

Joseph Bayly

out of my mind



## How Basic the Conflict?

An open letter from Bill Gothard

I have now received a written reply from Bill Gothard to the open letter published here in the June issue.

Questions which I raised, to which he addresses himself, were:

1. Does a Christian woman who is a wife have the responsibility to obey her husband rather than God, when the two are in conflict? Specifically, does God hold her guilty of lying, of adultery, of complicity in child abuse/manslaughter when she does not cross her husband but obeys in these areas?

2. Do you follow the New Testament doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, including women, reaffirmed by the Reformers, with their immediate access to God; or is a married woman's husband her priest, the connection between herself and God?

3. Is Old Testament Sarah a proper example for Christian women, in her obedience to Abraham when he told her to lie about their being husband and wife? If you taught this (and a number of people claim that you have), do you give any weight to God's act in the New Testament in striking Sapphira dead for agreeing with her husband to lie (Acts 5:1ff.)?

4. Does a Christian parent have a responsibility to break his child's will? If so, to what lengths should he go to achieve this end?

5. This question is not so important as the others, perhaps, but I'd like to know whether it is a concern to you that people such as I must depend on second-hand accounts of what you teach in your seminars if we do not have the time or money or inclination to attend? Do you not feel a responsibility to put any of your ideas or

explanations into print for the general public?

Here is Mr. Gothard's written reply.

Dear Joe Bayly,

My great reluctance in replying to your open letter was not because I reject criticism. On the contrary, I not only welcome criticism, but I actively seek it from many, especially recognized Bible scholars throughout the country. Neither is it because I don't want to clarify publicly what is taught in the seminar.

In answer to your questions: the seminar teaches that a person should *never* do evil, even if asked to do so by one in authority. On the other hand, it does emphasize that we must have a spirit of obedience, even if we must refuse to do evil. Daniel illustrated this spirit when he refused to defile himself with the king's meat and later when he refused to obey the king's command not to pray. In the first instance, he was able to design a creative alternative. In the second, he willingly went to the den of lions. In both cases he had a spirit of obedience but did not do evil. The apostle Peter condemned Sapphira for agreeing to tell a lie; but this same apostle used Sarah as a model of an obedient spirit. He urges all women to learn Sarah's spirit without doing evil: "... whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well..." (1 Peter 3:6).

In our day the source of most conflicts with authority is not over commands to do wrong actions but in demonstrations of wrong attitudes by those under authority. Chief among these are ungratefulness, disrespect, disloyalty, and pride. For this reason, it is unwise to cite hypothetical situations. By their very nature they do not contain vital facts nor the power of God in a particular situation.

The seminar teaches that every Chris-

Send in this coupon to receive Walk Thru the Bible's exciting magazine, **The Next Meal** for a full year — **FREE!**

Walk Thru the Bible Ministries  
356 NE 80th Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97213

☐ Mr.  
☐ Mrs.  
☐ Miss

Name

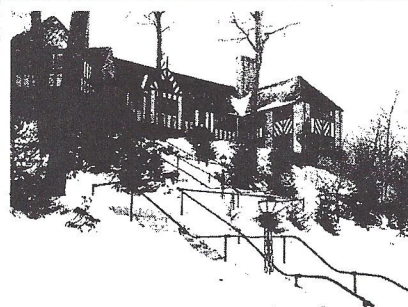
Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

Walk Thru the Bible



### TRIPLE DIVIDENDS FOR YOUR INVESTMENT

Nyack College has a **Gift Annuities Program** that gives you triple dividends:

- 1- A guaranteed monthly, quarterly, or annual income for as long as you live;
- 2- The joy and satisfaction of knowing that your money is helping train young men and women for the Lord's work; and
- 3- An assurance that your money will continue to work for the Lord after you're no longer here.

If you've got money to invest (from \$100 to \$100,000), and you want it to be used for Christian Service in addition to providing you with a good return, then a Nyack College Gift Annuity is just what you need. Write us for more information.

Gift Annuities Office

**Nyack College**

Nyack, New York 10960 (914) 358-1710

Mr. Bayly, vice-president of David C. Cook Publishing Co., is author of several books, including *The Gospel Blimp* (Zondervan). He is also in demand as a conference speaker.



tian has direct access to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The seminar emphasizes that a person should *never* break his child's spirit. Instead, he must *win* the child's will without breaking his spirit. If the child resists discipline, the parents should stop and examine their own attitudes. All too often, a child will reflect the wrong attitudes of the parents back to them.

My reluctance in writing a response to your letter was because of a deep respect

for you as a Christian brother and a commitment to the scriptural principles behind Matthew 18 and Galatians 6:1. These require that we privately check all facts when a brother misses the mark, and that we do it in a spirit of trying to restore that person rather than trying to expose him. These apply to your report on the child abuse case. When someone who appears to be a "respected church member" brings shame to the cause of Christ, it is absolutely vital that all the facts be

checked out before commenting on them publicly. Only then will others understand the real causes of the problem.

Those who were *directly* involved in this case have given me the following information: that the father who killed the boy was involved in a previous marriage and was accused of abusing the child of that marriage; that his present wife was unaware of the former child abuse and his pastor was totally unaware of both the previous marriage and the former child abuse. (We explain in the seminar how conflicts in previous relationships will affect a parent's ability to give proper discipline, and Scripture explains that if a man covers his sin, he will not prosper.)

Further information given to us is: that the man stated to his pastor, "I was *not* following seminar teachings"; that the three-year-old boy was *not* their own son, but was a ward of the court from another family; that the man was absorbed in many books on child discipline and claims that these influenced him; that the man used an object for spanking which is not scriptural; that there were bruises on the child from his knees to his head; that the child did *not* die by spanking but by drowning; that the wife *did* interfere, but was ordered by her husband to go downstairs; that the man *has* acknowledged his wrong to the church and asked for their forgiveness.

Joe, I spoke to you privately on two occasions after checking out this information. I urged you to do likewise and give a fair report based on the facts. You refused to do so. Now I ask you publicly, is it "responsible criticism" when a critic's use of incorrect information incites public indignation; when he refuses to check out secondhand reports, even after being told that they are false but instead puts the full burden of defense on the one being publicly criticized? I believe this question is vital to the cause of Christ and his reputation in the world.

If we are to turn back the forces of evil, we must demonstrate to the world a spirit of accuracy and of genuine love in all of our words. I would be grateful for the privilege of personally meeting with you and discussing these points together with any other questions you may have on the seminar ministry.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Bill Gothard

In about two hours of telephone conversations, Bill Gothard and I have discussed many matters related to my open letter. I have reassured him, as I did in the letter itself, that I am thankful for his ministry,

From  
the Folks  
Who give You  
**Eternity**



You can get **MORE** from Your Bible Study with

## Bible Study Cassettes

by Boice

Speaker of the Bible Study Hour

by Barnhouse

Founder of The Bible Study Hour

**HOW TO BE FREE FROM WORRY  
HOW TO TRIUMPH IN SUFFERING**  
Two most helpful messages

1 cassette ..... \$ 3.50

### PERSECUTION

"Hated for No Cause" & "No Strange Trial."

1 cassette ..... \$ 3.50

### THE GOD WHO IS ABLE

4 comforting studies on the greatness of God.

2 cassettes ..... \$ 7.00

### HOW TO KNOW GOD

Foundation truths about God and the Scriptures.

7 cassettes ..... \$22.50

### STUDIES IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

Part I of this verse-by-verse bible study: chapters 1 thru 4.

28 cassettes ..... \$85.00

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

8 vital messages in an attractive album.

4 cassettes ..... \$14.00

**YOUR RIGHT TO HEAVEN  
TEMPTATION AND HOW TO MEET IT**  
2 life-changing messages.

1 cassette ..... \$ 3.50

### THE FOUNDATION FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS

6 messages from the beginning of Romans 12.

3 cassettes ..... \$10.00

### THE CHURCH & RACE RELATIONS

also "The Nature & Origin of Conscience."

1 cassette ..... \$ 3.50

### DOES GOD SAY WHEN?

6 prophetic messages.

3 cassettes ..... \$10.00

### TRAGEDY OR TRIUMPH

Helpful to those facing tragedy. Also, "Living from the Word of God."

1 cassette ..... \$ 3.50

### STUDIES IN MARK'S GOSPEL

40 messages covering a wealth of subject matter.

20 cassettes ..... \$66.00

**I WANT MORE! RUSH ME THESE  
BIBLE STUDY CASSETTES**

name \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
street \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose Payment and mail to:  
Bible Study Cassettes, 1716 Spruce St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

E-8



that many people have told me of growth and problems solved through his seminars.

I should like to make several comments about the letter.

Concerning Mr. Gothard's judgment that I violated Scripture by not discussing these matters with him in private, I can only say that in this (as in several other areas), I realize more than before that our understanding of Scripture differs. This was no private "trespass" by Mr. Gothard against me (Matthew 18); it was a question of Christian doctrine that may have been taught or misunderstood by a multitude of people in the United States and Canada. (Mr. Gothard's estimate is that a million people have attended his seminars.)

Because of this involvement of the church, the relevant example—if I may mention it with any semblance of humility—is Galatians 2:14, "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, 'If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?'"

Nor do I consider Mr. Gothard a man who has done wrong and needs to be restored (Gal. 6:1). He is instead a Christian leader whose teaching needs to be examined, as does my own and that of any other person with a public ministry.

One thing the church has lost in the past 30 years is the public discussion of issues on which differing opinions are held by Christian speakers and writers—what might be called creative controversy. And this loss has left us vulnerable and isolated. It is my opinion that on significant matters of faith and life, Christian periodicals can rightly and biblically provide such a forum—but only if they are open to such discussion.

Concerning Mr. Gothard's statement that he asked me to investigate the influence of his seminars on the man who caused the death of his three-year old foster child in Portland, Mr. Gothard did suggest that I check with the social worker about this. Since I had previously heard directly from responsible members of the man's church—people who knew him—of his repeated attendance at the Basic Youth Conflicts Seminars, and that there was a significant relationship between this and his practice of discipline, I felt no necessity to find what a social worker assigned to the case might say.

I can understand a pastor's desire not to cause any problem to the seminars; I can understand the man's desire not to harm something that meant so much to him.

Out of a rather tense exchange between

Mr. Gothard and me, precipitated by my open letter, has come a positive result: I can now quote Mr. Gothard directly to all those missionaries in South America; the lady whose pastor told her she could commit adultery without guilt can show Mr. Gothard's letter to him, and everyone will in the future know that this is not what Mr. Gothard teaches.

Perhaps one further statement is in order. There may be "creative alternatives" to the suggestion of violation of the

ceremonial law (defilement), as in Daniel 1, but there is no creative alternative to a command or suggestion to sin. The only answer is disobedience (Daniel 6:10 ff; Genesis 39, in which Joseph proposes no alternative to Potiphar's wife). Christian believers in Russia know this. Unfortunately, many Christians in Germany during the Third Reich did not.

I appreciate Bill Gothard's gracious spirit and anticipate fellowship with him in the future.

## THE 1978 INSTITUTE ON DISCIPLESHIP & APOLOGETICS

with...

HOWARD HENDRICKS, NORMAN GEISLER, RAY STEDMAN,  
GARY COLLINS, ROGER NICOLE, DONALD CHITTICK,  
JIMMY WILLIAMS, JOSH McDOWELL, CARL WILSON...

JUNE 11 — JULY 8, 1978

Join with hundreds of students, pastors  
and lay workers at Western Kentucky  
University for four weeks  
of intensive study.

Objective: to balance an  
understanding of the  
certainty of Christian  
truth with an orderly  
and loving approach to  
making disciples.

Registration limited  
to 1100. There will  
be two, 2-week  
sessions. Priority  
will be given to  
those attending the  
full Institute.

Optional credit is  
available through  
Western Kentucky University.



For more information write:  
'78 Conference  
Worldwide Discipleship Assoc.  
1001 Virginia Ave., Suite 315  
Atlanta, GA 30354

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E ☐ Application for college credit ☐