

## "I KNOW NOT THE MAN"

**Gary McDade**

In a paradoxical development, a well known and widely read religious author who is a member of the church of Christ recently interviewed by Toby Druin with the *Baptist Standard* affirmed that he “would make a good Baptist.”<sup>1</sup> The author is Max Lucado.

Those who watched his television program “He Chose The Nails” which aired from the Pyramid in Memphis in the spring of 2001 could not be shocked by such a statement. An immediate audience of approximately 4,000 gathered that evening in the Pyramid and a wider viewing audience throughout the Mid-South over WPTY-30 heard the famed writer and minister of the Oak Hills Church of Christ in San Antonio teach salvation by grace alone as instrumental music played dramatically in the background, heard the chorus sing selected spiritual songs, and listened to solo singing—one song was performed by a young man who sang with the accompaniment of a guitar.

How closely associated is he with the Baptist Church? Druin wrote, “He is quoted in many Baptist pulpits, and his books, which have won six Gold Medallion Awards, are on the shelves of countless Baptists. Last Spring, Dallas Baptist University presented him an honorary doctorate degree.”<sup>2</sup> In the interview Lucado stated, “But I really don’t consider myself a Church of Christ minister. I consider myself a minister at Oak Hills, which happens to still call themselves a Church of Christ. But if I should leave Oak Hills, I couldn’t see myself going to another Church of Christ. I would go anywhere the Lord sends me. I think I would make a good Baptist.”<sup>3</sup>

The reference to the Oak Hills Church of Christ “still call [ing] themselves a Church of Christ” reveals his longtime affiliation with the Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, near Chicago. An appeal to some in the Church of Christ is the dropping of what they refer to as the “stigma” of the name “church of Christ” for some “Community Church” name which to them does not carry any “extra baggage.”<sup>4</sup> As evidence of this, the interview with Lucado reads, “When I came back [from Brazil] in 1988, I had an opportunity to join forces with Willow Creek Church in Chicago and others. It was a tough decision.

Bottom line for me was the church here in San Antonio has blessed and encouraged me to preach whatever is on my heart as long as I can go to the Scriptures and say, 'Here is why I believe this.' A man gave me counsel and told me, 'Stay where you are until you can't go any further.'"<sup>5</sup> Obviously, Lucado has been pulling away from the doctrine of Christ for many years.

A question Druin asked was, "What do you say to those who say you sound more like a Baptist than a member of the Church of Christ?" His reply was, "I say, 'Thank you.' I really do, because I have benefitted so much from the teachings of Baptists, especially in the area of understanding God's grace."<sup>6</sup>

Lucado's interview with the *Baptist Standard* is reminiscent of an interview a damsel, a maid, and "they that stood by" had on one occasion with Peter, "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, **I know not the man.** And immediately the cock crew" (Matt. 26:69-74; emphasis mine GM).

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Toby Druin, "MAX LUCADO: King's author" in *Baptist Standard*, August 6, 2001,

[http://www.baptiststandard.com/2001/8\\_6/pages/lucado.html](http://www.baptiststandard.com/2001/8_6/pages/lucado.html), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. *The Christian Chronicle*, April and March editions of 2000. (Back issues are available for viewing in the archives on their website: [christianchronicle.org](http://christianchronicle.org).)

<sup>5</sup>*Baptist Standard*, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.