

# Jim A letter to elders and friends on April 29, 2023

Dear fellow workers and friends.....

We've felt the need to write you, but haven't known what to write.

It is a few weeks since we delivered to the workers, the very painful message that there had been another side to the life of Dean Bruer that none of us knew anything about. It wasn't until some time after his passing that anything concerning his moral life was brought to light.

We've had to bring you yet another grievous message, this one concerning Mark Huddle and his inappropriate behaviour with children on a number of occasions. As soon as Mark was approached with the allegations he stepped down from looking after the oversight in Washington. When more details became evident, he stepped down from his place in the work, which of course was the appropriate thing to do.

Now, two more situations burden us deeply. John VanDenBerg from the California staff and John Mastin from Washington have been asked to step down from the work because of crimes against children.

I would say there was no connection between these situations, apart from the fact that these men, by times let their human nature rule, rather than the Spirit of God. Our great concern is for the victims in each case and we want to offer them understanding, support and care. Of course we have great pain in our own hearts when we consider these situations and we beg that each of you would let these horrible experiences draw you nearer to God. May our own desperation make each of us diligent in seeking God's help and comfort for our own needs & the needs of all in this situation. An experience such as this can urge us to pray for more Godly love and a growing faith.

We recognize the necessity of being transparent in such matters and so we feel the need of sharing these details with you.

Our own staff of workers have all taken the *Ministry Safe* course and this gives us a little awareness of what might be warning signs. It makes us acquainted with our responsibilities if we become aware of such a situation and it also teaches us what to do, to live safely.

We are asking our Sunday morning meeting elders to relay this letter to you and we want you to feel comfortable in approaching them & their wives or approaching the workers you know best, if you have concerns. Please let us know if you'd like to take the Ministry Safe course, as it is available to all.

Your brother in Him,  
Jim Atcheson