

January 28, 2014

OPEN LETTER

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“Closing Down the Ministry” – Whose Call?

Dear Bill,

The primary focus of your attention in the five requests you made to me (2 phone calls, 4 letters) in October, November, and December of 2013 was the question of your detailed knowledge of ongoing immorality among your staff before 1980. The reason for that question being so important is that you initiated and/or authorized young unmarried daughters of Dads and Moms to move to your Northwoods Retreat Center to live and work where they were spiritually abused and sexually assaulted, repeatedly.

On or before January 13 of this year (within 10 days of receiving the detail of evidence and testimony you requested of me), you telephoned one church and explained to them that “Tony Guhr was trying to close down the ministry” (of IBLP, of Bill Gothard). The past week I have heard of additional unique and different sources repeating their learning from you in the last weeks “that Tony Guhr is trying to shut down the ministry and is wanting money.” One of these sources is from one of your own current IBLP Board members. Are you telling your Board members and your friends such false statements? I would like to hear from you quickly that you deny making these statements. That would be wonderful news. If you will not answer this inquiry, and are silent, I will conclude you are actually making these statements during the past several weeks and are in violation of the Law of God.

If you are making these statements, they are clearly false, simply not true, and are malicious. Would you be able to correct me if these statements and occurrences are true in any way? If you are making these statements, you are in direct violation of the Law of God, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor.” Exodus 20:16

Evidence and testimony of your detailed knowledge of immorality before 1980 was requested by you, only by you (not initiated by me at all). The evidence and written testimony was delivered to you personally and directly December 30, 2013 by USPS, with copies to your Board of Directors of the IBLP organization and to your home church pastor and elders as shown in my cover correspondence to you. These materials and the request for your repentance of the sins outlined have not been published to the public by anyone else, except now by you. Your repeated requests for these materials were accompanied by your verbal and written assurances to me that God was working in your heart and mind to seek the truth and seek spiritual reconciliation with those whom you have deeply hurt and damaged in so many ways over many years. Is that true, or is that actually false?

Your claim that “Tony Guhr is trying to close down the ministry” cannot possibly be true when you, your Board and your home church pastor and elders (your spiritual authorities) have the materials to review and respond to as they address your yet unconfessed sins, as well as their own direct participation in assisting you in covering up these sins.

These are materials previously delivered to you and to your Board of Directors on and before June 5, 1980. They were offered to your home church before that date (and again in 1981) though they declined to respond in a Biblical way to hear the matter. Many of your staff involved in meetings with you and in bringing these charges against you, recorded these evidences and testimony in 1980. There were a number of ways these details became known to the wider public, as you know quite well. 33 years ago you instructed your attorneys to subpoena me to Chicago where they additionally deposed me for 8 hours a day for 5 days about each of these same evidences and testimony. You have had, for now 33 years, full access to these same evidences from the deposition they took from me and the materials provided to them at that time.

As of this date, now 30 days after you have received these evidences and testimony a third time, you have not offered any denial of even one of these details of evidence and testimonies which illustrate the charges standing against your qualification as a trusted minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Whose Call Is It?**

As clearly stated in the materials mailed to you, along with the several letters I have delivered to you over the last several weeks, I have invited you to clearly and fully acknowledge the wrong, the iniquity of your sins, which unconfessed leave you in violation of many of the Biblical qualifications required for an overseer, a minister, a Teacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I and many others are praying that God would grant to you genuine repentance and godly sorrow for your many sins and continued wickedness in repeating and covering your sins. The eternal impact of your responsibility is specifically and only your call to make.

If you peradventure are not granted repentance by God (II Timothy 2:24-26), it is God's call and instruction that the fact of your continual sinning examined without partiality to your high position (I Timothy 5:17-25) is to simply be made public to the church (Matt. 18:17-18) so that others may be warned and be made fearful of sinning (I Tim. 5:20).

The "call to close down the ministry" is between only two, you and God.

I have suggested several times to you, your organization Board and to your home church, that if you would prefer, a hearing by a Council of select men could be called for to examine carefully each charge against you with each testimony and evidence to confirm if they are each true or false. If you and your Board are confident these charges are entirely false, why would you not quickly embrace this approach for clearing your name once and for all? There are many pastors and leaders in the church of Jesus Christ that would be glad to support such a hearing by the establishment of a Council called together for this purpose. That would be Biblical and the outcome of the considerations by such a Council representation of church and ministry leaders would publically demonstrate that it was not controlled by me or any other person you might invent as an imagined enemy of your personal ministry.

I have also proposed on several occasions my sincere belief and understanding of the Scriptures that if you would invite God to deal fully with your sin, and honestly review the doctrinal confusion, the church of Jesus Christ in America, Africa, Asia and elsewhere would be great helped by your obedience to Christ. The wider church of Christ is in great need of a clear presentation by a clean vessel of honor regarding the grace of God through faith so that the promises of God can be relied upon as guaranteed and certain, without reference to one's own efforts and works to obtain salvation or sanctification. I have recently written to the church you contacted, stating...

*"I can actually see clearly how he can expand his ministry to the church in America and develop a powerful set of messages for spiritual growth that would have little equal. While he is considered by so many to be fully disqualified from being a minister (by bad behavior and contrary doctrines), I see some very specific ways for him to launch the most powerful part of his message and ministry that would have NO comparison to the last 40 years."*

Have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?

It seems to me that to the extent your teaching materials are based on the Law, and the commandments, wisdom and precepts of man (a man, you), those teachings will by God's decree, lead to death. There can be no life in them by God's design. The fruit of those efforts and that source of content will predictably produce the nasty outcomes, confusion, conflict, complaints and the very virus of death that they are, no matter how splendid the presentation and powerful the illustration. God will have it no other way. This can be illustrated with this question that begs a clear answer:

## **Why would wonderful Christian women, trained by Bill Gothard, fail to cry out when sexually abused over so many years?**

The Law is specific (Deuteronomy 22) that if a man seizes a girl/woman who is unmarried, if she does not cry out, she shares in the guilt with the man of this immorality.

The Law also provides for protection of the girl who has been seized if “she is engaged.” In that case “you shall do nothing to the girl, there is no sin in the girl worthy of death...”

It seems that some argument could be made that some (if not all) of the unmarried women on your staff that became involved in immorality with you, your brother and with others, had “no sin worthy of death” and that only you and your brother are left to share the guilt. Many of the women interviewed commented that your words, abundant special and valuable personal gifts, intimate touching and times alone with you, and intimations from you they were “special” persuaded them you were fully “engaging” with them with all the hopes of marriage.

The question must be asked. Why did these women not “cry out” when they were being spiritually abused, when they were being sexually abused? Why did these women not dial 911 and call in the civil authorities. Why did these women not contact you and plead with you to do something about the sexual assaults ongoing by your brother?

From careful interviews with these women, several arguments become clear.

1. You taught them chain of command, your version of how they must respond to the authorities in your life. You made it clear that you personally were their chain of command in God’s grand plan, that you were their umbrella of protection. They and their immediate commander(s) were you and your brother. With at least some you specifically communicated with the Dads of these daughters to transfer his authority and protection over to you. With at least some you offered to “be their Abraham and select their husbands for them.”
2. You taught them to give up their personal rights. You persuaded them they no longer had rights to their own insight and understandings from Scripture, convictions about what is right and wrong, with no longer any rights to their privacy and eventually their own bodies.
3. You taught them Design, that God is not finished with them yet, and that God chisels and works on their lives through their authorities. And you were very clear that you were their spiritual authorities and that your brother was their new work related authority. You taught these women and you specifically asked each of these women to obey their new authority in your brother when you chose to move them to work and live in a remote location with your brother.
4. You taught them to deal with hurts and bitterness by putting on them the responsibility of forgiving those who had offended and hurt them. To extend this teaching and placing the burden on these women to forgive 7 x 70 to repeated spiritual and sexual abuse in the environment you created and maintained. This clearly seems contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ.
5. You taught them the wickedness of “giving an evil report” about someone to another and by that teaching restricted them to taking the offenses against them first to the one spiritually and sexually abusing them. When they did fearfully bring the reports and details of ongoing immorality to you, they quickly realized you were not interested and you did nothing to remove the problem year after year.

Can you explain to the world why you do not train young women to call 911 when being sexually abused? Why did you not call 911? The 911 and related authorities are God’s ordained authorities and are “ministers of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.” Romans 13:1-5. “Those

who have opposed (government authorities) will receive condemnation upon themselves.” That would put you at some considerable risk in a number of damaging violations of women which you have been privy to.

5. The women involved in the immorality discovered in 1980 were interviewed by the Director you assigned to assist them in their travel back to the Northwoods Retreat Center to pack their belongings and move home in June, 1980. Each woman answered his simple question to them as to why over all these years they never came to you and notified you of what was going on? Each one stated clearly that they did indeed come to you, often and prior to 1980 and pleaded with you to stop the ongoing immorality they were involved in with your brother. All of the evidence and testimony provided to you confirms adequately this fact is true. A letter from that Director that details these interviews has been provided to you by this Director in the past few weeks.

These women were the nicest, most loyal, long serving staff any minister of the gospel could hope for. They were professional in their talents and sincere in their service to God and to their team members. We count them as the very best of friends.

When these unmarried women were enticed by your brother and yourself to dress the way you wanted them to dress, to come to your rooms late at night at your command, to violate the normal dress code per your instructions, and then were asked to engage in immorality, their normal resistance had been completely broken down. Your personal visits late at night to the bedrooms of these single women after they were in their pajamas and in bed is unconscionable. Your invitation to your executive secretary to visit your cabin in the woods late at night in her skimpy nightgown and sit on your lap while you visited with her, is as destructive as any activities you could engage in to persuade them that you “were engaged with them” testing them in their “fourth level of friendship” which in your teaching is preliminary to marriage.

### **Deception and Forgiveness**

Where you have been successful in obtaining the forgiveness of any of these women, it seems now clear that forgiveness was coaxed out of them by you based on your claiming to them, “before God” that you “had no knowledge of immorality ongoing before 1980.” These women will soon learn for the first time the abundance of detail you knew of ongoing immorality before 1980 and in fact for at least 7 years and possibly as long as 14 years. With all of that personal knowledge of gross immorality, you sent these women up North to work in a remote location without normal social and spiritual support of friends and church, to work long and tiring hours, and live in close and intimate proximity with at least two single men, you and your brother. These continual and late night contacts and exposure were all without chaperones in your social settings, especially late at night. How will you explain these evidences of your knowledge to these who were persuaded by you to forgive you based on your deception of them?

You have taught millions of believers in Christ to confess their sins, acknowledge how very wrong they were, and ask forgiveness of those you have offended, hurt deeply, damaged so greatly. Why would it be seemingly impossible for you the Teacher to acknowledge your own wrongs, confess them as sin, ask forgiveness and turn from repeating such iniquities?

Bill, there is only one response God asks of you. Give Him the glory alone. He will not share His glory with any other. Acknowledge to the world, to every church of Jesus Christ, defining every action, every point in which you have taken, in which you have accepted the glory only God deserves and demands.

I pray that you yet will.  
With many prayers.

Tony G