

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DEPARTMENT CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.
BISHOP CHARLES E. BLAKE, SR. - PRESIDING BISHOP

DR. BENJAMIN STEPHENS, III
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH
DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



EVANGELIST JOYCE L. RODGERS
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH
DEPARTMENT CHAIRLADY

May 29, 2016

To Presiding Bishop Charles Blake, Sr.:

As International Youth Department President, I would like to apologize for the inclusion of content within the Young Men of Valor (2015 Edition) that is inconsistent with the Church of God in Christ doctrine. I am very passionate about the total well-being of the young men to whom we minister through the Young Men of Valor, with their spirituality and sanctified living, being of utmost importance. Whereas, I am fully aware of the difficult choices that many young men face on a daily basis, it is my charge to teach, preach and distribute doctrine that is wholly consistent with that of the Church in God in Christ.

It was under my watch that the Young Men of Valor (2015 Edition) was published that omitted the Church of God in Christ's well-established theological, biblical, and doctrinal information surrounding "sanctified" sexuality. In its stead was clinical information acquired from various (non-Church of God in Christ) professional sources. The 2015 edition clearly represents a lapse in judgement and failure in supervision, and I take full responsibility for it.

Young Men of Valor's stance, teachings, and views are:

1. Sex is not to be engaged in outside the context of marriage; therefore, encouraging young men to maintain their virginity until marriage, by practicing celibacy.
2. We support the concept and commitment to sexual abstinence prior to marriage.
3. We encourage and support holy matrimony only between a man and woman.
4. We find it vital to address sexual temptations but from a holy and biblical perspective.
5. Single Young Men of Valor are encouraged to live chaste and sexually pure according to the Bible and the Doctrine of the Church of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian (Young Man of Valor) is enabled to live a holy and separated life in this present world.

To date, all Young Men of Valor (YMV) manuals have been pulled from circulation and the new YMV Manual is being completed for distribution. For those who have obtained a YMV Manual with this error, you are asked to return it to the COGIC Publishing House or visit the IYD Booth during the upcoming AIM Convention, and once the new amended edition is completed, you will receive a copy (free of charge).

Again I would like to apologize to our Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr. and the entire leadership of the Church of God in Christ, her constituents, and to those who support YMV. I can assure you that going forward, I will represent the COGIC doctrine, in all verbal and written communications, in a sanctified manner. Again, I offer my sincere apology.

Prayerfully Submitted,

Dr. Benjamin Stephens, III
International Youth Department President