

# **RICK HAMILTON CHOOSES TO FOLLOW BILLY GRAHAM OVER JESUS CHRIST**

**Gary McDade**

Rick Hamilton from Franklin, Tennessee, serves as a living example of how people will follow the doctrines and commandments of men over the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not know Mr. Hamilton personally, and I certainly have no personal animosity toward him. The reason for writing reviews of Billy Graham's articles and other activities he leads is to point out in love erroneous doctrines he teaches that will cause a person to be lost. The bold title of this article represents a conclusion drawn from Mr. Hamilton's e-mail to me after his visit to the Getwell Church of Christ's website. In particular he is responding to an article I wrote that is posted there. See where you think his loyalties lie.

## ***“You're Missing The Point”***

*“I read your article ‘Is It Possible to be a Traitor to the Cause of Christ?’ and I am deeply concerned that a so called man of Christ could be so wrong!!! The only traitor that I see is you; Billy Graham is a true disciple of Christ. You should pray for forgiveness for such foolish thoughts. People like you are the reason so many people stay confused and never repent and ask God for forgiveness. I'm a Southern Baptist and know that many people who do find Christ at Billy Graham Crusades follow-up with baptism in a local church. Billy Graham's message is so simple and true; ask God for forgiveness of your sins, accept Jesus Christ as your savior, and walk into eternity. My family and I will pray for your soul tonight (Gary McDade) because you certainly need it. God Bless You, Rick Hamilton, Franklin, TN.”*

Please allow me to begin my response with a condensed review of the article that has so upset Mr. Hamilton. One, it was proven from scripture that the Billy Graham Crusades have handled the word of God deceitfully from their beginnings in Los Angeles in 1949 by teaching that people are saved before they are baptized. Passages like Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38 were discussed in the article but received absolutely no recognition or response from Mr. Hamilton. Two, Billy Graham is not a member of the church of Christ but, like Mr. Hamilton, proudly presents his membership in the Southern Baptist Denomination. In so doing Ephesians 3:21 is openly and rebelliously violated. The passage says, “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Now, if Mr. Hamilton believes the Southern Baptist Denomination is the church about which the apostle Paul was writing, then let him show the world the Southern Baptist Denomination in the Bible. Before going another point further I will show

you the church of Christ in the Bible. Romans 16:16 reads, “Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.”

Three, the article of Mr. Hamilton’s rage discussed how Rubel Shelly, a former member of the church of Christ, agrees with Billy Graham in advocating a “core message” instead of following the divine directive to preach the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27; II Tim. 4:2). Many within churches of Christ have been influenced away from the Bible altogether because of Rubel Shelly’s rejection of the Bible. It is not surprising to see his affinity with Billy Graham who thinks as he does about placing desired restrictions against teaching the “whole counsel of God,” but it is disappointing. A number of Bible verses were offered for consideration in the article, but Mr. Hamilton chose not to even reference any of them in his response. Three passages in particular apparently had to be left out by Mr. Hamilton in order for his response to even be considered. They were Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; and Acts 2:38. If you read or recall them, you will see why Mr. Hamilton, like his mentor Billy Graham, cannot afford them a place in honorable discussion.

Four, in the article about which the Hamilton Family is praying tonight the popular idea of the church belonging to the people instead of to the Lord was reviewed. The church of the Bible belongs to Christ himself, so people are never encouraged to “join our church” as the Southern Baptists and Billy Graham teach. The Lord Jesus Christ adds those who obey the gospel to his church (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47). In the article, I carefully pointed out how no one is saved outside of Christ and his church and gave the biblical references from Romans 12:5 and Ephesians 5:23. But, instead of opening his Bible, Mr. Hamilton would rather blast on about how presenting this is “so wrong!!!”

Five, the Billy Graham Crusade is guilty of fabricating doctrines of men by wanting “all those thousands of people contacted and taught more about how to respond to the gospel in their daily lives” without believing and teaching what the Bible says about obeying the truth in initially responding to the gospel by being “baptized into Christ” (Rom. 6:3; Gal 3:27). Even Rubel Shelly noted in his church bulletin that baptisms from contacts made during the Billy Graham Crusade have not been forthcoming. Small wonder why when Billy Graham did not teach what Christ said on baptism from Mark 16:16. Those who responded to the invitation came to Billy Graham, not to Jesus Christ, like Mr. Hamilton here. More than three years have passed and “all those thousands of people” who responded to Billy Graham have yet to obey the gospel by doing what Christ commanded in Mark 16:16, yet Mr. Hamilton stresses how “simple and true” Billy Graham’s message is.

Mr. Hamilton read the article he rejects, and he knows the word of God was presented in it, yet he made absolutely no reference to any of the several verses of scripture presented. "I'll pray for you," he says. Prayer will not help the man who rejects the counsel of God against himself. Mr. Hamilton is like the Pharisees and lawyers about whom Luke wrote, "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Luke 7:30). Clearly, "thousands of people" want Billy Graham to carry them through the judgment, but all need to be reminded that Billy Graham will not be their judge; Jesus Christ will, and his judgment will have as its basis the word of God (John 12:48-49).