

# Acknowledgement and Apology

Aug 18  
Aug 17, 2023

Dear friends,

How do we begin to say sorry to people we've loved and hurt? We hope this letter can be the first step.

We would like to make an apology for our part in allowing SA and CSA to continue in our fellowship. Whether out of ignorance or denial, we did not act on what we were being told.

Many years ago [Redacted person A] was a victim of CSA by a member of our fellowship. At the time, they were four years old and didn't have the words to express what happened. We continued our relationship with that family and unfortunately another violation occurred. It was many years later before that violation was brought to our attention. We still remained in denial. Immediately after the Dean Breur news broke, [Redacted person A] contacted a close friend to discuss a need for a website for victim-survivors to go to for support. They developed <https://voicesforthetruth.org>. We are so thankful for the many selfless hours of work given by [Redacted person A] in support of victim-survivors all while also being a victim-survivor. We are terribly sorry that they had to suffer alone in silence for so many years.

In 2013, [Redacted person B] became aware of the extent of CSA in our fellowship. Since that time, she has been actively trying to make us more aware of the CSA issues. Due to her persistence, we finally began to see the gravity of Ira Hobbs' involvement in CSA and the mishandlings of the Ministry's leadership in dealing with predators. In September 2019, just five months after Ira Hobbs raped our dear sister worker (which we were unaware of at the time), and prior to Clever Convention, we asked to speak to our overseer (who was aware of the violation). Although [Redacted person B] was no longer in the fellowship, she remained intent on being a child advocate. With tears in her eyes she sat down with us and the overseer. We pleaded that the overseer would not allow Ira Hobbs to gather with young children and asked that he please ban Ira from coming to Clever Convention. We were told we alone could say who could and couldn't come on our property. [Redacted person B] helped us to write a letter to Ira Hobbs stating that fact. We want to thank her for the persistence in being a child advocate and continuing to be involved in making us aware and educating us on the dangers of CSA and coverup. We

also want to apologize to her that for so long her voice fell on deaf ears. The following is our letter to Ira Hobbs along with his response.

09/01/2019

Mr. Ira Hobbs

*I am contacting you concerning the conventions at Clever. As you know, hundreds of our fellow Christians both young and old gather together here once a year to celebrate the life of Christ. We will have a phone number set up to listen in for those that cannot attend convention in person. I strongly urge you to utilize the option to call in to each of the 3 meetings that will be held daily.*

*This year as in future years, attending in person or staying on the grounds during the week of convention is not an option that will be available to you. It is not our place to judge or convict only to walk with God and open our home as a safe place of worship. We have not addressed any safety concerns in the past as we felt moved to allow the workers to handle the situation. We have been advised that only we have the authority to make a decision about who can and cannot attend the convention at our home. We also feel that this would be best for your own protection against any future accusations that you not be present.*

*We have made the call-in option available because through Christ is our salvation and we want anyone who can to participate and enjoy the spirit of convention. This has troubled our hearts for some time now. Therefore workers were contacted and they have consented to, and are in agreement with this request. We ask that you respect our decision and respond to let us know that you have received this communication.*

*Sincerely,*

*The T Family*

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09/07/2019

*Dear Lecil,*

*God is witness of the grief caused by your strange and questionable judgment. Even though we had hoped to get to Clever convention this year, considering our current major health issues, it is not even feasible to physically attend any convention next week.*

*We love the fellowship and quickening meetings, and hope to share at least some of the meetings by conference call, if that is provided.*

*Sincerely, Joan and Ira*

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In 2013, [Redacted person C], who had 3 small children, also became acutely aware of the horrific acts of CSA committed by Ira Hobbs. She vowed at that time to take action. She contacted as many people as possible via email to sign a petition pleading for our Overseers to take action to rid the fellowship of CSA. Sadly, only 86 people signed that petition, fifteen signed 'Anonymous'. Due to our refusal to open our eyes and see there was a problem from within our fellowship, she felt she was fighting alone without the support of [Redacted]. For that we want to apologize to her. We also want to thank her for doing what she felt necessary at the time to protect her own family and [Redacted]. Back in 2013, it may have seemed extreme, but we are grateful for her insight and that she felt strong enough to make a stand. The following is a link to the petition written by [Redacted person C] 10 years ago. <https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/create-publish-and-implement-a-child-sexual-abuse-education-and-response-plan.html>

[Redacted person D], is presently very active and involved in assisting us in this fight to rid our fellowship of SA and CSA. We want to thank him for volunteering his time, along with our oldest in helping victims-survivors through Voices for the Truth. We want to apologize that he did not see [Redacted] take a more active stance against SA and CSA in the past. We realize what a disappointment this must be to him as well as to [Redacted]. We want to thank [Redacted person D], for always challenging us and opening up hard conversations. And thank him for the work he's done to help open us up to a kinder and more loving perspective towards others, especially those who may not share our skin color, sexual orientation or gender, or faith. It is in this that we have become more aware of the needs and struggles of others.

Although none of [Redacted] currently are in this fellowship, they realize our commitment and love for this fellowship and our desire to remain a part of it.

We are sorry that we recently allowed an alleged perpetrator to work on our property even after we learned that there were allegations against him. On June, 9, 2023 we received a letter notifying us of allegations against Brad Holman. Then on June 16, 2023 we were notified that Brad would be coming to Clever Convention grounds to pick up some of his personal things, wrap up an electrical project, and drop off a vehicle. Although Brad was never in our home, one week later, Brad was still present on the grounds. We asked Craig Winkvist if anything was being done to clear Brad of the allegations and told him that if not, Brad would need to leave. Craig informed us that the allegations were serious and doubted that they would be cleared. Brad was told he would need to leave our property

and he left on Sunday June 24, 2023. We know now that allowing Brad to work on our property even after we knew there were allegations against him appeared as us supporting him. To the community and especially victim-survivors, we hope you will accept our sincere apology.

To all victim-survivors of CSA and SA: we are deeply sorry for the pain you have experienced. We are sorry that we didn't do more sooner. We see you. We hear you. We believe you. And we will do everything within our power to support you.

SA and CSA have many secondary victim-survivors. It is a crime not only against an individual, but against a community. For our part in the complicity, we are so very sorry. Our lack of awareness and understanding delayed the urgency of action. We have been educating ourselves through literature, conversation, and sharing. And we plan to continue to do so. We understand that ignorance made us make wrong decisions, but that is inexcusable. We have also learned that accountability does not erase the damage done by our actions/inactions. We hope that our current stance against SA and CSA can show that we are not only sorry, but we are also committed to taking an active role in the healing of victim-survivors as well as the prevention of further harm. This letter is in no way written to justify our complicity and inaction in past years. We take full accountability.

For too long, we have not considered the anguish SA and CSA has caused the victim-survivors. To those who consider our stance too radical, we hope that you will come to see there is nothing radical about supporting victim-survivors and protecting our fellowship.

We know that many of you may have been personally harmed by our inaction on this in the past and you deserve a personal apology as well. Please reach out to us if you feel comfortable doing so: we would be grateful for the opportunity to apologize to you directly.

With remorse,

Lecil and Gaby T

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**WINGS Note:** Some details have been redacted to preserve privacy.