

9-19-1969

From/To: Jim Patterson (Chalk's reply filed first)

Jim Patterson

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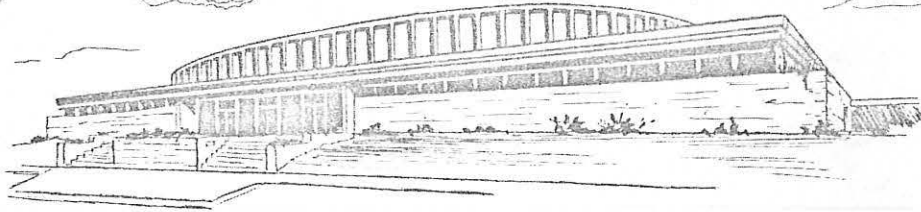
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HIGHLAND Church of Christ

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LEWIS SMITH
W. C. SMITH
R. W. VARNER
A. A. WADE

September 19, 1969

Mr. Jim Patterson
San Jose Church of Christ
6233 San Jose Boulevard
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Jim:

Unfortunately, I have no personal knowledge of what happened between you and the Highland elders. I never heard any specific complaints on your work. There were general complaints that your work was not effective among the young people. My observations, however, both during and since your work here, were to the contrary. I could not tell you of specific individuals who were dissatisfied. I rather think that it was a situation in the whole life of the congregation that caused this reaction to occur.

If you would like to make specific the differences that arose between you and the elders I would be happy to look to their resolution. I am going to talk with Art Haddox about this matter, urging him to reply to your letter.

I can certainly understand the feeling you might have toward the Highland elders. You are not the first person who has been hurt by their "handling" of situations. There have been many other instances when our elders have handled insensitively individuals with whom they were dealing. I hope and pray that through my ministry of the Word here that God will work in their hearts to make them more sensitive men.

I deeply respect you and appreciate your commitment. I believe you must be having a very effective ministry where you are and will be happy to do anything I can here to erase the tensions that might cause you to carry any kind of personal animosity toward these elders, and also to help correct any bad attitude that may still linger in their hearts toward you.

Your brother,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:hm

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JIM PATTERSON
LONNIE SMITH

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Sept. 3, 1969

John Allen Chalk
Highland Church
Abilene, Texas

Dear John:

First let me say that it was truly great to see and hear you again during the Seminar. I especially appreciated your contributions to the discussion on "New Life in the Church." It helped me to assemble some of my own thoughts. Gail says she only wished she could have seen you too. She and I both really appreciate the efforts you are making.

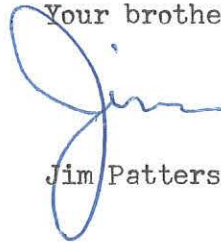
To make an abrupt change, I mentioned in Gainesville that I needed to confer with you about something that has bothered me for some-time. Possibly I am making it all seem bigger than it is, but nevertheless, here is the situation.

I remember talking to you on occasions about the possible move to Jacksonville. I am persuaded that this was the best thing that ever happened to me, so maybe all of this was God's plan. I can also recall discussing my case with the elders there and what exactly I had done wrong. This has been my whole problem. No one ever sat down with me and pointed out the things I was doing wrong; assuming I was, which considering the scant information I was given, I am not at all convinced of any error that required the measures I received. (I might add here that I am aware of possible prejudice, but I have made every effort to look at all sides objectively.) Because of this lack of communication, I nurtured a bitter resentment, especially since I had made every effort to keep those lines open. I have written the elders since I have moved, but have received no reply. While I feel that I can still love them as brothers, I still have a somewhat latent hostility toward them. It has gotten to the point that I can see a picture of one or a group of the elders there and immediately reassemble a whole panorama of contempt. I do not like this feeling, I feel that it is wrong, but I am completely frustrated as to how to fully overcome it.

John, possibly all I need is to "get it off my chest," on the other hand, maybe I need a strong reprimand. Whatever the case, I felt that you, still being closely connected with the elders there, could give me the best advise.

Thanks for a listening ear. Continue to pray for me as I do you and I hope to see you again soon.

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Patterson". The signature is stylized, with a large loop at the beginning and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Patterson