

September 29, 2014

Mr. Bill Gothard
1027 Arlington Avenue
LaGrange, IL 60525

Dear Bill,

Re: The Abundance of Your Children and Grandchildren

This may be one of the most important letters I have ever written to you. I pray that you will give it one small piece of your time, and if you would allow it, your sincere attention.

As I have considered your teachings, reviewing them hundreds of times while I was in your employment, and another hundred times since, I have in the course of that review asked such questions as....

Why are the teachings helpful to some and so confusing and cause so much damage to so many others?

Why would so many close family and friends to Bill fail so completely morally when the teacher of "How to be Morally Pure" was so close by?

How were the teachings initially helpful to me? And what have I relied upon in the last 35 years of spiritual growth while in rejection of the teachings?

Over the last number of years it has all become quite clear, starkly clear to me what are the most basic dynamics for what is going on in your life and in the life of your varied audiences. I trust you can follow me on these points. I will summarize them here as simply as I can. These same points I have expanded inside of the word pictures of the account I have attached with this letter, "Bill Gothard and His Children."

Two things are going on, at a very basic level.

First, when you and I met Christ and placed our faith and trust in Him for salvation, our relationship of being "one with Christ" became our new relationship. Our "marriage relationship" with the Law came to an end. We died to that previous relationship and were fully released from its obligations, expectations, and its penalty, which is death. We were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, through His death on the cross. We were therefore released, were made free to marry into another relationship, which is to Christ. This is the metaphor utilized in Romans 7:1-6

To keep the corpse of your first relationship (now long dead) in your basement, and to go often to visit that corpse, hold its hand, attempt to derive your life and pleasure from it, all of that would be what most would call suspicious and sad behavior. Something akin to necromancy.

To go to the effort and put a new dress on the corpse and a new Sunday hat and take what is dead to church with you, and take something dead with you to speaking engagements and bring something long ago dead onto the stage with you to introduce it to your favorite audiences, to say so many nice things about what is dead, and work to persuade members of your audience to embrace what is dead, to come under influence of what is dead as it has influenced you, that combination of behavior and attention to a

long dead corpse, for all of its previous value and memories from your prior relationship, that would be appalling and should cause great concern among your closest friends.

The greatest impact of this kind of behavior with the corpse of your previous relationship, would most directly affect your new relationship with Jesus Christ. Your second relationship with Christ would be necessarily compromised, at best confused, at the very least divided by the shared time and shared attention you are giving to the corpse of your first relationship, the Law.

Second, and equally important, when you as a Teacher feature the benefits of following the Law of Moses in any of its regulations and demands, you are simply putting anyone who embraces that law as a rule for living, you are putting them under the curse of the Law. And what is the curse of the Law? It requires you keep the entire Law, perfectly (Gal. 5:3). James, the brother of Jesus said it plainly, that if you break one rule, you break the entire Law and are guilty of violating the entire Law. And the penalty for breaking the law is death (James 2:9-11; Romans 2:25-29).

In the IBYC Basic Seminar, you added in another layer of complications by many aspects of your own personal philosophy, your own teachings and commandments, your own wisdom which became part of the development of a self-made religion. For all your efforts to correct the weaknesses in the overall system of 7 Universal Non-Optional Principles by adding in an abundance of Scripture and references to Jesus Christ and grace, the mixture itself became toxic and deadly to a growing number of believers who could no longer sort out Christ alone as the all sufficient One.

Colossians 2 outlines the additional religious resources and behavior that cheats, that defrauds believers out of the richness of a growing relationship with the living indwelling God based on a “true knowledge of God’s mystery, that is Christ Himself in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I say this so NO one will delude you with persuasive argument,” including...

Philosophy, v.8

Empty Deception, v.8

Traditions of men, v.8

Elementary principles of the world, v.8

Commandments and teachings of men, v.22

Wisdom in self-made religion, v.23

Self-abasement, v.18, 23

Severe treatment of the body, v.23

Judging of food, drink, decrees, v.16

Keeping of festivals and religious Sabbaths, v.16

Worship of angels, v.18

Standing on personal visions, v.18

Inflated minds, big heads, without cause, v.18

Asceticism, v.21-22

The initial conclusions I have come to are:

In your exposure to a turbulent society in the 1950s and 1960’s, the confusion and pressures of the multitude of broken relationships, rebellion among youth, families in great disarray in our world, our

natural impulse was to ask for and for you and others to provide solutions and a hope, outline formulations people can remember, write out some prescriptions for the ill and diseased to follow as good wisdom medicine, defining standards to detail what is godly, establishing rules and order, with steps to follow to get there, or at least get close.

In doing so, it is easy to default to the Law of Moses, the Ten Commandments and any other of the 613 laws outlined in the Code. They were given by God to Moses for His people Israel to follow as a people, as a nation. It would all seem proper and authoritative. It was easy to mix in practical advice, tips and wisdom, infuse your own philosophy of what might be helpful and what might work for each situation you were asked about and faced with so many families and individuals coming to you for help.

The problem is this.

When God sent Jesus Christ, to establish a “new covenant” His purpose was to cause His new children of Abraham (by faith) to build a relationship of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, not by the rules of a revised Code, nor by the commandments of the old Code, but by a relationship with the indwelling Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God Himself.

Circumcision made with hands for males only was replaced by the circumcision and removal of the filthiness of the flesh and heart by Christ for both men and women. When this actually takes place spiritually between a person and the Savior, they are made clean indeed from all sin, and made clean over again each new day as they acknowledge those sins and take advantage of the one time, single payment made in full for every sin.

God made very clear that it not what a man eats or drinks that defiles him but what words and deeds come from his mouth and heart that make him unclean. He wanted Jews and Gentiles to freely eat and fellowship together without making a ruckus over if the meat had been offered to an idol or was a good old pulled pork BBQ sandwich. The kingdom of God is not made up of meat or drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

When believers are enticed to embrace and rely upon any rule or demand of the Law of Moses for any spiritual benefit, or they are enticed to embrace or rely upon any teaching and commandment and traditions generated by mere men for any spiritual benefit, they are inviting in “every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God” and are going away from the “simplicity and purity of devotion to Jesus Christ.” As the Scriptures describe, each new program and system based on the best of man’s philosophy causes an idol relationship which competes with the sufficiency of Jesus Christ alone, causing us to “fall from grace” and “to be severed from Christ.” Galatians 5:1-10; Colossians 2:1-23.

The promise of the indwelling Spirit of God ended completely and totally any obligation to the Law, as the Scripture states so clearly, “...For what the Law could not do...God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” Romans 8:3-4.

No compliance with the Law is helpful to spiritual growth in God:

“...because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight...” Romans 3:20

“...if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.” Romans 4:2

“...But to the one who does NOT work...his faith is credited as righteousness.” Romans 4:5

This applies to both salvation and to sanctification and a spiritual growth that is from God, not from “seeking to establish their own [righteousness] Romans 10:1-5. You cannot mix the grace of God through faith in Christ with the Law, with the form of religion and philosophy outlined in Colossians 2, or with anything else including a system and formulation of 7 Universal Non-Optional Principles. God wants a relationship, not a formulation.

There is one problem you already are aware of. If you accept this position, the simplicity of the Gospel, and the all sufficiency of Jesus Christ, there is NOTHING to sell, there is nothing for sale.

Bill, you do not face anything that has not already been faced and addressed throughout the Scriptures and throughout the history of the church of Jesus Christ.

The opportunity is to see the simplicity of the Gospel in Christ Jesus and pure devotion to Him. II Cor. 11:3-4. You have accepted and you have taught “a different gospel” that is mixed with the Law, mixed with your own precepts, commandments, and philosophies condemned in Colossians 2 so very plainly, all of which has NO value against fleshly indulgence, which we have seen in your life, in the life of your brother, and in so many associated so closely with you.

The opportunity is to understand it, maybe for the first time in your life. The opportunity is to help 50 million believers (or church attenders) understand for the very first time it is Christ alone, a relationship with the indwelling God, who is all sufficient for all the needs of mankind by His precious promises (II Peter 1:1-11). It is free. They do not need to ever purchase anything every again that pertains to their spiritual relationship with God, anything more than a copy of the Scriptures.

I do pray that someday you will come to this freedom in your own mind and soul.

Tony G

Attached: Bill Gothard and His Children