

## **Letter by Rob Newman, Overseer of California Re: Removal of John VanDenBerg from the work – April 2023**

Dear fellow workers, elders, and friends,

Our prayers are that God will help us make the right decisions as we go forward. We realize that his hand is active. This gives us hope. We are looking forward to seeing you at the upcoming conventions.

We are saddened that it has become necessary for us to ask John VanDenBerg to step aside from the ministry. Recently we have received several credible allegations of unacceptable sexual behavior, including a complaint of inappropriate touching of a minor, which has been reported to the authorities. We want to make sure that all victims and their families feel free to come forward so we can support them in every way possible — they will not be blamed. and their identities will be kept confidential. We also want to confirm again, that sexual abuse in the ministry and the betrayal of trust it represents, will not be tolerated.

These things bring sorrow and concern to our heart, and we think especially of those who are victims. In recent times, when more of these kinds of errors have been brought to light and dealt with, we are left with the feeling that God has brought about a special season of cleansing. and change going forward. In our grief, we are comforted to know that His hand is working a greater work for the good of everyone involved. Once again, we are reminded His name is a holy name, not to be profaned, and this causes us all to deeply search our own heart.

*2 Timothy 2:19 'Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'* We are thankful for the perfect foundation in Jesus. and the comfort of knowing our Father is working in these events and that He is well able to help, heal. and preserve every soul who comes to Him with a humble, contrite heart.

Thanks for your support and input. Elders, please communicate this letter to each family or individual in your meeting soon, in an appropriate way.

Your brother, Rob