

Dale Doerings Story

TW:CSA

Every person that knows more and is not calling in to share information pertaining to abuse is just as guilty and complicit as the abusers.

The above quote, by Sheri Autrey with Advocates for the Truth, has been going around and around in my head for the last couple of days since my sister pointed me to the FB pages informing about victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) and Sexual Abuse (SA) within the “Truth” and the organized movement to call it out and address it.

I’m ready to tell my story of being sexually abused when I was 11-12 years old. I thought I had gotten past the hurt, betrayal, shame, and broken trust. I was so triggered and today my heart is broken reading story after story of victims that have been raped and abused at the hands of *workers, ex-workers, and elders*. All the people we were taught, as children, that we could trust.

If all of us do not collectively speak up, these atrocities will continue under the cover of secrecy, Predators covering for other Predators in the ministry and positions of trust in the “Truth”.

I grew up in the “Truth” in a family with 6 children. We were taught that the workers were to always be respected and trusted and what they said was to be followed. We were also taught that children were to be “seen and not heard”. Looking back now, it was an ideal environment for a pedophile to maneuver.

My sexual abuse took place 55 years ago and it is as real today as it was then. I have read in the Facebook forums that workers advise victims to “Just get over it” or “You can put it in the past, forgive the abuser and get on with your life”. It’s important to understand that *sexual abuse* is not something you can get over. The trauma of abuse leaves permanent scars on a child. Research shows that it disrupts long-term brain development and function as well. I never told anyone about the repeated assaults, including my parents. I think it is because of the culture of secrecy that is part of the professing ‘way of life’. In my experience, people did not talk about anything related to sexuality. My parents counseled with scripture only. Having a real-life conversation was difficult. The only person I talked to was my high school girlfriend, who became my wife. We were teenagers and we both had been abused by men within our circle. She relayed my experiences to my parents.

I was abused by an Ex-Worker, **Herb Erickson** (deceased in 2022) that moved to Denver from Washington State. I don’t know the reason why he left the work. My parents invited him and his new wife to our home several times for dinner and group gatherings to welcome them to Denver. The relationship eventually turned to more interest in the children. Herb and his wife would ask my folks if they could take the older kids (older sister, me, and younger brother) to gospel meetings and special meetings. All were long distances from Denver. Eventually the attention turned to my brother and I, and then it was just me. Looking at it today, it was classic grooming by a pedophile selecting the most vulnerable. Herb worked nights at a bank doing some sort of computer backup work and he slept during the day. He invited me to go to work with him and after work he took me to his home. The sexual abuse happened while his wife was in another room. Herb and his wife lived in a small apartment, and as far as I can remember there was only one bedroom. We would sleep in the same bed, where he assaulted me for an hour or more. He went to sleep but I didn’t. When he woke up, he took me home. On the way, he always stopped at Target to

get me some Matchbox cars. This “gift” of the cars was a ritual, after every incident of abuse we went to Target, and I got a “gift”. Just walking into a Target store today, the smell of the store (all Target stores smell the same), will trigger me with memories of the nightmare of abuse. As I write this now, I’m not clear about what the time period that the assaults took place, but I know it was months. I think it was over the summer break from school.

The last incident took place on a camping trip. Herb had a car, where the seats folded down to make a bed so, instead of bringing tents, we slept in the car. The assaults had become more intense, more overpowering, more dominant on his part. That night I was awakened out of a sound sleep with nearly all of him on top of me and his hand on my genitals, assaulting me much more aggressively than any other time. I was so frightened and confused! I was thinking, “What is happening isn’t right, it can’t be!” To this day I have night terrors, where I wake up from a sound sleep with this overwhelming pressure on my chest, my heart racing and not able to breathe but it happens less and less over time. After that night I avoided him completely. I was never with him again, but had to continually see him at gospel meetings, special meetings, and conventions. I’m so thankful that I didn’t have to go to Sunday and Wednesday meetings with him.

Around 2011 my mom told me that a Wednesday night meeting was going to be placed in Herb’s home and I was stunned. I felt that was not OK and my mom offered to take it to the overseer. I had left the “Truth” in 2004, plus I no longer lived in Denver, so my mom talked to **Leslie White** about my experience with Herb. Leslie then told Herb that he needed to apologize to me for the abuse. I received a note, in the mail, from Herb. It said, “I want to apologize for anything that happened between us”. Leslie did give approval for the meeting in Herb’s home, apparently with no concern for the children that might be there. An example of a *sexual predator* protecting another *sexual predator*. In this situation it’s the systemic coverup of sexual assault within the ranks of a **brotherhood of predators** and IT NEEDS TO BE STOPPED.

I left the “Truth” in 2004 and have never looked back. For the past 20 years I have been on a path of deprogramming from the dogma of the “Truth” and on to the discovery of who I really am. Because of the abuse, I overcompensated in my life, and I never wanted to be vulnerable again. I worked all my life in the construction field. In the beginning I wanted to be in the most physical part of the home building process, framing houses. An association with the big beams and heavy lumber (where the tough guys worked) made me feel less vulnerable. I rode motorcycles, but they had to be Harley Davidsons because they gave the image of toughness. I drove loud cars, big trucks, lifted weights to build my body to portray myself as someone who was tough and strong. I thought, “I couldn’t protect that little boy back when I was abused but I could protect myself now.” I was determined that no one was **ever** going to hurt me again. What I know today, about me, is that I am not that tough guy. I am sensitive. I am an empath. I am an introvert. I am an artist potter. And without a doubt, the Creator that I know wants the best for me, is kind, all-inclusive and, above all, LOVE. This belief has helped me survive a *pedophile* that was pure evil.

These are the things that are still troubling me.

Herb, a *pedophile*, manipulated my parents’ friendship and generosity. He was invited into their home, sat at their table, ate their food, and because of his **gross sexual perversion**, abused and assaulted their child. There are children today that are being sexually abused in their own homes, a place that should be safe for them. Parents and grandparents who are giving workers access to their homes are creating opportunities for their children and grandchildren to be abused.

Herb's wife was there, IN THE APARTMENT, when he would take me into the bedroom. While I was there, she never tried to intervene for me, and she never said anything! Maybe she was a victim as well? If so, my heart breaks for her and for what she endured.

I am so angry that the worker who our family chose to have my dad's funeral service was the *violent sexual predator*, **Ira Hobbs**. Ira was sexually abusing women and children at that time. My dad would have been so upset. The *abusive behavior of predator workers* and the cover up of the crimes is so prevalent in the ministry. The friends are taking a great risk having workers in their homes and around their children, **full stop**.

Today, I have a loving support group around me while I walk through the muck of the sexual assaults perpetrated on me. Thank you to the brave people that have set up these FB pages where we can collectively speak out about the *predators hiding in the ministry of the "Truth" and in positions of trust, such as Elders*.

Dale Doering