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John Allen Chalk

3-19-1971

From/To: David Oakley (Chalk's reply filed first)

David Oakley

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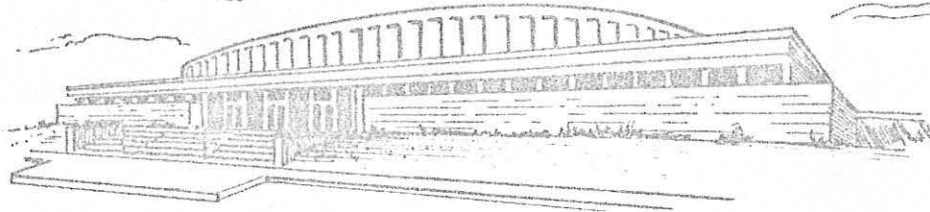
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March 19, 1971

Mr. David Oakley
South-Central Christian Children's Home
2510 Highway 65
Jeffersonville, Indiana

Dear Dave:

Your letter of March 7 was a powerful testimony to all that God is doing in your life. I praise the Lord Jesus whose death made it all possible. I sensed in your letter a genuine sincerity and reality that escapes most church members. I know that you are blessing countless lives, not only by specific words and thoughts, but in the very presence of your own life. The beautiful, new, "personal relationship" with God that you have is exactly what I am convinced is what Jesus promised us in John 14:23.

It's beautiful also to hear that your other relationships have become so rewarding. This is in keeping with the very thing Jesus is trying to tell us in Matthew 22:34-40. When our relationship with God is what it ought to be, our relationships with our fellow men become what they ought to be. I have found that my own personal relationship with God is deepening and growing as I practice the principle of Col. 2:6 and 7. To me, this passage says, among other things, that I must make the same decision every day that I made when I became a Christian. Unless I do that every day, I begin to feel an ebbing out of my spiritual strength.

Dave, I can appreciate the problem you raise in your letter. I, too, have known the overwhelming desire to share everything I have experienced with everybody, especially in the brotherhood. I frankly am not at all sure that this is a sound reaction. I, however, am not the one to counsel with you about this. As you know, I have been hurt and scarred by brotherhood reactions. Therefore, the positions I have taken in my own personal life regarding these kind of things may not be the most healthy. They seem to work for me and they also seem to preserve my relationship with God, but they certainly are not helping to get me elected "President of the Church of Christ." Paul seems to struggle with this matter of ambition in Phil. 3. You might want to study that chapter carefully for what he seems to find out about it.

Mr. David Oakley
March 19, 1971
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I know of no positions open in Herald of Truth right now. I would feel free, however, to write Mr. Clois Fowler, P.O. Box 2439, Abilene, Texas, 79604. Clois is coordinator of all Herald of Truth activities and is the man with whom you would work if you came here. I will be happy to recommend you and you can use my name in any letter to Clois.

I suppose my biggest question about "brotherhood type" efforts, such as what you would like to do, is that I can't see how this is healthy for one's family. I have travelled across this country in recent years and I discovered that not only was it damaging to my spiritual health, but it was damaging to my family's health. You, however, may be able to handle that better than I have. My family is a normal kind of family with normal needs that simply were not being met by my being home only on occasion. I am deeply concerned about those of us who have to travel and who have to be in new situations, receiving acclaim and honor, in order to feel accepted by God. I don't at all say that this is the way you feel, or that this is your position, but I am saying to look extremely carefully at this matter.

I am wondering if you are using Oswald Chamber's devotional book, My Utmost for His Highest. This book is published in New York by Dodd, Mead and Co. and copyrighted in 1935. You can get it in any good Bible Book Store. I think it would help you a great deal as you read from Chambers as to where and how to use your great talent.

God bless you for writing. I appreciate so much the frank, honest, Christlike way you are evaluating your own talents and the direction you need to go in the future. Let me know how things go.

I have sent your resumé on to Clois Fowler with a recommendation.

Your brother,



John Allen Chalk

JAC:hm

South-Central CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME, INC.

DAVID OAKLEY – DIRECTOR

2510 HIGHWAY 62
JEFFERSONVILLE, IND. 47130
812-282-8248

March 7, 1971

Mr. John Allen Chalk
Highland Church of Christ
South Fifth and Highland
Abilene, Texas, 79605

Dear John,

Your last letter of November 17 was received with great joy. In hesitating to answer you, I have been waiting to verify the experiences you reminded me of in the Scriptures regarding subjecting our lives under the Lordly rule of Jesus, and effectual prayer.

Wonderful things have happened in my life since I undertook this study. I realize now that I still don't trust Him completely, or I wouldn't have had to wait to witness the proof of His Power in my life. Listen:

~~My personal life is at peace with myself and with God really for the first time in ten years.~~ I have conquered sin, habitual, personal sin which has frustrated that reconciliation all my life. It was not I, but Jesus in me who made peace. And, I acknowledge God's warning in I Cor 10:13, but I believe, John, that a wicked lie has been propagated upon us, in that we are taught (or at least I was) that one can't live a life without sin. It is almost the attitude to which Paul addresses his readers in Romans 6. You mentioned in your letter that part of the reality of your spiritual life was an acceptance of what God did in Baptism. I agree, though I've a long way to go before I experience that power constantly and unconsciously.

Then, too, my personal relationships with others are more rewarding, relaxed and hence, more enjoyable. This is especially true with those to whom I am closest--my wife, my co-worker Ken Samuel, my elders, my secretary. It is possible through Jesus, and for His sake to have attitudes and actions I have desired, but been unable to perform under my own power. 2

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John Allen Chalk:

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Col.
2:6-7

It is most natural to talk to everyone I come in contact with about Jesus! I don't mean an emotional "Holy Roller"-type-of-experience, but simply that He is alive and real in my life at last. I must share this. Yet, again, by my power I feel inadequate. David's thoughts in Ps. 51:12,13: When I am right with God, by Christ, then I can talk freely about Him with others. And not to convince them, to "proselyte them," or to recruit them, but just to share with them the living reality that whatever is missing in thier lives can be found in Him.

The change in my work--my ministry--is phenominal! Almost immediately after I decided Jesus is Lord, I was given the ideal, long-sought-after position of being an independent, roving ambassador for Christ and his cause. Three months ago the Directors of South-Central put me on full time as Director of Develpment (flunky-ha!) to raise the needed added income for us to advance our program so that Ken Samuel could assume full time superintendent. They figured we needed to raise an additional \$5,000 in cash and committments by target date for the switch, three months later which was March 1, 1971. The Lord blessed our efforts, and the brethren rallied, and we now have over \$55,000 in cash and committments. We have quadrupled the number of regular contributors, and tripled the income to the Home; in three months! No man could accomplish that alone! Wonderful is He to me!

I know how busy you must be John. I wanted to see you at the lectures in Abilne, but couldn't find opportunity to be with you. I owe everything to Jesus. Let us thank God for his priceless gift. But, let me acknowledge you showed me the way. I saw Christ first clearly in you. I must share the wonderful things in my life with someone who understands, too.

Now, perhaps you can advise me in an area of difficulty which I seem unable to search out in The Book. Bluntly, it is that I am ambitious. *Phil. 3:*
I am afraid I confuse sometimes my zeal for the master with my desire to please men. Compromise is not a problem, but desire for prominence.
On the other hand, I honestly think that I, through God's grace, and Godly men's instruction, have a unique message so needed by so many.

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If my work in development and fund raising has profited the Lord's Kingdom in this place, am I in error to feel I could do more for Him in a wider sphere of influence. Paul was ambitious to win men, to change lives, to affect whole nations, to build great churches, to spread Christ's spirit of compassion--not for his sake--but for Christ's. Phil 3; 2 Cor. 9; Col. 3.

My good wife Kay, my two little girls, and I are deleriously happy here with a wonderful church and working with the Home. We own our own home, the Lord has prospered us greatly. Unlike Paul, I guess I haven't learned to abound yet.

But right now South-Central could operate on the increased services of administration, adding a new, fourth Home and endow it for eight kids for over two years, with the money we have in hand and committed only through December 31, 1971. We can do greater things for Jesus and His Bride, if the elders wanted to now. But, they don't need me. I seek a new challenge, another field waiting the reaper to harvest. (Though I haven't discussed this with anyone but Kay--and now with you, John.)

I would not "merchandise " our friendship. I don't want to use you. But, maybe there is a need for my talent (through Christ's power given me, I can work mightily with Him) with the Herald of Truth. If so, advise me about who I should approach, should I desire to do so. Or (to further confuse you) maybe in your travels you know of such a need in the church that I could expand to my full potential. If that is pride so be it, I guess.

Do you believe Christ, or God, or Providence (or whaterer) leads you in such matters? I think I am scared to feel that leading, if it be there. Is it God, or my own psche? Does He still rule in the affairs of Men? In my life? In yours?

I hesitate to even ask your advise or help with the above, and if it places you in an awkward position somehow...why, just ignore me.

Pray for me right now, that in my life I can continue to know Jesus, and be able to share that knowledge with everyone.

Fraternally

David Oakley

Providing Quality Child-Care In A Christian Environment