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JTJr's alcoholism: For use in meetings with Exclusive Brethren

(JTJr was my father's uncle; hence I shall call him "Uncle Jim") Uncle Jim started drinking socially taking his children to restaurants and buying them alcoholic beverages. Sadly, the children of alcoholics are often alcoholics too and Consie Hales was in this category. Uncle Jim was a shy man and gradually found that a few drinks "helped" him through meetings. Brethren were not used to seeing the effects of alcohol in one another because they tended to drink in moderation or not at all. However, Uncle Jim was hospitalized in 1965 due to the effect of alcohol on his liver. Ben Taylor, James Taylor, Mina Taylor and the Gaisford twins from Luton knew of this fact and kept it very much to themselves for fear of what it might do to the Brethren movement. Meetings became riotous, a change from the more starchy fare, and were seen by only a few as the advanced stage of alcoholism. New rules were made more frequently, most notably being the one telling the women to wear their hair down as a sign of affection for him (Jim Taylor). Like robots, and under threat, we complied.

'The system' hotted up at the end of the '60's and Aunt Renee, Uncle Jim's second wife, found his behaviour embarrassing. More frequently, when Uncle Jim went away on a ministerial tour, she would decline to go saying she wasn't feeling well. Without her influence, Uncle Jim's behaviour worsened. The meetings at Aberdeen were a case in point. Aunt Renee stayed in New York while Uncle Jim 'let his hair down' at Aberdeen, openly displaying vile behaviour including going to bed with MK. I spent Christmas 1969 in Australia and watched him and Consie drinking at the home of W Bruce Hales until they were bleary eyed. Aunt Renee did not come on this trip either. Uncle Jim flew first class where alcoholic beverages were free. It was on this trip that I met one of John Hales' sons born on 26 June 1950, my birthday. When I was concerned with JTJr's drinking in Sydney, Australia, I phoned home and spoke to my father about it. He wasn't concerned then because the Brethren weren't concerned. My father was a system supporter all the way. He did nothing by halves. It took learning from Renee Taylor of her pain regarding MK and of her concern about Jim's alcoholism to stop my father in his tracks. After that he did his best to seek justice. For this I am fervently thankful or I would still be locked in a mindless system of error.

After Aberdeen the Ks went to stay with Uncle Jim. Stanley McCallum, AB Parker and Mr Hoyt had been withdrawn from by Uncle Jim over the phone. My mother was troubled about what was going on and phoned Uncle Jim. Aunt Renee answered and

poured out her feelings telling my mother she was torn between her fears about alcohol and his claims that the Lord was telling him what to do. My mother told this to my father who went to see his uncle about getting a doctor. Uncle Jim wouldn't see him but Aunt Renee gladly reiterated what she had said to my mother. My father then went to see James III who suggested withdrawing from his father and went round to see him. Uncle Jim convinced James that his ministry was in the 'Pauline line' or equal to that of the Apostle Paul. Dad went to see Ben Taylor who willingly acknowledged his father's illness and resulting conduct.

My father had been careful not to answer our phone in case he was withdrawn from over the phone. That Saturday, August 22 1970 Uncle Jim showed up at Nostrand Avenue meeting room as sober as a judge. Dad opened the meeting by saying, "Certain matters have come to our attention which we can no longer ignore." Uncle Jim said, "He says I need a doctor, he needs a doctor, I withdraw from you, Bill." When Dad proceeded to state the case, Uncle Jim ordered his (Dad's) supporters to leave. Only one or two left. The rest wandered about the room, conducted mini-conversations or cried aloud. The execution of AB Parker and Mr Hoyt who had obtained the tapes of the Aberdeen meetings was still fresh in our minds and we knew that something was awfully wrong. New York was split down the middle. The suffering in those families who had lost members and friends was terrible. Those who decided for Uncle Jim were instantly locked behind the wall of separation and were denied the truth.

The first thing my father did after the New York split was to go round to the Pacific Street Brethren, Andrew Robertson, Mr Hoyt, Mr Parker and as many others he could remember and try to put matters straight with them. He met with nothing but love and forgiveness which he found humbling. When EB's apologize to us for harsh treatment, they are actually un-doing JTJr's ministry. It was he who taught this harshness, which defies the laws of nature. While undermining his ministry on one hand, they call him the 'elect' on the other hand. This is double-talk and is actually dishonest.

Ben Taylor's son, John, was in England on that fateful day and was encouraged to shun his parents. He went to live in the basement of his grandfather's house where an ample supply of whiskey had been stored. It was only a matter of time before he saw the excessive drinking and went home to his family. Uncle Jim died in October 1970 at the age of 70. His biggest crime is not his alcoholism but the cruel division of families strewn across the earth. Those who stay (in the EB's) do so because of Fear, Finance, Family, Friends and Fame.