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John Allen Chalk: Personal Correspondence

John Allen Chalk

6-6-1969

From/To: Batsell Barrett Baxter (Chalk's reply filed first)

Batsell Barrett Baxter

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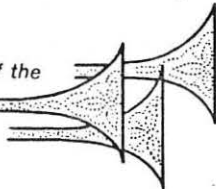
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HERALD OF TRUTH
Radio and Television Programs

June 6, 1969

Dr. Batsell Barrett Baxter
David Lipscomb College
Nashville, Tennessee

Dear Batsell:

Thank you so much for your concerned reply to the invitation to attend the Retreat at the Yokefellow Institute. I am deeply thankful that you took the time to share your conscientious concerns about this matter. I respect the decision you have made and understand why you would feel such a decision necessary.

I do not agree with the decision you have made. All of the participants in this retreat will be either gospel preachers or interested leaders from local congregations from all over the nation. I envisioned this retreat initially for several reasons: (1) to bring spiritual renewal into the busy, hurried lives of all of those who will be attending through prayer, worship, and study together; (2) to give these men, most of whom are coming from local congregations, an insight into what a retreat-renewal center is like (The Yokefellow Institute is a specially designed center, costing \$300,000 for small groups just like ours); (3) to stimulate local preachers and other leaders to use small groups as one method by which to encourage greater spiritual depth and maturity on the part of their members. Sam Emerick and Craig Peters, director and associate director of the Yokefellow Institute will be in charge of the mechanics of our 24-hour retreat. They will not, however, be foisting upon us any of their special denominational opinions. Both of these men are sincere concerned "believers" in Jesus Christ, who have specialized skills regarding retreat-renewal centers. I can see no way in which our association with these two men will be interpreted as either compromise or a total agreement with all the personal beliefs they hold. Our visit with Elton Trueblood on Monday night will be a teacher-student situation. All of us have read either all or most of Trueblood's books. I hardly see a difference in learning from him from a book and learning from him from a personal visit. My own experience with Elton Trueblood has been of such a profitable nature that I believe the other men attending this retreat will also profit from hearing his personal convictions and sharing in the warmth of his personality.

On these bases I cannot agree with your conclusion. I think it reveals an insulated and culture-shaped view that, in my judgment, is neither Biblical nor wholesome. I can assure you that this exchange is of such a confidential and personal nature that I will not be sharing your conviction about this nor my reaction to it with anyone else. I can certainly appreciate the fact that you might want to discuss this with Don Finto and Tim Tucker, but hope that you accept this letter within the context of our warm, meaningful experiences of the past. I do respect your judgment. I understand why you have had to come to the conclusion you have

Dr. Batsell Barrett Baxter

June 6, 1969

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about the Yokefellow Retreat. I appreciate your taking the time to write me about it. I do not agree with the conclusion you have reached, but I send you my continued prayers, personal concern and support for your own conscientiously chosen ways of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

Your brother,

John Allen Chalk
Radio Evangelist

JAC:hm



David Lipscomb College

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

May 23, 1969

DEPARTMENT OF BIBLE

Mr. John Allen Chalk
Highland Church of Christ
South 5th at Highland
Abilene, Texas 79604

Dear John Allen:

Partially through being preoccupied and busy with other things, and partially because I have wanted to weigh your invitation to attend the Yokefellow Institute carefully before making a decision, I have delayed writing until now. Don Finto, Tim Tucker and I get together several mornings each week for a discussion of the situation among our young people here, the developments of Campus Evangelism, and other related matters. We have talked at some length concerning this invitation which you have sent. It is difficult for me to know what I can do in view of my other obligations and what I ought to do about this invitation.

I have some problems in my own conscience in being part of a devotional-type retreat with men such as those who lead in the Yokefellow Institute. I would very much like to learn from them the methods and techniques which they have found helpful, but I cannot quite conscientiously feel that I want to be part of a situation that seems to imply rather full fellowship with men with whom I cannot agree on many of the basic teachings of Christ and the apostles. It may be that I misunderstand the nature of the meeting and it may be that I misunderstand some of the doctrinal beliefs of these men who lead the institute.

In any case, I have to do what I really believe I ought to do and on that basis I feel I must decline your invitation. It would have been far easier, John Allen, to write this letter and say simply that I am tied up and cannot come. I appreciate you, however, too much to do it on any other basis than an honest statement of the real reasons. I hope that the meeting goes well for those of you who do attend and I shall look forward sometime to learning from you some of the methods and plans that undoubtedly will be rich and rewarding. My prayers go with you in all that you are doing for the Cause of Christ and also in your individual and family situations.

Sincerely in Him,

Batsell Barrett Baxter
Batsell Barrett Baxter
Chairman, Department of Bible

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