

# Hurt and Bitterness—By Bill Gothard



William W. Gothard Jr. (born November 2, 1934) is an American Christian minister, speaker, and writer, and the founder of the Institute in Basic Life Principles (IBLP), an independent fundamentalist Christian organization. His conservative teachings encourage Bible memorization, large families, homeschooling, aversion to debt, familial patriarchy, the submission of wives to husbands, and modest attire. At the height of Gothard's popularity during the 1970s, his Basic Youth Conflicts seminar was regularly filling auditoriums throughout the United States and beyond with attendance figures as large as ten thousand and more for a one-week seminar. (from Wikipedia)

I attended Bill Gothard's Basic Youth Conflicts seminar when I served in the USAF when stationed in Sacramento, CA., circa 1972. I probably didn't get as much out of it as I should have because I felt I was forced to attend the seminar by the Navigator leadership, the non-denominational Christian fellowship that led me to Christ. I didn't always agree with what Bill Gothard was teaching. I was deceived then by Pentecostal pastors who told me I didn't need to study the Bible as much as the Navigators told me to study it or memorize so many Scriptures as the Navigators encouraged me to memorize. The Pentecostals told me all I needed was the infilling of the Holy Spirit. This supposed shortcut to spirituality was in *direct contradiction* to what the Navigators were telling me, namely, there is no shortcut! I rejected the Navigator's view of how to grow spiritually the time, but guess what? After a couple of decades of the school of hard knocks, I learned the Navigators and Bill Gothard were right. It was only through decades of Bible study, Scripture memorization, listening to the right people, experience, *and* guidance of the Holy Spirit that I came to know I know today.

The Scripture that comes to mind about this subject is what Jesus told His disciples.

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: *the words* that I speak unto you, *they are spirit*, and they are life. – John 6:63

The Lord blessed Bill Gothard with good health. At the time of this post, he's 89 years old.

Hurt has got to be one of our major problems today. You can get hurt so badly that you cut yourself off from feeling altogether. I've met girls who've

said, "Hey, I've been hurt too many times. I'm never going to love anybody again. Forget it." So you get hard and cynical. That's one way people deal with pain—they just withdraw themselves so that they won't be hurt again. But when you come to Jesus, God heals your heart and He takes the cynicism out of your life. You can once again open your heart to others and love again.

Even Christians can get hurt. It's not wrong to be hurt, but the way you deal with your hurt makes all the difference in the World. Being hurt is a big enough problem in itself, but if that hurt is not handled in the right way, bitterness will set in. In the end it is bitterness, not "being hurt," that will destroy you.

## **RECOGNIZING BITTERNESS**

It is really not that complicated to recognize bitterness. Let's think of some of the characteristics of an extremely bitter person:

1. They show a lack of concern for others. A bitter person cares very little about anybody else.
2. They're sensitive and touchy. For instance, if a bitter person walks into a room where two other people are talking, and those people get quieter as he walks in, the bitter person thinks, "They're talking about me."
3. They become very possessive with just a few friends, and rarely ever have any really close friends. They also have an unnatural fear of losing their friends.
4. They tend to avoid meeting new people.
5. They show little or no gratitude at all.
6. They will usually speak words of empty flattery or harsh criticism.
7. They hold grudges against people, often for a long time. They find it extremely difficult to forgive.
8. They often have a stubborn or sulking attitude.
9. They are usually unwilling to share or help anybody.
10. They end up experiencing mood extremes—very high and happy one minute, and the next thing you know, they're so low they can reach up and touch bottom.

(Editor's note: Although these symptoms often indicate bitteresses, they can also result from other causes as well.)

## **BITTERNESS: THE SEED OF HELL**

One of the bad things about bitterness is that it doesn't stop. It keeps getting worse. It may only start as a little seed of hurt, but then it grows and festers into a very dangerous thing. Many people can be hurt by one person's bitterness. (See Heb.12:15 .)

## **THE "FILING CABINET OF YOUR MIND"**

In bitterness, you focus on what that "horrible person" has done to you. You make a filing cabinet with their name on it, saying, "Rotten Things This Person Has Done To Me." Now this is a big filing cabinet, and every time that person does even the smallest thing that hurts or bothers you, you file it in

with the rest of the hurts. Usually we have more than one filing cabinet.

One of the causes of continual or persistent bitterness is that we try to balance out the guilt with blame. We say, "Well, I'm wrong, but they're worse. I have a good reason to be bitter. You don't know what they did to me!" That's how we try to ease our conscience.

Many people use bitterness for revenge. That's why we hold on to it sometimes. "I'll show you, and you're really going to be sorry." But who is sorry first? You're the one who's killing yourself! You are not only hurt spiritually and emotionally, but physically as well. Bitterness and resentment often bring on all sorts of medical problems, such as ulcers and high blood pressure. People who carry deep bitterness around can't even enjoy a great meal. They sit down to eat, but all they can think of is the person who hurt them—they might as well be eating cardboard.

### **GETTING OUT OF THE BITTERNESS TRAP**

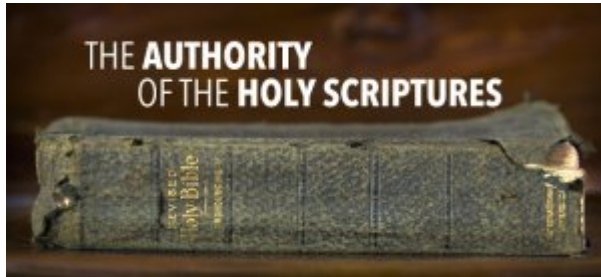
The Lord's Prayer says, "God, You forgive me the way I forgive others." The thing that causes hurt to develop into bitterness is failing to respond to the help God can give at that time of being hurt. To forgive someone doesn't mean pretending you're not hurt. That isn't Christianity—that's insanity. You need to be honest with yourself and admit that you've really been hurt. But how do we overcome our hurts? Here are some basic steps.

Pray, and ask God to forgive you for your bitterness and unforgiving spirit. This is not a complicated thing, but it may be costly. You may need a bit of time on your own. Take time to actually write a list of how you have hurt God and others, and let the Lord break you. Ask God's forgiveness for these things one by one.—And when you get finished, take the list and rip it up. It's a good feeling. Burn it if you like.

Destroy your files. Remember that list of things that others have done to hurt you? Open the filing cabinets of your mind, take out all the files, and get rid of them. Tear up your list and burn it. You must release it all to God. Forgiveness is opening the filing cabinet before God and clearing the debts. "I'm not going to hold this against them anymore. I'm not even going to keep a record of it." No record. That's what God does with you. Do you want Him to remember and recall all the debts He has cleared you of? Of course not, so you do the same. The Bible says, "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."—Mat.6:14,15 . It's a choice you must make in response to God's offer of forgiveness to you. What will you do?

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# Are Bible Doctrines Important to Teach and Know? Or is "All You Need is Love"?



doctrine (n.)

late 14c., "the body of principles, dogmas, etc., in a religion or field of knowledge," from Old French doctrine (12c.) "teaching, doctrine" and directly from Latin doctrina "a teaching, body of teachings, learning," from doctor "teacher" (from <https://www.etymonline.com/word/doctrine>)

It's been my personal observation of Pentecostal-Charismatic type of Christians that they seek experiences with the Holy Spirit which result in emotional highs and don't care so much about biblical doctrines. And the ironic thing is, though they assert that teaching doctrine from the Word of God is not as important as being filled with the Spirit, they have developed their *own* doctrines which are patently false and unscriptural!

One pastor of a Pentecostal church boasted to me how *little* Bible he knew or memorized and yet he is "filled with the spirit." I tend to agree with him that he's full of some spirit, but the question is, which spirit? Is it really the Holy Spirit? My Bible says,

John 6:63b ...the **words** that I speak unto you, **they are spirit**, and **they are life**.

One "brother" told me once, "We have Jesus, we don't need the Bible." But how are we going to have Jesus without the Bible? NO WAY! The Bible is the only authority a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus can stand on. And if he or she cannot explain their faith in Christ directly from Bible verses, I wonder if they have any real faith at all. The Bible says the source of true faith is through hearing the Word of God. The Bible is the only sure source of the written Word of God.

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

I once wanted to share the historicist interpretation of Daniel 9:27 to an elderly Pentecostal lady I was helping in setting up her new house. She told me flat out she wasn't interested in hearing it. She introduced me to Todd White who teaches doctrines such as, "the Bible doesn't tell you to rebuke the Devil." And she introduced me to Heidi Baker who sometimes appears before a congregation acting so drunk as if she had just drank several bottles of wine!

In showing the list of Scriptures in the Bible with the word "doctrine" I will be commenting on the number of times it appears in certain sections of Scripture. I've been influenced by the teaching of Pastor Michael Hoggard who believes numbers in the Bible and specifically in the King James Version of the Bible, are significant because it shows that the KJV is a translation that can be only inspired by the Holy Spirit. For example, the word "godhead" appears exactly 3 times in the KJV signifying the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity. Other English translations do not do so. The New King James version in the Book of Acts uses the words "divine nature" instead of godhead. That's wrong and a different meaning entirely!

## **Scriptures with the Word Doctrine**

**The word doctrine appears six times in the Old Testament.**

Deuteronomy 32:2 My **doctrine** shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

Job 11:4 For thou hast said, My **doctrine** is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

Proverbs 4:2 For I give you good **doctrine**, forsake ye not my law.

Isaiah 28:9 ¶Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand **doctrine**? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

Isaiah 29:24 They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn **doctrine**.

Jeremiah 10:8 But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a **doctrine** of vanities.

**It appears 12 times in the four Gospels. It's interesting that Jesus chose 12 Apostles!**

Matthew 7:28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his **doctrine**:

Matthew 16:12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **doctrine** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Matthew 22:33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his **doctrine**.

Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at his **doctrine**: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 1:27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new **doctrine** is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

Mark 4:2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in

his **doctrine**,

Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his **doctrine**.

Mark 12:38 ¶ And he said unto them in his **doctrine**, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at his **doctrine**: for his word was with power.

John 7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My **doctrine** is not mine, but his that sent me.

John 7:17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the **doctrine**, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 18:19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his **doctrine**.

**It appears four times in the Book of Acts. There are a lot of combinations of "fours" in the Bible, four Gospels, four beasts (Revelation 6:1,6), four angels, four corners, four winds (Revelation 7:1)**

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' **doctrine** and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 5:28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your **doctrine**, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Acts 13:12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the **doctrine** of the Lord.

Acts 17:19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new **doctrine**, whereof thou speakest, is?

**It appears 21 times in 12 chapters of the Pauline Epistles! The number 21 can be factored to 3 X 7, both significant numbers in the Bible. And of course, 12 is a significant number.**

Romans 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of **doctrine** which was delivered you.

Romans 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the **doctrine** which ye have learned; and avoid them.

1 Corinthians 14:6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by **doctrine**?

1 Corinthians 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a **doctrine**, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of **doctrine**, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

1 Timothy 1:3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other **doctrine**,

1 Timothy 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound **doctrine**;

1 Timothy 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou

shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good **doctrine**, whereunto thou hast attained.

1 Timothy 4:13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to **doctrine**.

1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the **doctrine**; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and **doctrine**.

1 Timothy 6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his **doctrine** be not blasphemed.

1 Timothy 6:3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the **doctrine** which is according to godliness;

2 Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my **doctrine**, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and **doctrine**.

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound **doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound **doctrine** both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound **doctrine**:

Titus 2:7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in **doctrine** shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Titus 2:10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the **doctrine** of God our Saviour in all things.

**It appears five times in four verses in the rest of the Epistles.**

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the **doctrine** of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 6:2 Of the **doctrine** of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

2 John 1:9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the **doctrine** of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the **doctrine** of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

2 John 1:10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this **doctrine**, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

**It appears three times in three verses in the Book of Revelation.**

Revelation 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the **doctrine** of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Revelation 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the **doctrine** of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Revelation 2:24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this **doctrine**, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

**The plural of the word, doctrines, appears five times in five verses in the Bible.**

It's very interesting to me that in each case the plural word is used in a negative sense meaning bad or false doctrines!

Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for **doctrines the commandments of men**.

Mark 7:7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for **doctrines the commandments of men**.

Colossians 2:22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the **commandments and doctrines of men**?

1 Timothy 4:1 ¶Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and **doctrines of devils**;

Hebrews 13:9 Be not carried about with divers and **strange doctrines**. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

## **Words Modifying Doctrine**

Deuteronomy 32:2 **My (God's) doctrine** shall drop as the rain

Proverbs 4:2 For I give you **good doctrine**

Matthew 7:28 when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at **his doctrine**:

Matthew 22:33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at **his doctrine**.

Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at **his doctrine**: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

Mark 4:2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in **his doctrine**,

Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at **his doctrine**.

Mark 12:38 And he said unto them in **his doctrine**, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at **his doctrine**: for his word was with power.

John 18:19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of **his doctrine**.

1 Timothy 6:1 ¶Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of **God and his doctrine** be not blasphemed.

Mark 1:27 (Jesus') **new doctrine**

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the **apostles' doctrine**

Acts 17:19 May we know what this **new doctrine**,



Ephesians 4:14 every **wind of doctrine**

1 Timothy 1:10 **sound doctrine**

1 Timothy 4:6 the words of faith and of **good doctrine**

2 Timothy 4:3 **sound doctrine**

Titus 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able **by sound doctrine**

Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become **sound doctrine**

Hebrews 6:1 the **doctrine of Christ**

2 John 1:9 the **doctrine of Christ**

## **Is love also needed when teaching doctrine?**

Absolutely! We should not become like the scribes and Pharisees with a holier than thou attitude when we teach doctrine from the Bible. The Bible says,

1 Corinthians 13:2 And though I have ... all knowledge; ... and have not charity, I am nothing.

2 Timothy 2:25 **In meekness** instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

We are to teach doctrine from the Bible in a spirit of love and meekness and not in an arrogant condescending attitude. When we know our own weaknesses and faults, it's easier to remain humble. Remember, Jesus came not for the righteous, but to bring sinners to repentance. We are ALL sinners. The problem with some people is they don't think of themselves as a sinner.

1 John 1:8 ¶If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

## **Conclusion**

From this study, would you say that teaching correct doctrine is important? Or would you say, "**Doctrine divides!** All Christians should be united as one! Let's continue on with ecumenicalism and unite with ALL religions, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, any Christian religion that claims to be Christians such as Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, etc. Don't we all worship the same God?" My answer to that would be a resounding NO! Catholics include Mary in the Godhead.