also know that a point could be reached... where, because of some deep conviction before God, we would feel that we could not submit to something that is being asked of us. However, there is also great danger in not submitting and in taking a rebel attitude when the situation doesn't warrant that

extreme position in God's mind. So, I would like to encourage all of you to accept the present situation...Whether the decision is right or wrong, the right thing for all of us is to respect it because of those who have made the judgement. If the decision is wrong, I am sure that the Lord will have ways of correcting that over time. He still is very much on the throne” (Dale Shultz April 12, 1999 Letter). http://www.tellingthetruth.info/Workers_later/shultz.php

If you suspect you may be receiving a notification (kangaroo court) meeting, be sure and (1) record and transcribe the visit--but don't let the Workers know you are doing so. If they know, they may leave without saying why they came. They will still need to advise you of your sentence, but may do so over the telephone, as they are reluctant to be recorded or for there to be anything in writing that could “fall into the wrong hands” or be posted on the internet and that might put them in a bad light. (2) Be sure you have 2-3 witnesses in good standing in meetings on hand, but don't let the Workers know ahead of time. If they object when they see the witnesses are present, point out you are merely following the Biblical precedent found in Matt 17:16: “take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” (3) You might ask the lead Worker if s/he would begin the meeting with a prayer—this confounds them, since they are coming for the purpose of sentencing you to a lost eternity. Be prepared to pray yourself if they refuse, or prepare one of your witnesses to do so.

During this whole process, from beginning to end, keep this in mind. Compare the Workers' words and demeanor with Jesus who said He didn't come to judge the brethren and pass sentence, and He refused to judge between two brothers who came to him. He didn't excommunicate the sheep, He went to find the lost sheep, and He gave his life for the sheep. He was full of compassion for them, including the woman taken in adultery. He did not deny Judas the bread and wine or fellowship all the way through the last supper, even though He knew Judas would betray him. Jesus said, “A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory” (Matt. 12:20).

Remember: No man has the ability to take a believer's salvation from him. Jesus said: “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand” John 10:28-29.

If you're excommunicated, don't fear to firmly say:

“Go your way. I don't need you. You're not my Lord and Savior – Jesus is. He will take care of me.”