

Friends letter to Ray and Barry

Jul 4

Dear Ray and Barry,

In regards to the plethora of information coming to light about the mishandling of CSA/SA cases I feel compelled to write again. When a meaningful and sustainable policy has been put in place to prevent tragedy in this arena let's have some further conversation about bullying and other forms of abuse that heavily contribute to the former.

Jack Mulkey often told us about the person who was asked "How long have you been in the Lord's WAY". The answer of course was "way too much and far too often". In retrospect I've been guilty of this and realize my clumsiness in handling God's work has been grievous. I understand not wanting to be rash or getting ahead of God. I know the feeling of people looking to you for leadership and being overwhelmed by the questions and not having answers. I know how hard it is to maintain an image of perfection and control, trying to keep "the box" together when it is completely falling apart because of the sand that it is.

I say this respectfully... would you ever consider that God is responsible for dissolving the box? Not allegations, not history, not cover ups, not mistakes that were made, not Dean B. Not CSA/SA, not ignorance. These are all simple tools. God is using the many voices of the unheard and abused to expose the sand that we have built on?

What if the time has actually come to dissolve the ministry, especially the current structure of overseership? This may be my own opinion but are you open to the Spirit's direction here? How has strong oversight been helpful? Logistics? Unity? Honestly? Listening? Trust? Safety? Many of us know the feeling of hearing the story and afterwards Nathaniel says "You are the man"!

Something to ponder... mental instability and mental problems very often lack pathology. Meaning these problems stem from trauma and not being heard more often than something physically wrong with the brain. When we judge people to have mental health problems let's ask how I have contributed to this. Listen, forego power and control then see how changes occur in one's mental health status! Being a "Mental Health Professional" is not so difficult. Jesus was the greatest Authority on Mental Health this world has ever seen!

Can anything be done to undo what has been done? None of us have lived long in this world before we see many things we wish had been done differently. An apology comes to mind. Not the kind my kids say to each other when they are forced to. Not the kind that is

guarded or accompanied with excuses. The kind that comes with self-exploration and from the heart.

This crisis isn't a distraction from the "Gospel work". The listening, connecting, self-examination and heart-felt. "I'm sorry" which can lead to healing... IS the "Gospel Work"!

Sincerely,

Rolland Sarver
