

May 20, 2003

From: Marty & Cathy Wooten

To: Brothers and sisters in Christ, especially to the membership of the Central Region of the Los Angeles International Church and the Northern Federation World Sector

Subject: The Termination of Marty and Cathy Wooten

A series of events began to unfold in the Northern Federation World Sector which culminated in what I consider our wrongful and unscriptural termination in September 2002. I have tried to the best of my ability to follow Matthew 18:15-17 to resolve this matter since May 2002.

Matthew 18:15 states, "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you." Jesus directs the person sinned against to take the initiative in resolving the offense. As his final effort (third step) to resolve the offense, this individual is to "tell it to the church." (Matthew 18:17) Since my wrongful and unscriptural termination has not been resolved after following the first two steps of this passage, I have decided to "tell it to the church".

I reviewed how such issues were communicated and dealt with in the first century in order to determine how best to proceed. Paul's letters to the Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians were all directed to the individual members of the church, to those in Christ, called saints. The only mention of leaders in Paul's salutations is found in Philippians 1:1, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons". Clearly, the pattern established in the first century by Paul and the other inspired writers, was to communicate church issues directly to the membership for their consideration and not necessarily through a leadership structure first, and then to the individual member. Paul believed that Christians have the ability to discern the truth in settling disputes. He wrote in 1Cor 6:4, "Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church. I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers?" It is my hope that the church can help us resolve this matter. The balance of this letter provides the details of our termination for your evaluation and consideration.

Reese Neyland and I were appointed WS elders for the Northern Federation World Sector in August 2001. In March 2002, Reese and I drafted and sent out an email to other WS elders and teachers voicing our concerns and to solicit input about the failure of the WSLs to disciple one another and how they seemed reluctant to relinquish control in the decision-making process at the top (see attachment 1). This email upset Marty Fuqua and resulted in his angry outburst. Reese Neyland, Marty Fuqua, and I met in our living room to talk through this conflict. Cathy and I mistakenly thought the matter was resolved.

As an elder, I also attempted to address various dynamics in the Northern Federation discipleship group that I felt were wrong and hurtful. Some of those issues involved the type of leadership dynamic that existed in our fellowship around the world and how I believed the Fuquas had been trained to lead. In my opinion, how the Fuquas viewed people, talked about them, and treated them were serious issues. Also, the Fuquas had a habit of not talking to people face to face about their true feelings, avoiding conflict, then gossiping about them. Cathy and I discussed these things with the Fuquas several times. Reese Neyland and Gregg Marutzky told me on several occasions how afraid they were of Marty Fuqua. They said it was difficult for them to be open with Marty Fuqua because of the threat of losing their jobs. I had personally witnessed how Marty Fuqua dealt with leaders with whom he had trust issues and understood that job loss was a real possibility. I had often felt the same thing. For example, because of fear, I agreed to a meeting I did not feel good about.

In April 1999, soon after Catherine became a Christian, she confessed sin to her discipler. Catherine agreed to speak to Chris Fuqua, but before she was able to get with Chris, Mary Kay Neyland initiated a talk with Catherine about her sin. Chris Fuqua and Catherine's discipler got with Catherine the following day to discuss her sin again. After these talks had already taken place, Marty Fuqua called me and insisted that Catherine meet with him. Cathy and I expressed our reservations about such a meeting, but were given no choice and reluctantly "consented" to the meeting. During the meeting, Marty Fuqua asked Catherine very specific and inappropriate questions about her body. He made other very inappropriate statements to Catherine to "sober" her about her sin. Marty Fuqua shamed and frightened a fourteen-year-old girl. Catherine felt humiliated. Cathy and I deeply regret that we "allowed" this to happen to Catherine. Foolishly, we had no idea how this affected Catherine until three years later.

As a result of this meeting, two years ago in the fall of 2001, Cathy and I met with the McKeans, Bairds, Fuquas, and Neylands to discuss the wrongful way Catherine was dealt with and how the situation in 1999 had been mishandled. In addition, Catherine's confidentiality was breached and her sins were discussed with other leaders, even in other churches, before anyone thought it important to tell us, her parents. We felt our parental authority was violated and the Fuquas and Neylands had judged her and us and had pulled back from their relationship with us. This was very hurtful to Catherine and to us. They expressed their remorse and we had hoped that true repentance had taken place. We now believe that repentance did not occur, as history repeated itself in 2002.

In April 2002, Catherine spoke with John and Nancy Mannel (elder and elder's wife for the North Region) in confidence and expressed openness for their help. It had become obvious that Catherine was going through some serious spiritual and emotional testing. She had lost considerable weight and was very depressed. Later that week Catherine received a phone call from Mike Newman, a brother in the West Region who is a licensed psychologist. She became very distraught and did not understand why Mike Newman called her and had no idea who he was. Cathy immediately called Mike Newman to find out why he called Catherine. Mike apologized to Cathy for his call and said he made a mistake. Mike Newman told Cathy he heard in a counseling session with

a client, another teen in the church, that Catherine might have used drugs. He told Cathy he had already called Al Baird, the Fuquas, and the Neylands, before calling Catherine. Not only did he break his client's confidentiality by calling Catherine to confront her, he did all this without ever calling us, her parents, and without seeking our permission or input to talk to Catherine. We again felt our parental authority was violated and Catherine's confidentiality was once again breached, as it had been three years earlier. Needless to say, this alienated Catherine by further destroying her trust and confidence in leaders, even in professional counselors in the church. As a result of his call, Catherine began to spiral downward emotionally. She became suicidal.

Cathy and I were very concerned for her safety and well being. We asked Catherine if she would be willing to meet with Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham. Mike is the pioneer among the International Churches of Christ for his work in the chemical recovery ministry and is a licensed counselor. Dave is the former leader of the AMS ministry and chemical recovery ministry in LA, also a former addict himself. Catherine agreed to meet with them because she trusted us and wanted help. Catherine was extremely open with them about her struggles. Mike expressed to us that the lack of confidentiality she had experienced had become life threatening to her. As with all of his clients, Mike kept his sessions with her confidential, even from us. We were fine with that, knowing that Catherine was being completely open with him and Dave.

Catherine told us that she had used drugs, but the reason was still unknown to us. We flew to New York so that Mike and Dave could further evaluate Catherine. We willingly followed the advice the Fuquas and Neylands gave us. We made a total of three trips to New York. After our first trip, we gave the Fuquas and Neylands a full report of everything we knew. Mike was very concerned about her depression and suicidal thoughts. He told us he feared Catherine intended to starve herself to death. Unfortunately, the Fuquas and Neylands did not trust Mike's professional evaluation and thought we were in denial of Catherine's "real" problem, drugs. Subsequent trips to New York confirmed Mike's assessment that Catherine had been suffering from depression for many years and had tried to cope with a recent traumatic event by self medication.

In May 2002, Catherine was able to open up to Cathy and me about her traumatic event. In October of 2001, while she was with two girlfriends, Catherine was drugged and raped by a boy from school. He offered to give the three girls a ride home. Knowing he had already drugged Catherine, he took the other girls home first, and then raped her. Because of the effect of the date rape drug, Catherine was unable to move her arms and push him away. It was horrible and humiliating. Unfortunately, as with most rape victims, Catherine experienced uncontrollable feelings of shame, guilt, condemnation, and deep depression. Because her confidentiality was violated in the past she was afraid to get open and used drugs for a few months in an attempt to deal with her depression, pain, and shame. Although she suffered from post-traumatic stress, she continued to come to church until we were terminated. Catherine's fears about the lack of confidentiality in the church and her fear of another confrontation with Marty Fuqua were very real to her. She was also afraid that Cathy and I would lose our jobs

if anyone knew about the rape. Because she felt responsible for our future use in the kingdom, she felt that death was her only way out. When we offered to resign, she begged us not to. Clearly, she was not able to handle so much "responsibility" at that time. Mike Leatherwood felt strongly that Catherine needed more time and counseling to be able to move forward. We kept Catherine's rape confidential because of Mike's advice and because Catherine was not emotionally ready to handle others knowing about it yet. Meanwhile, she continued to seek Mike's help and continued to be open with us. Her sessions with Mike were excruciatingly painful for Catherine. We are eternally grateful for Mike's intervention. Without a doubt, Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham saved her life.

Unfortunately, because Mike has children who are not disciples, John Mannel discouraged us from listening to Mike's advice. Because we continued to seek his help, it was perceived that we were independent, prideful, foolish, and "not willing to be disciplined". In addition, Mike Leatherwood felt Catherine needed further counseling for at least a year or more. Because we could not continue to make trips to New York, he suggested we see Dr. Allan Berger, a well-known psychologist in LA, for further counseling. Dr. Berger saw Catherine and our family a number of times. He was extremely helpful to all of us personally and as a family. He agreed with Mike's assessment of Catherine's diagnoses and also felt she did not require drug rehab. Because we followed Mike Leatherwood's advice regarding Catherine's needs and sought help for Catherine outside of the church, this was also perceived as "unspiritual and independent" and again we were labeled as "not willing to be disciplined".

On May 13, 2002, Cathy and I were put on a two-month leave of absence with no prior discussion with us. Although we were grateful for the time to focus on our family, we were excluded from the decision-making process. As an elder and elder's wife, we were a part of the Northern Federation consensus group and had expected to reach a decision together to determine the best course of action. Instead, I was informed about the leave of absence and that I was permanently relieved of my responsibilities as a teacher and GSL. Marty Fuqua made it clear in the meeting that I was being relieved because of the bad example of my family.

I was angry because I felt Marty Fuqua had another agenda with me and wasn't being open with his real feelings. Three days later, Cathy met with Chris Fuqua, who told her that she and Marty Fuqua felt that I was in a "power struggle" for control of the Northern Federation. I met with Marty Fuqua later the same day. He told me that he didn't trust me, that he hadn't trusted me for years, (back to the Crossroads church days - over 20 years ago), and that because of his distrust, he took away the twenty Great Plains churches from me so that I would have "no place to land". Neither Marty nor Chris had spoken to us before about their trust issues and we were not allowed to discuss them before our termination.

In July 2002, Mike Leatherwood flew to LA to meet with the Fuquas and Neylands and, with Catherine's permission, told them about her rape. He tried to help them understand about her preexisting depression and what the rape did to her emotionally; how it "threw her over the edge". We felt their understanding about Catherine's real mental health issues

was important. Marty Fuqua had told us that, "if Catherine was doing well spiritually, she would be happy". Getting happy is not so simple for those who have been raped. We felt he did not understand depression and post-traumatic stress, particularly regarding rape, and had a very narrow-minded and ignorant view of mental and emotional health issues. Mike knew this and urged them to love her unconditionally because outside of himself, the Grahams, and us, they were the only others who knew about her rape. He stressed that their unconditional love was key to her recovery. He informed them that Catherine was drug free and had begun to gain weight. From his perspective, his intervention was successful (see attachment 4). Because they were concerned about her spiritual condition, the Fuquas and Neylands asked Mike where he felt Catherine was spiritually. He explained to them that, in his opinion, "Catherine was doing better spiritually now than she ever had and that she was earnestly seeking an honest and real relationship with God".

Following the talk, no one made any attempts to reach out to her and offer her grace or acceptance. Marty Fuqua even told me that "hearing about Catherine's rape was informative, but it made no difference in what he thought of her spiritual condition". Catherine's courage and openness was met with only further judgment and condemnation. The hurt that Catherine feels from the men who claimed to be like fathers to her is exceedingly great. She feels betrayed, judged, and condemned. We feel the Fuquas and Neylands shamed her and effectively slammed the doors of the kingdom in her face. Since being treated by Mike Leatherwood and Dr. Allan Berger, Catherine has also been evaluated and treated by Dr. Richard Atkins, a child psychiatrist, and her therapist, Dr. Barbara Waldman. These four professionals feel strongly that Catherine was severely damaged by the treatment she received at the hands of the leadership in the church. In Dr. Berger's words, "they psychologically raped her." They have all offered to speak with Marty Fuqua and Reese Neyland about their perspective from a medical and emotional point of view and have even offered to speak on Catherine's behalf in a court of law, if necessary.

Although we tried to initiate several additional discussions with the Fuquas and Neylands, we were unsuccessful. Without further meetings with us after the July 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with Mike Leatherwood, the Fuquas and Neylands called us to a meeting with the Northern Federation discipleship group on September 6, 2002. The group informed us that they had already reached the unanimous decision that I was no longer qualified to be an elder, teacher, or GSL. Again there was no prior discussion with us, and outside of the Fuquas and Neylands, no one from the group knew about Catherine's rape. In addition, other than the Fuquas, Neylands, and Mannels, no one else from the group had even spoken to Cathy and me since April 2002, and yet, they took part in the unanimous decision to disqualify me for these three roles.

At Al Baird's suggestion, we asked for outside mediators to help us resolve what we felt was a wrong decision and to help address the fear in the group to disagree with Marty Fuqua. Our request further angered Marty Fuqua and resulted in his decision not to pay for anyone's expenses and in setting an unreasonable date for the invited brothers to meet with us, only one week later (see attachment 2). The group also decided it was necessary to inform the invited brothers that their decision about my disqualification was firm and unchangeable. In

response to the September 6<sup>th</sup> Northern Federation email, I sent an email to the brothers to plead for their help (see attachment 3). The group viewed my email to these brothers as divisive. To our disappointment, no one came. Mike Leatherwood, unable to come, sent a letter to be read at the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting (see attachment 4).

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, Cathy and I were asked to come to John and Nancy Mannel's home. We met with the Fuquas and Mannels alone. They informed us that the group had decided to terminate us and that they did not want us to be in any of the churches in the Northern Federation, which included the Metro super region. As a result, we decided to worship in other regions of the LA church. However, after the February 2003 announcement to the Central region Bible Talk leaders, we felt we should return to the Central region because we did not want the brothers and sisters to be further misled and hurt by the false statements regarding our "very serious spiritual condition" (see attachment 5). This announcement is both slanderous and incorrect. Al Baird, Bruce Williams, and we were all unaware that this announcement was going to be made, and consequently, none of us had the opportunity to review its contents. Al and Bruce confronted Marty, Reese and Jon Augustine about the announcement and its contents. As a result of their conversation, Marty Fuqua, Reese Neyland and Jon Augustine apologized to me for making a very hurtful and damaging announcement. However, this has never been corrected publicly.

In November 2002, Tom McCurry and John Mannel met with Cathy and me in our home. Tom told us the events that led to our termination from his perspective. He stated, in John Mannel's presence, that Marty Fuqua resented our involvement in attempting to resolve conflict in relationships in the Northern Federation and for my involvement in discussions with other WS elders about "kingdom issues" (see attachment 1). Tom said this added to Marty Fuqua's perception that I was trying to "take over" and "run the Northern Federation". He stated that Marty Fuqua was fearful that I was "trying to get rid of him as the WSL" and that Marty Fuqua believed I was in a "power struggle for control of the Northern Federation". Tom said, "I've heard Marty Fuqua say it. I can quote it. 'Marty Wooten is out to get me'. It became you versus Marty Fuqua and that was the end of that". He told us Marty Fuqua made these statements in his presence. Marty Fuqua never talked to me about his unfounded fears or trust issues prior to our leave of absence. Lastly, Tom stated that "the straw that broke the camel's back" was an alleged conversation that took place between Maria Fuqua and Catherine. In that conversation, the Fuquas believed that Catherine was trying to "pull Maria away". Tom said as a result of their understanding of Maria and Catherine's conversation, Marty and Chris Fuqua decided to "pull away from, to withdraw from, to get rid of Marty Wooten" in April 2002, before my leave of absence in May 2002.

The conversation between Maria and Catherine happened in April 2002. When Reese mentioned the conversation to me, I encouraged Reese to talk to Catherine to get her side of the discussion before drawing any conclusions. He never did and we heard nothing about it from the Fuquas at all. We later learned in the "resolution meeting" in March 2003, that Reese sought advice about this from Bruce Williams a year ago. Bruce instructed him last year to get the two girls together to find out what was actually said. Reese did not follow the advice Bruce gave him. We believe the reason Reese did nothing, was because, in

Tom's words, the Fuquas had already made the decision to "get rid of us".

To hear in November 2002, that these were the real issues behind our termination is extremely hurtful and wrong. We have no reason to disbelieve Tom. He is a known trusted advisor and confidant to Marty Fuqua. Because these were the "real" issues behind our termination, we feel that Catherine's struggles conveniently provided Marty Fuqua with the means for our dismissal. We believe that Marty Fuqua used Catherine and her weakness to get rid of us and silence our voice in the Northern Federation World Sector. Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham also confirm this in their written statements (see attachments 4, 6 and 7). We feel that the leadership of the LA church is unwilling to deal with this because they are either in denial or are simply unwilling to acknowledge the sins involved in this cover up.

Cathy and I are alarmed with the deception, hypocrisy, and dishonesty in some of our leaders. The following information may also be helpful in understanding this statement and the additional reasons we were terminated. Reese and Mary Kay Neyland had been leading a family group in the Glendale sector. To his credit, Reese adopted many of the principles found in the CR ministry to facilitate an open and close group dynamic among the brothers. Reese courageously confessed to the brothers in his family group that he had used Skoal (smokeless tobacco, a very strong amphetamine) for a period of thirty years and that it involved daily use; Reese even admitted to using it in the pulpit while preaching. Reese did not tell me he confessed this to his group.

When Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham were in LA in April 2002 to help Catherine, Reese met with them and confessed to them his drug use and also his "sexual behavior" (see attachments 6 and 7). Reese expressed to them his fear of Marty Fuqua, stating that Marty Fuqua would never "understand". They encouraged Reese to tell Marty Fuqua and me. They also encouraged Reese to seek help from the CR ministry in the South Central region with Will Ashley and invited Reese to come to New York so they could evaluate him for treatment. I was unaware that Reese had this conversation with Mike and Dave.

In May 2002, Reese came to my home and confessed that he was a "casual" user of tobacco and that "Brother X (a brother who has asked to remain anonymous) wasn't doing well spiritually and was making a big deal out of nothing". I thought Reese was referring to his casual use of cigars and mistakenly thought little about it until I saw Brother X and Marty Fuqua in what appeared to me to be a "heated" exchange at church a week later. When I asked Marty Fuqua what their conversation was about, he told me that Reese had confessed sin to "the wrong people", meaning the brothers in Reese's family group. The next day, I called Brother X to find out what the conversation was about. Brother X told me about Reese's confession to the group and that he subsequently met with Reese privately to ask him to seek help from the CR ministry. Reese told him that he was already getting help from the guys in New York because "they were more qualified". Later, in June 2002, I again heard Reese confess to the Northern Federation (men's) discipleship group about his "casual" use of tobacco. John Mannel was present in the meeting and heard Reese make this statement. In my opinion, a thirty-year history with a known amphetamine involving daily use is not "casual" use. In addition, Reese never followed up with Mike and Dave or sought further

input or help from them. In fact, Mike called him at least once to follow up with him (see attachment 6). Reese did not return his call. I believe Reese deliberately misled Brother X by falsely telling him he was seeking help from Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham.

I spoke to Reese about my concerns on May 27, 2002. I challenged him and told him that I thought he was a hypocrite and a liar. I felt it particularly hypocritical for Reese to consider Catherine a "fallaway" after a few months of drug use when he used extensively for a period of thirty years. It was my contention as it is now, if I am not qualified to serve as an elder because of Catherine, then on what basis can Reese continue to serve as an elder when his problems were more serious? From that day on, Reese refused to meet with me alone until after I was terminated.

Two years ago, Sister X (Brother X's wife who has asked to remain anonymous) confronted Reese about his use of Skoal when his name came up for the eldership; he lied to her and told her he had already stopped using, which he had not. Two weeks after Reese lied to her, she and her husband went to the Bairds to express their concerns about Reese's addiction issues and about his lie. Their concerns fell on deaf ears.

In September 2002, Cecil Wooten spoke to Brother and Sister X and subsequently met with Reese to confront him about his lie to Sister X two years ago. Reese was very defensive with Cecil. Following his talk with Reese, Cecil spoke with John Mannel about his conversation with Reese and gave John the information he learned from Brother and Sister X. After John Mannel spoke with Brother and Sister X, John suggested to Reese that he apologize to her. Reese obeyed and apologized to Sister X for being "deceitful" two years prior.

On January 7, 2003, several brothers and sisters from Reese's family group, Cecil Wooten, Cathy and I met with the Bairds to attempt to resolve our concerns about Reese's addiction issues and his integrity. We all felt Reese lied about his drug use two years ago and that Reese is still lying about it. At the conclusion of the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, Al determined that Reese had indeed lied to Sister X two years ago, that Reese's problem with Skoal was "serious" and "sinful", and that his use of cigars was casual.

In the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, referring to his April 2002 discussion with Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham, Reese claimed they expressed "little or no real concern" about his addictions and that "they offered him no help" because they were not concerned. Reese made these statements before several witnesses. Only days later, we furnished Al with statements from the six witnesses present in the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting who also heard Reese's statements and separate letters from Mike and Dave stating they expressed to Reese in April 2002, that they were concerned and alarmed about Reese's addiction issues and his lack of openness (see attachments 6 and 7). Al refused to talk about Reese or to even discuss Reese's additional lie of January 2003 in our subsequent March "resolution meeting". Dave Graham was even present in the meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup>. The statements from the six witnesses, the letters from Mike Leatherwood and Dave Graham, and even Dave Graham's presence in the meeting, quite frankly, didn't make a bit of difference to Al. Al says that the situation regarding Reese is "not resolvable" and he

wants it dropped. Al did nothing about Reese's sin two years ago. We feel (and others feel) that neither Al nor Bruce is willing to address Reese's lack of integrity. Reese also refused to discuss these issues further in the meetings. Reese lied about his addiction issues two years ago and we believe he is still lying about them. Reese slandered Brother X repeatedly in his attempt to minimize his own sin. Needless to say, we do not feel resolved about Reese's integrity and believe him to have repeatedly lied. We are alarmed that the leaders, who are aware of this, are protecting him, while Catherine is labeled a "fallaway". Catherine makes no excuse for her bad decisions. She was a seventeen-year-old girl who tried unsuccessfully to deal alone with her rape. Reese is a forty-six year old elder in the church who used a drug for thirty years to deal with his own issues. We feel this is hypocritical and a double standard. We are not asking that Reese be given less grace for his sin, but why wasn't grace also given to Catherine? In addition, even though it was clear to everyone present in the room on January 7<sup>th</sup>, that Reese lied two years ago, because the lie occurred before he was an elder, Al, Bruce, and John feel that Reese is still qualified to be in a shepherding role. I, on the other hand, was terminated from my roles for challenging authoritative and harsh leadership, hypocrisy and deceit.

Lastly, we feel that the Northern Federation discipleship group is not facing up to the truth of what the real issue was and why and how they decided to terminate us. In our last meeting on April 18, 2003, they claimed that Catherine was never the "issue" for my disqualification. They further claimed that the unanimous decision to disqualify me for the role of elder, teacher, or GSL never happened. They claimed they disqualified me for the role of elder **only**, and when I fought that decision, they were forced to terminate me a week later because of my "lack of humility in not submitting to their decision". They also claimed that the email sent by Tom McCurry was a "mistake" (attachment 2). Tom said it should have stated that the group disqualified me for the eldership **only**, instead of what it does say, for all three roles. Tom explained to us that it was a "mistake" because they hadn't done what the email, in fact, stated they did. Cathy and I strongly disagree and believe that this statement about elder disqualification **only** contradicts the evidence and is not true. The email sent by Tom McCurry in September 2002 and even the February 2003 announcement (attachment 5), drafted 5 months later, both clearly state the decision they actually made; the Northern Federation discipleship group "unanimously" disqualified me for all three roles simultaneously. I was informed of their decision on September 6, 2002. They had already unanimously determined and informed us, that because the role of teacher and GSL were "shepherding roles", the qualifications of an elder applied to these roles as well. Since I was disqualified to be an elder, they disqualified me from the other roles as well. In the September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, Catherine was the "issue" for my disqualification. Since they now claim that Catherine was not the issue, then what disqualified me from the eldership? I believe I was disqualified from my roles and subsequently terminated because of Marty Fuqua's unfounded trust issues with me and because I challenged his abuse of authority and how he treated people, and Reese Neyland's hypocrisy and deception. In the April 18<sup>th</sup> resolution meeting, I asked Reese and Bruce, if it is true then that the Northern Federation **only** disqualified me for the role of elder, am I still a teacher? I asked Reese if I could teach in the Central region. He told me "no, because

he didn't trust me." If Reese still doesn't trust me, am I right to assume, he is not resolved with me either?

Cathy and I have the attached documentation and more for what we reveal in this letter. We have tried to the best of our ability to follow Matthew 18 to resolve this conflict in a biblical manner. We feel that it is time now to "tell it to the church". This is especially important as Marty Fuqua and Reese Neyland were recently appointed to the role of Central region leader and elder, respectively. It was our hope that these appointment decisions would not have been made before we resolved our termination issues. Cathy and I have tried to defend the needs of the "weak" for many years and believe we have loved and faithfully served the brothers and sisters in the Central region and the Northern Federation World Sector. What is challenging to us is that the "weak" in this case is our daughter, Catherine. We feel she was wrongfully and sinfully dealt with. We feel we were wrongfully terminated and slandered. We are asking for public acknowledgement and apology to her, to us, and to our other children. Since the Northern Federation email (attachment 2) and the February 2003 announcement to the Bible Talk leaders in the Central region (attachment 5), we feel that it is more hurtful and wrong for the brothers and sisters not to hear our side of the story. It is our hope that you will see the "real" issues involved and raise the necessary questions to establish the truth behind our wrongful and unscriptural termination.

In the event you would like to discuss these things with us or have any questions, please call or email us. Cathy can be reached by phone at 818-790-0182 or by email at [cathywooten@hotmail.com](mailto:cathywooten@hotmail.com). I can be reached by phone at my office at 818-790-7591 or by email at [martinwooten@yahoo.com](mailto:martinwooten@yahoo.com).

Much love,

Marty & Cathy Wooten

Marty Wooten

To: MartyFuqua/LA/ICC@ICOC  
cc: rneyland@sprintmail.com

03/03/2002 09:13 AM Subject: World Sector Elders' Letter

TO: Sam Powell, Jim Blough, Ron Brumley, Dave Weger, Bruce Williams, Gordon Ferguson, and Wyndham Shaw.

Dear Fellow Elders:

We are writing to solicit your input on a matter that we believe warrants some discussion among us with the hope of reaching some resolution. We are personally concerned with the lack of involvement of the World Sector Elders (WSEs) in the decisions/meetings of the World Sector Leaders (WSLs). Issues involving retirement, the McKeans, and other financial and ministry issues were discussed at the most recent WSL meeting and will be discussed again in May and November. As far as we know there are no plans for our involvement in any of the upcoming meetings. At the recent meeting of the WSLs and Kingdom Teachers (KTs) in January, various issues were discussed: relationships between elders and evangelists, leadership in the early church, the biblical concept of consensus leadership, and the need for the WSEs and WSLs to have more interaction at the decision making level. Though no decision was made at that time concerning how to implement more involvement, the general feeling was that it was a good idea. At the earlier meeting with the WSEs and KT's in November, we also discussed the need for more involvement at the top.

We certainly do not want to be negative, but in light of the recent events concerning the McKeans, their ministry style, serious financial issues in the movement; the lack of discipling in the lives of the McKeans over many years, it is very difficult to accept a continuation of the same leadership dynamic that has resulted in many of the challenges now facing the church. We do not believe the WSL group has a successful history of discipling each other, and without a more biblical leadership dynamic, that is, more involvement of those designated as overseers of the church, it is hard to imagine that the future will be much different. At present, we are in the mode of being informed about the decisions that are made, rather than, the more appropriate establishment of a consensus dynamic between the WSLs and WSEs. It is very difficult, in our opinion, to fulfill the role of overseers if we continue in the position of being excluded from helping make important decisions. There appears still to be a strong aversion to the proper scriptural role for elders in our movement a result of the not so distant past. Also, given the current structure, it seems clear that the wives of WSLs have more to do with the decisions at the top than elders who have been given the charge by God to oversee the church.

Though appreciative of the invitation for the WSEs and KT's to meet in Philadelphia in June, we feel it inappropriate to wait. Two WSLs meetings will have taken place and it will have been 7 months since the last WSEs meeting. The fact that there has not been more discussion over these matters shows that the WSLs still in many ways do not realize the correlation between the severity of the current problems and the leadership dynamic of the WSL group; which, from the input we have received, has tarnished heir, example as a leadership group. We believe that they have operated in such a mode for so long that, though they recognize the serious problems with Kip, decisive action has been slow in coming. There needs to be more recognition that what Kip set up was partially for his own purpose of gathering his "Timothys" around him, and though helpful at the beginning of our movement, needs to be seriously evaluated and brought more in line with the biblical role of elders and a more biblical leadership structure as a whole.

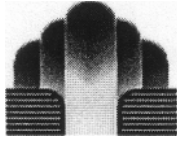
ATTACHMENT 1 PAGE 1

We believe that if we are not persistent in inserting ourselves into these discussions we will not be included. We believe our participation in decision making will help restore a lost confidence and trust in the leadership of the church and bring about a greater unity. Is it unreasonable to expect that we be included? Are we satisfied with being in the role of potential advisors rather than overseers who participate in the decision making? If expanding the group would involve too many people, wouldn't be more expedient for the sisters not to attend rather than the elders? There are many more questions to raise and much more that needs to be said, but we will wait for your response to determine if any more communication is prudent. We propose, along with some e-mail discussion, a meeting with at least the brothers receiving this memo (the older brothers of the WSEs) for some discussion on these matters. The only hope that we see for making some of these changes is that we stand united as a body of elders.

Let us hear from you. We look forward to the discussion. We suggest that we all use the "reply to all" option on our e-mails so that everyone can be part of the discussion

Your brothers,

Marty Wooten and Reese Neyland  
Elders, Northern Federation World Sector



Tom McCurry

09/06/2002 03:53 PM

To: Gordon Ferguson/BOSTON/ICC@ICOC, Wyndham Shaw/NEW ENGLAND/HOPE@HOPEWW, AI Baird/LA/ICC@ICOC, Jim Blough/DC/ICC@ICOC, Robert GempeI/Worldwide/HOPE@HOPEWW, Sam Powell/NEWYORK/ICC@ICOC, Gregg Marutzky/GreatSouthUS/ICC@ICOC, John Mannel/LA/ICC@ICOC, Mark Mancini/LA/ICC@ICOC, rneyland@ucd.net@ICOC, Andy Fleming/LA/ICC@ICOC, Bruce Williams/LA/ICC@ICOC, [dburnettgraham@aol.com](mailto:dburnettgraham@aol.com)

cc: Marty Fuqua/LA/ICC@ICOC, Marty Wooten/LA/ICC@ICOC

Subject: Meeting on Friday, September 13 per Marty Wooten's Request

Brothers, the Northern Federation Discipleship group, consisting of Marty and Chris Fuqua, John and Nancy Mannel, Mark Mancini (Connie was not present), Reese and Mary Kay Neyland, Gregg and Cathy Marutzky, and Tom and Etta McCurry met together today with Marty and Cathy Wooten. The group, after a time of prayer and sharing of appreciation for the Wooten's and an in-depth discussion of the qualifications for the eldership from I .Timothy, Tutus, and I Peter, informed Marty and Cathy that they no longer believe that Marty and Cathy are qualified to serve in the position of Elder or Teacher or Geographic Sector Leader. Marty and Cathy then responded to this decision and discussed their concerns about the decision and the discipleship group.

Marty Wooten requested that a meeting be held with respected brothers outside of the Northern Federation discipleship group to discuss his concerns about Marty Fuqua's leadership of the group and the "dysfunctional" relationships within the group. Marty Fuqua agreed with this request and asked me to send you this memo to invite you to the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to be held next Friday, September 13, at 10 a.m. at Tom and Etta McCurry's house at '549 Camino Verde, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

Please confirm with Marty Fuqua (626) 799-8386 if you can attend this meeting. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints in our World Sector, Northern Federation is unable to provide funding for air transportation to this meeting, since, as you can tell from the list above, this would amount to a large sum of money. Based on counsel we have received, we are making every effort to resolve this matter quickly. This explains the reason for the short notice for this meeting. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Please pray for us and the Wooten's as we work through this difficult time.

ATTACHMENT 2

Marty Wooten  
09/06/2002 11:47 PM

To: Gordon Ferguson/BOSTON/ICC@ICOC, Wyndham Shaw/NEWENGLAND/HOPE@HOPEWW, AI Baird/LA/ICC@ICOC, Jim Blough/DC/ICC@ICOC, Sam Powell/NEWYORK/ICC@ICOC, Andy Fleming/LA/iCC@ICOC, Bruce Williams/LA/ICC@ICOC, Robert Gempel/Worldwide/HOPE@HOPEWW, [dburnettgraham@aol.com](mailto:dburnettgraham@aol.com) cc: Marty Fuqua/LA/ICC@ICOC, Mark Mancini/LA/ICC@ICOC, Gregg Marutzky/GreatSouthUS/ICC@ICOC, John Mannel/LA/ICC@ICOC, TomMcCurry/LA/ICC@ICOC, neyland@ucd.net@icoc

Subject: Meeting on Friday, September 13

Dear Brothers,

We feel the need to follow-up the letter sent to you by Tom McCurry informing you of Cathy and my request for a meeting to help us resolve what we consider to be serious dysfunction in our group. It is our intention to openly discuss the issues and work towards the unity that God wants for his church. We feel that your attendance is imperative to help get to the truth of how leadership should approach the decision making process and uphold the integrity of the elder's role. Cathy and I feel that unless you attend another meeting would not be productive. As you know, there has been a tremendous amount of leadership turmoil here in LA for a number of years and we believe an outside perspective is necessary to help the Northern Federation churches stay unified with themselves and particularly with the rest of the kingdom. If I am not qualified to serve as an elder or teacher then I would like to be shown the biblical basis rather than the primary reason being distrust because I have chosen to express my concerns about how many people have been treated in our group and in our churches. Cathy and I want to help foster an open environment among our consensus group without the accusation of disloyalty and the threat of dismissal which as been a consistent pattern. There are many other serious issues that need to be brought to the table as well which have only recently come to my attention by other brothers and sisters which will bear much light on the situation. If your ministry cannot afford it, Dad has offered to pay for any of your expenses. He will also be attending the meeting to share some of his insights into our situation.

Along with confirming with Marty Fuqua, please let me know as well whether you can attend. It will mean a lot to Cathy and me if you are there.

Much love  
Marty and Cathy

ATTACHMENT 3

From the desk of  
Mike Leatherwood, MA, MSW, LSW

September 11, 2002 [added]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

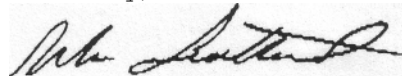
I wanted to take a few minutes to explain why I chose not to attend the meeting. First of all, I've begun my private counseling practice in NYC. Last week was my first week to have a full slate of clients on Thurs. and Fri. It would be very difficult to reschedule or cancel that many people on short notice. Secondly and more importantly, I feel that I need to be honest with you about my experience with the Wootens, Fuguas and Neelands. When I was initially contacted to come out to LA, it was to help evaluate Katherine's drug use and offer suggestions for treatment. Although Katherine's use of drugs had only extended over an 8-month period, the consequences of her use were serious. I felt that the initial interview reflected a need for inpatient treatment. Since X's [added] daughter was in treatment at Betty Ford, John, Lieberman, a brother who works at Promises, suggested two other programs. One of those was in Pennsylvania, which would have put Katherine close to the Grahams, and me, and the other was near Seattle, which seemed to be the best for X [added].

After the Wootens arrived here in New York, and I was able to spend three other sessions with Katherine, I became very concerned about her mental state. She manifested clear symptoms of a major depression. The depression was so serious that I thought at one point of suggesting hospitalization. It was clear to me that, while at some point Katherine needed to address her substance abuse issues, the immediate cause for concern was depression.

I suggested that the Wootens either return here to New York for the summer so that I could treat Katherine, or that she find someone, like Dr. Berger in LA, who could treat her depression and monitor her abuse of substances, The Wootens decided to remain in LA and to see Dr. Berger, which I wholeheartedly supported. My diagnosis was confirmed by Dr. Berger who has not felt that Katherine needed inpatient treatment. Today, I am delighted to say that Katherine is better. Her mental state has improved; she has gained weight, and all indications are, that she is remaining drug free.

I felt that my intervention was successful, and I expected everyone to be excited that Katherine was better. While I am sure that the Fuguas and Neylands were not disappointed that Katherine's condition had improved, it appeared to me, after our last meeting that they had had another agenda. I believe that the plan all along had been to use Katherine's situation as a way of removing Marty and Kathy from their position in the World Sector. I am not interested in returning to have any further discussion with the Fuguas and Neylands because I do not feel that they dealt in good faith with me. I am very disappointed in what I feel was an effort to manipulate me and the mandate that I had regarding Katherine to serve their agenda. It saddens me to think that this young girl's mistakes and illness would be used to serve what, in my opinion, was some political or personal agenda.

Sincerely,



Mike Leatherwood

ATTACHMENT 4

Harvey Woodford  
02/04/2003 11:39 AM

To: Cecil Wooten/LA/ICC@ICOC cc: Tom McCurry/LA/ICC@ICOC Subject; Announcement  
Hello Cecil.

Tom McCurry asked me to forward to you the announcement that was read to the Bible Talk Leaders concerning Marty and Cathy. I attach it below.

Please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions regarding this.

In April 2002 Marty and Cathy Wooten were given a leave of absence from all ministerial duties to focus on some spiritual issues.

After six months on leave, the Northern Federation leadership group unanimously determined that Marty was no longer qualified to serve in the shepherding role of Elder or as Geographic Sector Leader or Teacher in the Northern Federation World Sector.

Because of Marty and Cathy's spiritual condition, the Northern Federation lost confidence in the Wootens' ability to continue to be effective in their ministerial roles and subsequently terminated their employment.

We have delayed for many months to make this announcement out of a desire to be wise in our actions and sensitive to the Wooten family. This has been a troubling and disappointing time for the Central Region and for us. We appreciate your patience and continued prayers.

We understand that Marty and Cathy have chosen to attend services in other Regions of the LA Church. Al Baird and Bruce Williams have been and are still involved in helping the Wootens work through these very serious spiritual issues.

If anyone has any additional questions on this please feel free to talk to Marty Fuqua, Reese Neyland or Tom McCurry directly.

We ask that we all continue to pray for the Wootens.

ATTACHMENT 5

To whom it may concern:

March 2, 2003

In order for the church to grow, God's word is clear that we must speak the truth in love. I want all the interested parties to know that in my heart of hearts I am endeavoring to write this in that spirit of love and truth in the hope that the church might be restored to the health that God intends.

David Graham and I initially came to L.A. to help in evaluating Catherine Wooten for possible drug treatment. Immediately after that initial session with Catherine, Reese Neyland, the Fuduas, and the Mannels, Reese asked to meet privately with David and me in order to address some of his own issues. Reese admitted to having an addiction to smokeless tobacco during the time he had been serving in the ministry for the L. A. Church. He also discussed having formed a small support group of disciples without Marty Fuqua's knowledge in which he had begun to open up about his sexual behavior. Some in the group had become so concerned with Reese that they had taken some of these concerns to others outside of the group.

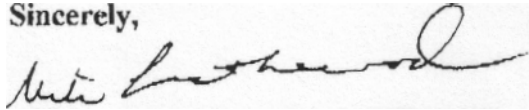
David and I did not do a full evaluation regarding the extent of Reese's nicotine use, but we were both concerned enough to recommend that he attend Will Ashley's CR group as a way of insuring that the issue with nicotine was really being treated and not just minimized and swept under the carpet. We also expressed alarm that he was keeping these things from Marty Fuqua. We suggested that the first thing he should do is tell Marty Fuqua everything. The first step in recovery is to admit everything with total openness and honesty. David suggested that he call Dr. Allen Berger, a psychologist who specializes in addiction and works in conjunction with the Betty Ford Center. We also suggested that it might be highly beneficial for him to come to New York for a few days where we could evaluate his situation more thoroughly. I made at least one other attempt to contact Reese regarding these issues, but he did not return my call. As far as I know, Reese did not accept our recommendation to attend Will's group or to seek further help.

As we got with Catherine over the next few months, it became apparent that her primary problem was a clinical depression and that drugs were being used in a secondary way to treat a deep sense of worthlessness, I was disturbed that in several discussions with Reese about Catherine's condition, Reese got very angry. The anger confused me at first, but over time e it has become my opinion that Reese's own undealt with issues were a part of his reaction in our sessions regarding Katherine. I believe the intent in enlisting us to come to LA was to give the Neylands and the

Fuqua's justified reason to marginalize the Wootens' influence and to ultimately remove them from leadership as elders and GSL's.

I am deeply saddened and disillusioned, as I stated before, that Reese and Martv Fuqua would use their power and position to exploit Catherine's condition and manipulate our good intentions in order to achieve their own personal agenda. It is my opinion that the church would be better served by the resignation of both Marty Fuqua and Reese Neyland. I also believe that their souls might well be at stake unless there is a lengthy period of time in order for them to deeply evaluate their lives and motives as leaders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Leatherwood", written over a light-colored rectangular background.

**Mike Leatherwood, MS, MSW, LSW.**

ATTACHMENT 6

PAGE 2 OF 2

To whom it may concern;

March 6, 2003

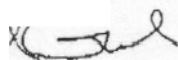
I am writing this letter to confirm that I am in complete agreement with Mike Leatherwood's letter. I too am saddened and disappointed with the lack of love, compassion, and empathy shown for the entire Wooten family. Having been through 2 ½ years of my own personal recovery from drug addiction, I understand the denial, shame, guilt, anger, manipulation, confusion, and pain involved. It is not easy. I can only imagine how hard it would be for a teenager to go thru this process in an environment of condemnation and shame.

As Mike and I sat there with Catherine and listened to her story, both of us were moved to tears. We both felt her pain. I couldn't believe that men and women of God, claiming to be followers of Jesus Christ had treated her this way. There seemed to be very little understanding and much resentment held over from an incident that had happened 3 years prior. Jesus never shamed anyone intentionally. He told the truth, but with love, compassion, patience, kindness, and with a total desire to forgive. In fact, two-thirds of all of his teachings are on forgiveness. Without forgiveness, we buy into the shame and honor system and our religion becomes pure religiosity.

Brother X [added] phoned Mike and me at the hotel in L.A. and told us he needed to talk to us about something very important. He came over and expressed his concern about Reese Neyland. He was a friend of Reeses' and was in the private group that Reese was involved with. He felt like Reese was in total denial about the seriousness of his problems. Brother X had some strong convictions on the nicotine, alcohol, and sexual problems (addictions) that Reese was battling.

Mike and I were both alarmed at the apparent lack of true relationship within the group. As the months progressed, we found it unacceptable that nothing was being done to help the Wooten family. They were treated as if they had the plague. To my knowledge teens were advised to "be careful around Catherine."

Sincerely



David Graham

ATTACHMENT 7