

ARE *LUF* QUOTES TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT?

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Letter # 3

In this article *Where is the Authority?* Bro William Stang accuses me of quoting the old Landmarkers out of context in *Landmarkism Under Fire (LUF)*, apparently, [Voice in the Wilderness. Dec. 14, 2006. p. 32, Col 4, par. 2; p. 33. col. 4, par 1] but gives no reference. He does mention EMDA (Essential Mother Daughter Authority, that is a group must have authority from an existing church before it can be constituted) [p. 34. col. 1. par. 3].

As far as *LUF* is concerned, there are nearly 700 references in it and the majority refer to Baptist books, histories, and other such sources. If the whole book was out of context, as Bro Stang seems to imply, it is strange he did not give one single example! Not one!

Bro Stang says:

One may quote Graves or Ford or Jarrel on what they believed on perpetuity, but to go from that to say that they did not believe in succession is like accusing them of not believing in salvation in that context, for in the context of perpetuity they mentioned not salvation. Our antagonist ought to be ashamed of such chicanery. [p. 33. col. 4. par. 1].

The only thing I can be sure about in this statement is that Bro Stang accuses me of quoting these men out of context! If I have done so it is wrong. It is always wrong to represent someone as saying something they do not mean to say. It is a breach of the Law of God, a bearing false witness. But strange as it may seem, Bro Stang does not give a single example! Have I taken the old Landmarkers out of context? Let us see.

As Bro Stang mentioned J.R. Graves and suggested I took him out of context let me give one example from Graves. The reader will be able to judge as to context and intent of Graves.

Take this quote from *The Great Iron Wheel*. It is in a chapter entitled ***Constitution***:

Article I.

Sec. 2.—A particular Church may consist of any number not less than ‘two or three’ gathered together in the name of Christ.

Sec. 4.—Each particular Church is independent of every other body, civil or ecclesiastical, and receiving its authority directly from Christ, it is accountable to him alone. [J.R. Graves. *Great Iron Wheel*. P. 544. Cf. *LUF*. p. 23-24].

What was the subject? **Church constitution!**

What the context? **Church constitution** for this is the **title** of the chapter!

What Scripture does Graves appeal to? **Mt 18:20**, as “two or three” prove, although he does not give the reference.

What about other churches? Do they give authority? **No! For “Each particular Church is independent of every other body!”**

What the source of authority for the constitution of a church? **“Christ”!**

What the means of receiving this authority? **“Directly from Christ!”**

Is this self constitution? **Yes it is! The words declare it! The context demands it!**

It sounds like self constitution!

It looks like self constitution!

It walks like self constitution!

It talks like self constitution!

It is in a *context* of self constitution! It is a declaration of self constitution and therefore it *is* self constitution!

It is demonstrably the very epitome of self constitution!

While language has any meaning this statement by Graves is a Gibraltar for self constitution! On the other hand this quote is a smart bomb and EMDA the target!

Does it sound like EMDA? **No! In no wise!** Nor do EMDA men ever quote it! I have never seen a single EMDA writer refer to this quote! Why not? **Will they quote it now? Will they approve of it? Will they deny it? Will they claim it is out of context? Will they admit they were wrong about Graves?** Will they say this quote from Graves is an **argument from silence?** [p.33. col. 1. par. 2].

This argument by Graves proving self constitution or *direct authority* has the sound of a trumpet—a very loud trumpet! And it waxes louder and louder [Ex. 19:19] and EMDA brethren cannot bear the volume of it! They fear and tremble because of it [Ex. 19:16]! This trumpet does not give an uncertain sound (1 Cor. 8:14). They know exactly what it means. But instead of believing the facts they claim we have taken J.R. Graves out of context!

Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? (Gal 4:16.)

What man would maintain Graves, in spite of all he said for self constitution, (This quote given is just a sample, Cf. *LUF* pp 14-25) was somehow teaching EMDA? Only an evil spirit like Saul had could compel men to look at these facts and yet pretend Graves taught or practiced EMDA! Why does the melody of the harp have no lasting effect? Why do they stop their ears and shut their eyes to the truth? Jn. 3:27.

But with this quote before the reader, he will be able to see clearly that these men who claim Graves and the other old Landmarkers taught EMDA are actually seeking to **suppress evidence, repudiate facts and confuse the unwary!** Is this right? Most EMDA brethren plainly deny what Graves taught on this subject but claim they are in agreement with him and repudiate those who actually agree with Graves!

Bro Stang's *claim* that *LUF* quotes are taken out of context will remain just that until he gives us some specific example or examples. I will be glad to consider anything he can produce.

No one can claim the old Landmarkers believed in EMDA with *LUF* before him! Nor can one allege the old Landmarkers believed EMDA with their books on his shelf! Those books testify against this error loud enough to shake not only the bookcase but the whole continent! It is a very deceitful thing when any individual takes a quote from a book which *sounds* like it might possibly refer to EMDA, when the author in the very book quoted, gives an explicit statement of self constitution and the individual quoting it knows this! It is also deceitful whenever a man asserts one of these old Landmarkers teaches EMDA as Bro Stang has done! Did he even bother to see what J.R. Graves believed on the constitution of churches? Apparently not! Unfortunately this is a frequent error of EMDA men and is documented several times in *LUF*.

In the meanwhile, perhaps Bro Stang will read *LUF* and the old Landmarkers for himself. When he does he will be compelled to repudiate either EMDA or old Landmarkism—but if he tries to hold both, the impossibility of the task will force him to **seethe** in silence! [p. 33. col. 4, par. 1]. I suggest Bro Stang *ought* to be ashamed of this *chicanery* either way! [Voice. P. 33, col 4.].