

From BrentDetwiler.com

Brent Detwiler Documents

Parts 1-7

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RESPONSE REGARDING FRIENDSHIP AND DOCTRINE
MARCH 17, 2010

Introduction¹

Thank you C.J. for writing. I hope and pray our friendship will be restored and the issues of offense that separate us will be removed. While the past five years have been punctuated with anguish and pain, it was an honor to work with you over the last three decades. I learned so much from you and I was blessed to serve in so many wonderful capacities. Here is your e-mail that I am replying to in what follows.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2010 3:17 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Letter from CJ

Dear Brent,

I hope this e mail finds you enjoying God's grace.

Recently I was informed that you might have some offenses with me. I was saddened to hear this, but not surprised given the sinful tendencies present in my heart and life. Brent, if it is accurate that you have offenses against me, I want to do whatever I can to address these and pursue reconciliation. I also want to make every effort to preserve our friendship. Even though I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that now separate us from serving together, I don't want there to be any separation of heart between us. Your friendship has been an undeserved gift and I have countless memories of serving the Savior with you that I still treasure.

Finally, I believe you are called to pastoral ministry and I want to help you in any way I can should you desire to pursue this call.

My friend, if it is accurate that offenses exist, I would like to fly to Charlotte to hear your heart and consider your perspective in hopes of discovering if I have sinned against you. If that is the case, I would be eager to ask your forgiveness.

C.J., I have a great love for you. I sought to demonstrate it over the years. That love was most poignantly expressed on August 20, 2004. I knew the outcome of that meeting could (not would) have terrible consequences for me.² I went into the meeting with fear and trembling. I also went into the meeting with hope and faith. I knew the result could be greater fruitfulness for you and greater glory for God. Afterward I told

Dave it was the most loving and sacrificial thing I'd ever done. He understood my meaning in context. It was not a boast.

My love for you continues. I've always protected your reputation, honored your labors, advanced your interests, and sought to care for your soul. At times, care for your soul included honest input. You now offer "to fly to Charlotte to hear your heart and consider your perspective in hopes of discovering if I have sinned against you." For reasons that will become apparent, I am not prepared to meet face to face at this time. I will instead share my heart and perspective in writing.

I appreciate the sentiments you express in the e-mail above; but, I also find them disconcerting. On the one hand, I hope they represent a change of heart. On the other hand, I find them disingenuous. Let me briefly explain.

During the last decade, many people brought to your attention numerous ways they thought you sinned against me. I did the same either directly or indirectly through others. Unfortunately, this never resulted in any personal confession. You either rejected our input as unfounded or failed to apply it to any actual occasions of sin. For instance, you denied ever being bitter, resentful, or angry at me – a concern raised by many people.

Therefore, I don't know how you can say that "Recently I was informed that you might have some offenses with me." This is unintelligible because the "offenses" outlined in my response are not new to you. You are well acquainted with them. They have been outstanding and unresolved. As such, I don't understand how you can claim ignorance³ until quite recently.

The same is true about "preserving our friendship" and not wanting "any separation of heart between us."⁴ I want that to be true but it has not been my experience. Since the day I stepped down from the apostolic team over two years ago, I've not seen you or talked to you. I will say more about this later.

Nevertheless, I appreciate your willingness to contact me and inquire about offenses or ways I think you've sinned. I hope this represents a new and different approach. I'd like to see our friendship recovered. I'd love to have my confidence in you and Sovereign Grace restored. I want to pass on good reports to others. I want to see the movement prosper and not be subject to reproach. You and Sovereign Grace have born a lot of godly fruit. May that only increase! I remain very grateful to God for you and many others in the movement.

I also understand your preference to do this in person and not by e-mail. For me, however, e-mail is a necessary first step. My trust has been shaken. E-mail ensures

accuracy and accountability. It is also a form of letter writing which the saints have used as a fruitful vehicle of communication throughout church history.

For the most part, I've presented this material in chronological order. This provides historical context and progression. Where we are today has a long history. The breakdown in our relationship is rooted in the past. That is why it is critical to review the past. Secondarily this approach shows your long term knowledge of offenses (i.e., ways you sinned against me) and "separation of heart" between us. They are not recent developments or nebulous issues. Having read this paper, I hope you will honestly acknowledge both points.⁵

Lastly and most importantly, I write because of my deep love for you and for Sovereign Grace Ministries. My greatest concern is for the increasing presence of deceit and hypocrisy rooted in self preservation and love of reputation.⁶ I'd be overjoyed to see you acknowledge these things to the movement, whether or not you ask my forgiveness for anything specific. Comparatively speaking, the later is unimportant. Ultimately, this isn't about us. It is about something much bigger. Therefore, I provide the history that follows for your careful consideration.

I have not relied upon my memory in putting this response together since memory alone is inadequate and not always reliable. I could never retain and preserve accuracy without the use of primary source material. I think you'd agree that I have served, at least in large measure, as the "unofficial" historian and archivist for the movement. In preparing to write, therefore, I have reviewed thousands of pages of e-mails, official minutes, notes from meetings, transcribed messages, and writings in my journal. My ability to present in detail does not come from a heart eaten up with bitterness. My ability to remember minute details and provide intimate observations do not come from a mind constantly rehashing the past. It comes from these sources.

I cite and include many documents. The only changes made are due to spell check or reformatting for consistency. The only additions are in brackets []. These are explanatory notes I've added to make the meaning more understandable or add personal commentary. I excerpt some documents (i.e., not include or quote in entirety) for the sake of brevity and focus. I underline for emphasis. When I quote speakers from conversations, I only do so when indicated by quotation marks in my notes. This means I was able to catch the wording and write it down or recorded it with great care. Otherwise I never put statements in quotation marks. This doesn't mean I always get it right. It means I try to be as accurate (and just) as possible. Lastly, I have left out many important issues and illustrations. Even the ones I have included are often abridged. I address "the disagreements over doctrine and practice" later in this response.

A Brief History -1974-1982

My first introduction to you and Larry Tomczak was at the Jesus Festival in 1974 in Erie, Pennsylvania. I loved hearing both of you preach. Four years later, I met Larry for the first time. He came to be a guest speaker at the Charismatic Conference held at Melodyland Christian Center in Anaheim. I was one of 25 pastoral interns at the church, and in the providence of God, was assigned to be Larry's host. The following summer, I graduated from the School of Theology and returned to Indiana, Pennsylvania.

I met you in August of 1979 when I came to visit Gathering of Believers for three weeks. Steve Shank was my host. In 1980, I became the senior pastor of Indiana Christian Fellowship. The following year, we asked you and Larry to provide oversight for us as a church. This first church "adoption," along with the church plant in Cleveland, marked the unofficial beginning of Sovereign Grace Ministries. In August of 1982, Jenny and I moved to Wheaton, MD so I could begin the Leadership Training School and join you, Larry and Bill Galbraith on the emerging apostolic team. This was the official beginning of Sovereign Grace Ministries. Our time together spans more than three decades. I continue to count it a great joy and privilege to have been a part from the start and to have worked with you for so long.

Larry and C.J. – 1982-1997

Once we began functioning as an apostolic team, I quickly became aware that you and Larry had difficulties relating to each other. In my naivety, I was very surprised by this reality. I still remember the first time Larry asked me to lead you and him through the resolution of a conflict during a team meeting. The notion scared me. I thought to myself, "This is way over my head. Who am I to try and help Larry and CJ?"

Little did I know I would continue to play this role from 1982 until 1997 when Larry left the movement. During this time period, I learned a lot about you and not just in relation to Larry. It included many different people and contexts.⁷ I discovered you were most tempted when you felt sinned against, judged or misrepresented. This often led to bitterness, anger, sinful judgments, distrust, and relational withdrawal.

Don't misunderstand, I also observed far more than patterns of temptation and sin. I have in mind many evidences of grace in your life which were a joy to observe and learn from. In fact, I appreciated how you and Larry attempted to grow in your relationship and successfully worked together for so long. A lot of good fruit was produced as a result.

A 3½ Year Process Starting December 2000

Fast forward. During a team meeting on December 4, 2000, Dave, Steve and I began to raise issues of concern for you. For example, we pointed out you were often difficult to correct, became offended when you felt misunderstood or judge by others, quickly and hastily arrived at conclusions about people based on limited information, came to extreme conclusions about people in a presumptive and premature fashion, were stubborn when you thought God had spoken to you or you had a strong opinion about something, made decisions without adequate appreciation for the personal effect on others, and led the apostolic team more by expedience rather than by process. We also noted a lack of discussion and involvement as a team in decision making. These things didn't happen all the time but tended to be general patterns. For the next three years, I led a process whereby we consistently tried to help you see these and other issues of character. Unfortunately, that lengthy process proved unsuccessful.

During 2003 our appeals to you intensified. For instance, Dave met with you in Baltimore on April 24 and covered numerous concerns. We took the next team meeting on May 13 to follow up with you. We talked about "silencing mechanism" you tended to use when someone like Dave attempted to bring you correction (i.e., how you could be "exacting" and take offense, judge, mistrust or adjust a person if they didn't have the right attitude and use the right words or illustrations when bringing correction to you). We talked about whether or not you viewed the apostolic team as a venue for confession because we did not know where you struggled with sin and whether you were growing or being evaluated.

We also reminded you that the absence of confession was raised 1½ years earlier at Celebration United Kingdom. At that time, you promised to talk about the confession of sin to us as a team. You never did.⁸ During the May 13 team meeting, I pointed out how this was "uncharitable and irresponsible." You asked our forgiveness for not getting back to us but we never talked about the lack of transparency in the ensuing months.

We also asked if the CLC pastors were speaking into your life. You assured us they were. (Later we discovered this was untrue.⁹ They were providing very little input.) If true, we asked why we were not updated on the team level. We talked about the disconnect between us being evaluated by you, but you not being evaluated by us.¹⁰ We also talked about other issues and examples but I have not included them here.

A few days later, Dave e-mailed me on May 16 and asked the following.

"Will CJ be returning to his network (Josh, etc.) to share your concerns for him and observations from that day and also the areas where he repented? Also, will you be speaking with them about these things? Lastly, there were a

number of things you asked CJ to think about that day. Should you be expecting to hear back from him on those or only if he feels convicted or desires to pursue it? Brent, you don't need to get back to me on this and I don't feel any need to see these things pressed through. These are just logical questions that have come to my mind over the past couple of days to ensure we all maximize the time spent and information exchanged. We covered so much ground with so much being said...is there benefit for you to know where he is going with all of it? That's all, you may have considered this already. Whatever you decide is fine..."

I decided to take no specific action at the time in response to Dave. I wanted to see if you would voluntarily inform Josh, Kenneth, Grant, etc. of our input and also whether you would get back to us with further updates on your soul. You did not get back to us and we found out later you did not inform Josh, Kenneth, Grant, etc. of our input. As a result, I felt the need to broaden the circle and see if the pastors at Covenant Life Church shared our concerns and could identify with our experiences. I put this on the agenda for our August team meeting. You responded to me via e-mail on August 14 saying,

"I was going through the agenda with Carolyn last night and realized when we came to your desire to meet with Josh, etc. that I would like to be there whenever there is an evaluation of me.¹¹ Two mistakes I made last year were meeting with your [local] team [in Charlotte] and Dave's [local] team [in Philadelphia] without you guys being present. For a number of reasons I will never do that again.¹² I think any communication of this nature should be direct. We end up talking with all the people involved anyway so it is not only wise it is the best use of time. And you and Dave should have been present to hear, ask questions, agree or disagree, etc.¹³ So let me know what you have in mind and who you want to be involved so hopefully I can benefit from the time.

I forwarded this to Dave and Steve. In response, Dave wrote Steve and me on August 28 saying,

"As I've considered our conversation the other day, it seems to me that we should at least give CJ an opportunity to share (with all of us in a team meeting) why he doesn't want Brent to do the review without him present and we should have the opportunity to respond to this. I think this would serve, not only by giving each of us the opportunity to interact with CJ's reasons, but also to ensure that this approach (lead guy always present) doesn't become default policy for us."

Steve followed and wrote, "Good Dave... I would agree... It would be appropriate for us to understand CJ's reluctance... Is it the process? Our assessment of him which he doesn't feel is valid? Does he feel our observations of him are a reflection of us instead? How so? Etc., etc..." I responded to both men, "Also concur. I'll e-mail him shortly. Thanks so much."

On September 8, I wrote you,

"I am not sure how to proceed. I'd certainly have you present for any evaluation but I am wondering if that is necessary when simply asking questions (gathering information) of an individual. I think it would be helpful to get Steve and Dave's thoughts on Wednesday at the [September] team meeting."

Evaluations from Covenant Life Pastors – December 2003

After the September team meeting, I decided in deference to you, to solicit written evaluations and only follow up on things of concern that were noted for further clarification. Here is what I wrote to the CLC pastors on November 23.

"In preparation for our team retreat on December 16-18 we'd like to ask for your help in providing us an evaluation of C.J. In some respects, you relate and work more closely with him than we do. Therefore, we look forward to your feedback on ways you feel he can grow and ways you feel he excels. Please feel free to provide additional written explanations for your answers pertaining to both his strengths and weaknesses. Also, if you wish, please add any additional comments that are relevant but not addressed on the form. Either Steve, Dave or I will try to get back to you by phone during the week of December 9-12 with clarifying questions we may have. Therefore, could you please send us this completed evaluation by the end of the day on Friday, December 5? Thanks so very much brothers for serving us and C.J. in this way."

Kenneth's Evaluation

I received Kenneth's evaluation on December 12. He wrote the following, "I'm not aware of correction he is receiving from others. [He] seeks input on selected topics during our monthly accountability times [which just began due to our correction]. [But] not from me in family/married life. Maybe others."

I followed up with a phone call that afternoon. Here are some of the notes from my conversation with Kenneth. I sent them to you, Dave and Steve at the time.

- When correcting C.J. you have to be real precise for him to receive.
- This can be hard for men to do who are less gifted than C.J.
- Should be easier to bring things to him.
- Needs to grow in learning to listen carefully even if he thinks the person's perspective is wrong.
- Needs to listen when person is conveying a sense of something that is wrong but having a hard time being precise.
- Can exhibit a quickness and strength of response.
- Kenneth and Josh show a sense of deference [to C.J.] in their hearts – don't press issues.
- Neither Josh nor Kenneth raises these kinds of issues with C.J. That is, whether he receives correction humbly and is easy to confront or responds gently and kindly, not abruptly or harshly, when disagreeing with someone.
- C.J. not making aware of input from others – e.g., CLC pastors, apostolic team, Carolyn
- Don't know if he is receiving correction.
- Kenneth assumes no one is bringing correction or things to him.
- Occasionally asks for input on parenting issues. Nothing on marriage.
- Input resolves around the effect of schedule or work around the home.

Grant's Evaluation

On December 13, Grant wrote the following in his evaluation, "My primary concern for C.J. would be in the area of who is supposed to be caring for him? Perhaps this is taking place with you men on the apostolic team? We have tried numerous times to get together here over the past year but have not been able to make it happen. So care for he and Carolyn is not happening here¹⁴ unless there is something I am unaware of."

That afternoon I followed up with a phone call. Here are some of the notes from my conversation with Grant. I sent them to you, Dave and Steve at the time.

- Can be in a meeting talking about a situation that C.J. is not involved in and he will hear some facts and be tempted to make conclusions or assumptions.
- At times C.J. can too quickly come to a conclusion without knowing all the facts, prematurely coming to conclusions or making assumptions.
- Grant is not aware of any correction C.J. is receiving from the apostolic team or others. This issue has always been ongoing concern for C.J.
- Grant has raised his ongoing concern over the years that C.J. receives pastoral care.

- Grant is not aware of anyone raising any issues or concerns with C.J. in private.
- Grant believes they have a very limited view of what is going on in his life, a narrow window to look through, and limited opportunity for observation of C.J.
- Over past year, correction of C.J. and confession by C.J. has not happened at all – there is no context for this to happen.
- Grant has assumed it is happening with the apostolic team.
- Thinks C.J.'s self assessment may be such that he and Carolyn just don't require input.

C.J. Not Transparent with Pastors at Covenant Life Church

I also talked to Joshua on December 14. His comments echoed Grant's and Kenneth's. He shared different examples of self righteousness,¹⁵ sinful judgments, and pride in your life. For example, the difficulty he had in talking with you about starting two services at Covenant Life Church.

After talking to Joshua, Kenneth and Grant; I wrote you, Dave and Steve the following.

“In my opinion, we should take some time at the [upcoming team] retreat to hear C.J.'s thoughts on the evaluations and talk about a strategy that ensures he is receiving proper care and input from the men at Covenant Life (i.e., primarily Josh, Kenneth, Grant). In this regard, I think it may serve them to be made aware of the issues we have been talking about with C.J. and the observations we have provided him.”

As a result of those evaluations and phone calls, I discovered you had not told them about any of our input over the past three years including the substantial input we recently gave you at the May 13 team meeting. I was shocked and dismayed but did not communicate those sentiments to Joshua, Kenneth or Grant.

On the December 16-18, 2003 retreat, we again raised concerns for you but with little effect. Five weeks later, I had lunch with Joshua on January 24, 2004. I asked him directly if you had been filling him on our correction. He said he was vaguely and barely aware of any evaluation we had brought you. When I asked what he remembered you sharing with him, he could not recall anything. It is hard to express how distressed I felt that you were once more withholding information.¹⁶

Summary of Concerns from Apostolic Team – April 2004

Fast forward again. In April of 2004, Dave, Steve and I provided summary statements to Joshua, Kenneth, and Bob. I chose to state my concerns as succinctly as possible for

the sake of clarity. I tried to condense 24 years of observations and express things as graciously and mildly as possible by avoiding words like pride, hypocrisy, integrity, etc. Here is what I communicated regarding you.¹⁷

1. "Can become resentful, distrustful or withdraw when he feels misunderstood, judged, or sinned against by others.
2. Can judge or prematurely come to conclusions about others based on limited or incomplete information.
3. When correcting or disagreeing can communicate his assessment or perspective too strongly or categorically.
4. Can lack gentleness and not perceive the unhelpful effect of his words, actions or decisions upon an individual.
5. Can be difficult to correct and help because he often disagrees with or has a different perspective on illustrations.
6. Infrequently makes us aware of specific sins or the correction others are bringing to him."

Dave wrote a lengthier summary as follows.

"In December of 2003, we convened a team retreat to discuss team polity and to review the recent evaluations on CJ. At this retreat, Brent suggested each team member summarize the concerns raised for CJ in a separate document for review by the CLC guys who pastor CJ. This document represents that summary.

Most of the weaknesses referenced below have been raised with CJ over the past few years. They were then summarized for CJ during our time in Baltimore (Spring 2003) and discussed further as an apostolic team at the Dec. Team retreat. I'm not presently aware of the degree to which CJ may agree or disagree with these observations, but I do believe he has endeavored to humbly receive them. Also, these are simply my interpretation of CJ's leadership weaknesses and may not be helpful or accurate. Finally, it is an honor and a blast to serve CJ regardless of whether he agrees or makes any changes.

A summary of what was communicated:

- 1) I wondered whether CJ has been too exacting in his listening - Speaking with him, particularly in areas of correction or disagreement, can at times produce a notable burden on the person seeking to communicate. Is he patient with imprecise words or critiques that aren't carefully illustrated? Do people he is building with find him easy to correct? 'Examples' seem to become highly important but insufficiently helpful or potent (seems to lose the 'forest' of the point through the "trees" of insufficient illustrations?)

Sometimes seems as if not recollecting may greatly diminish his pursuit and the utility of possible illustrations (Should CJ accept responsibility for his words even when he doesn't remember?)

- 2) I think CJ may be vulnerable to making hasty or expedient judgments on people or situations. This can result in impetuous words or actions. Also when opposing ideas or critiques are offered, CJ may rest on his internal conclusion and overlook the need to lead an individual, or in some cases the A[postolic] Team, in discussion towards mutual understanding of the issues. There can also then be a sense of reaction in follow-up communiqués that may indicate a haste in judgment. He can sometimes appear to get hooked in ways that he may be imperceptive to and then communicate to others out of this.
- 3) I didn't think CJ was offering a sufficient example (at least over the past few years) of confessing sin or pursuing evaluation with the A. Team, nor had he been deliberate in updating team members on areas being brought to him by others.
 - a. Perhaps a recent example? Did CJ act to inform his local team (those involved in his care and accountability) that the A. Team had spent the recent retreat (Dec. 2003) covering areas of concern for CJ? Brent indicated that it did not appear that Josh had a clear recollection of any issues raised with CJ when Brent met with him in January of 2004. Perhaps Josh did know but just thought it wise not to break open the conversation at that time.
 - b. To what extent are those select few at CLC (those involved in CJ's care and accountability) providing challenge for CJ when they perceive areas of concern? This may be happening sufficiently, but it is not something that the A. Team hears much in CJ's conversations. (I believe the A. Team just wants to make certain that CJ has local voices that provide not only excellent care, which they certainly do, but also sufficient challenge and correction).
- 4) I didn't think CJ had taken sufficient leadership over the recent years in defining the team and determining our direction. This had been an ongoing dialogue between us and a growing concern for me.
 - a. The team does not possess sufficient clarity in relationship to where the movement requires team direction and decision and where decentralized leadership is necessary.

- b. An inadvertent drift where CJ becomes the focal point and clearinghouse for movement direction, thereby unintentionally marginalizing the team in important decisions.
- c. There is an insufficient amount of strategic planning. Seems he may have institutionalized the assumption that God doesn't give us much direction for the future and organized us around it.
- d. It appears as if CJ has agreed with some, perhaps much of this [leadership] assessment and has implemented some changes that are already making a big difference. Thanks buddy!

CJ is an exceptional leader and this summary does not provide the opportunity to celebrate all of the ways in which he excels. Even beyond his ministerial effectiveness though, I am deeply touched by his ongoing friendship and love for me. I trust this perspective, though flawed by my own fallenness, serves this dialogue by sharpening the leadership of the man God has called to lead us."

Phone Call with Joshua, Kenneth, Bob – June 15, 2004

Dave, Steve and I had a phone call with Joshua, Kenneth and Bob on June 15, 2004. Bob was a new addition. Previously you wrote me on April 24 saying, "So that there is no confusion if you are sending your concerns to the guys here I am accountable to and meeting with please send any info to Josh, Kenneth and Bob."

During this call Josh told us once again they were not made aware of the May 2003 or December 2003 input we provided you on both of those retreats. All three of them told us the April 2004 written summaries were very helpful and they expressed "board agreement with them having observed many of the same things." In fact, they had an all day meeting with you on May 7 to discuss the summaries.

The next day you wrote them,

"How kind of you men [Joshua, Kenneth, Bob] to care for me yesterday with your correction and counsel. And how kind of you to give me the gift of your time as well. I am well aware that there are many other tasks you could have devoted yourself today yesterday afternoon instead of spending time with me."

At our May 19 team meeting and at the June 10-13 team retreat in Asheville, you never mentioned to us this daylong meeting with Joshua, Kenneth and Bob or the correction and counsel they provided you. We had no idea they had gone through the summaries with you until our June 15 phone call with them. You should have talked to us and asked Joshua, Kenneth and Bob to fill us in on their time with you. This was another

example of you withholding vital information. Furthermore you never took any initiative later to talk with us about the content of summaries.

As a result of our summaries and conversations, Josh told us he was now more willing “to challenge C.J. and bring observations and corrections in a way that was different than before.”

During the June 15 phone call, Josh told us you were “difficult to correct because of his strength” and “not shy about his opinion.” He said “people go with what he is saying because of his position and strength of personality.”¹⁸ That you were “very decisive and hasty – often through E Mail.” He mentioned again the example of you “not wanting to do two services at CLC” and “not feeling there was receptivity on his part” and it was “hard to talk with C.J. about numerical growth.” He also reiterated that “guys don’t hear from C.J. re: our [the apostolic team’s] observations” and “in the past the context for focused observations has not been present.” He added that “C.J. provides input for others but not the other way around.”¹⁹ Joshua said he is “changing his mind set and approach in how they care for the Mahaney’s” because “we are not in settings where C.J. confesses specific sin especially related to marriage... Confessions are more on the level of schedule... Maybe C.J. doesn’t sin as much as we do.”

Kenneth said he “assumed we [the apostolic team] were bringing care and accountability” and therefore did not feel the need to do so with you. He was also “surprised he did not fill us [the apostolic team] in on [their] May 7 meeting. Kenneth said “C.J. feels a freedom to disagree in the process of correction more than others.” There “can be immediate disagreement” and “he doesn’t entreat further observations.” “Given his position and discernment” this “can shut down the process.” He “is generally more quick to disagree.”

Bob said all these issues “can make it difficult to communicate with him.” It “puts a burden on the person” particularly with “word choice” when bringing input. Bob said C.J. makes “hasty judgments” and “quick emotional responses that others cannot process.” He also “appreciated the grace in all our summaries” and felt they “demonstrated great humility.”

Three days after the June 15 phone call Dave followed up with me and Steve.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2004 2:24 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Thanks for doing this Brent [i.e., leading the process]. I know it is distasteful, and that there are a thousand other ways you would rather use your time...but you are being a faithful friend!²⁰

I've included all of my thoughts below with the idea that some may be more helpful and advantageous than others...so feel free to edit as seems wise to you. I tried to think down roads not already covered by your original e-mail.

My thoughts:

- Seems like we need two different documents: One that describes the things we would encourage the CLC guys to follow up on, and one that summarizes the things we need to follow up on.
- Related then to the second document, I would create two different segments of observations and questions. One that relates to 'process' and the other that relates to 'content'. For instance, there are many questions below that relate to the process...why didn't CJ tell them or us this or that?...I believe that discussion is important, but I also think it needs to remain distinct from the actual substance of what we are and were bringing to him. Also it seems important now that we cover both (process and content) since the CLC guys have broad agreement on many of the issues.
- In terms of 'content', it would be helpful to ask Josh to produce a written document that summarizes what they sought to bring to CJ on May 7th. Then we can compare this with our summaries to see where we are encountering a similarity in perspective and experience. I know they did it verbally on the phone the other day, but I think it would be helpful to have something in writing for the purpose of clarity and follow-up. Also, it may be helpful to have this before we talk to CJ...
- Question regarding process: Did CJ share the letter that he received from the CFC [Covenant Fellowship Church] pastoral team with the guys that are caring for him in CLC (or the feedback he received from the Charlotte guys)? [C.J., you never did either of these.]²¹ Even if he disagreed, would he not want to notify those that he is accountable to that some notable & written feedback was being offered to him from some credible teams in our apostolic churches? (I still have not seen this letter, but I assume it was clear and that there may be some helpful things in it.)
- Why did he represent the CLC guys as disagreeing with us? [When they didn't.] Why represent them as saying the areas under critique are actually strengths for him? [When they didn't.]²²
- Has CJ been clear with the apostolic team on where exactly he feels like his leadership has been weak and insufficient, where he feels we have been 'patient' with him, and explored with the A. Team whether these issues are rooted in gifting or character? In light of the December [CLC] evaluations,

the [December 2003 team] retreat and the [April 2004] summaries, I would think that he would respond to us with some clear reflections on exactly where he feels he has been deficient and where he would like to change. In my recollection, no such dialogue has taken place (although there have been many allusions to weaknesses and deficiencies).

- Here is an issue that we should probably draw the CLC guys out on: Would it be their experience that CJ can be tempted to emotionally withdraw his attention or enthusiasm when he feels misunderstood or under scrutiny?
- Brent (regarding question below), I would stay away from questions that elicit 'yes/no' answers below and frame them in a way to elicit discussion and disclosure: Rather than, "Does C.J. realize there is broad agreement with them on our April 04 summaries?", perhaps we could ask, "How might CJ help us understand his representation of the CLC guys when they would describe themselves as having broad agreement with the summaries?"
- Guys, there are several illustrations of times where I specifically asked CJ if he would talk with someone about what I am talking to him about and he did not.²³ These illustrations may or may not prove to be helpful as we involve the CLC team. I would need your help to know whether it would even be wise to bring these forward. No problem if it is not necessary to walk down this road.
- Should we come back to the New Attitude conversation and talk about where he went with the dialogue and where he went with Pat's input and how he represented Pat's input as a helpful and recent illustration to our experience in engaging him?
- How effective has CJ been at leading us through an honest evaluation of our strengths and weaknesses as a team and movement? Seems like we celebrate strengths but we don't really talk about weaknesses. Also, he doesn't seem to talk much about where CLC or the CLC guys may be weak or in need of improvement.
- Lastly, and perhaps less importantly, I would be interested in hearing from the CLC guys on whether they feel that CJ substitutes e-mail for personal contact²⁴ in a way that complicates clarity and their attempts at building. This is not essential, but I do think there is a value of expedience in communication that can sometimes overrule the law of love in some of CJ's e-mails (correcting by e-mail, notifying people of substantial changes by e-mail, etc.)

Please let me know whether this is sufficiently clear and helpful.

Dave

Meeting between Apostolic Team and Josh, Kenneth, Grant, Bob - August 20, 2004

After the June 15 phone call it became apparent we needed to set up a meeting with you, Joshua, Kenneth, Grant and Bob and also ask you to write down the sins you were convicted of. I wrote you the following on August 3,

“The written confession helps you to further identify and clarify issues of sin for yourself and us...The meeting on August 20th is for follow up and follow through. My time with you...did not allow for a lengthy discussion or review of all that has transpired or been raised with you over the past 12 months. Likewise, hearing from the CLC men, asking further questions, talking about specifics examples, revisiting the summaries, etc. can only benefit you. I am sure you agree.”

You provided us an e-mail confession on August 10. Then we met with you on August 20. This was the all important meeting at the Covenant Life bldg. We asked Bob to take official notes for everyone. Here they are.

- CJ Opened with CJ thanking guys for the encouragement he's received in the midst of his discouragement as he's seen more sin.
- Brent The team communicated to CJ that the issue of CJ stepping down is not one they've ever considered. Nor do they think he needs to make a movement wide confession.
- CJ Feels everyone's forgiveness has been consistent.
- Brent CJ has been making consistent progress, as a result of the Spirit's illumination.
- Dave Brent has excelled in his care and affection for CJ. Brent is intent on making sure there is care, protection, deliberation, and caution in this whole process. He is engaging God in the process.
- Brent Reviewed CJ's confession of Aug. 10. Mostly dealing with CJ being difficult to entreat or correct. Thought it would be helpful to better understand sinful cravings behind CJ's actions. Obviously related to pride, but Brent communicated to CJ that he can be inordinately concerned about his reputation.²⁵ Seems paradoxical, because he knows few guys who so despise putting himself forward or promoting himself. Obviously, this isn't a categorical statement. CJ's feeling judged, misunderstood can often lead to him becoming mistrusting and withdrawing.

CJ told Brent a week and a half ago some areas of temptation. He wasn't inclined to engage Brent or others in the details of the temptation. He gave two reasons for this. First, he didn't want to divert attention from his own heart. But he also told Brent he feared that he would be judged by Dave and Brent. Brent pointed out that CJ used the word "fear" several times, and anticipated there was a likelihood he would be judged. Thought CJ might have a preoccupation with being judged that results in a significant fear for him. He asked CJ why he feared being judged. Brent thinks that CJ can crave a reputation that is as good as he thinks he is.²⁶

Josh Has seen evidences of what Brent is describing in CJ. Has seen at times that CJ does things in reaction to what Larry T. did. He doesn't in any way want to be perceived as doing what Larry did. Shared another illustration where a guy said CJ hadn't returned something. He was tempted in that situation because he believes returning things is a strength in his life.

Brent Wants to submit that CJ has a high view of himself in some ways that are now being challenged. There is a paradox to all of this. Thinks CJ has represented himself as accountable in a way he hasn't been. CJ told Brent at one point that he receives more accountability and pastoring than anyone in the movement. Thinks there is an element of deception there. For a year and a half CJ didn't participate in a care group. The picture CJ painted of our [the CLC pastors] involvement in his life has not been accurate. Also thinks CJ has represented himself as being teachable,²⁷ and would think of himself that way, up until now. The CLC pastors communicated a different view of CJ's teachability. Mentioned the illustration of the decision of how to handle growth at CLC.

Josh After Josh brought that up to him, CJ responded immediately and things have changed.

Dave The paradox in CJ's life motivated Dave to meet with CJ in Baltimore, and explain how he saw things in CJ's life that CJ didn't see in himself. He talked to Steve and Brent to make sure that he wasn't simply imposing a process on CJ, and to make sure he wasn't totally off base. CJ would represent himself as a man who humbly receives from the team, but there are big gaps. He would not characterize CJ's leadership of the A-team as humble. Illustration: situation with Bo, when the three other guys [Brent, Steve, and

Dave] said that CJ introduced the issue of trust too early in the process. CJ didn't seem to be responsive to appeals from the other guys to talk about it.

Brent CJ would see himself as strong in confessing sin. But the team has made the observation that there seems to be a weakness in terms of specificity in his preaching when it comes to confession of sin. Sins in his marriage or sins in general weren't being confessed regularly to the CLC pastors.

Josh Has shared those specifics with CJ in other contexts. In August, there was a marked change in the specificity of his confession. He realized that we didn't often hear the specifics of conflict between CJ and Carolyn.

Kenneth Things have definitely changed in regards to specificity, but he hasn't been personally involved in helping CJ with his marriage.

Josh There was a marked change in CJ when he began his accountability group [which was requested by Brent, Dave, Steve], but no acknowledgement that he was responding to the team's observations [which gave the impression you were acting on your own initiative].²⁸

Brent At times CJ puts himself forward in a favorable light, more favorable than the facts support. Illustration: When Dave, Brent, and Steve talked to CJ about CJ unilaterally ending New Attitude on the heels of 6 months of talking about how decisions like that should be made, they felt their adjustment was met with pride. Brent followed up, and CJ mentioned that Pat disagreed with Dave and Brent. Brent followed up with Pat and he acknowledged that he had concerns about CJ's heart, although he hadn't reached any conclusions. CJ painted a picture of Pat being supportive of CJ. Thinks CJ can be deceived in this area. The opposite is true, also. When people are giving CJ an unfavorable report, he doesn't always share that.

Steve Numerous times CJ has used Carolyn's or the CLC pastors' commendation²⁹ to support disagreement with the A-team's perspective.

Josh Does anyone else have illustrations for the point Brent is making?

Kenneth Hasn't seen the specificity in confession that others have demonstrated.

Brent At the December '03 retreat, they talked about these issues with CJ, they had the written evaluations from the CLC pastors. At that retreat, CJ repented of a couple things, but disagreed with most of it. CJ never came to us [the CLC men] and acknowledged the things he confessed. Nor did he go beyond filling us in on the team's oral presentation. CJ has acknowledged this in his confession in the context of pride and feeling his discernment is superior. [Brent] Sees more pervasive pride in how CJ views himself – [that is] not in a suspicious way, but in a confident way. It's not simply pride in his discernment, but pride in his opinion of himself.³⁰

Feels there's been an element of hypocrisy in CJ.³¹ If he doesn't agree with observations from others, that's one thing. If he doesn't share that with others, that's another issue.

Josh Agrees with the assessment of the sin at work and the way it was deceiving CJ. Doesn't think CJ was intentionally seeking to deceive us, which doesn't make it any less serious.³² The way in which CJ asked for observations at times lent to a less thorough response. All of us will face this temptation to believe the person who says that what we're doing is okay. We're seeing CJ's reaction to observations in a new way because we're bringing observations more frequently and specifically.

Dave There is an issue of perplexity, which he has raised with CJ, which may be an issue of integrity.³³ That is the times the team has asked him to get specific observations from others and he hasn't done it. Example of Dave asking CJ to follow up with Brent, and have the team talk about his unteachability, and CJ not following through. Seemed like these things stopped at CJ. Another illustration was a letter of concern from the Philly team which the A-team and the CLC pastors never heard about.

Brent The [apostolic] team doesn't often hear of areas that we [the pastoral team] are correcting CJ on, and it doesn't sound as though the pastoral team is hearing concerns from the A-team.

CJ can become resentful, mistrusting, withdrawn when he feels sinned against or judged by others.

CJ told Brent he's not fully seeing this one yet. Praying through it, asking for input. Situation with Bo, the team had two major concerns. First, communicating to Bo by e-mail rather than face to face. More important was CJ's unwillingness to meet with Bo, communicating in strong terms that he didn't trust Bo [which was unfounded]. Bo was raising some observations in the midst of that about CJ. The team told CJ he couldn't pull the trust card on Bo, that he needed to be willing to talk to him about it. Thinks that attitude exists frequently, but not to that degree.

Another illustration was conversations about CJ's book [*The Cross Centered Life*]. Suggested that it was TOO cross-centered, and didn't speak of the resurrection enough. CJ introduced an agenda item of cross-centeredness at a retreat. The next day, the team received an e-mail from CJ that no one had to read, promote, or agree with the book. When asked about it, CJ said he didn't want to be self-promoting like Larry T. Brent thought the issue was self-pity, and possibly resentment.³⁴ Asked CJ how he ended up there. That never got resolved.

Wants the CLC pastors to be aware of this so that we can follow up. The most recent example is a contemplation of Brent's and CJ's roles. CJ told Brent he didn't think he should serve as a pastor to the team [you wanted me to take this responsibility]. The team would be concerned that CJ will pull back from pastoring them. This is a pattern they've seen.

Has CJ been sinned against in this situation? Is he reacting to something?

If CJ thinks he's been ineffective in caring for the team he should invite the team to help him be more effective. The team would say they prefer to have CJ care for the team.

Dave We all think CJ should lead us to a wise process that results in a restructuring. Also agree that Brent is eminently qualified to take on any responsibility CJ would desire. To discuss this in the middle of this process is awkward and unwise. This might be a good illustration of what tends to happen when CJ is corrected, at least from Dave's perspective. It would be better if CJ was inquiring about where he has been deficient, and then communicating that he wants to change. Ultimately, that response doesn't contribute to the building of the team.

- Grant An illustration, as these things have more recently come to light, CJ has asked whether or not he should be the team leader. To introduce that in the midst of evaluation can seem to be an overreaction, potentially born out of self-pity, and can put others in the position of not wanting to share observations when there is that kind of response.
- Josh Remembers CJ referring to the situation in Philly and saying he wasn't going to lead in that way again. Also, shared that because of weaknesses he saw in others sharing observations harshly,³⁵ he was purposefully not sharing observations with others. Seems to be a giving up attitude, rather than examining carefully something that he might have done wrong. More of the attitude, "if what I've done isn't fruitful or appreciated, I'm just going to stop doing it."
- Brent In May of 2003, CJ told Brent he didn't want to continue be involved (oversee pastorally? Oversee?) in Philly in light of his experience there. CJ has a tendency to become easily condemned and discouraged. Thinks this is probably tied in to love of reputation, that CJ doesn't want to look bad.
- CJ Please don't draw me into anything I don't disagree with. Have found that he agrees with most things [later, you radically revised your position] that have been presented. Agrees that he thinks highly of himself, a fruit of pride.
- Josh Can you fill that out with specific categories or illustrations?
- CJ Would have assumed he was more accountable than he was. Looks back and sees that what he was doing was woefully insufficient [later, you radically revised your position and said you really had been accountable]. Hasn't just been sitting here, but has been convicted. Agrees immediately that he has a sinful craving for reputation.³⁶
- Kenneth Asked how CJ would handle the situation with the e-mail about his book differently now.
- CJ He'd ask more questions, invite them to give him their perspective. Acknowledged he wasn't humble.³⁷

- Brent At those times, think CJ could do more heart work and self-examination. Thinks CJ becomes resentful and angry and bitter in those situations in a way he's not aware. On *The Cross Centered Life* issue, did CJ resent that criticism at all and start to respond sinfully by withdrawing? Seemed extreme.
- CJ Yes, seems extreme, and he said he'd consider it.³⁸
- Kenneth Almost a judgment when individuals have criticized Carolyn's book [*Feminine Appeal*]. There can be an attitude that no one has to agree with her. Instead of there being a peaceful discussion, it seems as though there is anger there.
- Grant Why would the category of self-promotion be in CJ's mind when that wasn't a part of the discussion?
- CJ That would have been in his mind from the day he received the book.
- Brent Thinks that's where his heart deceives him. They were having a theological discussion, and in response CJ told them they didn't have to promote it.
- Grant Has the appearance of manipulation cloaked in the virtue of humility.³⁹ A more apparent explanation would seem to be that CJ's work was being critiqued and CJ's flesh was reacting to that.
- Steve CJ's response seem to be quick.
- Kenneth Another underlying motive might be the fact that CJ pursues integrity to a high degree. Wonders if there is a craving not to be perceived like Larry, that is inordinate. There is not a wisdom that is open to reason. He should have known there was something wrong in his soul because he wasn't responding gently and kindly to the observations that were being brought.
- Brent Another illustration - Washington Times article. Felt CJ spoke disparagingly of the reporter when they weren't there. Brent brought up that when CJ felt sinned against, he reacted. Self-righteousness is a great category for us to confess our sin out of, but wonders if his assessment of himself and his reputation are too high. Self-righteousness has to do with feeling morally superior, not that

- this person is misrepresenting me and I don't like being misrepresented. That is love of reputation.
- CJ It's odd because Larry can slander him and it doesn't affect him at all.
- Josh The people Larry influences don't matter that much to CJ. Might make a difference if it was someone CJ cared about.
- Brent To simplify, Brent thinks CJ's view of himself is accountable, teachable, and good at confessing sin. Doesn't think those things are as present in CJ's life as he thinks they are.
- CJ Feels he has thought more highly of himself, and compared himself favorably with others. Doesn't think he's thought unfavorably of himself.⁴⁰
- Grant There are various issues in CJ's life that he hasn't received input well on. In general, Grant feels CJ hasn't had enough accountability, and allowed the A-team and the CLC pastors to believe the other group was taking care of it.⁴¹ This has been a longstanding issue.⁴²
- CJ Sees a whole lot of pride in the past. Wasn't lying to each group, trying to cover up.⁴³
- Kenneth Was part of the motivation, if you have a higher assessment of yourself, you don't feel like you need accountability, and when guys ask if you're getting it, you don't feel you need as much as others. Thinks that's critical in terms of the future.
- Brent Wonders if in his pride CJ didn't think that he needed others to figure things out on his own.
- Kenneth Humility and confession of sin lead to accountability. They communicate a perception of need.
- Josh In the past few weeks, CJ has really stepped it up in these areas.
- Grant Sanctification is in the details. Generally speaking, these are categories that CJ has led us in. Seems like details have been lacking.
- Pat Asked CJ why he wouldn't share what he was thinking.

- CJ Doesn't want to interrupt the conviction that is taking place in his heart.
- Josh Obviously there is a place for self-control. But because this has been a consistent issue, it would help in the evaluation of CJ's heart if he told others about his thought processes. We need to see how CJ thinks, where cravings are present, etc. But it would help CJ to have other eyes on his thoughts.
- Pat Would it be humility to let others judge whether his thoughts were accurate or not?
- CJ Struggles with the area of restraint. Trying to not say as much. What just happened was a good thing (him not saying what he was thinking), he thinks.⁴⁴
- Dave Thinks this is an important point because this exemplifies certain places certain examples he has tried to build into us - self-disclosure,⁴⁵ inviting others into our thought processes. CJ didn't bring up at a team retreat what we had talked about. CJ's approach doesn't exemplify walking in the light. CJ ends up controlling and leaving unevaluated too many things. CJ ends up staking out something of a moral high ground, not intentionally.
- Brent In CJ's exchange with Pat, CJ mentioned the word "perceived." Whatever he was thinking, he didn't want to share in part because of how he might be perceived.⁴⁶ Most helpful if CJ said he was a work in progress, told us the things he agreed with, and then the things he's not seeing. Doesn't think CJ does a good job telling us what he is seeing. Realizes he hasn't had time to contemplate all this. Also important to share with us what he's not seeing and may disagree with because of the way we'll perceive him, thinking that he might be lambasted.
- Kenneth Seems like CJ's comfortable with his own assessment.
- CJ Says he's not comfortable with his own assessment.⁴⁷
- Grant Don't lock on to one thing that has been said that you disagree with.
- Kenneth Seems like CJ was offended with what Brent said.
- CJ CJ wants to be clear in what he's seeing.

Josh CJ doesn't lead the meeting in terms of what's important.

CJ During the period he wasn't seeking accountability, CJ thought he was fighting sin and informing others what was going on.

Grant That's how you draw others into the conversation and into your life. In specific areas, Grant hasn't heard CJ confess sin, like lust. Lack of specificity will keep CJ from growing.

Brent Asked forgiveness for using the word "lambasted." CJ can make the fatal mistake of judging the response of those bringing him correction and then trying to figure things out on his own. Concerned that people will think, "Aha! We've got him."

CJ Doesn't think his process is what Brent is describing.⁴⁸

Grant Asked CJ if what he expressed to Brent was an ongoing concern. Who is CJ thinking of?

CJ At times CJ acknowledged he has not received correction from Dave and Brent because he thinks it has been rooted in offense.

Grant Humility would cause CJ to invite others into that process. CJ might be right or wrong in his assessment of the hearts of others.

Josh CJ just shared part of his thinking process and it was extremely helpful. That helps others serve CJ.

Grant CJ should involve others whether those bringing correction to him are offended or whether or not he's judging them. CJ should think of sharing his heart not to critique others but to reveal more of his own sin.

CJ Talked about conviction. Sometimes it comes abruptly and starts to focus. Then as he looks back it makes a difference in how he perceives things.

Josh Everyone would say there is a humility and perception we would affirm. Not sure Brent's statement was helpful, because it was so general. But thinks CJ's temptation in these moments and meetings is to want to be one to direct the focus of things.⁴⁹

- Grant CJ's description of what we're doing as unimportant. This point of self-disclosure is key to all we're talking about.
- Brent Was trying to reference was Josh's comment of CJ saying "guilty as charged" and then there's silence. That doesn't really help us.
- CJ Would have loved to have dwelt on each point today.⁵⁰
- Josh This has served us by walking through these examples, so we can review these notes later on, and give extended time to specific areas. We can't cover this all⁵¹ in one meeting.
- Brent Asked CJ what his thoughts were on the last point – withdrawing when he perceives others judging him.
- CJ Seeing that the least. (e.g., Bo, *Cross Centered Life*, Philly)
- Josh Doesn't think "withdrawing" – isn't the best word. It seems to be more resentment and distrusting.⁵² At times there is a strength of response in CJ that seems to be resentful, especially when others criticize members of his family. Illustration: Carolyn's message to women. Josh sensed a tension in CJ when he brought up some negative comments from some women in the church. Same thing happened in a pastor's meeting, which Grant challenged.
- CJ Agreed with Grant's perception, didn't agree with Josh's.
- Kenneth What motive would CJ attribute to his making comments that made others feel uncomfortable?
- CJ Josh was driving the agenda, and CJ wanted to get his items taken care of. That's what he was resentful of.
- Kenneth Felt that CJ's response to Brent when he used the word "lambasted" was intense. Wondered if CJ's response couldn't be more kind.
- Dave Sometimes CJ can get hooked on what people say and respond in a way that has a silencing, punishing effect⁵³ on the person he's talking to.
- CJ Didn't see that in his response to Brent.

- Grant What happened today isn't the clearest example of this response. But there seemed to be some of it there. When CJ says, "if that's the effect, then we just need to start over," that has an effect. Seems like CJ has concluded, and isn't asking questions.
- Josh Even if there wasn't sin in CJ's heart, that response [to Brent] doesn't position CJ to position and hear. It isn't a question, and it could be said in a way that's humble. Sounds like "I'm doing my best here, and if that's all you think of it, then let's start at the beginning." That's not the best way to get at the good content from Brent.
- Josh CJ can be self-disclosing and still be asking questions.
- Bob It seems there is an air of finality in CJ's responses that doesn't invite questions or evaluation. At times he states his disagreement, at other times he doesn't disclose what's going on in his heart. In either case, he thinks his conclusion is accurate and isn't allowing others to help him.
- CJ Agrees with all the major categories⁵⁴ that have been brought to him, except he's not seeing the last one. Agrees that he can feel condemned when his reputation is assailed.
- Brent CJ needs a lot more input from the guys on the pastoral team. Quarterly couples times that Josh is leading, starting with CJ. Monthly accountability meetings, starting with CJ, Pat is joining us for that. Spontaneous times. Good to iron out who's responsible for who pastorally. Who should be caring for the Laymans, Kauflins, and Marescos - Josh or CJ? Some other arrangement? Thinks we need to make sure that the Mahaneys are cared for first if we're only meeting quarterly.
- Kenneth What about Carolyn?
- Brent Heard that Carolyn has regular times with Betsy and Nancy, but not sure that's sufficient. Thinks the contact between the A-team and the CLC pastors has been insufficient. For the next year, would like one of the guys on the CLC team to fill the team in quarterly on how things are going, as part of the monthly team phone call. Would probably take an hour. If something significant occurs, positive or negative, Brent would want someone to call him. Also, as things come up with the [apostolic] team, they will point CJ back to the pastoral team.

Thinks we should bring Carolyn into the equation as often as possible. Thinks that it would be helpful to have CJ ask for feedback from relationships outside Sovereign Grace [i.e., national leaders like Piper, Powlison, Dever, etc.].

Asked whether or not CJ should at some point confess his sins to a larger group, whether that be the Sovereign Grace staff, the CLC pastors. His thoughts: 1. It's always good for the person who does it. 2. Are there historical situations where we've had other guys do this? 3. Is it proper as an issue of integrity, to have key guys brought in to our assessment of CJ, so that their opinion of CJ is more accurate.⁵⁵ Does integrity require that they be informed?⁵⁶

Steve Thinks the CLC guys should consider Brent's questions. Personally, he can see the CLC staff as being a venue, and possibly the Sovereign Grace managers. Wouldn't go the extended team right now. Reasons: Progress is being made, guys that are now being added wouldn't have any experience with CJ.

Dave Wants to reflect on all that's been said today, consider how CJ is processing all that he's heard, before he makes a formal recommendation [regarding scope of confession]. Given the seriousness of the situation, and the fact that the pattern has been a pattern of resistance, and the measure of CJ's responsibilities and role, and the fact that we would typically have guys humble themselves before some group.

Josh We will definitely consider those things.⁵⁷ Thanked the apostolic team for effectively caring for CJ and for us.

Brent Expressed that there is no one we would rather have leading the apostolic team than CJ. Expressed appreciation for CJ and Carolyn for their example and friendship.

Dave The things we've covered are not what we think about when we think about CJ's leadership. There is an overwhelming category of grace when we think of CJ.

The Circle of Confession for C.J.⁵⁸

Leading up to this meeting, I e-mailed the following to Dave and Steve on August 17, "I'd like to recommend on Friday [at the August 20 meeting] that C.J. make a confession to all the CLC pastors and to the extended team [comprised of the regional teams overseeing churches] in Nov/Dec.? Do you agree that this would serve him and is a good and necessary thing to recommend?"

Dave agreed with my proposition and Steve expressed reservations. Steve wrote saying,

"I would need to know more of your thinking why the extended [regional] teams should be brought into this... at the moment, I think it should stay with us and the CLC guys responsible to pastor CJ... I think it would be those men's call if they extend it to the entire CLC pastoral team.

The next day, August 18, Dave responded to Steve regarding his request "to know more of your thinking."

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 7:46 AM
To: Steve Shank
Cc: Brent Detwiler
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL - Confession

I [Dave] may try to call you [Steve] on this today or tomorrow to explain my thoughts further, but I recently had a chance to sit down and look over a # of documents that help to bring interpretation to this event for me. One would be the [April] summaries we all sent to the CLC guys. A cursory read validates the sense of gravity that I felt (although it is easy for me to lose this sense of gravity now that CJ is responding so humbly [you just provided the August 10 e-mail confession] – don't know whether that [losing a sense of gravity] is a good thing or a bad thing), and I believe Brent's is equally grabbing. In response to my experience over the past few years (at least the way I interpret it), I recently sat down to try to summarize, in an overarching way, what I am hearing from everyone involved. This is what I came up with:

I think his responsibilities before God and the people in movement that love him and trust him led all of us to assume that:

1. CJ was pursuing correction about self – he was not
2. CJ was humble towards correction – he was not
3. CJ was talking to other people about the primary concerns being raised with him – he was not

4. CJ was truly accountable in certain important areas – he was not
5. CJ was responding lovingly to misunderstanding & pressing into his friendships for clarity & with affirmation – he was not
6. CJ was leading the movement through the primary influence and direction of the A. Team (or team was involved in strategic planning for future) or that we were actually talking about where we were weak and needed improvement. [he was not]
7. CJ was seeing the need to illustrate his sermons with examples of his own weakness and sinfulness (this was weak)
8. All the while teaching on humility, writing on it & referencing himself in regards to it when we were calling him to account.
9. Been enormously troubling to us & personally grievous for me

Because of the portrait that forms above,⁵⁹ I don't think we want to limit the confession to the CLC guys involved (not sure CJ would want this either, but I don't know). Also, I'm not sure that the fact that others that don't relate to CJ as much (rest of CLC team) is a good reason for not having him go broader. I don't think we should evaluate the circle of confessions by the aggrieved parties but by the longstanding nature of the pattern, the resistance of the person, the measure of his responsibilities, the norm in Sovereign Grace, etc., etc. For CJ to confess his sin to his [pastoral] team and the upper echelon of leadership in Sovereign Grace (extended [regional] teams) does not appear to me to be excessive. The groups are both highly contained and very mature (present company excluded!).

I seem to recall Brent doing a similar thing when confronted with his pride (Brent, is that true?) years ago and him confessing to the Sr. Pastors. [I shared with all the pastors in 1990 the areas of pride God was illuminating in my life.] I think it is just a way to mortify this thing and receive the grace that comes from humble confession. But I may be totally wrong here.

Hope this helps you understand why I was advocating those two contexts. Please challenge my thinking because I don't assume that I have this right. We don't often walk down this road!

Follow Up on August 20, 2004 Meeting

Dave wrote me on September 3, "It might be helpful for you to take some time to map out a clear road forward based upon everything that has been said. This will not only inform CJ on where we are but it will inform everyone on where we need to go." I answered, "Totally agree with the need for this. I'll be working on it - probably next week. One disadvantage, we won't talk about things until our Oct 26-28 retreat if we

leave things alone during the September 15 phone meeting [in light of the “Milestone Weekend” at CLC]. Do you think it would be good to invite Josh, Kenneth, Bob and Grant to the retreat for half a day?”

On September 3 Dave wrote me,

“I think that might be a good idea. However, even more important than their attendance would be our certainty of the role they are playing and the clarity they are bringing... We need to hear more from them. We need to hear what they think, where they are seeing things that CJ doesn’t necessarily see, what they are addressing, etc... It would not be helpful for them to (I’m not saying they are doing this.) close circle around CJ.... This is also where CJ’s newer doctrine of discouraging the talking about situations when the corrected is not present is going to be seriously counterproductive. If we cannot connect with them to evaluate clarity and direction except in CJ’s presence, this process will be much longer than any of us would want. I hope to make these points to Josh sometime.”

C.J. Redirecting the Focus after August 20, 2004 Meeting⁶⁰

On September 8, you told me on the phone that “Carolyn had questions about the process” and you asked for “one meeting to ask a lot of questions about the large body of material” you “may not have heard correctly or understood” from August 20.

On September 10, you wrote me.

“At some point if and when you guys think it is appropriate in the distant future I would be glad to share with you and Dave observations I have from this season. If necessary I can include Carolyn in that process but I don’t think it will be.”

Later in the day you wrote again.

“In looking over the notes from the time [on] Aug 20 I need to talk with you before the [October] retreat (if that is the next meeting) because there are different points/illustrations I need to ask you about so I can make sure I understand and hear you clearly as well provide you with my perspective and invite your evaluation of my perspective.”

On September 22, I responded.

"I/we certainly want to hear your perspective. I/we understand and appreciate that "there are different points/illustrations I [C.J.] need to ask you [Brent] about so I can make sure I understand and hear you clearly as well provide you with my perspective and invite your evaluation of my perspective." This is good and necessary discussion to have. I'd request, however, this be done in the context of the larger group.⁶¹ From my perspective, it is important for all the men to participate in this discussion."

On October 19, you wrote me.

"Thanks for wanting to have these conversations on the [October] retreat but I don't think this will be possible [even though you requested our meeting occur before the retreat]. I am going to need a period of time to organize my thoughts/questions on both the process and observations I would have over the last two years for you and Dave apart from this process. I am not going to be able to do this before the retreat, nor would there be the amount of time necessary on the retreat to devote to this from my perspective. I don't want to be rushed in either the preparation necessary for these conversations or the time frame of these conversations I want to have with you and Dave. And I appreciate your invitation to share with everyone but I think it would be wise for me to talk with you both personally and then I am glad for everyone to hear anything and everything."⁶²

In response, Dave wrote me and Josh.

"I think I would appeal that meeting [as a team] before or during [the October retreat] remain a priority. My sense from the CLC guys was that the team dynamic is their primary concern. I think that would be the same for the A. Team. Therefore, I think addressing these issues at the retreat becomes the best use of the time (even if CJ is only able to share in a preliminary way and we come back to it in the future)...I think the process is now stalled unless we do move forward on these conversations. In other words and if I understand correctly, CJ is not really able to process our perspective or illustrations on his sin because of these unknown and unspoken variables that he has withheld over the last couple of years. And since there isn't time to talk or inclination to talk right now, seems like we are not able to move forward. Also, since thinking about how to approach us will be time consuming for CJ, it appears as the process is now left hanging. Personally, I think moving this forward will serve the team health (and our mental health!) best."

On October 21, Josh wrote me back.

“Kenneth, Grant and I met with CJ to discuss the timing of him sharing his thoughts with you men. We encouraged him to do this next week at your retreat, and he was reluctant but willing to do this if this was what we thought was best. But as we talked more and heard more of his perspective we came to understand why this might not be wisest or best for the overall process. The first reason is that CJ’s desire is to have a whole day with each of you. The things he wants to share he wants to be able to explain in detail and not rush through with the concern of keeping the rest of the team waiting. He views this as an 8-10 hour process not something that can be handled in a morning.”

Dave responded to Josh.

“While the e-mail [above] was helpful for Brent and I, it probably raised more questions for us as well. I think it would be profitable and necessary for us to talk through our questions with you so that we can determine how best to proceed. We’re hoping you might be able to make some time available this afternoon, but we can be as flexible as necessary in order to make this happen.”

On October 22, Dave and I talked with Josh, Grant and Kenneth by phone (Steve was unavailable on a couple’s retreat). During this call Dave told them that your request presented an “element of difficulty” since for the “past 3-4 years he [Dave] had a history of taking initiative with C.J. in asking for input.”

Dave went on to say that,

“Now coming out on the other side of August 20 we are unaware of where C.J. has seen the helpfulness of our concerns. Instead there is a two year backlog of concerns for us which now takes front and center stage.⁶³ We should expect to hear the results of C.J.’s time with you since the August 20 meeting and back from him on his e-mail confessions [from August 10 & October 13].”

We proceeded with the team retreat in Herndon on October 26-28. Josh, Kenneth, Grant and Bob did not join us. You took no initiative to inform us or engage us about anything from the last 3 months. We kept it to business. There was an elephant in the room. Your focus was now on evaluating us. The day after the retreat you e-mailed me.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2004 9:51 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Evaluations

Are you going to initiate the evaluations of team members using the forms we used last year? I'd like you to do this if possible and if possible it would be ideal to have this stuff either for our January retreat.

Let me know what you think.

Thanks,

CJ

On November 3, I wrote you.

"...I'd also like to suggest we go over Dave, Steve and my [job performance] reviews at our March retreat [instead of the January retreat]. This would give us plenty of time to talk with you [in January]. Since August 20 we've had no interactions with you as a team or in conjunction with you and the CLC men. In my mind, this seems a good and necessary thing to do. If you agree, would you consider having the CLC men join us on the January retreat so we can talk about all that has transpired?

Dave's November 11, 2004 Summary

This summary was sent to Joshua, Grant, Kenneth, Steve and me. Nearly three months had transpired since our meeting with you on August 20.

Josh,

This is my best shot at summarizing my questions. Thanks for your willingness to look this over. I'm not necessarily looking for a response on anything because I know we are engaged in a dynamic situation that is still playing out. But I welcome any feedback that you (or any of you men) would like to offer as well.

Thanks!

Dave

Hi guys [Joshua, Grant, Kenneth].

Thought it might be wise to drop you a note to offer an update on where things are sitting for me and the remaining questions I have in this process. These are offered with hope that by sharing them, you might better understand my heart and concerns and that this may be of service to both of us as we proceed. In so doing, I welcome your perspective.

But first, let's celebrate grace: I see changes in CJ. He opened this past retreat with expressing his desire to be corrected should anything come up and he closed the retreat by asking for an evaluation of our time. Although it was evident he didn't want to talk about any of the recent matters, I still appreciate these specific attempts to honor God and I told him so. Also, I believe he is leading and involving the team in ways that are greatly enhancing our productivity while we are together.

Finally, I see important steps towards change through the reports of your experience with him. I believe your experience (and some of my own!) are a wonderful indication that God has begun a powerful work. This is all very encouraging to me!

Quick update from our last phone call: CJ has not contacted me with a date for meeting nor has he communicated any intent or desire to meet to raise his concerns.

Now, on to remaining questions that I might place in the 'unresolved' category:

1. To what extent should CJ's fresh conviction & humility guide him to update the Apostolic Team on important developments such as:
 - a. The helpfulness and applicability of the August 20th meeting.
 - b. The results and helpfulness of the CLC summary produced after the August 20th meeting. There appear to be areas where some of the original concerns raised by the team are corroborated by the CLC guys. It seems important to understand how CJ is interpreting that.
 - c. The results of his time with Bo, particularly on those points where the team was united in their appeals to CJ.
 - d. A review of his recent October confession for its relevance to our experience with him.
 - e. A general pursuit of any additional thoughts or observations in relationship to his soul or this process.
 - The absence of conversation or self disclosure appears like a notable omission right now. Perhaps equally important is that it seems consistent with the pattern of how these things tend to play out, particularly over the last few years.

2. To what extent is it really wise for the process (and helpful to CJ & the Apostolic Team) to allow CJ's concerns over us to postpone additional confessions or updates, re-direct the process and close off communication about where we are and where we are going?⁶⁴ While I understand the explanations offered thus far, I guess I'm still uncertain as to whether CJ is examining his assumptions and perceptions of Brent and I through the points he has confessed ("quick to find fault with those correcting; pattern of sinful judgment towards those correcting"; etc.). It doesn't appear as if his words or approach since August 20th would lead to that conclusion,⁶⁵ though I am confident that you men are encouraging that exercise.
3. Has the CLC team encouraged CJ back to Brent and Dave regarding the longstanding concern over his tendencies towards 'withdrawal'? Since everyone (including the CLC guys, if I understood you correctly) appears to share this concern and it seems to affect the dynamic of the Apostolic Team, I wonder if this discussion should be more of a priority. It also seems that humility would lead CJ to share with us your observations for him on this point. The present (and historical) lack of discussion and resolution on this important point can leave open speculation about CJ's relational determination, particularly when he encounters disagreement or problems with the Apostolic Team.
4. Perhaps related to #3: Is CJ demonstrating a sufficient appreciation for what this process imposes on team dynamic, unity and communication? It seems the more common approach among us would be to elevate the priority of these kinds of discussions - partially to care for all involved; partially to uphold the unity of the team(s); and partially because these situations play out on a relational stage and those relationships are important. The fact that we could have weeks, even months pass with no discussion or deliberation is difficult to interpret, but not unusual for how we tend to proceed when there is misunderstanding or unresolved relational issues. (It bears saying though that there are many other ways that CJ communicates his love and affection, for which I am grateful to God and him.)
5. Would CJ (maybe the CLC guys as well) perceive any benefit in examining the comments made to Steve about Dave and Brent "controlling information and manipulating the process"?⁶⁶ This seems to be a serious statement and may reveal important information that helps us understand how CJ processes criticism or maybe even sinful judgments that CJ may be carrying. The irony of CJ's comments deepen as we find ourselves in a position where the process and information now rests with him and yet we

are not discussing these things or, for myself, even clear about how we are proceeding

6. This is one that seems important because it may illustrate how diverse our perspectives might be: Why would CJ represent the last couple of years as a period where he has withheld feedback and perspective and the upcoming period as one where he needs to 'come out of retirement' (CJ's e-mail comment) to serve us? Also, why are these issues, some of which you men indicated are not necessarily related to this process, being introduced and entertained right now? This not only appears procedurally unconventional but it reveals impressions about himself that I think it would serve to explore. I have no doubt that CJ has graciously overlooked some of my many faults and sins. It's just that I have pursued his perspective over the past few years and I have been assured by his answers that I am updated. To introduce the idea of a two-year unspoken backlog in the middle of this process is a perplexing development and difficult for me to reconcile with his words.⁶⁷

To summarize, the following is my best shot at a summation of my original concerns, (though I am aware that I am capable of misunderstanding or misinterpreting CJ's words & actions): *To correct CJ, or to challenge his own self-perception, was to experience a reaction through e-mails, consistent disagreement (without seeking to sufficiently understand), a lack of sufficient follow-up and occasionally, relational withdrawal. Along with this, CJ was poor in volunteering areas of sin, temptation or weakness in himself.*

I believe God has begun a work in CJ and that he wants to cooperate with God's activity. But since CJ has not acknowledged the relevance of any of the illustrations that Brent and I have given and we're still not discussing these things, it's hard to know if we are making sufficient progress. I am delighted to hear things are moving forward on your end. That is very important evidence of CJ's desire and application. But I continue to wonder whether one of the best measures of CJ's growth will be in the way he is responding to the insights and concerns of Brent & I. Perhaps I am wrong on this.

I believe we are engaged in an important time of serving the entire team, not just CJ. I want to thank you for your patience and participation in it and I welcome any insights you have for me. I live more aware than ever that CJ is a great man and that I am a great sinner.

Joshua's Reply to Dave

On November 19, Joshua wrote.

Dave,

Thanks for your written summary. I think you're asking good questions and I want to pursue these questions after CJ has had his time with Brent (today) and with you. CJ told me that he recently e-mailed you about setting up a time. Sorry for the delay.

All that to say, we want to explore the questions you're raising. We care about CJ and the whole team. We don't assume that everything has been addressed in CJ or that he's seeing all the issues with clarity. We hope that God will help us build on what has been accomplished.

Thanks for your help with the New York trip. I appreciated your creativity with the title. I really hope they use that.

Sincerely,
Joshua

C.J. and Brent's Meeting in Charlotte - November 19, 2004

Immediately after the August 20 meeting you changed the focus to an evaluation of Dave and especially me.⁶⁸ On November 19, you flew to Charlotte and took four hours⁶⁹ (at least not the 8-10 hours Josh said I should expect) to share your concerns for me. This was a lengthy monologue, not a dialogue. I listened and took extensive notes. Where possible I asked your forgiveness. Here and there, however, I succinctly voiced my disagreements out of concern for you. So many of the things you shared were contradicted by Bob's notes from the August 20 meeting. For instance, you insisted I advocated that you step down as team leader (more on this later) which was the opposite of what I said.⁷⁰ Leaving our time together I was very concerned for you. It was evident your offenses were affecting your heart and mind.⁷¹ You came with many sinful judgments.⁷²

Two months later on January 19, 2005, I sent you my notes (see below) from the meeting and included my disagreements. I hoped they would help you and give you pause for how you were misinterpreting and misrepresenting things to others.⁷³ Here is what I wrote.

"I am happy to talk about any of this with you at 2:30. It really is not my desire to be difficult. I want to support you and serve you,⁷⁴ I want to commend progress. I wish these differences did not exist. I invite your disagreement my friend. I want to move ahead."

That same afternoon we talked by phone. I brought up my notes hoping we would talk about them. Instead, you told me you "didn't feel there was a need to talk about them."⁷⁵ I cordially disagreed.

Three months later on March 26, I asked your permission to send my notes onto Dave, Steve, Kenneth and Bob. I did not include Josh because he asked to be out of the process. He no longer wanted to be in a position where had to correct you or be affected by the things he heard about you. He simply wanted to be mentored by you. At this point, you put Bob in charge⁷⁶ of the process from your end.

Here is my email requesting permission. I have added a few thoughts in brackets [].

"Dave and Steve have wondered what your assessment of my leadership was on November 19 [2004] when we met in Charlotte. I assume the same is true of Kenneth and Bob. May I send them a copy of my January 19 [2005] response to you? [I was apprehensive how you would interpret any of my actions.] Of course, I'd want you to feel completely free to express any and all concerns or disagreements with them concerning my response. I do not need to be present or copied for this. [I was giving you a freedom you refused to give us after August 20.]

I have no desire to press any of these points. [I was giving up hope that you would acknowledge any wrong doing.] I would simply like to make them aware so they have a more complete picture of things. [They were only hearing your perspective on things which was often distorted.]

Thanks for considering it.
Brent

Brent's Feedback for C.J. from Meeting in Charlotte - January 19, 2005⁷⁷

We met so you could provide me your critique of the August 20 meeting. These are my notes which I sent to you on January 19, 2005. While I said little at the November 19 meeting, I briefly responded to you on each point two months later.

E Mail

- Your concern: I was using e-mail as a “primary means of correction.”
- My response: I think my e-mails were primarily informational and illustrative and not corrective. I also reminded you that you asked Dave and me on August 4 to e-mail you any and all additional examples related to the issues [of pride in your life, etc.]. The e-mails that followed were all in response to your request.

Hope

- Your concern: We “didn’t impart hope” to you.
- My response: Imparting hope was made more difficult by several factors. You were not updating us as a team on progress with the CLC men [Josh, Grant, Bob, Kenneth], we were not hearing from the CLC men on progress, phone calls and meetings with this in mind were cancelled, you were expressing disagreement with most of the examples we shared on August 20, no examples were acknowledged as helpful or applicable, you were struggling with the process and with Dave and me.

Seriousness

- Your concern: I made “repeated statements about seriousness.”
- My response: I may have at the August 20 meeting. I am not sure. Previously, I can only remember one occasion where I used the word “serious” in an e-mail. You agreed in a follow up e-mail that the issues were serious.

Comparison to RB

- Your concern: That I made a “careless comparison [of you] to RB.”
- My response: You misunderstood the e-mail [i.e., judged me] where I referenced RB. The context of my e-mail made clear I was only asking you to use RB’s written confession as an example for your own. That was all. In any case, I quickly clarified my reference to RB in follow up e-mails as soon as I discovered you were struggling.

Stepping Down

- Your concern: My reference to “having [you] step down.”
- My response: The only occasion I’ve ever mentioned “stepping down” was at the August 20th meeting. It was a hypothetical reference if you had not repented. Josh agreed with this perspective. Previously, you were the one who introduced the idea of stepping down. All of us responded to you in clear cut terms that this was not necessary. This was repeatedly affirmed.

Hypocrisy

- Your concern: You did not find “my explanation regarding hypocrisy” helpful on August 20.
- My response: I only used the word once in reference to you not telling the CLC men about our input during the 18 month period of time. From my perspective, this was contrary to what we have taught and practiced.

BC and BP⁷⁸

- Your concern: You thought I was comparing you to BC and BP because you were “not getting the extreme nature of things.”
- My response: You asked me via e-mail to explain my reference on August 20 to “an element of hypocrisy.” In my response to you on Sept 22, I referenced BC and BP. It is very clear, however, that I implied nothing by way of character comparison. In context, my comments regarding them only had to do with the things we learned about informing others of input we are receiving.

Normal Sanctification

- Your concern: You didn’t understand “why so many interactions” thereby making it “more serious” rather than viewing things as “normal sanctification.”
- My response: We have a difference of perspective on this point [i.e., the issues were serious].

Escalation

- Your concern: The request for a [written] “confession escalated things” in your mind.
- My response: This was not an escalation. It was just a simple request for you to write down the things you were seeing. We felt this would benefit you and us. This reason was clearly communicated to you via e-mail.

“Tribunal”

- Your concern: You felt the August 20 meeting was a “tribunal” with no statement of encouragement.⁷⁹
- My response: I mentioned to the men at the beginning of the August 20 meeting that we had encouraged you at length during our August 13 team meeting. At that time we spent at least 30 minutes expressing our deep appreciation, encouragement and affection for you. This did not seem to help you. In retrospect, I wish we had taken the time to encourage you again at the beginning of the August 20 meeting.

Alliance

- Your concern: There has been an “alliance” between Dave and me.
- My response: Dave and I have worked together at times (along with Steve) but we have not allied ourselves against you.

Taking Up Offenses for One Another

- Your concern: Dave took up offenses for me (e.g. doing less teaching in the Pastors College) and I took up offenses for Dave (e.g., asking Jeff, not Dave, to do the Called Men seminar at Celebration; Dave not writing books for SGM).
- My response: We have not been motivated by offense (i.e., anger, bitterness or resentment). We used the examples above to help you see some of the issues related to gentleness, etc. I don’t believe we have taken up offenses for each other.

Dave Offended & Unkind

- Your concern: You quoted Dave as saying on August 4 [during a phone call with us] that “You [C.J.] don’t appreciate what guys do.” “You [C.J.] don’t recognize the contributions of others.” “You [C.J.] miss opportunities to recognize the contributions of others.” You felt Dave was being unkind to you in making these comments.
- My response: I don’t have any recollection of Dave saying these things in this way. I don’t remember him speaking in an unkind manner.

Few Hours of Correction

- Your concern: You didn’t think it was wise to make “a few hours of corrective statements” without dialogue during the first part of the August 20 meeting.
- My response: I asked you to forgive me for leading that part of the meeting (12:30-1:50 pm) in a way that did not facilitate dialogue. I corrected your recollection that it was “2-3 hours” in duration. I also mentioned that I left 2½ hours for dialogue (2:00-5:30 pm) which I sought to initiate immediately after the break.

I Seemed Irritated

- Your concern: “I [Brent] seemed irritated” at the August 20 meeting.
- My response: I don’t think this was the case. I was uncharitable at one point when I used the word “lambasted” but I don’t remember expressing irritation during the meeting. When I asked all the men present for any correction [after the August 20 mtg.], they have not expressed this as an observation.

Confession of Sin

- Your concern: You weren’t sure “why a wider confession of sin was necessary” especially since you have “historically confessed your sins to others.” [No one agreed with your self-assessment.]
- My response: I think the nature and pattern of sins⁸⁰ being addressed warranted a consideration of confessing to a larger group (e.g. CLC pastors, some Sov. Grace managers, or some men serving on the extended [regional] teams). We never pressed for this or conveyed this was a necessity. We

never implied or thought a confession to CLC or the movement was necessary. Just the opposite.

Public Confessions

- Your concern: You said you would walk more carefully than me in having men make public confessions. That you are more restrained than me.
- My response: I would see this differently. I think the opposite has historically been the case.

TH

- Your concern: You wondered why DH didn't make a public confession⁸¹ given the way TH lived during a 3 year period of time.
- My response: I don't know the particulars so I don't know if a confession to the church was warranted. I do know DH was confessing his sin to the men locally and was walking in the light with them.⁸²

BL Taking Up Our Offense

- Your concern: Dave and I have gone back to BL and "transferred our offense" with you to him.
- My response: I don't think we have done this. [And BL told us "not at all."]

Not Discerning of BL's Sins

- Your concern: You didn't think we were perceptive and discerning of BL's sins.
- My response: I think Dave, Steve and me had a good handle on BL's sins. We were also concerned for the harsh assessment you were making of BL.⁸³

Care Group

- Your concern: That I did not make "inquiry into what took place during the 18 months" when you didn't have a Care Group. That I used this illustration as part of a "damming body of evidence."
- My response: I would not agree. At the team retreat in December 03 we were surprised to find out three things: 1) you had not participated in a

couples retreat for 3 years, 2) you had not been involved in men's accountability meetings, and 3) you hadn't had a Care Group meeting over the last 18 months.⁸⁴ In expressing my concern, I also sympathetically communicated my understanding. I specifically mentioned Nicole's sickness, Janelle's wedding, your father in law's health, Carolyn's book writing, your book writing, and the challenge of coming up with dates that worked for everyone. I did not press the issue of Care Group.

Postpone August 20 Meeting

- Your concern: You and Carolyn felt the August 20 should have been postponed until after the Milestone Weekend in September [17-19].
- My response: I don't know how this was possible. I did try to tamp things down after the August 20 meeting. I reminded you that I asked for everything to be put on hold until our team retreat at the end of October. You didn't remember this. During this time, you and Steve were talking/e-mailing and that was keeping the issues active during the Milestone Weekend.

I expressed my concern that Carolyn had struggled with the impact of this process on the Milestone Weekend way back in June at the CBA Convention before you had acknowledged any sin to us. I communicated that I didn't know how things could have been done differently unless we tabled all our concerns from the December 2003 team retreat until after the Milestone Weekend [which was] ten months later.

Two Services

- Your concern: You said Josh inaccurately "misrepresented [you] on having 2 services" at CLC at August 20 meeting.
- My response: I have no idea if this is true. If it is true, Josh should get back to us. If it is true, I assume he has already asked your forgiveness.

Cross Centered Life

- Your concern: Thought I judged you at August 20 meeting by saying you were resentful regarding our discussions about *The Cross Centered Life*.
- My response: I didn't say you were resentful. Quoting Bob's notes I said, I "thought the issue was self-pity, and possibly resentment."

Two Examples of Offense Expounded

You were resentful, bitter and angry about many things.⁸⁵ As a result, your perspective on what and how things were said or done was sorely distorted. Though each of the topics above could be expanded upon, I've selected two of the 24, hypocrisy and stepping down, as illustrative of the rest.

Example 1: "An Element of Hypocrisy"

When we met on November 19 in Charlotte, so I could hear your critique of me, you brought up the reference to hypocrisy. You told me I should not have used the word and you did not think it applied to you. Going into the August 20 meeting, Dave asked me to consider not using the word "hypocrisy" out of concern for your reaction. I shared with Dave I thought we needed to use biblical terminology if we were going to help you. Knowing how easily you could stumble, I purposefully used the phrase "an element of hypocrisy" on August 20. I was trying to be so careful. Nevertheless, you took offense and felt the need to correct me on November 19. Here is the e-mail trail which began the day after our meeting. You wrote the following.

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Saturday, August 21, 2004 8:52 AM⁸⁶

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: Confidential

If you have a few minutes I need to ask you a question/clarification on Bo today. Also, it would help to ask you about a statement you made related to me and hypocrisy. I want to know if I have the quote right and understand your concern.

If possible please send me the specific categories you presented. It would help to have your wording so I can let you know what I perceive and what I don't yet perceive.⁸⁷

Thanks again for taking the time to come here yesterday and provide me with your care and correction.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Wednesday, September 22, 2004 7:30 PM

To: Grant Layman; Steve Shank; Bob Kauflin; Pat Ennis; Kenneth Maresco, C.J. Mahaney, Joshua Harris; Dave Harvey

Subject: Confidential - Hypocrisy

In your e-mail below you say "it would help to ask you about a statement you made related to me and hypocrisy. I want to know if I have the quote right and understand your concern."

Here are some excerpts from Bob's notes from the August 20 meeting to give you the context.

Kenneth Hasn't seen [with C.J.] the specificity in confession that others have demonstrated.

Brent At the December '03 [apostolic team] retreat, they [the apostolic team] talked about these issues with CJ, they had the written evaluations from the CLC pastors. At that retreat, CJ repented of a couple things [i.e., the handling of Bo and Tyler], but disagreed with most of it. CJ never came to us [CLC pastors] and acknowledged the things he confessed. Nor did he go beyond filling us [CLC men] in on the [apostolic] team's oral presentation [additional input]. CJ has acknowledged this in his [August 10 e-mail] confession in the context of pride and feeling his discernment is superior. Sees more pervasive pride in how CJ views himself – not in a suspicious way, but in a confident way. It's not simply pride in his discernment, but pride in his opinion of himself.

[Brent] feels there's been an element of hypocrisy in CJ. If he doesn't agree with observations from others, that's one thing. If he doesn't share that with others, that's another issue.

Josh Agrees with the assessment of the sin at work and the way it was deceiving CJ. Doesn't think CJ was intentionally seeking to deceive us, which doesn't make it any less serious. The way in which CJ asked for observations at times lent to a less thorough response. All of us will face this temptation to believe the person who says that what we're doing is okay. We're seeing CJ's reaction to observations in a new way because we're bringing observations more frequently and specifically.

Many years ago a similar scenario presented itself with BC... We were bringing things to his attention but he was not telling the local men around him. The local men were bringing things to his attention but he was not telling the apostolic team.

I remember talking about this and all of us making a commitment to inform others of the correction we receive from others so we don't make the same mistake. This same kind of thing happened with BP. It again accentuated the need to always inform others of the correction we are receiving whether we agree with it or not.

In your case, not providing this kind of information to the CLC men over an 18 month period seems [was] contrary to what we have taught, agreed to and practiced. Of course, we're never had an exception for times we don't agree with the correction we are receiving. Just the opposite. When we don't agree it is more critical that we inform others. If we share with humility and self suspicion, it can easily be done without "embarrassing" the person(s) bringing the correction and not putting them in a bad light.

Is there anything you are struggling with by my referencing an "element of hypocrisy." I'd be happy to hear your perspective or disagreement if you have one.

Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2004 10:03 AM

To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Joshua Harris; Grant Layman; Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin; Pat Ennis

Subject: RE: Confidential - Hypocrisy

Well, there is much I want to talk with you and Dave about [a month after the August 20th meeting you were struggling with our input in a major way] at the proper time my friend. But I don't prefer to communicate about this kind of stuff through e-mail and I will ask the guys here how they think I should proceed. They continue to do an excellent job watching over my soul.

So thanks for sending this. I will talk with the guys here about this and at the appropriate time provide you with my perspective.⁸⁸

Example 2: Stepping Down as Team Leader

This is another example of offense that affected your relationship with me. Even though I never suggested you step down as the team leader you continued to correct me for supposedly doing so and this despite many attempts to assure you otherwise.⁸⁹ This offense, that I wanted or suggested you resign, was conveyed to Steve and others and had a negative impact on them.⁹⁰ What is remarkable, you were the one who suggested the idea of stepping down.⁹¹ Here is the e-mail trail.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, July 17, 2004 8:49 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

Dave,

...I am glad to write up a confession⁹² [sadly it turned out you became resentful of this request] similar to RB's and would also want you men to know if you think I should step down because of my sins I don't think I would make that difficult for you. Actually I think I would make it easy for you.⁹³ The only challenge would be timing since the transition [Joshua becoming the senior pastor] is in September. But God will give you men clarity and wisdom as to how to proceed...

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, July 17, 2004 9:27 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

...I don't think you should step down and I personally don't want to serve anyone else. I'm sure you would make it easy for us, since I know that you are not selfishly motivated to keep your job or use your platform.⁹⁴ I love that about you. So, I think you're stuck with us a little longer! However it may be appropriate in some public context for you to share the dealings of God in your life right now. [This never occurred. The CLC pastors who knew "closed circle" as Dave predicted.] But there is plenty of time to consider the path from here and I don't think we need to get ahead of ourselves since there is no urgency to this matter...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 5, 2004 8:47 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Confidential – Feedback

Dear C.J.,

Thank you for your honesty this morning and thank you for continuing to do the hard (and sometimes discouraging) work of self examination. I am praying you will receive grace from the Savior and be assured our love and affection in the process.

Let me provide you some feedback from our phone conversation this morning...

...I was surprised to hear you say that “Two of four guys [Dave and me] I am serving [are] having serious doubts about whether I should be doing this [team leader].” I’ve never consider this prospect or even intimated at it. On the contrary, we have been constant in our affirmations of your team leadership. This has never been questioned, only repeatedly affirmed. What would cause you to make a statement like this? [Which was declarative, not interrogative.]

I don’t ask these things to condemn you or because I am angry with you. I just want to ask questions to help you further evaluate your heart. Please feel free to disagree with any of my observations, statements, concerns or recollections.

There is no need for a prompt response. Take your time in getting back to me.⁹⁵ I realize there is so much else going on in your life and ministry.

Thanks my friend.
Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2004 10:07 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Feedback

Brent,

Thanks for your care, correction and patience!

Bring on the feedback and questions my friend! I only benefit when you do this

so PLEASE DON'T HESITATE to do this. My only concern is that I find e-mails so limiting particularly when these kinds of issues are involved. So I would prefer to talk to you and I will make time to talk to you everyday if necessary so I can perceive my sin and hopefully grow...⁹⁶

As for the statement "Two of the four guys, etc.", I think I said "if". I don't know what you guys are thinking but if you have these kind of thoughts I don't want it to be difficult to introduce them and make this transition. So it's not a bizarre thought to me to think that you might at least wonder in light of all my sins and then all the deficiencies in my planning/administration whether I should continue to be the team leader. [This quickly changed and became a major source of offense to you.] I think some of what we experienced with Larry in the past also has some influence on me. As we walked through that lengthy challenging season with him on this point I purposed that I would make it easy if this day came for me.⁹⁷ But I very glad to hear you guys don't think this way and that settles it for me and I won't bring it up again⁹⁸ [which you continued to do].

Bob's Notes Regarding Stepping Down from August 20, 2004 Meeting

Brent The team communicated to CJ that the issue of CJ stepping down is not one they've ever considered. Nor do they think he needs to make a movement wide confession.

Grant An illustration, as these things have more recently come to light, CJ has asked whether or not he should be the team leader.⁹⁹ To introduce that in the midst of evaluation can seem to be an overreaction, potentially born out of self-pity, and can put others in the position of not wanting to share observations when there is that kind of response.

Brent Expressed that there is no one we would rather have leading the apostolic team than CJ. Expressed appreciation for CJ and Carolyn for their example and friendship.

Nevertheless, you continued to believe I wanted you to step down. Without our knowing, you were talking with Steve about this and other unhelpful issues. Without my prompting, Dave addressed this matter with Josh after a phone call Dave and Steve had with him.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2004 2:50 PM
To: Joshua Harris
Subject: Confidential

Hey Josh. Great job leading today. Thanks again for expressing your care in such a tangible way.

Just a thought to follow up on something Steve said. He indicated, something to the effect that, Brent's words and attitude in this process have communicated to CJ and others the potential need for repositioning or re-evaluation of his role if he does not respond (I think the way Steve summarized what he has heard from Brent was: "if there isn't significant growth then we may need to look at your role on the team"). While I don't think it is necessary or helpful to answer Steve's perceptions¹⁰⁰ at this time, I did want to follow up with you on this one because I think it misrepresents (unintentionally I'm sure) Brent's heart and approach thus far.¹⁰¹

Brent would've been among the first to respond to CJ when, at the outset, CJ indicated he would be willing to step aside. This was as crazy to Brent as it was to the rest of us. In my opinion, the way Brent opened up the August 20th time - communicating to CJ that the issue of CJ stepping down is not one they've ever considered, he doesn't need to make a movement wide confession, and that there is no one we would rather have leading the apostolic team than CJ - has characterized his attitude and approach all along in both public and private.¹⁰²

Just a point of clarification that seems important.¹⁰³ Thanks for listening.

Dave

From: Joshua Harris
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2004 5:13 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Re: Confidential

This is very helpful. Thank you!

JH

C.J.'s Meeting with Brent in Charlotte
November 19, 2004

Here are the notes I sent you from our meeting. After many attempts to assure you otherwise, you remained offended and still charged me with saying you needed to step down from the leading the team. This twisting of reality had now become common.¹⁰⁴

Stepping Down

- Your concern: My reference to “having him [you] step down.”
- My response: The only occasion I’ve ever mentioned “stepping down” was at the August 20th meeting. It was a hypothetical reference if you had not repented. Josh agreed with this perspective. Previously, you were the one who introduced the idea of him stepping down. All of us responded to you in clear cut terms that this was not necessary. This was repeatedly affirmed.

Things Never Addressed or Explained

In December we talked about whether or not Josh, Bob and Kenneth should join us on our January 11-13, 2005 retreat in Herndon, VA. I was still trying to get everyone together. Here is what I wrote Josh on December 17.

“Thanks Josh for getting back to me and thanks for your willingness to consider a joint meeting.¹⁰⁵ Here are few of my thoughts that may help you to understand my perspective. C.J. has been talking to us individually about his evaluation of us and the process (which I appreciate), but I don’t think we have ever talked as a team over the last 12 months¹⁰⁶ about anything leading up to or flowing out of the August 20 meeting as it pertains to him. If my memory serves me well, this is an unprecedented way of handling things.¹⁰⁷ I’d also add that we’ve had many opportunities to talk as a team but have not done so.

...As a result, I remain perplexed why we have never talked with you men or with C.J. as a team. From my perspective, there remains a substantive list¹⁰⁸ of things that have never been addressed or explained.

Josh, I welcome your correction, adjustment, disagreement or questions. Please feel free to challenge my perspective and my recollection. I am both sinful and fallible. I am glad to write down my thoughts for you as you request. Thanks

for the invitation to do so and thanks for your on-going care and concern for all of us.”

The next day you wrote me the following.

“I would benefit from having the “substantive list of things that have never been addressed or explained.” I wasn’t aware there was this list or more issues that hadn’t been brought to my attention or that I hadn’t responded¹⁰⁹ to so I would like this specific list to begin to consider these items.”

Here is my December 31 response to you and Josh and copied to Dave and Steve.

Josh and C.J.,

Josh, thank you for your on-going care and involvement in C.J.’s life. You are a dear and precious friend to him. C.J., thank you for interacting with Josh and the other men and benefiting from their input and encouragement. All of us on the team are grateful for your responsiveness to God and the changes that have been observed [by the CLC men] in your life.¹¹⁰ We are also grateful for the questions, critique and input you have provided us individually.

Given your request, here are some general questions touching upon those issues I think have gone unaddressed or unexplained.

1. Should we have heard back from the CLC men [Josh, Kenneth, Grant, Bob] and C.J. after the August 20 meeting so we could know what issues were followed up on and how C.J. was processing them? For instance, were any of the examples we used helpful to C.J. in illustrating our points?
2. Should C.J. have talked to us about his e-mail confession of October 13 so we could understand how he came to see the things he acknowledged? Did any of the things acknowledged have a personal bearing upon us?
3. How have the CLC men helped C.J. and Carolyn in their struggles with us? Should we know what the CLC men have been covering with C.J. and the progress that is being made (we have no information except for the Oct 5 “Moving Ahead” report)? How are pastoral care and accountability being provided for C.J. and Carolyn?

These matters seem relevant to me, but I will leave it to you, Dave and Steve, to determine if they are legitimate topics worthy of conversation.”

On January 7, Kenneth wrote back on behalf of Josh, Grant and Bob and answered these questions. Here is what he said in relation to following up with us regarding the effect of your sin on us.

“We believe that this is CJ’s intent. And again, have encouraged him to continue to discuss¹¹¹ [in reality no discussion had occurred] with the team his understanding of the ways in which his sins have a personal bearing upon you. This was the heart of our recommendations from October 5th. We believe that he fully intends¹¹² to press into these areas. [You never did.] We are also aware that CJ has a conviction to where possible, confess sins face to face,¹¹³ rather than through e-mail. And we believe this is commendable and helpful as a general practice.... Whenever we have observed any element of potentially sinful attitudes¹¹⁴ from CJ we have faithfully shared our thoughts and perspective and encouraged CJ to get back to you.”¹¹⁵

Kenneth also said,

“We desire to serve CJ in areas of accountability and personal sanctification, and are very open to the team’s and CJ’s assessment of our care for him in this process. Please feel free to call [me] or Grant for follow up. We prefer to speak personally as a means of sharing about these kinds of issues in the future... And again would welcome the team’s perspective¹¹⁶ if you have any concerns at all regarding our attitude or approach in any and all of these matters.”

Team Retreat in Herndon, VA – January 11-13, 2005
C.J., Brent, Dave, Steve, Pat

I appreciated Kenneth’s response. I was hopeful you’d finally approach us with humility and transparency. According to Kenneth, you fully intended to discuss and press into the ways in which your sins personally impacted us. This was the heart of their counsel to you. That you had a conviction to confess sins face to face rather than by e-mail. It was also encouraging to hear that “Whenever we have observed any element of potentially sinful attitudes from CJ we have faithfully shared our thoughts and perspective and encouraged CJ to get back to you.” He provided you excellent counsel but, as it turned out, you chose not to follow it on the upcoming retreat.

The Friday before the January team retreat (the same day we heard from Kenneth), Dave talked to you about the need to discuss the October 13 e-mail confession at the retreat. You agreed and told him you should have already done so with us. He fully expected you would come prepared to review it. When you did not bring it up, we brought it and attempted to draw you out. All you were willing to say was what you told Dave, which was, you should have talked to us about it already. You did not ask

our forgiveness. And bafflingly, you did not proceed to discuss the confession at all. You simply moved on. In this context, you also told us how you didn't like e-mail confessions (this appeared to be a reference to Steve who had just written one to us) and would rather confess sin in person. Of course, this was hypocritical and made no sense since your only confessions to us were by email and not face to face.

During the retreat we had some discussion about you never asking forgiveness for specific incidences of sin. Incredulously, you told us you were not required to do so provided you were seeing the categories of sin.¹¹⁷ I suggested you should desire to confess specific sin to us and others if truly convicted of categories of sin because specific confession demonstrates repentance and humility and leads to reconciliation. Your ongoing unwillingness to discuss illustrations and ask forgiveness for specific sin was very troubling and contrary to all the counsel you were receiving and everything you had taught in the past.¹¹⁸

Five months earlier and ten days before the August 20 meeting, you acknowledged the following via e-mail. Here is what you wrote,

“On numerous occasions I have not been easy to entreat or correct.... I can be quick to disagree when I am being corrected. I have disagreed with those correcting me before I have sufficiently understood the nature and content of their correction. Too often I have failed to humbly ask questions and draw out the one correcting me. I have not consistently made the individual correcting me comfortable by inviting and encouraging their correction. I have failed to discern the effect of my disagreement upon the one correcting me.... I have not sufficiently perceived the effect of my words and decisions upon individuals.... To my shame there have been many occasions in recent history where my arrogance has been pronounced and I have not been easy to entreat.... And I would like to express my deep gratefulness to Brent, Dave and Steve for their kindness and patience. I think these sins have been most evident to you and sadly manifested the most toward you men. I am so deeply grieved by this. And yet your response to my many sins has been forbearance and forgiveness.”

In August you acknowledged you had sinned against us in “recent history” on “many occasions” but in January you remained unwilling to voluntarily acknowledge any of them. Nevertheless, we tried to engage you. For example, Dave asked why you turned the process of evaluation to us immediately after the August 20 meeting without ever having a discussion about doing so.

This was reminiscent of previous experiences like the one with BL going back to December 2000. I am sure you remember the struggles you were having with him. You recused yourself and I was put in charge of a process whereby the team tried to help both of you. When you disagreed with our concerns for you; you unilaterally removed

me, took over the process and stopped the evaluation. For the next five years we patiently, but unsuccessfully, tried to help you see your sins against him and us. We brought this illustration up again. Finally on the retreat you acknowledged some aspects of your sins against us. Here is what Dave wrote.

From: Dave Harvey
Date: Sunday, April 17, 2005 06:44 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Bob Kauflin; Kenneth Maresco
Subject: RE: Confidential

This is my two cents on how to proceed.

I will query the A. Team to see what might be remaining, either in relation to BL or how you handled the team in relationship to BL and find out if there is anything worth talking about. If there is a list, I will pass it along.

I think you should inform the CLC guys of the specifics of what you confessed to BL and the sin you also confessed to us in our last team meeting in relationship to removing Brent from leading the process and taking the leadership without consulting the team.¹¹⁹

One final illustration. During the January retreat, I brought up the secret and counterproductive discussions you and Steve were having about Dave and me.¹²⁰ In particular, I referenced your e-mail to Steve from September 18, 2004. This was not the first time I tried to talk to you about it. If you remember, you sent this "confidential" e-mail to me by mistake. It read as follows.

"I do not understand (but I want to understand) how Brent states there are to be no secrets but I am not to know what you [Steve] are thinking and the CLC guys aren't to be informed that these conversations are taking place until Brent and Dave determine it is appropriate. It seems (an observation not a conclusion) to me that there is a selective procedure in place and that those men are trying to manage or limit the information. So I am glad to make time to talk and definitely want to be of any help I can. I am preparing for tomorrow and I meet with Thomas Womack this afternoon so you can let me know what time works best for you."

What you asserted about Dave and I had no bearing in reality. I never said you weren't to know what Steve was thinking or that the CLC guys weren't to be informed until we deemed it appropriate. These were sinful judgments. It was also heartbreaking that it

seemed to you we had put “a selective procedure” into place and were “trying to manage and limit the information.” I was deeply saddened to realize you thought we might be acting deceitfully.¹²¹

I forwarded your September 18 e-mail to Dave. In response, here is what Dave asked Steve and me. Like me, he was a baffled.

“Can anyone explain to me what this reference means (above)? What I mean is, I’m curious as to what he [C.J.] is referring to? I would be glad to just e-mail CJ and/or Josh if you guys don’t understand the reference either. Maybe it’s not important right now and I don’t necessarily want to open up any more fronts. But it does seem to go to his perception of what is happening. But where are we withholding information? Brent, any thoughts?”

Within two months you had effectively forgotten your August 10 e-mail confession. At the time you also acknowledged, “I have arrogantly assumed the superiority of my discernment when corrected.... I can be quick to find fault with the one correcting me thus revealing my self-righteousness.... There has been a pattern of sinful judgment toward those who are correcting me.... I have not communicated the correction of the team to the CLC men, arrogantly assuming the inaccuracy of their correction and wrongly assuming the agreement of the CLC team with my perspective.”

Bob recorded in the notes at the August 20 meeting, “At times CJ acknowledged he has not received correction from Dave and Brent because he thinks it has been rooted in offense.” In other words, you felt free to dismiss our discernment, input, and observations because you believed we were motivated out of resentment and bitterness.¹²² For example, you told me that Dave was bitter because you had Jeff, not him, do the “Called Men” seminar at Celebration East and because you had not assigned him any books to write for Sovereign Grace Ministries. You told me, I was bitter because you reduced the number of courses I taught in the Pastors College. For these kinds of reasons, you never informed the CLC pastors of our input. You believed our observations were inaccurate and motivated by a desire to get back at you. If I may say so, that was ludicrous.

“I Do Not Trust You!” – January 2005

Unfortunately, you were not willing to talk at the January 2005 retreat about your e-mail to Steve when you said, “but I am not to know what you [Steve] are thinking and the CLC guys aren’t to be informed that these conversations are taking place until Brent and Dave determine it is appropriate” etc. When I attempted to draw you out, you became angry and emphatically stated, “I do not trust you!”¹²³ That comment deeply affected me. In context, that meant you did not trust my motives, actions, or

discernment. I let the statement go but came back to it the next day. When I brought it, you denied saying it. Dave and Steve had to correct your recollection.¹²⁴ You acquiesced. You went on to qualify your meaning and said “I don’t have confidence in you.”

The next week, I followed up and sent you my November 19 notes from our meeting in Charlotte. We talked by phone on January 19. I asked if we could discuss the content of the notes, but you said there was no need to do so. As a result, I succinctly communicated my concerns for how you were viewing things and for your sinful judgments of us. You disagreed. I also brought up your comment about not trusting me and how strongly you can say things when offended.¹²⁵ During our conversation, I also asked if you or Carolyn had been angry at me or resentful of me. You said both of you had been angry and resentful, like anyone else would, but not specifically toward me. The categorical and immediate denial was surreal.¹²⁶ There was no self suspicion.

The “I don’t trust you” statement at the retreat was not a new revelation. Steve already informed Dave and me on October 26, 2004 that you didn’t trust our motives or agree with our illustrations. He told us, you believed we were motivated by offenses. In this regard and in contrast to trusting us, Steve said “C.J. does trust his own perceptions.” That is, your perceptions of our hearts.

Before Steve told us this, I already knew trust was an issue for you. We talked about it earlier. On August 6 you wrote.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2004 10:12 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

One more VERY IMPORTANT POINT. I don’t think I have a “fundamental distrust of you and Dave.” Being tempted to mistrust in just a few areas is very different from a fundamental distrust.

This would be one of the fears I had in calling you. I didn’t want you to proceed to this place as a result of the temptations I experienced.

My friend, after my wife you are on the short list of those I trust the most. So how do we resolve this one?

Trust had become a major issue. In five months, I went from someone you trusted the most to someone you trusted the least. In my April 2004 summary for the Josh, Kenneth, Grant and Bob, I shared six points of concern for you. The first was “Can become resentful, distrustful or withdraw when he feels misunderstood, judged, or

sinned against by others.” This was based upon a sinful tendency I observed over 25 years together. It was also a major concern for Dave.

C.J. Taking Over the Process Per Steve

I’ve already referenced how you took over the process after the August 20 meeting like you did with Bo in the past. Here are a few more emails regarding your actions.

On September 17 you wrote the following to me, Dave, Steve, Josh, Kenneth, Grant, and Pat.

“In my monthly conversation with Steve yesterday he informed me that he had met with Brent and Dave [at Celebration UK on August 31] to communicate some of his concerns with aspects of the approach and process related to my recent sins. I told Steve that I didn’t need to know or want to know the specifics of his concerns at this point but that he should let the CLC guys know about them at some point. At present I just want to consider my appropriate response to our last meeting together [on August 20] and let you men know what sins I have been convicted about since that.¹²⁷ I will draw Steve out at some point in the future after this confession [the October 13 e-mail confession] and hear his perspective.”

Steve responded to you on September 22 saying,

“It is not the responsibility primarily for the one being corrected [C.J.] to continue to influence and direct the process¹²⁸.... I am not sure why you felt it necessary/appropriate to inform the CLC guys and cc Brent and Dave of the same, when I assured you that I would be bringing my thoughts to them at the appropriate time... it would appear, without hearing from you the why questions, that you took it upon yourself to force the issue and discussion, when there was no need for you to... I would encourage you to ask of yourself why you thought this necessary.”

Steve also responded to Dave and me by saying,

“Just got this.... Obviously, I had no clue CJ would send this... [I] don’t believe it was his place to initiate this... especially in light of our complete discussion... [I] will be speaking to CJ regarding this when Milestone Weekend (sure is...) is over... Another example?¹²⁹ Any questions, let me know...”

Dave and Brent's Concerns for Steve

Obviously Dave and I were concerned for the secret conversations and e-mails¹³⁰ you were having with Steve. In general, we felt Steve was not serving you well and vice versa. Dave wrote Steve the same day.

"I do have some questions about the timing and manner in which you have chosen to proceed with this [i.e., secretly communicating with you starting August 24 without our knowledge] and also a question about whether you are sufficiently distinguishing major and minor points (and approaching this process in light of those clear distinctions) [i.e., whether Steve was being discerning], but I am fine to wait for some future time for us to discuss.... Admittedly, I was surprised to read CJ's e-mail because I thought it could leave the impression that you were disassociating with Brent and I in the process and that did not appear to be your heart when we spoke on the phone."¹³¹

Dave wrote me also.

"I would also want to make the point that I would see this as part of a historical pattern where he [Steve] has not discerned sufficiently, nor served CJ with what he does discern and also tends to grant wide latitude to CJ's sins¹³² in a way that does not serve CJ. Would you agree with this assessment."

I agreed and these concerns were communicated to Steve and Josh. In this regard, Steve told Dave and me on October 26 that he was "possibility motivated by pride" in wanting to make a "unique contribution" in the process, by "self-righteousness" in having "better discernment" than us, by fear of Brent and Dave, and by wanting "C.J.'s approval."

Follow Up After the January 2005 Team Retreat

Dave attempted to contact Kenneth after the January retreat to express our concerns from the retreat and to try and understand what things were being covered with you since you were not telling us.

Here is part of Kenneth's response to Dave on February 4. It was copied to Grant, Josh and Bob.

"We are continuing to pursue fellowship with the Mahaney's and see this as a process. We would love for CJ to share with you what we are speaking to him about, and would encourage the team (as a team in this practice) to share what

each pastoral team is bringing to each Apostolic team leader [member], as you pursue fellowship together.

We would also welcome if you thought it would be helpful for CJ to share with us any observations you are bringing to him,¹³³ that would enable us to serve him better. We are asking him for your assessment of him¹³⁴ and how he is doing.

We are making progress, and we don't want to do anything to jeopardize that progress or violate the Mahaney's trust." [This was a constant concern for them. They were afraid to do anything that you'd react to.]¹³⁵

Dave responded to Kenneth on February 17, 2005 and copied Josh, Grant, and Bob. Here are the six questions he raised.

"I guess these would be the questions where I would love to get some feedback from you. Most of them (with the exception of #6) relate to how we should conduct the process from here:

- 1) What should the parameters for involvement be for the CLC guys in the remainder of this process (i.e., process related to the A. Team & CJ)? This seems important to clarify because we may have misunderstood your role and made some incorrect assumptions about how you preferred to be involved.
- 2) It would appear that the CLC guys may be making certain assumptions in their communiqués (past conversations; letter to Brent; etc.) regarding CJ's circulation of what they have shared with him. If I understand correctly, you are assuming that CJ is sharing with the A. Team the areas you are addressing with him. [This never happened.]¹³⁶ Is it important in your care for CJ to understand whether this is an accurate assumption?
- 3) It seems as if you are also expecting CJ to share with you the areas of concern communicated by the A. Team. If he is doing this, then I want to make sure that we answer any questions or concerns that you might have for us about what is being shared. If he is not doing this with you, then I wonder why this is not taking place & how you might interpret the omission?
- 4) In reference to #2 & #3, can you help me better understand why it is important for CJ to be the exclusive courier of information¹³⁷ between both teams? Would there be any benefit in kicking around whether that is a wise approach in serving a leader of CJ's stature & responsibility?

- 5) What would the resolution process look like for any unresolved areas that might affect the unity of the A. Team or the relationship between an individual A. Team member and CJ (assuming they have been discussed with CJ)? Also, I would love to get your thoughts on what closure should look like for this process.
- 6) Here's a tension that I think exists that I could use your perspective on: I think we've probably thrown some stumbling blocks in CJ's path and that has complicated things. He's had a chance to share these with us and I'm really glad he did. I think it will help us to understand better how to care for him in our supplemental role. But on the other hand, I'm not always sure that CJ is effectively evaluating his impressions of what he is hearing and experiencing from us through what he has confessed. He seems to have a difficult time applying his written confessions of sin to this team (as an example, he has never discussed or referenced the Oct e-mail confession with us even though we brought it up and asked him to talk about it. Seems like you men assumed that he would be doing this also, but perhaps I misunderstood Kenneth's reference in the letter to Brent). I really want to understand this paradox [hypocrisy] better because I think it causes us to see his growth in a slightly different way than you men. (By the way, this has all been shared with him¹³⁸ and presumably, he has shared our perspective with you.)¹³⁹

Guys, I understand your reluctance to jump into this side of the pool. Actually, I'm not looking to tread water very long here myself [your anger and resistance deterred all of us] – provided we (the A-team) can be certain that in moving on, we are not compromising our friendship or care for CJ. I guess I'm just not sure what significance to assign to some of the things above. We just don't have the consistent exposure to him that you do, and perhaps this magnifies the apparent inconsistencies.

Kimm spoke with Carolyn yesterday and she mentioned that the Mahaney's are changing Care Group's and that the Bob may be their new Care Group leader.¹⁴⁰ So, if Bob is now "point-man of the month" for the Mahaney (ha, ha), then please feel free to redirect me to him and not Kenneth for this conversation. Whatever you men prefer is fine with me.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about my approach or attitude. And thanks for your ongoing investment of time and care.

As a result of this e-mail, Kenneth asked Dave to put some recommendations together for how to proceed. Dave asked for Steve and my input. Here is one of the clarifying e-mails I sent Dave and Steve on March 3, 2005.

“To the best of my recollection¹⁴¹ I make the following general observations since the December 2003 Retreat:

C.J. has not:

1. Initiated or engaged us in discussion as a team on any of the issues that have been raised with him.
2. Informed us as a team of any input or illustrations shared by the CLC men related to issues of character raised with him.
3. Asked forgiveness for any illustrations that have been share with him by us with the exception of the situation with Bo and Tyler.
4. Acknowledged any sinful judgments toward us.
5. Acknowledged any resentment, bitterness, or anger toward us.

On March 9, Dave wrote C.J., Josh, Kenneth, Bob and Grant with the following recommendations for how to proceed. Given the lack of progress, Dave was trying to bring closure but with some integrity.

“Thanks for your counsel and participation in shaping this recommendation [below]. We hope it is self-explanatory, but please get back to us if you have any questions or clarifications...

Recommendations for Proceeding:¹⁴²

1. CJ sits with the CLC guys prior to the March A. Team retreat and discusses the questions below.
2. CJ shares the notable outcomes of this discussion with the A. Team at the retreat.
3. The A. Team members interact with CJ over this meeting and provide any additional encouragement, questions or thoughts.
4. The A. Team members can, if they so desire, elect to summarize remaining thoughts/concerns in a brief (bullets!) e-mail. This will be sent to CJ and

CLC guys. No follow up will be necessary unless CJ and/or the CLC guys deem it necessary.

5. At CJ's discretion, the A. Team prays together entrusting all perspectives and remaining questions to God.

Remaining Questions for Discussion:¹⁴³

1. The A. Team would not be aware of the major areas of focus or concern where the CLC guys are seeking to serve CJ...and we are not sure if you are aware of the categories we have been visiting with CJ either. Moreover, it would not appear to us that CJ is sufficiently intentional at initiating dialogue or disclosing important illustrations in a way that would help us understand his clarity of soul and deepen our experience of fellowship. Could CJ & the CLC guys discuss whether it is reasonable for us to expect him to initiate these conversations and relate the notable patterns of sin being discussed in this season?
2. Returning back to Brent's question posed to the CLC guys, "Should C.J. have talked to us about his e-mail confession of October 13 so we could understand how he came to see the things he acknowledged? Did any of the things acknowledged have a personal bearing upon us?" Perhaps CJ and the CLC guys could dialogue about why this might be an important exercise and why this confession was not discussed or applied to the A. Team.
3. In the summary for CJ, the CLC guys indicated that though you don't know his motives, CJ can at times appear to become withdrawn or resentful when he feels sinned against or misunderstood by others. This potential pattern is a remaining concern for the A. Team. Are there any specific areas/illustrations or patterns where the CLC guys have observed that CJ may have become resentful or withdrawn in respect to A. Team members?¹⁴⁴ How would the CLC guys & CJ recommend we engage in a profitable conversation around this area?
4. The A. Team needs to establish an understanding – applicable to all – that recognizes the need to occasionally discuss the care or perspective of A. Team members with the people entrusted with primary pastoral care (CJ to Mark Prater or Mickey; A. Team member to Kenneth/Bob, etc). What advice would you & CJ have for us towards sharpening our approach in this area?

Shortly afterward Dave talked with Kenneth and Bob¹⁴⁵ about these recommendations. Dave filled Steve and me in on March 24. Here are my notes.

- Dave told us that “C.J. and CLC guys had problems with the questions”¹⁴⁶ [i.e., the four “Remaining Questions for Discussion” above]. Dave felt we were “coming up against a different understanding of humility and what leadership looks like.” They “saw [Dave’s] questions as unhelpful” and “had more questions from the questions.” Dave said “C.J. was not at a high level of faith to talk about these things” and “feels he is doing the things addressed in our questions.”¹⁴⁷ For instance, “C.J. thinks we covered and talked about his October 13 e-mail confession.” [We never talked about this confession.]¹⁴⁸
- Dave went onto say he “does not have confidence in moving forward with our [planned] conversation tomorrow with C.J.” If we did “C.J. would like for Bob and Kenneth to be there on phone call.” Dave reiterated he “does not have any faith for discussion tomorrow.”¹⁴⁹

Steve and I agreed with Dave. We “were coming up against a different understanding of humility” at least when applied to you. You were resentful that we asked these kinds of questions. These questions should have been embraced. Bob and Kenneth treated you partially and shielded you instead of holding you accountable. No one else in the movement could have gotten away with this kind of response. Dave wrote you the same day saying, “After taking counsel with our friends at CLC and your fellow A. Team members, we no longer think it profitable or advisable to cover the questions tomorrow.” As a result, the phone call was cancelled.¹⁵⁰

Dave, Steve and I were all concerned with what was taking place. As we talked, I referenced concerns from my time with you back in November 2004 in Charlotte. They asked for my notes. As a result, I e-mailed you on March 26 to ask for permission.

“Dave and Steve have wondered what your assessment of my leadership was on November 19 when we met in Charlotte. I assume the same is true of Kenneth and Bob. May I send them a copy of my January 19 response [from our November 19 meeting] to you? Of course, I’d want you to feel completely free to express any and all concerns or disagreements with them concerning my response [in contrast to your forbidding us the same freedom]. I do not need to be present or copied for this [in contrast to your requirement to be present in all conversations]. I have no desire to press any of these points. I would simply like to make them aware so they have a more complete picture of things.”

You wrote back the same day and said, “I will pass it along to Bob and Kenneth.” I wrote back and said “Thanks C.J. I will pass it on to Steve and Dave.” As it turned out, your response to me was deceitful because you had long before passed on the notes to Kenneth and Bob without my knowledge. I had no problem with Bob and Kenneth having the notes – just the opposite – but I did have problems with your dishonesty.

In this regard, I wrote Bob on May 3, 2005 inquiring, “If I may ask, have you shared any concerns [regarding dishonesty] you may have with C.J. on this matter or will this be new to him?” Bob wrote back, “I have asked him numerous questions about his response [pretending to not have passed on the notes] and think it would be helpful for you two to talk.” You never acknowledged leading me to believe you did not give them the notes.¹⁵¹

Bob and Kenneth Request a Meeting with Brent - March 30, 2005

While teaching at the Pastors College, I received a message that Bob and Kenneth wanted to meet with me. I was hopeful they were interested in hearing my perspective on how things had deteriorated and why. Instead, they came to confront and reprove me. They started by saying my notes from November 19 were “unhelpful and unwise” and that I was “proud in my responses to C.J.’s critique.”¹⁵² They expressed no concerns for the issues I raised in the notes and expressed no interest in hearing my perspective on things addressed in the notes.¹⁵³

I pointed out that they had heard your perspective and interpretation for the past seven months (September 04-March 05). During that time, Dave and I repeatedly tried to set up phone calls, meetings, or retreats so all of us could talk and share perspectives and concerns. All these requests were denied. I pointed out how we regularly asked for and received their evaluation but how they never asked for our evaluation. They were not responsive to this point at the time.

I also pointed out you had (1) not initiated or engaged us in discussion on any of the issues we raised on August 20 or from the April 04 summaries, (2) not informed us of any input or illustrations shared with you by the CLC men related to issues of character, (3) not asked our forgiveness for any illustrations we shared (with the exception of Bo and Tyler), (4) not acknowledged any sinful judgments, and (5) not acknowledged any resentment, bitterness or anger toward us. Bob and Kenneth expressed no concern for these things.¹⁵⁴ In your defense, they said you told them you had talked to us about the October 13 e-mail confession. That was a lie.¹⁵⁵ We have never talked about that confession to this day.

After I shared these points, Kenneth reproved me by quoting 1 Timothy 5:1, “Do not rebuke an older man.” I was stunned. For one thing, Kenneth should know you are not

an “older man.” We are the same age, came to Christ at the same time, and been in ministry the same number of years. That aside, Kenneth used this passage to silence me. I did not yield to him and communicated to both of them my extreme concern for their attitude and approach.¹⁵⁶ When Kenneth quoted 1 Timothy 5:1, I immediately thought of all the men in ministry who have used “touch not God’s anointed” to avoid accountability.

It seemed apparent they had taken up an offense¹⁵⁷ for you and set up the meeting to adjust me. There was no openness to anything I said. They were oppositional to each of my concerns. They appeared to be turning a blind eye. I don’t know if they were sent by you to correct me. If they were, I’d consider that an abusive use of your position and authority.¹⁵⁸

Brent’s Job Performance Evaluation by C.J. – April 2005

A few days after my meeting with Bob and Kenneth, you filled out my annual job performance evaluation. You indicated there were no evidences of grace in my life with regard to being open or transparent, identifying sin; inviting, receiving or considering correction; or asking for input for my personal, married and ministry life. These characteristics were non-existent in my life. In contrast and at the same time, all the men on my regional team, who filled out the same form, gave me good to great marks in these categories. Larry Malament wrote you about this discrepancy.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2005 3:49 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Evaluation

Hi C.J.

Today Brent and I met for accountability and he passed on to me your recent evaluation of him from the “Job Review Form”. It was concerning for me as I read your evaluation of Brent regarding the following:

1. Revealing and transparent: **weak**
2. Regularly invites correction: **weak**
3. Receives correction humbly: **weak**
4. Willing to consider correction: **weak**
5. Sets example of identifying sin: **weak**
6. Invites and seeks input in married life, personal: **weak**
7. Invites and seeks input for ministry effectiveness: **weak**

It would be helpful to me if you could provide some examples and explanations of how you came to your evaluation so I can discuss these with Brent in more depth. The way the form reads, when weak is checked it communicates these character qualities are not present since the next box that can be checked says, **Present but needs work**. Would that also be your assessment of these areas in Brent's life? Thanks for the help. I trust this will serve Brent. Although your evaluation would not be my present experience (a few years ago during the transition [when I turned CrossWay over to Mickey] I would have seen "some" of these weaknesses present in Brent), I know you see him in a different context and in different situations where these issues seem to be revealed as you observe him. Any examples and input would be helpful. Thanks for doing this.

Larry was concerned for your evaluation because this was not his experience with me (he had one example from 3 years earlier). He also wanted to confirm that you really thought these virtues were entirely absent in my life. That's why he asked, "Would that also be your assessment ["not present" versus "present but needs work"] of these areas in Brent's life?" I will come back to this illustration later but here is how you responded.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, April 07, 2005 5:38 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Evaluation

I will let you know when/whether I can do this.

I think it might be helpful if you set up a time to talk with Bob and Kenneth together to get their perspective of a recent time they had with Brent where they were sharing observations with him.

Thanks for the way you serve him and care for him.

My disagreement with Bob and Kenneth on March 30, 2005 was, and continues to be, used against me as an example¹⁵⁹ of pride and unteachableness. I'd suggest the harsh evaluation¹⁶⁰ of me was due to your bitterness toward me.

Brent's Fall from (Sovereign) Grace

This evaluation was in stark contrast to seven months earlier when you ardently proposed I take a much greater leadership role with the apostolic team and take

pastoral responsibility for the team. I quickly went from “someone...with more character” on August 9 (see below) to someone with practically no character. Around the same time, or a little later, you sent me a prelease copy of your book, *Humility: True Greatness*. Inside you wrote the following note: “With my gratefulness for your example of humility and your friendship!” Overnight, I went from “an example of humility” to the epitome of pride. August 20 mark a radical change in our relationship and my responsibilities.¹⁶¹ Gradually my role was decreased at conferences, in the Pastors College, etc. The following documents my fall from grace.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, August 5, 2004 3:46 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: An idea

My friend,

I have been working on some stuff for the next team call next week and I had an idea I wanted to know if you could consider. If necessary let's talk about this because it is hard to reduce this to a short e-mail. Here is my idea. Because of my limitations and deficiencies in relation to planning/administration how about if you take responsibility for assembling the agenda for each team phone call and then leading us through the agenda during the call?

You are undeniably gifted at this and I am undeniably not so this would serve me and I think the team.... What do you think? If you agree I'd like to propose it next Friday [at the August 20 meeting at CLC].

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, August 06, 2004 7:25 AM
To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris
Subject: Team Phone Call

I wanted to prepare you for an idea I'd like to propose next week during our call that I think will serve us all. Since this stuff is much easier to talk about and more effectively communicated over the phone I will make this e-mail brief.

I think it would serve me and more importantly the team, Sovereign Grace and the entire world if Brent became responsible for obtaining and formulating our agenda for each meeting and retreat and then leading the discussion of each item during the phone call or retreat. Here's the short reason why. Brent is gifted in administration and I am not...

I think we will all benefit from this since Brent can help with all the broader planning, push along stuff I forget about and I could go on and on. So for your own sake, for the sake of your families, for my sake, for the sake of Sovereign Grace and for all mankind I hope you will agree to at least experiment with this for a season. And if Brent doesn't do a good job I can fire him at any time.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Monday, August 09, 2004 9:42 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Just want you to keep current with my thinking. I haven't heard from Steve and Pat yet but I am going to appeal for at least an experiment with you and this new role on Friday. I can't think of any reason why not to do this and given the clear lack of gifting and character in my life there is no reason to postpone this in my opinion. I think you will do a GREAT job formulating and preparing the agenda and leading our calls/retreat discussions with my help.... Also, though I won't propose this on Friday, I am going to eventually propose (sometime in the near future) that you take responsibility for the team pastorally.... So I think God's intention for this process is not only my personal sanctification but to reposition me according to the gifts he has given me, have someone more gifted and with more character¹⁶² serve the team more effectively in providing administration and personal care and ultimately expanding Sovereign Grace for His glory.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 7:10 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Well, I will present this to them once I hear from you my friend. Would you like to serve me and the team in these ways? I would really like you to and I think you would do a great job.¹⁶³

As for pastoral care you and Jenny would become responsible for the 3 couples [Mahaney, Harvey, and Shank] but remember this is supplemental not primary care. So you and Jenny can work out how often you want to talk with each guy and each wife. I don't think you need to do this more than 4 to 6 times a year and actually less because of our couple's retreats.... And you would be responsible for any end of the year evaluation with the respective pastoral team like you've done with me. I haven't done this so you can pioneer how you

want to do this with the other two guys. We can work out the details and specifics easily. So are you open to serving me/team in this administrative and pastoral capacity?

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, August 12, 2004 7:32 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Admin/Pastoring

I understand your caution and concern but I really think these changes are God's will and for the good of the team. They position me according to my gifts my friend. Carolyn agrees...

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2004 9:58 AM
To: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Cc: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Dave and Steve (and Brent),

As I am sure you are aware I did not attempt to cover the item on my list about a new role for Brent yesterday. Given the length of the agenda and other concerns I didn't think it wise to devote time to discuss this yesterday. Also, I think at least one of you recommended we not devote time to this due to all the agenda items.

Actually I think the best way to proceed (and there is no urgency with this decision) is to meet with each of you guys personally and give my perspective about a possible new administrative/pastoral role for Brent on the team.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2004 10:19 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

I'm sure Brent would do a great job. Look forward to talking with you.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, August 14, 2004 12:31 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

.....Just one additional thought on the timing of this (you may have already considered this so just disregard if so): One challenge is that it makes it more difficult to explore the legitimacy of whether you tend to withdraw (withdraw in the sense of putting a kind of distance between yourself and those challenging you) in response to this kind of corrective feedback because you are proposing a functional re-structure at the same time we are serving you in the process. This can complicate things since we have not had the opportunity to discover whether this is a pattern worthy of attention nor to evaluate to what extent (if any) your present proposal might be influenced by your temptations. While I can fully support a new role for Brent at any time (he is certainly worthy and qualified!), it may be wiser to have the opportunity to talk about and consider the legitimacy of that perspective before you move to adjust your pastoral or functional relationship with any of us.

Dave's Comment at August 20 Mtg.
Taken from Bob's Notes

"We all think CJ should lead us to a wise process that results in a restructuring. Also agree that Brent is eminently qualified to take on any responsibility CJ would desire. To discuss this in the middle of this process is awkward and unwise. This might be a good illustration of what tends to happen when CJ is corrected, at least from Dave's perspective. It would be better if CJ was inquiring about where he has been deficient, and then communicating that he wants to change. Ultimately, that response doesn't contribute to the building of the team. "

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2004 12:01 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Pat Ennis
Cc: Joshua Harris
Subject: Confidential

Josh informed me that Kenneth spoke to Brent and Dave after our meeting last week (Steve I wasn't told whether you were included) and appealed that my proposal to have Brent replace me and become pastorally responsible for the

team be adopted. Well this whole thing certainly isn't going as I planned it.... Carolyn thinks this change is wise and should be made but she thought I should wait and not make this proposal at this time. Josh thinks the proposal has merit but he thought I should wait as well. And you know what Kenneth thinks. So I do wish I would have waited but I thought this would strengthen the team and hopefully draw us closer together.

The Home Stretch - April thru November 2005

This section documents how the long process that began in December 2000 came to an end. Simply put, Dave and I gave up. The wagons had circled. You were entangled in the very patterns of sin we brought up over the previous five years. Sadly, nothing was ever resolved. Dave's four "Remaining Questions for Discussion" were never discussed. Bob's correction of me continued while ignoring our concerns for him and you. Here is the e-mail trail.

From: Dave Harvey
Date: Sunday, April 17, 2005 8:09 AM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

...I will be glad to circulate this [Bob's question below] to the team, but my sense is that we have determined to move on and that this might be best.... Also, there would probably need to be a discussion between the A. Team and you [Bob] and Kenneth that would precede the process below. But again, I think that could wait as well.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2005 2:58 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Confidential

Before I get back to Bob and clarify that I believe I am supposed to keep my mouth shut for a while, but nevertheless giving into a momentary bout of lunacy in asking this question...what are your thoughts on Bob's question about unaddressed areas or conversations needed?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, May 06, 2005 4:23 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

I'd communicate we don't have the freedom to address issues in C.J.'s life given his assessment of our motives (that we are offended) and our accuracy (that we are sinfully judging). We are going into "retirement"...to quote a phrase.

Fast forward from May to August. Dave again expressed his fundamental concerns for you, and Bob in particular, since Bob was directing the process.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2004 3:37 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential: RE: Dinner on Aug 20th

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I have not written this assuming it will be circulated. Should you ever desire this, I will craft it accordingly. [I appreciated Dave's unvarnished honesty here] Here's my quick thoughts:

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As you may recall, I've never been comfortable with the development of this position [that we can't talk to the CLC pastors about C.J. and they can't talk to us about C.J. unless C.J. is the courier of information or personally present], particularly as it relates to guys with substantial responsibility (like us on the A. Team and also Sr. Pastors). I think the effect is basically to protect the guy under critique¹⁶⁴ rather than to facilitate the communication of perspective. I understand the rebuttal, "Can't we all just move beyond our fear of man and share our thoughts like men are supposed to do" OR "it gets too confusing because things are shared that can't be addressed or reviewed by the guy under scrutiny." My response is three fold:

- 1) It's a fallen world and even the best leaders will share more freely without us there. Our hope is not in participating or overseeing the dialogue but in the guy (for instance, Josh or Brent) leading the meeting. I would also say that what has been revealed about how much the CLC guys were bringing [which was very little] to CJ under the system he was advocating would be additional evidence for my point. It doesn't appear as if there was a healthy exchange. If I'm CJ, I might now want an extended period of time to advocate a 'no restriction policy' on guys talking to one another for my benefit [you were doing the opposite].
- 2) Secondly, it was us pulling the CLC guys together without CJ that ultimately resulted in the movement forward. Had that not happened, I wonder where

we would presently be. So I think the opposite approach is bearing the better fruit right now.

- 3) It is more confusing perhaps, but it is better than things not being said at all. I'm not advocating we establish a habit of doing meetings apart from the guys being addressed. I'm simply advocating that a discipline process, even a modified one such as the one we are presently in, sometimes necessitates these kinds of meetings and conversations. There are also other times where it is appropriate for guys to discuss someone not present. To me, and I could be wrong here, Josh being concerned to meet with us because of how CJ desires these kinds of things does not seem healthy or profitable.¹⁶⁵

I think CJ's position on not meeting apart from him is something he established, but never really discussed with us, so I wonder whether that needs to be re-examined. This is partly because I wonder how much of it may have been influenced by the sin he is confessing¹⁶⁶.... and partially for the reasons I already sent you in the e-mail excerpts below last summer:

- a. "If some of Dave and Brent's perceptions are accurate, then CJ's presence may actually discourage productive dialogue [because of sinful reactions]. Also, if folks are excessively concerned with 'how' they say things, then things may not get said. [Everyone was very concerned with what they said so as not to offend or anger you.]¹⁶⁷
- b. The reason why it may not be wise for CJ to meet with teams without the Sr. Pastor present is that – in my opinion – it does not play to CJ's strengths (a tendency towards 'haste' in process, conclusions and communication ...?) [i.e., sinful judgments]. I'm not sure that this same issue would be (or has been) a serious factor with the rest of the apostolic team meeting with pastoral teams, nor do I think that CJ's new position is one we want to advocate for our extended teams. I wouldn't want to draw a universal conclusion on the practice because CJ – due, I believe, to his style and approach – had unfruitful experiences. It seems as if you and I, and our local teams, are saying that this had to do with CJ's approach...not the overall practice. If we did make this change (only dialogue with teams with senior guys present), I would want to talk about it and ratify it as a team. It seems as if CJ may be taking his assumptions and making it policy. [Later, this "policy" was not applied by you to others. For instance, beginning in June 2006 you frequently met without me to talk about me. This was particularly hypocritical given how adamant you were about this requirement.]¹⁶⁸
- c. I believe the approach CJ is advocating may be more expedient (just gather everyone together and throw it out on the table) but I'm not sure it results in a clearer pursuit of helpful observations and perspective. I don't think

that expedience should be a primary factor in the approach we choose here."

I hope these ramblings serve you in some way. Also, I hope we have a chance to talk about this at some point, but I understand if it does not seem like a priority. Lastly, I understand if you think this dinner meeting may not be wise. However there may be some benefit in you & I connecting over dinner (we could cover a # of other things besides CJ as well!!)

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2005 4:36 PM
To: Steve Shank; Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey
Cc: Kenneth Maresco
Subject: Confidential

Gentlemen,

Thanks for taking the time to talk today. It was helpful to hear your perspectives on how we might have served you better through this process. [Bob thanked us but didn't acknowledge our concerns as legitimate.¹⁶⁹ For instance, our concern for a "culture of accommodation" whereby you were held to a different standard.] We deeply care for CJ and each of you men, and trust that what we've learned will serve us in the future.

As to another time to talk, these would be what I think we might accomplish, the Lord helping us:

1. Kenneth and I finish responding to the 4 points from the "Looking Forward" [i.e., Dave's four Remaining Questions for Discussion] document. Those are attached [see below].
2. Kenneth and I share perspectives/ask questions/hear from you on how this process unfolded.
3. Discuss ways we can most effectively serve CJ and the team and you can serve each other in the days to come.

That's what I'm thinking. If you have any thoughts as to the wisdom of this, please let me know. If you have any other suggestions, I'd be happy to hear those as well.

Otherwise, I'll have Rakel set up a phone call sometime in September. Judging from today, I'd allow three hours.

I thank God for each of you and the way God has used you to glorify our Savior.

“Four Remaining Concerns” [i.e., Remaining Questions for Discussion] from Dave on March 9, 2005 on behalf of Steve and Brent

[A year had passed since August 20, 2004 and these issues were still unanswered or not discussed. This was unprecedented.]¹⁷⁰

1. The A. Team would not be aware of the major areas of focus or concern where the CLC guys are seeking to serve CJ...and we are not sure if you are aware of the categories we have been visiting with CJ either. Moreover, it would not appear to us that CJ is sufficiently intentional at initiating dialogue or disclosing important illustrations in a way that would help us understand his clarity of soul and deepen our experience of fellowship. Could CJ & the CLC guys discuss whether it is reasonable for us to expect him to initiate these conversations & relate the notable patterns of sin being discussed in this season?
2. Returning back to Brent's question posed to the CLC guys, "Should C.J. have talked to us about his e-mail confession of October 13 so we could understand how he came to see the things he acknowledged? Did any of the things acknowledged have a personal bearing upon us?" Perhaps CJ and the CLC guys could dialogue about why this might be an important exercise and why this confession was not discussed or applied to the A. Team.
3. In the summary for CJ, the CLC guys indicated that though you don't know his motives, CJ can at times appear to become withdrawn or resentful when he feels sinned against or misunderstood by others. This potential pattern is a remaining concern for the A. Team. Are there any specific areas/illustrations or patterns where the CLC guys have observed that CJ may have become resentful or withdrawn in respect to A. Team members? How would the CLC guys & CJ recommend we engage in a profitable conversation around this area?
4. The A. Team needs to establish an understanding - applicable to all - that recognizes the need to occasionally discuss the care or perspective of A. Team members with the people entrusted with primary pastoral care (CJ to Mark Prater or Mickey; A. Team member to Kenneth/Bob, etc). What advice would you & CJ have for us towards sharpening our approach in this area?"

From: Brent Detwiler
Date: Friday, August 19, 2005 4:08 PM
To: Bob Kauflin, Kenneth Maresco
Cc: Dave Harvey, Steve Shank
Subject: Confidential - Input & Confession

These are the comments I had in mind [during the phone call today] when illustrating our lack of awareness as to the kinds of issues you were following up with C.J. on, or he was pursuing you on, after the August 20 mtg.

Josh	Has shared those specifics with CJ in other contexts. In August, there was a marked change in the specificity of his confession. He realized that we didn't often hear the specifics of conflict between CJ and Carolyn.
Kenneth	Things have definitely changed in regards to specificity, but he hasn't been personally involved in helping CJ with his marriage.
Kenneth	Hasn't seen the specificity in confession that others have demonstrated.
Josh	We're seeing CJ's reaction to observations in a new way because we're bringing observations more frequently and specifically.
Grant	There are various issues in CJ's life that he hasn't received input well on. In general, Grant feels CJ hasn't had enough accountability, and allowed the A-team and the CLC pastors to believe the other group was taking care of it. This has been a longstanding issue.
Grant	Sanctification is in the details. Generally speaking, these are categories that CJ has led us in. Seems like details have been lacking.
Kenneth	Seems like CJ's comfortable with his own assessment.
Grant	That's how you draw others into the conversation and into your life. In specific areas, Grant hasn't heard CJ confess sin, like lust. Lack of specificity will keep CJ from growing.

I've also added some comments from Josh during a June 15, 2004 phone conversation.

Josh's Comments

- In the past the context for focused observations has not been present – C.J. provides input for others and not the other way around.
- Josh changing his mind set and approach in how they care for the Mahaney's.
- We are not in settings where C.J. confesses specific sin especially related to marriage.
- Confessions more on the level of schedule
- "Maybe C.J. doesn't sin as much as we do."

From: Bob Kauflin

Sent: Fri 8/19/2005 4:34 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: Re: Confidential - Input & Confession

Thanks, Brent.

It would help me if you told me what these e-mails are supposed to say to me. Do you think that our/my assessment of CJ's past accountability is off?...

Thanks. By the way, your encouragement was very meaningful. I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing apart from your example of care and biblical faithfulness.

From: Brent Detwiler

Date: Friday, August 19, 2005 5:43 PM

To: Bob Kauflin

Subject: RE: Confidential - Input & Confession

Sorry for the lack of clarity. I brought this up today as an illustration of something we never heard more about since Aug 20. That is, was there further conversation regarding your perspective of C.J. in these areas and did he agree or disagree. I've/we've assumed C.J. has drawn each of you out on your comments from the Aug 20 mtg. but we don't know if that ever happen.¹⁷¹ I sent the notes because I was not able to clearly articulate my reference to those things from memory today.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2005 6:06 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential – Communication

Brent,

I wonder if this is part of the problem.¹⁷² You're looking for more specifics, but I'm not sure you're going to get them. [This was a sad commentary on Bob's perspective. Our expectations were quite reasonable.]¹⁷³

We've attempted to celebrate where CJ has been seeing his sin, helping him apply it to new and past situations, and moving on, encouraged by the Spirit's work in his life.... I wonder if you place too much emphasis on the illustrations¹⁷⁴ you've brought up and can't rejoice in what God is doing in CJ... [We wanted to rejoice but you were not even talking to us. All our illustrations were discounted. These comments by Bob were so misguided. He had lost all objectivity.]¹⁷⁵ which would be understandable if you think he's not responding to correction or making attempts to see his sin... [You were not responding to us and there were no attempts to acknowledge your sin. Just the opposite was true.]

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, August 21, 2005 10:47 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: Confidential – Communication

If it helps, I think I am just limited in being able "to see or to rejoice in the changes." Since August of last year [a full year], we haven't talked as a team about issues related to C.J.... Given these circumstances, it's hard to be aware of his growth in grace. You are able to engage him and observe him regularly. That is not something we are doing. So please know, I rejoice in the good reports you have given and in all the changes you have observed.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2005 3:55 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Kenneth Maresco
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL – Expectations

In re-reading your e-mail, I recognized I didn't respond to your inquiry about [sinful] expectations.¹⁷⁶ It would be my view that C.J. has not responded well to us as a team since the August 20, 2004 mtg. That certainly doesn't mean he hasn't responded or that there are no evidences of grace. I also realize and respect the fact that you have a different view born out of your own experience. I rejoice in this.

It would also be my perspective that some things have apparently gone unaddressed by you men with C.J. Granted, I know little about what you have covered over the past 12 months. I am aware, however, there are important matters (in my opinion) we have never heard from back from C.J. on. Having made these points, I nevertheless thank you for your exhortation to evaluate whether my expectations are sinful [which is what Bob told me during August 19 phone call]. Though I have not been convicted of sin, I do not dismiss your concern. I share it.

I don't think there is profit in rehearsing the points above. I have communicated my observations and concerns in person and in print to everyone involved. As I expressed during my March 30, 2005 meeting with you and Kenneth, I have committed these things to God knowing we have all attempted to glorify God in this difficult process. I also realize and regret that I have served C.J. poorly at points in this process [e.g., using the word "lambasted," taking an 1 hour 20 minutes for the overview on August 20]. Thanks my friend for the care you have extended to all concerned.

I am saddened that C.J. feels I have been motivated by offense.¹⁷⁷ but I also know of his love and continue to count it a great honor to serve and encourage him in whatever ways the Lord permits in the future.

After our August 19 phone call with Bob and Kenneth, Dave recommended the following course of action.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 5:16 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Steve Shank; Brent Detwiler
Cc: Kenneth Maresco
Subject: RE: Confidential

Hi guys. I've had an opportunity to ponder our last conversation, reflect upon the flurry of follow-up e-mails and consider the way forward. Although I am more humbled than ever by my ignorance, I would like to offer the following observations:

In my opinion,

Our communication around these issues, while deeply appreciated, does not appear to be producing the kind of clarity that justifies the time and effort necessary.

It appears to me that the conversations that Bob recommends below may have already taken place. Perhaps I am just speaking for myself but I have now had a number of conversations with Kenneth and Bob, some of which have included the points below. I am assuming the same is true for Brent and Steve, but that may not be a correct assumption. However it seems as if we now find ourselves re-stating perspectives and concerns without a distinct sense of what God wants us to understand and pursue. I wonder whether we just need more time to ponder what has already been said as we look to God and our own hearts.

I think we should follow Bob and Kenneth's advice and pursue any conversation over remaining concerns with CJ. This would not necessarily eliminate the additional step of any of us discussing them with Bob and/or Kenneth. But I think this step should be done individually (if at all) [Dave was going silent.] and not as a group. I intend to contact Bob soon to arrange a time to talk or connect in some way.

Please feel free to get back to me with any thoughts or disagreements you have on these observations. And let me close by once again thanking Bob and Kenneth for their tireless efforts and abiding desire to serve us. Bob and Kenneth, I'm sure I speak for Brent and Steve when I say that your intentions and your care are deeply felt and appreciated.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 5:27 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: RE: Confidential

In other words, if we want to pursue dialogue with Bob and/or Kenneth over this, we should do it individually and not as a group. Remaining concerns for CJ should be shared with CJ but don't necessarily need to be discussed in a meeting convened with Bob and Kenneth.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 5:27 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

...Can you share any fuller your thoughts as to why you arrived at this? No obligation. Welcome home...hope you had a good vacation.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 5:39 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

As you may recall, I had circulated word prior to our last discussion that I did not think the team approach was bearing fruit in our approach to CJ and that I didn't think I wanted to participate in that way any longer. However, out of concern for our current state, I subordinated this sense to see what kind of fruit might come of our conversation (Bob, Kenneth and A. Team). In reflecting on that conversation and considering another one, it seems we have taken that approach as far as it will go.¹⁷⁸ I think future conversations will probably result in restatements of things already said but not necessarily move us down the road at all. I don't know what does work, but maybe we can eliminate options until we arrive at the best approach.

Any thoughts?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2005 3:10 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

I typically don't remember anything you say ☺...though on occasion it might have some limited value.

A few thoughts. First, I don't think Bob and Kenneth see how a lack of response to our request for involvement [e.g. asking to meet with them and you] during the process negatively impacted the process. Second, it doesn't appear they share our concern for a "culture of accommodation." [They applied a double standard to you.] Third, they seem to have accepted C.I.'s view that we have been talking [as a team] and he has been filling us in since last August

[which never happened]. Fourth, they don't seem interested in our observations of C.J.¹⁷⁹

Therefore, it is hard to press ahead with any sense of faith. Thanks my friend for all your thoughts and leadership to date. I am so grateful to God for you!

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2005 3:20 PM

To: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Kenneth Maresco, Bob Kauflin

Subject: Confidential

Bob & Kenneth,

I appreciate your willingness to ask for feedback during our phone call. I'd agree with Dave, I don't think additional time need be invested¹⁸⁰ in this process. We have sought to discuss the salient points and hear one another out. Thank you for your friendship and care toward us all and especially C.J.

Brent

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Monday, September 12, 2005 7:38 AM

To: Bob Kauflin

Cc: Kenneth Maresco; Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank

Subject: RE: Confidential

Bob,

I need a bit of time to ponder how to proceed in serving this process.... A few passing thoughts that I hope will bring clarity...Personally, I would now advocate less concern on your part over how things are brought to CJ and more attention to certain issues that have been put on the table, but I'm not entrenched in a conviction that I am right...Your observations that I have been unclear are confusing to me¹⁸¹ in light of our many conversations and the four questions for closure that I summarized on behalf of the team. Also, I think you may recall how often I have raised the possibility of an undetected pattern of behavior in CJ that translates into 'withdrawal' when he feels misunderstood or sinned against. I understand that you don't think this word is a helpful one and that CJ doesn't see this particular issue... From here, I want to pray and ponder the helpfulness of a more thorough response over against whether it just serves more to allow closure on this note and live with the lack of clarity and/or disagreement...

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2005 10:19 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Your words of encouragement are very meaningful, Brent. I thought you said PLENTY at the conference!

I'd love to talk to you some time about your relationship with CJ¹⁸² and any loose ends that remain, as you've mentioned in previous e-mails. Let me know what you think.

Also, how do you think the recent retreat went? Appreciate you much.

From: Brent Detwiler
Date: Thu, 3 Nov 2005 15:49:17 -0500
To: Bob Kauflin
Conversation: Confidential
Subject: RE: Confidential

Retreat went well.... No "loose ends" I haven't already shared. You're welcome to send me any new thoughts.

Thanks
Brent

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2005 5:14 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential

Thanks, Brent. Sorry this is taking so long to get back to you.

As far as "loose ends," I'm speaking of the loose ends you have already shared. Specifically:

August 22 [2005] e-mail

“It would also be my perspective that some things have apparently gone unaddressed by you men with C.J. Granted, I know little about what you have covered over the past 12 months. I am aware, however, there are important matters (in my opinion) we have never heard from back from C.J. on.”

I’m not sure what we haven’t addressed, and the important issues you want to hear back from CJ on¹⁸³... Thanks for all you do to serve Sovereign Grace, Brent. More importantly, thanks for seeking to live a life worthy of the Gospel.

This final response from Bob on November 26, 2005 was distressing. I knew very little about what Bob, Kenneth, etc. covered with you over the 12 months. Why did I know so little? First, because they were unwilling to fill us in due to the restrictions placed upon them by you that you must always be present. Second, because you were withholding the information from us. This goes to the heart of Dave’s first question that was left unanswered.

“The A. Team would not be aware of the major areas of focus or concern where the CLC guys are seeking to serve CJ...and we are not sure if you are aware of the categories we have been visiting with CJ either. Moreover, it would not appear to us that CJ is sufficiently intentional at initiating dialogue or disclosing important illustrations in a way that would help us understand his clarity of soul and deepen our experience of fellowship. Could CJ & the CLC guys discuss whether it is reasonable for us to expect him to initiate these conversations & relate the notable patterns of sin being discussed in this season?”

It was also shocking for Bob to ask, “I am not sure what...important issues you [Brent] want to hear back from CJ on?” After fifteen months of repeated appeals, Bob was oblivious to one of our major concerns. That is, you never getting back to us on anything even though directed to do so. Furthermore, Bob labeled my “expectations” as “sinful.” This goes to the heart of Dave’s second question that was left unanswered.

“Returning back to Brent’s question posed to the CLC guys, “Should C.J. have talked to us about his e-mail confession of October 13 so we could understand how he came to see the things he acknowledged? Did any of the things acknowledged have a personal bearing upon us?” Perhaps CJ and the CLC guys could dialogue about why this might be an important exercise and why this confession was not discussed or applied to the A. Team.”

This separation began immediately after the August 20, 2004 meeting. After the meeting you began to pull back from me and take a critical view of me. In the years leading up to the meeting, I worked hard to serve you well because I loved you dearly and regarded you highly. I appreciated Dave's comments at the beginning of the meeting per Bob's notes. "Brent has excelled in his care and affection for CJ. Brent is intent on making sure there is care, protection, deliberation, and caution in this whole process. He is engaging God in the process."

As an example, here is one of many e-mails I sent you. You had just received the job performance evaluations from Dave, Steve, Josh, Kenneth, Grant, me, etc.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, December 13, 2003 4:20 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential - Compilation of Job Reviews

My dear friend,

You are the only team leader any of us want. No one has any reservations about you leading the [upcoming December] retreat. The evaluations don't disqualify you in the least from leading us now or in the future. We all treasure your wisdom, count it a great honor to work with you, have great respect for you, and prize our friendship with you. Really! Written evaluations are helpful but have limitations. Please don't interpret them too negatively. We are all for you!!!

With much love and regard.
Brent

The next three plus years were not pleasant. You related to me with little gospel and grace. During that period you made several harsh comments to me and about me. On one occasion, you said I was the only pastor in Sovereign Grace who had "not grown in preaching in the last 6-8 years." That may have been true but I don't know how you arrived at that conclusion. On another occasion, you emphatically stated that "I never want anyone to go through what I went through!" That summed up your perspective. We were the ones at fault - especially me. There was no awareness of what we had been through. During these years, numerous individuals expressed concerns that you were resentful and bitter at me. You always disagreed with them. In time, you passed on your offenses to others.

I brought this up to the Assessment Team a week before I resigned last summer. We talked about it. I appealed that this crucial information be included in the report to the Sovereign Grace leadership team. Here is what I wrote.

From: Brent Detwiler
Date: Sun, 19 Jul 2009 13:28:04 -0500
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Sin Focus

In your feedback for SGM, it is my perspective that the three year “sin focused” [approach with me] began with C.J. Then he conveyed it to Larry [Malament] and Gene [Emerson].

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 6:55 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: RE: Sin Focus

If you want me to explain my statement or provide you information to support my statement, I’d be willing to.

Bob never asked for a further explanation or additional information.

C.J.’s Visit to Charlotte – September 30-October 2, 2005¹⁸⁵

The separation in heart was evident during your visit to Charlotte in the fall of 2005. Your relationship with me had drastically changed. Let me explain. I planted CrossWay Community Church in 1991. You visited many times over its 15 years history. We would carefully plan each trip. It always included substantial time with me, Jenny and me, and our family. You’d always stay at our house. We have many fond memories of these times together. We always looked forward to your visits.

This time you and Mickey planned the entire trip. You expressed no interest in getting time with me, Jenny and me, or the family. Instead of staying in our home you requested a motel – the first time ever. You spent all your extra time with Mickey. Before your message on Sunday morning, you honored Mickey and made no mention of me. That was a notable omission given our normal practice. These kinds of changes sent a clear message. I was out of favor with you.

Dave's Private Letter – January 2006

From August 20, 2004 (the CLC meeting) to November 20, 2007 (my last day on the leadership team), you never talked to us as a team about heart issues in your life. In January 2006, Dave wrote you a lengthy personal letter.¹⁸⁶ You did not responded to the letter and you never told anyone about it. This was Dave's last attempt. He strongly appealed that we talk about your withdrawal from us. I asked Dave if I could read the letter but he declined. He wanted to keep it "private." Instead, he told me about the contents. I wrote Bob, Phil and Wayne about this letter (below) during the assessment they did of me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, July 25, 2009 8:29 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Dave's Letter to C.J.

In January 06, Dave wrote a lengthy personal letter to C.J. In it he tried to help C.J. see how his sinful response to our correction had adversely affected his relationship with the team and especially me. Dave told me C.J. never got back to him on it. Perhaps he [C.J.] shared this letter with those watching over his soul [which you did not do].

If you are interested in understanding my perspective below, you should ask Dave for this letter and share it with those caring for C.J.

Bob did not ask Dave for the letter or bring this to your attention. If he had it would have been a fresh reminder that things were not right between us. You said only "recently" (January 2010) were you informed I might have some offenses with you. Bob should have brought it up back in July 2009. I don't know why he kept it from you.¹⁸⁷ Also, when you received this letter from Dave it should have been discussed with the apostolic team and the CLC pastors. This is what you'd expect of others. That is, transparency and accountability – not concealment.

The Final Goodbye – November 20, 2007

The last time you and I were together or talked was at the Phillips-Harborplace Restaurant in Baltimore on November 20, 2007. That was the retreat when Steve and I stepped down from the leadership team. You probably remember, my son Stephen had a bad car accident the day before. He rolled and totaled his vehicle. I left our lunch early so I could catch a flight home. You finished up the next day.

Before leaving, however, I extended an open invitation to preach any time you could at the new church that would begin in April 08. I said you could come anytime with no advanced noticed necessary. I also said I'd love to get together anytime you visited CrossWay Community Church in Charlotte. You did not respond in the affirmative. With that, I said goodbye to you, Dave, Steve and Pat at the restaurant. I left with tears in my eyes. Some tears of gratefulness for the years I was blessed to serve you and Sovereign Grace Ministries. Most of sadness knowing how displeased you were with me and realizing our friendship was likely over. You never came to preach at Grace Community Church during our 18 month history. You never touched base with me when visiting CrossWay.

It was 1½ years after I resigned from the apostolic team that I heard from you for the first time. The surreptitious demand for my resignation as sr. pastor of Grace Community Church had just occurred. On June 3, 2009, you wrote a one sentence e-mail to say you were praying for me and available to help if I desired.¹⁸⁸ Here is what I wrote the Assessment Team about your e-mail and our relationship.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2009 12:38 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Report to SGM

One of the things that has been very difficult is the lack of any relationship with C.J. over the past 18 months which has been the hardest time in my life.¹⁸⁹ Asking about my forced resignation is the first time I have heard from him since Nov. 20, 2007 with one exception. At T4G 08 I approached Pat Ennis to ask if I could receive my 25 year service award from the previous year. The award had been forgotten. C.J. wrote me a short note with the check.

Otherwise I've had no contact with him since I (and Steve) stepped down from the apostolic team. I think this is due to a change in his disposition toward me after leading the three year process in helping him to see issues of sin that resulted in our August 20, 2004 meeting with the CLC senior leaders.

In my opinion, this breakdown in relationship has had a significant bearing on the process that began in June 06.¹⁹⁰ I appreciate C.J.'s interest below but it is hard to interpret after 1½ years of no communication. Could you include this in your report also?

So after I stepped down from the apostolic team, having faithfully served you for over 25 years, I didn't hear from you for 1½ years – not even an e-mail. I left the retreat early to catch a plane home to see my son and handle all the complications arising from a serious accident that totaled the vehicle and could have killed him and his friend. I

never heard from you the next day, week, month or year. It was apparent you wanted nothing to do with me. I understood.

The Pre-Conference Gathering at T4G – April 2008¹⁹¹

A number of men at our Sovereign Grace pre-conference gathering before Together for the Gospel 2008 noticed a very strange omission during the five hours we were together. This is what I mean. Many people were honored and many updates and reports were given. The most important update had to do with the restructuring of Sovereign Grace Ministries. You told all that pastors that Steve and I were no longer on the leadership team. You mentioned your gratefulness for our willingness to be “repositioned so we [SGM] could care more effectively for you [the SG pastors] and others in the future.”

Later you appropriately honored and thanked the men who were “taking on added responsibility in order to create manageable geographical regions.” You recognized Steve’s on-going role in Sovereign Grace and said his region was (and responsibilities were) “still big.” In contrast, nothing was said about the church I began two weeks earlier or about me no longer leading a regional team. Of course, my friends knew about these changes. What perplexed them, and distressed some of them, was the absence of any expression of appreciation for my 26 years of service. They did not understand this but I have never told them why you omitted any reference to me. I always protected your reputation.¹⁹²

A Nine Page Letter of Concerns Disregarded – March 2009

From August 2004 until January 2010 (a 5+ years time period), you showed little to no concern for our friendship or the ways you sinned against me. I don’t know why the sudden change now but your recent claim of ignorance regarding offenses in the past is dishonest.¹⁹³

For example, Eric sent you and the entire leadership team a nine page letter on March 24, 2009 in which he documented one concern after another for how you were treating me. Numerous offenses were cited and these were “only a sampling.” At the end of the letter, he requested a meeting “as soon as possible” to discuss the contents of the letter. Here is an excerpt.

“SGM has become uncharitable and impatient in its approach and response to concerns with Brent and GCC [Grace Community Church]. This is evidenced by SGM listening and acting primarily upon the claims and accusation of offended parties without soliciting and patiently hearing the perspective of

Brent or the leadership of GCC.... Brent has not asked me to write this letter. It was not his idea and he did not proof read it.... His progress in some areas has been remarkable. Other areas have progressed more slowly than some may have wished. Overall Brent has responded with incredible humility while shepherding his flock during a most difficult season.... I am asking that SGM be as entreatable as they are asking Brent to be. The examples and concerns I have brought, and this is only a sampling, are not issues of practicality. They are issues concerning the glory of God in the church.... We request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss further what has been presented here. Both Brent and I will be at the Leadership Conference in April if you have any time left. If not we fully understand."

The following month at the Sovereign Grace Pastors Conference on April 20-22, 2009 in a closed session just for our pastors, you talked about how we should respond to critics. After that message Eric approached you, commended you for the excellent teaching, and told you it was not at all our experience.¹⁹⁴ You said you'd follow up with Dave. Here is how Dave responded, on your behalf, to the 9 page letter and our desperate appeal to meet.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2009 4:42 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Doctrine

...So, at this point we are just uncertain on how best to proceed. In light of that fact, and also the demands of many other situations emerging in SGM, we would suggest the following:

1. Go ahead and send us your thoughts on the process, if you so desire.
2. We will be happy to take time to consider and pray over what you send. Then, if there appears to be anything for us to comment on, we will eventually get back to you.
3. In the interim, we will turn our attention to other matters in the movement that appear urgent. [Which did not include us.]
4. We will then revisit this issue in 6-12 months. That means you won't be hearing any response back from us for 6-12 months.

Get back to me with what you think about that.

This response was the complete opposite of what you taught the week before at the conference about getting with your critics and humbly listening to their critique. For example, "People are not so much concerned with whether you agree with them. What

they are concerned about is whether there is some process where they can voice it and you would address it without sinfully reacting to it."¹⁹⁵

The issues we were bringing to your attention were urgent and we made that clear. Yet, we were dismissed out of hand. No process was granted unless you consider waiting for up to a year "if there appears to be anything...to comment on" an acceptable response.

In the same teaching you also said, "It would serve all of us to review our history and think if there is someone you might have sinned against, someone who has left your church offended that remains unresolved, consider contacting that person to pursue reconciliation." You knew I/we felt sinned against. There was no pursuit.¹⁹⁶

During this 5 plus year period, I regularly, though I assume inadequately, asked forgiveness of you when I sinned (e.g. the resentment in my heart about your comment that I was not committed to our mission like others) even at the risk of it being used against me by you. Dave and Steve commended me for this.¹⁹⁷

Brent's Concern for Hypocrisy - Three Examples¹⁹⁸

I've picked a few examples to help you further understand my concern for hypocrisy in your life.

Example 1: The Seven Year Plan

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Saturday, December 23, 2006 3:26 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Speaking dates

Hi CJ,

It was great seeing you at the Knoxville wedding. Thanks for your investment in Will and Meg. I trust you're encouraged by the fruit of your ministry!

A few months ago, you invited me to revisit the invitation for you to speak at our Revive conference this July 6 to 8 in Harrisonburg, Virginia. We'd still very much like you to speak, and since this is the first year of the regional celebration conference, I think your presence would be particularly important. Since Harrisonburg is close (about 2½ hour drive from Gaithersburg) you could do this in a day. Would you please consider and let me know?

Also, we're in the early stages of planning a regional marriage conference in Williamsburg for February 14 to 16, 2008 in Williamsburg. We're planning for 500 and hoping to negotiate space in the renovated Williamsburg Lodge. What a place to celebrate Valentine's Day! Would you and Carolyn please consider speaking at four sessions?

Thanks for considering this, CJ. I trust you perceive my tenaciousness as a fruit of our love and respect for you. We're always open to a weekend (Sunday) visit as well. Over half of our church is new since the last Celebration conference, and I'm eager to introduce them to you.

Merry Christmas to you and your family!

With joy,
Gene

On 12/28/06, C.J. Mahaney wrote:

Gene,

Well, these guys got back to me sooner than I expected and I am sorry to say they don't think I should participate. Here is a primary reason why. We are walking through a lengthy process where they are kindly spending many hours evaluating what I am to do over the next 7 years Lord willing.¹⁹⁹ Their recommendation is that we consider how I can serve Sovereign Grace most effectively in these remaining years in writing, strategic initiatives etc. There are a number of possible recommendations on the table. Though it's been a lengthy process I have really appreciated both the time and wise counsel I have been receiving. Anyway, this 7 year plan plays a big role in declining your kind invitation.

Thanks for your understanding Gene.

With appreciation,
CJ

I would not have known about the "7 year plan" if Gene hadn't sent me the e-mail above. He passed it on hoping I could persuade you to speak at Revive (the Upper Mid-South conference for our churches) and/or at the Married Couples Conference for the region. I wrote Dave and Steve to see if they knew anything about it. They did not.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, January 02, 2007 1:00 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

Do you know anything about the 7 year plan? If not, do you know who is C.J. referring to?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, January 02, 2007 1:16 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Nope. I assume CJ is referring to him, Jeff and Bob though....

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2007 8:33 PM
To: Pat Ennis; C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: 7 Year Plan

If you're not already planning to do so on the retreat, I'd love to hear your thoughts if possible on the 7 year plan you've been working on. I'm sure I'd learn from what you're doing.

Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2007 8:38 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: 7 Year Plan

Well, I haven't thought about it for a few months so I am not sure I have much to share at this time. It primarily involves continuing to cultivate relationships with key leaders while adding a few and possibly writing a book on pastoral ministry before I delegate all this to Josh.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2007 8:57 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Steve Shank; Dave Harvey; Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: 7 Year Plan

I'd love to hear your thoughts on how and when you'd delegate to Josh and how and when a team would form around him.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2007 9:03 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: 7 Year Plan

I have no specific thoughts other than do it when I'm 60.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, March 03, 2007 8:16 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

Does any of this leave you perplexed since we have not been part of the process?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, March 03, 2007 9:05 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

Not perplexed, because I don't think process on this kind of stuff is always a strength for us. But it does make life interesting...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2007 8:16 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

It seems independent of him to be working long and hard with other men on a seven year plan we don't know anything about. Further, he has already picked

his successor (Josh) and the time of his transition (age 60) yet we have never formally talked about these matters. Leaves me perplexed. I don't think this kind of thing would be acceptable for the rest of us to do.²⁰⁰

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2007 3:01 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: R E: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

I think he comes across to Gene as if all of this is more formalized than it really is. However I do think he has been meeting with Jeff, Bob and Pat to evaluate some of these things. I doubt that it has gotten as far as it appears to be below.

Shall I forward this to Steve to get his perspective as well?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 10:43 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

Your call whether you contact Steve. FYI – he didn't know about the 7 yr. plan [when I asked him].

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 10:46 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - 7 Yr. Plan

I will inquire of Steve...

Operating independently of the apostolic team was one of our original concerns. In Steve's April 2004 summary he put it this way.

"Close to this were questions as to the [apostolic] team's role in shaping decisions versus CJ making far ranging decisions on the counsel received from CLC [non-apostolic team members]. Needing to clarify what falls into the category of a team issue, and what CJ handles via input he gets from Bob, Jeff or Joshua or others."

I was also concerned for your apparent deceit. For instance, you told Gene on December 28,

“We are walking [present tense] through a lengthy process where they are kindly spending many hours evaluating what I am to do over the next 7 years.... Though it’s been a lengthy process I have really appreciated both the time and wise counsel I have been receiving. Anyway, this 7 year plan plays a big role in declining your kind invitation.”

Then I asked you on January 10,

“If you’re not already planning to do so on the [upcoming January] retreat, I’d love to hear your thoughts if possible on the 7 year plan you’ve been working on. I’m sure I’d learn from what you’re doing.” In response you said “Well, I haven’t thought about it for a few months so I am not sure I have much to share at this time.”

First, you tell Gene you can’t come because of all the work being done on the seven year plan. Then, two weeks later, you tell me you have not thought about the 7 year plan for a few months.

You also told me, “So I am not sure I have much to share [about the 7 year plan] at this time.” But you told Gene, “this 7 year plan plays a big role in declining your kind invitation” and in determining how you “serve Sovereign Grace most effectively in these remaining years in writing, strategic initiatives, etc. There are a number of possible recommendations on the table.”

When I asked about the 7 year plan you minimized its significance. You said, “It primarily involves continuing to cultivate relationships with key [national] leaders while adding a few and possibly writing a book on pastoral ministry before I delegate all this to Josh.” Then I said, “I’d love to hear your thoughts on how and when you’d delegate to Josh and how and when a team would form around him.” You responded, “I have no specific thoughts other than to do it when I’m 60.”

Dave, Steve and I knew nothing about a 7 year plan. Yet you were “walking through a lengthy process” and “spending many hours evaluating what I am to do over the next 7 years.” And “Though it’s been a lengthy process I have really appreciated both the time and wise counsel I have been receiving.” You were not receiving any counsel from us. We were in the dark. Your accountability for the direction of Sovereign Grace Ministries was to the apostolic team. I don’t know what your motive was but you were putting plans together we did not know about. You have reprimanded other men for far less serious expressions of independence. No senior pastor would be allowed to

circumvent his fellow pastors and put together a 7 year plan with some of his Care Group leaders.²⁰¹

Example 2: Jeff Teaching on the Sacraments

At our team retreat in Herndon, VA in October 2004, we discussed the subject of “Water Baptism and Children.” I was asked to provide my thoughts on the subject. You were moving in the direction of withholding baptism from younger children who professed faith in the gospel and putting restrictions on the sacraments (e.g., they should be administered by pastors only, should be celebrated in the context of the church only).

We went through my outline (below). Dave and Steve expressed agreement with me. At the end of our discussion, though not completely persuaded, you made the comment you wouldn’t want to debate me on the subject given the simple teaching of Scripture on the subject. We also had a short and parallel discussion regarding the Lord’s Supper and children. In the end, we agreed to make no changes in our practice.

WATER BAPTISM AND CHILDREN

I. When Should A Person Be Baptized?

- A. A person should be water baptized as soon after they come to Christ as possible.
- B. In the New Testament water baptism followed immediately after the salvation experience or at the time of salvation.
 - 1. The day of Pentecost - Acts 2:41 (at the time of conversion)
 - 2. The Samaritans - Acts 8:12 (at the time of conversion)
 - 3. Simon - Acts 8:13 (at the time of conversion)
 - 4. The Ethiopian eunuch - Acts 8:35-39 (immediately following his conversion on the same day)
 - 5. Saul of Tarsus - Acts 9:17,18; 22:16 (3 days after his conversion, cf. Acts 9:9)
 - 6. Cornelius’ household - Acts 10:44-48 (at the time of conversion)
 - 7. Lydia’s household - Acts 16:13-15 (at the time of conversion)
 - 8. The jailer’s household - Acts 16:30-34 (at the time of conversion in the middle of the night - cf. 16:33)
 - 9. Crispus’ household and many Corinthians - Acts 18:8 (at the time of conversion)
 - 10. John’s disciples - Acts 19:1-7 (as soon as they were instructed by Paul about Christian baptism – they were probably believers in Christ already)

- C. In the Book of Acts it was not necessary to wait for an official meeting of the church in order to baptize new believers. In almost every circumstance new converts were baptized immediately and with whatever means available. It was not necessary for a prescribed number of church members to be present. Typically, those in attendance were limited to the person or people doing the baptizing and those being baptized.

II. Should Believing Children Be Baptized?

- A. Baptism was based upon a simple but sincere profession of faith. Persons were baptized when they became disciples. If a child shows evidence he understands the gospel (cognition), is willing to follow the Lord (volition), and is convicted of sin (affection); then, he should be baptized.
- B. Baptism was never postponed until convincing proofs of salvation were evident in a person's life. New converts were baptized immediately. They did not wait until the fruits of sanctification were apparent and a thereby a source of assurance (cf. Simon the magician).
- C. Children are able to understand the gospel, repent of their sins and savingly believe. (cf. 2 Timothy 3:15, Titus 1:6)
- D. Household baptisms probably included believing children.
- E. If a child can understand the gospel they can also understand the significance of water baptism (and the Lord's Supper).
- F. The New Testament never encourages, by way of teaching or practice, the putting off of water baptism in the case of believing adults or children.

At the Leadership Conference in April 2007 you had Jeff teach on the sacraments. His message title was, "Watch the Sacraments: Recapturing Vital Elements in the Life of the Church." There were many good points but there were several important points that differed with our previously agreed upon understanding and teaching on the subject. This took Dave, Steve and I by surprise. It also caused consternation for many of our pastors and we were put in an awkward position of trying to answer their questions. My main concern was for your independence. Unilaterally you introduce new doctrine and practice contrary to previous agreements and without any discussion. Here is the e-mail trail.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 12:54 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential – Sacraments

Will we discuss Jeff's being approved by C.J. to teach on the sacraments in the fashion he did without the knowledge of team?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 1:14 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

Feel free to bring it up. I think I raised it with him already in private...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 1:14 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

What was his response...?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 1:16 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

He indicated he agreed with what Jeff said but he would be happy to discuss it further as a team.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 1:16 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

Did he see how he acted independently?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 1:29 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Sacraments

I did not explore that category with him. Thoughts on how to proceed?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 5:22 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

I think you should talk to him about not proceeding “independently” on something of this magnitude especially given our previous discussion re: the topic.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 5:25 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

I think YOU should talk to him and let me attend to the 10,000 other things you guys are dumping on me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2007 5:26 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

Chicken...but I am no better.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, August 24, 2007 10:50 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential – Sacraments

Honestly, I'd be willing to bring this up to C.J. during a team meeting. Just let me know.

I did bring it up to you later at a team meeting. We talked about your independence. You didn't agree with us. You reiterated your doctrinal agreement with Jeff as grounds²⁰² to have him teach without talking to us.

As an aside, Dave's approach to you had changed. He was no longer bringing up issues of the heart. He was no longer raising concerns for your character. He decided to accommodate those deficiencies and move on. He and I talked about this on a few occasions. He encouraged me to do the same. I was trying to do so but important issues kept coming up like this one regarding Jeff staking out new positions on the sacraments.

Example 3: Writing the Book, *Humility: Greatness Defined*

On August 18, 2004, Dave wrote Steve and me about evidences of pride and independence in your life that warranted a wider confession of sin. He ended by saying "All the while teaching on humility, writing on it and referencing himself in regards to it [as an example] when we were calling him to account." I've already cited Dave's e-mail in entirety but this one sentence illustrates my point.

Leading up to the meeting on August 20, 2004 you were earnestly writing your book on humility. The writing probably continued after the meeting but I don't remember when the final manuscript was submitted to Multnomah. Anyway, the book came out in 2005. There were no references, or allusions, to the 3½ years of resistance²⁰³ we experienced when providing you correction or to the process we were walking through with you.

Instead you gave counsel on how to grow in humility. "First, humbly recognize your need for others.... That's why I need the care and correction of my wife and fellow team members, and why I must pursue their care and correction. I need help, and so do you."²⁰⁴ We were pursuing you but you were not pursuing us. You were resisting correction not receiving it.

At our team retreat in June 2006 you began to raise concerns for evidences of pride in my life. A few months later I wrote you about putting my teaching on the subject into book form. See below.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, September 01, 2006 7:03 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Larry Malament
Subject: 50 Fruits

Would it be okay with you if I sent in my "The 50 Fruits of Pride" messages and outline to Crossway and Multnomah for their consideration? I realize how very unlikely it is they will ever review them. If okay, I'd ask Bob for some contact information. If you prefer I not do this just let me know.

Thanks
Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, September 01, 2006 7:24 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: 50 Fruits

...Do you think it's wise for you to send this in at this time with all that is transpiring at present with you and the pastoral team?...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, September 02, 2006 12:49 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: 50 Fruits

The initiative and encouragement to do something with the material is coming from others. They have found it helpful and would like others to benefit. I am very content not do anything with it. It really is not my focus - I don't have ambitions to get it published.

I am trying to focus on my own heart - to do otherwise would be unwise as you indicate. I am glad to take no further action. Thanks for expressing your concern.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, September 02, 2006 8:14 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: 50 Fruits

I would just encourage you to make sure that for any major decision you are thinking about that the local pastoral team be at the top of the “others” list you consult for counsel before you proceed.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, September 03, 2006 1:43 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: 50 Fruits

Sure will. I'd also desire your support.

At that point, I dropped the matter, did not contact any publishers, and never did any writing. You gave me good counsel. You just didn't follow it to yourself. You never asked us about whether you should be writing a book on humility.

Doctrine and Practice Now Separate Us

This next section is long and deals with the issue of doctrine and practice as a basis for removing me from Sovereign Grace Ministries.

During the Baltimore Team Retreat in November 2007, you told us you wanted Dave, in his new position, “to secure theological uniformity in the essentials throughout Sovereign Grace and a selective uniformity in practices.” This was the same retreat when Steve and I resigned from the leadership team. You didn't go into any detail but I took special note. I've been waiting to see how this assignment for Dave would be worked out. You clearly indicated a change was coming. That appeared to mean a narrowing of acceptable beliefs and practice in Sovereign Grace was on its way.

Fast forward. On March 27, 2009 Dave wrote the following to the leadership team of Grace Community Church.

“It might be helpful to note that while the character issues remain a concern for us, we recognize the benefits of entrusting the evaluation and resolution of those character issues to the leadership team in Mooresville. However, it is the areas of disagreement in respect to doctrine and practice that we (the

[Sovereign Grace] leadership team) are particularly obligated to address. So we hope to give more thought to that as well in the near future.”

Leading up to this e-mail, Dave and Gene repeatedly said my preaching and teaching were not gospel centered. Yet when I asked them how they came to this conclusion, it turned out they had not listened to any of my messages in nearly 2½ years. These conclusions were based upon bogus reports and not upon an examination of my sermons.

For instance, Gene used Andy and Lanie George as his main illustration for my lack of gospel centeredness when Ray, Jonathan, Eric and I met with him on October 31, 2008. Gene sympathetically and supportively pointed out “they [the Georges] had concerns with [my] first message [at the beginning of the church] on sin and behavior.” That “it didn’t feel right” and claimed I “was preaching a different message” than was being preached at CrossWay Community Church. This was a sad exercise of leadership by Gene.

You can listen to this message which was entitled, “Amazing Grace” from April 6, 2008. The Georges left the church plant after two months. They only heard my first 8 messages while they were attending. You can listen to those messages also.

The Assessment Team investigated the charge from Dave and Gene. In particular, Phil Sasser evaluated my messages from the beginning of the church plant. He/they did not find my messages to be lacking in gospel centeredness or containing prescriptions for legalistic practices.²⁰⁵ Dave and Gene never asked forgiveness for their sinful judgments.²⁰⁶

At the time of Dave’s e-mail on March 27, all the men on the local leadership team were speaking well of my character and commending me to Sovereign Grace Ministries. They were also raising grave concerns for how Sovereign Grace was dealing with me. Given the good reports about my character, Dave changed the topic to my doctrine and practice. This was the first time anyone ever raised concerns over doctrine and practice as grounds for removal from Sovereign Grace Ministries. As stated by Dave, these “disagreements” were even more important than perceived character deficiencies and the apostolic team was “particularly obligated to address” them. This included “areas” not just particular beliefs or approaches.

Unfortunately no one has been willing to define for me which of my doctrines and practices were unacceptable to Sovereign Grace Ministries and therefore warrant dismissal from the movement. The things Dave mentioned were non issues (see below). But as you said recently “I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that

now separate us from serving together." I wish I knew what they were. Here is the e-mail history with Dave.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2009 4:12 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential - Doctrine

Introduction

- This is an initial installment in response to your questions and the beginning of a process whereby I will raise issues of concern. There are many important matters to address. This will take considerable effort so I plan to work on it a little at a time.

Your [Dave's] Statements re: Doctrine

- "Brent, this past December I sent you a letter on behalf of the leadership team expressing our concerns over certain issues of character, doctrine and practice." (4/11/09 e-mail)
- "I was glad he [Eric] shared his heart with us, but it illustrated the fact that we appear rather clueless on where these discussions have helped you and the areas of doctrine, character and practice needing change." (4/11/09 e-mail)
- "Are there any areas where you maintain a difference in theology or practice with SGM?" (4/11/09 e-mail)
- "It might be helpful to note that while the character issues remain a concern for us, we recognize the benefits of entrusting the evaluation and resolution of those character issues to the leadership team in Mooresville. However, it is the areas of disagreement in respect to doctrine and practice that we (the [Sovereign Grace] leadership team) are particularly obligated to address. So we hope to give more thought to that as well in the near future." (3/27/09 e-mail)

Important Clarification

- The first time you mentioned a concern for my doctrine or theology was two weeks ago (cf. the 3/27 quote above). Your "December...letter" was actually dated 11/22/08. There were no references in that correspondence to my doctrine or concerns for my doctrine.

- The introduction of doctrinal disagreements is a very recent development. It is not a subject you have talked to me about or raised with me in the past. I am surprised it has been introduced as a primary issue and would like to understand why.²⁰⁷

Membership-Church Commitments

[Note: The quotation below regarding doctrinal agreement comes from the Membership Agreement for Sovereign Grace Churches that all senior pastors are required to sign.]

- “To ensure substantial theological harmony...within Sovereign Grace, membership churches are to subscribe to the following documents: The Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith... Are to be in complete agreement with substitutionary atonement of Jesus, as described in *Living the Cross Centered Life*...and *Pierced for Our Transgressions*. Are to be in substantial agree with the *Perspectives* series, as updated from time to time, and current consisting of “Sovereign Grace and the Glorious Mystery of Election,” “Polity: Serving and Leading the Local Church,” “Am I Called? Discerning the Summons to Ministry,” “Missiology: Entering the Field of the Lord.”

Response to Theological Commitments

- Having written it, I can confidently say I am in complete agreement with the Sovereign Grace Statement of Faith.
- I am also in complete agreement with the substitutionary atonement of Christ as presented in the two books mentioned above and substantial agreement with the four booklets in the *Perspective* series mentioned above.
- I maintain no differences in theology for member churches within Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Questions Requiring a Response

- What doctrines do you have in mind when expressing such concern? Where do you disagree with my doctrine? Please be specific and thorough in your answer.²⁰⁸
- In what way does my doctrine need to change? Please be specific and thorough in your answer.

Thanks for your prompt reply to these questions. After I hear back from you, I will proceed to the issue of practice. Your answers to these questions will likely inform my response regarding practice.

Grace to you!
Brent

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2009 4:42 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Doctrine

...I'm glad to hear that you do not see any significant differences. I think the categories we had specifically in mind would include the nature and extent of apostolic and pastoral authority. From past discussions and experiences, it seems that category has been an area where we have disagreed in rather important ways. However we certainly could have misunderstood you. In fact, I will assume we have if you are saying that there is no difference in our beliefs and practice in this area...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 4:47 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential – Practice

Hi Dave,

Greetings my friend!

I understand you'll be on retreat next week and visiting Metro on Sunday. Whether for concentrated work or a time to relax, I pray the Lord will bless you. I am sure you could benefit from both, especially the later.

Here is the response you requested.

Errors in Practice

On April 11 you asked, "Where are you seeing errors in your practice?"

In the past, I've sometimes stressed certain practices too strongly or defined them too narrowly. As a result, I suspect some people may have confused

personal practice with biblical principle and invested too much authority and faith in the former rather than being sufficiently guided by the latter. Also, some may have tended to put their hope in certain “practices” which guarantee nothing.

This is an area where I’ve needed to grow and have worked hard at it by the grace of God. I’ve labored to emphasize the principles of Scripture from which individuals can develop their own practices and not simply imitate others. I’ve emphasized more than ever the power of the gospel to change hearts and motivate people to honor God. I’ve also exhorted people to put their confidence in God not methods.

At the risk of being misunderstood (no indirect message intended), my own growth parallels the changes I have seen with respect to our teaching on modesty. Originally it was titled “Modesty Check.” In *Girl Talk* it was changed to “A Modesty Heart Check” without an introduction. In *Worldliness* a helpful introduction was added. “We don’t intend these questions to be a list of rules or consider them to be definitive guide to modest dress. The Modesty Heart Check is a tool, to be used in the context of biblical teaching on modesty, and never in isolation from God’s Word” (p. 173). So too, I have edited and re-edited my material.

Currently, I don’t think there are differences in our approach in practice. I would heartily agree with C.J.’s comments at the recent Pastors Conference. It has been 2½ years since I’ve given a message where I shared “practices” (really just guidelines) for consideration. I spoke on the subject of courtship [at the Summit Conference in Charlotte on November 2-4, 2006]. Afterward, Larry Malament exclaimed that my differentiating between principle and practice was “brilliant.” I doubt that was the case, but I appreciated his encouragement.

Last June, I did a two part series at Grace Community entitled “A Sanctification Primer.” In it I laid out my theology of change. I again recommend it to you and Gene. I covered a number of critical issues including the difference between principle and practice.

I feel I have grown in this area of understanding and teaching. My presentation of “practice” would be in keeping with those set forth in *I Kiss Dating Goodbye*, *Boy Meets Girl*, *Worldliness*, and *Feminine Appeal*. Like C.J., I would not recommend public school (cf. his comment at the Pastors Conference). Nevertheless, I am very careful when talking about home schooling and reasons to consider it as one’s educational choice.

Gene's Perspective

I think Gene has complicated matters by misrepresenting me to you and the leadership team (you'll need to read the e-mails below). We came to the Pastors Conference wondering what new direction or doctrine or practice would be presented that would represent "very different perspectives." We discovered none.

There was nothing "awkward" about our time after the conference with the sr. pastors and wives in Gene's region. Nothing Gene said made us "feel significantly uncomfortable." My approach to "practice" mirrored everyone else's in the room. We did not feel put in an "awkward position" and participated honestly.

I am afraid Gene misjudged us when he said we should "feel released from attending" and expressed concerns that his comments during the session might be taken by us as a "personal attack." We were glad to be present.

Apostolic Ministry

On April 17, you also asked the following²⁰⁹ "I think the categories we had specifically in mind would include the nature and extent of apostolic and pastoral authority. From past discussions and experiences, it seems that category has been an area where we have disagreed in rather important ways. However we certainly could have misunderstood you. In fact, I will assume we have if you are saying that there is no difference in our beliefs and practice in this area."

We last discussed the subject of apostolic ministry in July, 2003. At the time, I expressed a concern that we were moving away from the kind of apostolic involvement that had built a strong family of churches. My primary focus was not on authority but involvement. On the issue of authority, however, I acknowledged we had differences. I felt the authority of apostles exceeded that of elders.

I also affirmed, and agreed with all, that the extent of apostolic involvement depended on the maturity level of the eldership and its proper functioning. Furthermore, I whole heartedly agreed that a proper exercise of any authority was based on servanthood, trust and relationship.

From July, 2003 forward, I adjusted my practice to the polity we set at the time which was later "codified" in your "Polity: Serving and Leading the Local

Church.” I abided by this polity through my entire tenure on the apostolic team which ended in December, 2007.

I continue to affirm this approach

Pastoral Authority

While on the team, I don’t remember ever discussing the extent of pastoral authority or ever having any differences between us. My understanding of pastoral ministry is the same as that of Sovereign Grace Ministries. That is, our “authority” derives from Scripture. This means our teaching and counsel is only “authoritative” to the degree it lines up with Scripture. Where the Bible is clear, we can be clear. Otherwise, we must exercise great care.

Gene misrepresents me when he says, “Thanks for your willingness to talk through your perspective on advocating a position and providing leadership in disputable matters in our last phone conversation.” Please be assured, this is not my approach. See my response to him.

I hope these answers are sufficient and helpful to you.

Love in Christ,
Brent

Gene and I had a brief conversation about “principle and practice” before the Pastors Conference last April 6-8 at Covenant Life Church. He twisted my words and distorted my beliefs. Here are the e-mail exchanges.

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 3:59 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Regional meeting

Hi Brent,

Thanks for your willingness to talk through your perspective on advocating a position and providing leadership in disputable matters in our last phone conversation. I’m grateful we spoke and look forward to pursuing this topic in the future. However, since this will be the primary topic in our time together as regional senior pastors, I’m concerned that you & Jenny will feel significantly uncomfortable and in the awkward position of honestly responding or not participating. So, as I reflect on this, I want you to feel

released from attending. Of course, you're welcome to come--just don't want you to feel obligated to do so. Please consider and let me know either way.

Your friend,
Gene

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 7:52 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Cc: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Regional meeting

Hi Gene,

I would not say we "talked through" my perspective on these matters. I am concerned you may think you understand my position when you do not and then misrepresent me to others. For instance, I did not say a pastor should provide directive leadership on disputable matters. Just the opposite. I don't believe that.

I don't think you understand how I would advocate for home schooling. Advocate does not mean impose. Advocate does not mean "should." Advocate means give consideration to in light of the added opportunity it provides to shepherd your child's heart. Just so you know I have not even mentioned home schooling in the past 12 months of Sunday preaching [i.e., since the beginning of the church]. In a private meeting with our church plant home school parents, I carefully instructed them on how important it is to welcome and accept those who don't home school and how to differentiate between principle and practice.

I do think a pastor has a somber responsibility to teach on moral purity between the sexes as commanded by Scripture and to exhort parents to bring up their children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord (every child must be taught a thoroughly Christian worldview in all disciplines of life). This does not mean everyone will follow all the prescriptions Josh gives in his two books [on courtship] or Carolyn [Mahaney] in her modesty guidelines or choose to home school.

Please be careful not to assume you know what I believe and how I practice these beliefs based upon a brief conversation.

Thanks
Brent

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 9:38 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Regional meeting

Sorry my friend. Didn't intend to misrepresent you in what I wrote. I did think we have very different perspectives and don't want that to create an awkward day for you or for you to take my concerns as a personal attack.

The reports you received from Gene were misrepresentative and judgmental. He put things in the worse possible light. Let me share an analogy. In my opinion, the "Modesty Heart Check" is the most detailed prescription of practice SGM has put into print. Don't get me wrong - I find them extremely helpful and wise. Here's the point. If I wrote something comparable, I am afraid I'd be confronted for "legalism." For instance, "Does my shirt reveal any part of my cleavage? Does my midriff [between the chest and waist] show when I raise my hands above my head? Is my shirt just plain too tight? If the answer to any one of these question is yes, then I need to change my outfit."²¹⁰

Based on the March 27 e-mail from Dave and the March 30 e-mails from Gene, I expected to hear at the Pastors Conference the following week that additional doctrinal affirmations/denials would be required and certain practices would be incumbent, while other practices would be prohibited, for member churches. Instead, nothing was said or taught that put my affiliation with Sovereign Grace in jeopardy.

Nevertheless, Dave continued pressing the issues of doctrine and practice after the conference. After I laid out the doctrinal requirements for membership churches and expressed my agreement, however, Dave backed off on April 17 and pulled back his demands that my doctrine and practice change. I think he realized that you, the Sovereign Grace leadership team, could not remove me over doctrinal and practical differences given the agreements outlined in the "Membership Agreement for Sovereign Grace Churches." Nevertheless, it was not surprising when you recently asserted I cannot be a part of Sovereign Grace Ministries due to these unknown (to me) "disagreements." Here is the e-mail trail with you.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2010 3:17 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Letter from CJ

Dear Brent,

I hope this e mail finds you enjoying God's grace.

Recently I was informed that you might have some offenses with me. I was saddened to hear this, but not surprised given the sinful tendencies present in my heart and life. Brent, if it is accurate that you have offenses against me, I want to do whatever I can to address these and pursue reconciliation. I also want to make every effort to preserve our friendship. Even though I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that now separate us from serving together,²¹¹ I don't want there to be any separation of heart between us. Your friendship has been an undeserved gift and I have countless memories of serving the Savior with you that I still treasure...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 9:35 AM
To: Nora Earles
Subject: RE: Letter from CJ

Hi C.J.,

Just a quick note for now. Would you please tell me what you have in mind when you say "I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that now separate us from serving together." I am not aware what those disagreements are but would really appreciate knowing. Would you please inform me and be as specific as possible?

Thanks so much,
Brent

From: Nora Earles
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 12:22 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Letter from CJ

Hey my friend,

Thanks for getting right back to me.

Good question! Well, perhaps we don't have any differences in doctrine or practice!²¹² I'd love to talk with you to discover²¹³ if there are any differences but primarily I don't want our hearts to be separated and I want our friendship preserved if at all possible. Also, I want you to experience my support as you serve the Savior in the future.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 2:20 PM
To: Nora Earles
Subject: RE: Letter from CJ

Of course, we both know we have doctrinal disagreements. We've talked about them over the [past 26] years. I was unaware, however, that these disagreements "now separate us from serving together." That's why I'd really appreciate if you answered my question.

From: Nora Earles
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 2:26 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Letter from CJ

Brent,

I'm sorry if my attempt to discover whether you have offenses with me has been unhelpful and appears to have focused on doctrinal disagreements.²¹⁴ [I knew you weren't focused on doctrinal differences. This seemed like a reaction to my question.] The intent of my e-mail was to reach out to you and if necessary pursue reconciliation with you, not to review or rehearse any doctrinal praxis disagreements we might have. Whatever disagreements we have are secondary to maintaining our friendship and I'd be open to talking to you about such differences at some point in the future. But this should be a conversation not an e-mail exchange. And we've already experienced the

limitations and deficiencies of e-mail my friend so please let me know if it would serve you for us to meet and for you to share any offenses you have with me so that our friendship remains regardless of where we are serving the Savior.

C.J.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 2:39 PM

To: Nora Earles

Subject: RE: Letter from CJ

I am glad to provide you an answer regarding our friendship, etc. but that will take a considerable amount of time. My question about doctrine and practice was just a “quick note for now.” It also seemed an easy one for you to answer.

It alarms me that serious concerns for my doctrine and practice were raised over a 10 month period as grounds for being disfellowshipped unless they changed. Yet, I have no clue what you had in mind. This also concerns me for my pastoral friends in the movement. If I can't be in Sovereign Grace then who else can't be in the movement? This is a serious issue. You have a moral responsibility to clearly articulate for these men what is, and is not, allowed in terms of belief and practice lest they be removed from the movement also. You concluded that specific disagreements with me are beyond the acceptable boundaries of Sovereign Grace Ministries. I'd still like to know what they are.

My greatest concern for your response regarding doctrine and practice was the flip flop. First you said, “I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that now separate us from serving together.” Then you said “Well, perhaps we don't have any differences in doctrine or practice! I'd love to talk with you to discover if there are any differences.” This is deceitful for several reasons.²¹⁵

You and I talked about doctrine and practice for over 25 years. I sought to serve the movement by teaching sound doctrine. It was a huge part of my life. I am not aware of any differences in practice; but you, more than anyone, know our differences in doctrine. For over a ¼ century you heard my doctrine up close.

As I reminisce, I was privileged by God to teach on Amillennialism at our first “Elders Week of Study” in 1982. The next year in Johnston, PA, I defined the gospel (i.e., the good news about Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and reign and emphasized that the Cross was the “heart of the gospel”). This was when we had a defective understanding of the gospel (i.e., “If he's not Lord of all, he's not Lord at all.”) and were

coming under attack. I wrote the Statement of Faith the same year. Later I founded the Pastors College and taught more than half its curriculum. I wrote numerous articles on doctrine for the magazine (e.g. Sanctification in December 96 when we rolled out our Reformed Theology issue), wrote the short "Statement of Belief" (cf. "We hold to an essentially Reformed understanding of Christian doctrine but with a significant charismatic dimension to our faith..."), revised and expanded the original Statement of Faith in 1998, and gave thousands of messages in SGM churches and conferences on doctrine. Most importantly I wrote and presented scores of doctrinal papers and outlines for discussion by the apostolic team over 25 years.

So let's just say, doctrine has been important to me. And let me also say, no one knows my doctrine and our doctrinal differences better than you do. They have not been great and they have always been welcomed. They were never viewed as "disagreements" but "differences." At some point, that changed in your mind, but I don't know when and I don't know what it included. It is obvious you and others have concluded those disagreements are now beyond the acceptable boundaries of Sovereign Grace Ministries. Could it include my charismatic theology?

No Room for Brent's Charismatic Theology?

At the Team Retreat at the Courtyard Marriot in Herndon, VA on January 23-25, 2007, we found out you switched to a 3rd Wave understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. You said you thought "scholars for the Pentecostal position are much weaker." That "the Pentecostal approach to Acts lacks scholarship and an understanding of redemptive history in the Book of Acts." Further, that "Pentecostals dance around 1 Corinthians 12:13." You also expressed your disagreement with D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (e.g. his book, *Joy Unspeakable*). You said a person "is not always aware when they are filled with the Holy Spirit."

You went on to say you were "far more charismatic today than you'd ever been" and you had "the most differences with Brent." Steve said he was still uncertain what he believed but was moving in your direction. Dave was inclined to believe the "dimensional view" with a metaphorical understanding of "baptism in the Holy Spirit" (i.e., a phrase that encompasses all the blessing of salvation including justification, union with Christ, regeneration, adoption, and filling of the Holy Spirit). Here are a couple e-mails from the retreat.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2007 12:24 AM

To: Pat Ennis; C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank

Subject: Position on Baptism in HS

Thanks for filling us in on your change of position tonight. I was not aware. Guys will ask me what your current position is. I've been telling them Pentecostal/Charismatic. Sorry. Thanks for the clarification.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2007 8:49 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Position on Baptism in HS

No need to be sorry at all. This change has taken place only recently [without interaction with the apostolic team] when I was able to study the topic and related topics thoroughly again.

A month later you wrote Dave, Steve and me asking us to state our positions on several topics. In this e-mail you celebrated our differences and diversity.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2007 8:36 AM
To: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Brent Detwiler
Subject: Leaders Conference

Hey boys,

Since you guys were encouraging me to preach a message on the person and work of the Spirit (possibly 1 Cor. 12-14) at the Leaders Conference I need to discover where there might be differences on this topic so I can wisely present the material if I preach on this. Obviously differences exist in Sovereign Grace on this topic and by the grace of God we are in agreement on that which is most important in relation to this topic. I've always viewed this diversity in Sovereign Grace as a strength. I'm sure you do as well.

But it would serve me and I think all of us to revisit the topic on our next phone call. So how about if you guys each send me a few lines describing what you presently believe about the following topics:

1. The baptism in the Spirit (subsequent to conversion, a part of conversion, etc.)
2. The gift of tongues (universality of, use in public meetings, etc.)
3. Singing in the Spirit (i.e., in public meetings without interpretation)
4. Prophecy (use of first person; use of personal prophecy)

I think that would cover it. If you think there is anything else that would be helpful to address please let me know. How about if you have this to me by March 13? I plan on having Jeff join our call in order to benefit from his perspective.

Thanks for taking the time to do this.

With appreciation,
C.J.

Four months later at another team retreat on June 18-21, 2007 in Herndon, VA; you, Dave, Steve addressed me about my continuing charismatic theology in light of your change to a 3rd Wave position

Dave asked me “How am I stewarding my differences?” He went on to asked, “What does the absence of change say to you?” by which he meant, why haven’t I changed my position? He asked me if I “sought to assess the influences that are shaping Sovereign Grace? The thinkers, speakers, and authors?” He asked, “Who is influencing you?” and “What books are you reading?” To these questions I responded, I hope humbly, that I was reading the same books as you and few extras both for (Baker, Erwin, et al.) and against (Dunn, Brunner, et al.) a charismatic/Pentecostal interpretation.

Dave commented that “People far smarter than us are changing as our scholarship deepens and we read more. The absence of change for you should be cause for evaluation.” Steve added, “Others are making changes with things we once held dear. Those around you are changing. Are you engaging in honest evaluation or taking the posture of digging your heels in and defending the truth.” Steve suggested it could be an issue of “pride, obstinacy, and unteachableness.” Larry Malament (there as a guest) asked me, “Are you concerned for pride or self-righteousness or stubbornness in hanging onto your doctrines? Is your immutability grounded in pride and independence?” Dave responded by saying it was “a good question regarding whether Brent is being independent.”

I remember the conversation like it was yesterday. It was fine to ask questions about my pride and tell me my positions were unscholarly. What caught me off guard and hurt, was the awareness that all of you had talked about addressing me beforehand and gave me no forewarning. Things had rapidly changed and without my knowledge. Suddenly, pneumatological differences and diversity were a weakness, not a strength to be celebrated. I recommended that these significant changes in theological positions be openly communicated to the movement. That recommendation was denied. [To this day many people in the movement don’t know about the significant pneumatological changes in doctrine though they comment on a noticeable decline in charismatic activity.]

Brent Removed from the Pastors College

My charismatic theology and loss of favor resulted in my removal from the Pastors College. Both my doctrine and my influence on upcoming leaders was now undesirable. I tried to respond humbly.

From: Jeff Purswell

Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2007 2:09 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: Pastors College

Hello Brent,

I trust you are well, my friend.

Thanks for getting back to Evelyn with prospective dates for next year's PC calendar. As I'm compiling these and tackling the rather challenging task (I know you can relate) of putting together next year's schedule, I wanted to let you know that I've decided to make a change concerning the pneumatology course, and that C.J. and I will attempt to teach that course next year together. [Wayne Grudem ended up teaching it.] C.J. actually encouraged me to make this change, and I do think it makes sense in light of a few factors: given the modification in our Statement of Faith (which, I think, very much needs detailed explanation—historically, theologically, and pastorally), the greater specificity given to a Sovereign Grace perspective on this (i.e., the "Contours of Charismatic Theology" message at the last Leadership Conference, along with more stuff that's been published), and the modification of C.J.'s views, it seems that it would be beneficial to address this topic with all of these things in view. I think C.J. and I together would be able to do this.

This also allows me to do something I've been trying to do for a while—get C.J. more "classroom" time for the guys (right now, it's pretty much down to zero, which should not be!). Perhaps you would assume this, but I do want to affirm clearly that, in this course, I want us to set out the strongest arguments for the range of allowable views of the topic within Sovereign Grace, as well as to exhort the men to a passionate pursuit of the Spirit's activity, gifts, and power in our lives and ministries. Your example in such a pursuit has been a wonderful effect of your teaching in this area for years, and that is something I want at all costs to preserve. Thanks so much for your heart and leadership in this for so long.

I very much want you to continue teaching Systematic Theology 1 (i.e., Introduction to Systematic Theology and the Doctrine of Scripture). The September 4-7 date you sent works great – it's wonderful to have you kicking off the year for the guys.

If you have questions about this, Brent, feel free to let me know.

Grateful for you,

Jeff

I was now reduced to teaching Systematic Theology 1 in the Pastors College. In January 2008, I contacted Jeff about the upcoming 08-09 school year. I was planning my calendar but I also had in mind that you wouldn't want me to teach in the Pastors College any longer.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2008 9:50 AM
To: Jeff Purswell
Subject: PC – Brent

I am planning my Fall calendar. Would you like me to teach Systematic Theology 1 [i.e., Introduction to Systematic Theology and The Doctrine of Scripture] in the Pastors College on September 2-5? It would be a joy to do so.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2008 4:40 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: PC – Brent

Hello Brent,

Thanks for your note – it is very good to hear from you.

Actually, as C.J. and I have been looking over the calendar, we will be making a number of changes involving different teachers. So at this point, I will not have you teaching this course next year.

Of course, an e-mail like this wouldn't be complete without expressing my indebtedness to you for your investment in the PC over the years. In fact, as I like to tell the students – and I will continue to do so – the PC wouldn't be what it is now without your labors from the beginning. I trust you feel my deep

gratefulness, not only for this, but for your friendship and support over the years.

Thanks, my friend.

Jeff

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2008 6:35 PM
To: Jeff Purswell
Subject: RE: PC - Brent

That is personally sad to hear (I love teaching in the PC) but it is perfectly fine for C.J. to make any changes he would like (I am sure many others can teach the doctrine of Scripture better) but maybe you could provide some kind of explanation at some point. On the other hand, if you're uncomfortable doing so that is fine. It has been a joy teaching over the last 23 years [beginning with the Leadership Training School in 1983].

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, January 26, 2008 8:41 PM
To: Jeff Purswell
Subject: RE: PC - Brent

Please disregard my request. [It wasn't worth pressing for an honest explanation. I realized my influence in the PC was undesirable.] Thanks for continuing to improve the PC. That is plenty fine.

Sincerely,
Brent

The stated reason for not having me teach was "C.J. and I have been looking over the calendar, we will be making a number of changes involving different teachers." These numerous changes involving different teachers never occurred. In fact there were absolutely no changes made involving SG teachers except that Jeff taught Pneumatology instead of Grudem and Jeff taught the Doctrine of Scripture instead of me. There were a couple minor changes for guest speakers.

Dave Harvey, Jeff Purswell, Bruce Chick, Mark Mullery, Gary Ricucci, Mickey Connolly, Bob Kauflin, Phil Sasser, Robin Boisvert, Steve Shank, Corby Megorden, Craig Cabaniss, Kenneth Maresco, Jim Donohue, and Tommy Hill all taught the same

courses in 08-09 as they did in 07-08. No new SG teachers were added. No old SG teachers were deleted. I was the only one removed.

Seven months earlier Jeff told me, "I very much want you to continue teaching...The Doctrine of Scripture.... It's wonderful to have you kicking off the year for the guys." Given those sentiments, I'd gladly have taught the course when no changes were made to the teaching rotation. Instead Jeff taught the course even though he was very busy and had too much on his plate already. This appears to have been a ploy to phase me out or at least a convenient opportunity to do so.²¹⁶ I might also add these changes were all done by e-mail and without a conversation with you or Jeff.

On a little different note, I was told a couple of months ago that all of Jenny and my messages were removed from the Sovereign Grace website. I just checked by doing a search. It appears to be the case. Could I get a copy of our messages so I can provide them to those who ask? Evidently, people are troubled by this and the fact that any reference to me has been expunged from the "history book" of Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Personal Anecdote on August 20, 2004 Meeting

After the August 20, 2004 meeting at Covenant Life Church all the men in the room came up to me and commended me for my presentation and my courage. I did not feel courageous. I was afraid to address these issues with you.

As the meeting progressed, I was comforted as I realized all the men essentially agreed with my assessment. This is evident from Bob's notes. So there was reason to be encouraged. Nevertheless, when the meeting was over and as I was leaving; I felt the Holy Spirit indicate that this meeting would ultimately result in my removal from Sovereign Grace Ministries. That thought came out of nowhere. On my way to the car, I called Jenny. She asked how the meeting went. I told it went well in the sense that all the CLC men were supportive and expressed agreement. But I also told her about the impression I received from the Holy Spirit.

I have not lived with that impression in the forefront of my mind for the last 2½ years but I have contemplated it from time to time. In retrospect, it is not hard to discern your profound offense from the August 20 meeting. It was particularly apparent during our November 19 meeting in Charlotte when you critiqued me. There was very little from the August 20 meeting you were not offended at. This was in contrast to your own comments at the August 20 meeting. Compare the two sets of notes. In three months, your perspective radically changed. I am afraid the seed fell on rocky soil.

Recently, Sovereign Grace has begun to repudiate any connection between August 20, 2004 and my present circumstances.²¹⁷ I think there is a vital and direct link. Your resentment of me resulted in sins against me. Later this bitterness contributed to an unjust process of evaluation led by Bob. I will not belabor the point.

Brent Banned from Sovereign Grace Churches

As it stands, I've been banned by you and the leadership team from involvement in any of the churches. On September 24, 2009 Dave wrote,

"Should you desire to alter your approach [i.e., stop raising concerns and asking questions]²¹⁸ and turn your attention to the practical steps you would need to take for involvement in an SGM church...then I would be happy to speak with you in person or via phone."

I have never shared the detailed concerns in this response with anyone. I've only shared my experiences in general with a handful of people. When I was involved in Sovereign Grace it was a joyful challenge to cover your sins, protect your reputation and celebrate your strengths. Your strengths touched and benefitted my life in many ways.

In contradistinction, people are now being told that my "disqualifying" sins have been addressed for many years. That they are long term. This is unjust. The first time you raised any concerns (i.e., the church planting proposal, sending Nick Swan to the Pastors College) was at the team retreat in June of 2006. People are being misled and it is intentional.²¹⁹

The Need for Private Acknowledgment by C.J.

You contacted me because you heard I might be offended. You didn't contact me because you were convicted of sin. Therefore, I hope this response helps you "to hear [my] heart and consider [my] perspective in hopes of discovering if [you] have sinned against [me]." I suggest you interact with this material and then write me back. Please let me know if you are convicted of anything. This is a necessary first step for me if we are to move ahead.

You should also consider the past input of others. Over the years, sins against me were brought to your attention by numerous individuals.²²⁰ On these occasions, you always disagreed with their correction, said you experienced no conviction of sin and therefore could not ask my forgiveness. There are many examples. I suggest you revisit them.

While there has been no effort to preserve our friendship or ask my forgiveness in the past, I sincerely hope the future is different.

The Need for Public Confession by C.J.

Over the last 30 years – and for less serious sins – you have disciplined, removed from ministry, required public confessions, done extensive investigations, reduced salaries, placed on probation, and curtailed the responsibilities of Sovereign Grace employees and pastors. In your case, none of these things occurred.²²¹

Last April at the Sovereign Grace Pastors Conference you said,

“We all sin. We sin many times and we sin in many ways. The passage [James 3:2] is clear and it is confirmed in our experience. We not only sin frequently, we sin with variety. This passage applies to each and every pastor in Sovereign Grace. We are not flawless pastors. Quite the opposite. We are flawed pastors. We do not flawlessly pastor in Sovereign Grace. I wish we did. I wish I did. But I don’t. You don’t. We don’t.... But in Sovereign Grace we must acknowledge our flaws and we must learn from our flaws...”

You also said,

“It is stunning when anyone in any modern American institution takes honest responsibility. I want you to know it should not be stunning when pastors take responsibility. It should be the norm. And in Sovereign Grace we are not about damage control. It would be a clear contradiction of this passage [James 3:2] and what we believe about the doctrine of sin for us to engage in damage control. We do not engage in damage control. There will be no damage control in Sovereign Grace. We will seek to walk humbly before God and when we stumble we will not seek to engage in damage control. No, instead we will humbly acknowledge with sorrow that we stumbled. No damage control.”

In your case, there has been no confession but there has been considerable damage control.²²² I suggest you acknowledge to the blogosphere and confess to the churches in the movement, the patterns of sin we’ve addressed in your life. In addition, I think you should give a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and senior staff at the upcoming Pre-Conference Gathering before T4G. It presents a great venue and would be a wonderful display of humility.

So I will gladly meet with you and work to see our friendship restored provided you are willing to acknowledge your sins in private correspondence and confess your sins in public.²²³

Final Remarks - An Appeal for Integrity, Truth Telling & Justice

I'd love to see our friendship restored. I'd love to see some acknowledgment of wrongdoing. I'd love to see issues from the past resolved. I'd love to be in good standing with Sovereign Grace Ministries. But all of these hopes and desires are very secondary!

Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically, and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect.²²⁴

These things are not pervasive in their lives, your life or the movement but they are serious. I know you value integrity but when you feel judged or sinned against it is often subterfuged in your life. When you become resentful, bitter and angry – grace and integrity often get left behind. These are fueled by the idols of self-preservation and love of reputation. As the movement has grown, so has temptation and sin.

I love you and Sovereign Grace Ministries. It remains one the best combinations of sound doctrine, contemporary worship, community life, and gospel centered mission in the country. There are many outstanding pastors in the churches. And there are many godly aspects to your example and leadership. These too have been imbibed by others including me. I have greatly benefitted by your life, ministry and friendship.

Though concerned, I am hopeful in Christ, and pray God's grace will be poured out upon you in abundance!

ENDNOTES

¹ I sent you "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" on March 17, 2010 and "A Final Appeal" on October 8, 2010. You provided me your perspective on these documents on December 16, 2010 and again on March 11, 2011. In these responses, you treated lightly or passed over a lot of material. As a result, I've added endnotes to highlight what you failed to address or address inadequately.

² At no point did you acknowledge any relationship between the "terrible consequences for me" and the August 20, 2004 meeting.

³ This was the first of many examples where you passed over the concerns I raised and left them unaddressed. Here you said nothing about your deceitful "claim [of] ignorance" which was "disconcerting," "disingenuous," and "unintelligible."

⁴ You pretended there was no harm to "our friendship" or "separation of heart between us."

⁵ You never acknowledged either of my points or your dishonesty.

⁶ You acknowledged absolutely no deceit and practically no hypocrisy. You never talked about self preservation or love of reputation. In other words, you have no concerns for my greatest concerns for you and the movement.

⁷ You don't acknowledge this long history of sin and its affects upon a host of people over the last three decades.

⁸ This is another example of giving your word and then breaking your word. You did not address this illustration in either of your responses.

⁹ You badly misled us in this regard. Dave and I were shocked by the almost total lack of accountability we later discovered in your life.

¹⁰ You didn't address or acknowledge this double standard. It was another example of hypocrisy you passed over.

¹¹ Something you insisted for yourself but never ensured for Dave, me or others. This requirement effectively shut down the process. The CLC men were afraid to provide updates and you/they were unwilling to meet with us. As a result we never met together again (or even had a conference call) after the August 20 meeting. They "closed circle" and you were leading the wagon train.

¹² This was an empty boast. In the years to follow you repeatedly did evaluations of me without my knowledge or participation. You even had Larry Malament send you secret reports. Dave, Gene and Bob also followed your example of exclusion. It's incredible how much was said and done behind my back.

¹³ True but you never talked to us about your hypocrisy. Nor did you ask our forgiveness or clean up the resultant debris.

¹⁴ You have never acknowledged to me (or anyone else to my knowledge) this serious and long term expression of hypocrisy. You taught accountable. You required accountability. You had a reputation for accountability. But in reality, you had little accountability with the pastors at CLC. No one was speaking into your life for all practical purposes. This should be confessed to the movement and the pastors. Moreover, you had no accountability because you saw no need for accountability. Even when men brought care in the form of correction it was typically dismissed by you. You were able to shepherd your own heart with your superior discernment. You were above accountability.

¹⁵ This is a biblical category you never used in reference to yourself. It is a very fitting one. It is related to your high estimation.

¹⁶ You repeatedly withheld information you were asked to share and promised to share yet you acknowledged no deceit in either of your responses.

¹⁷ A public confession is necessary given the adverse effect these sinful patterns have had upon a large number of people in Sovereign Grace Ministries and outside the movement over the past 30 years.

¹⁸ One day I hope you realize how intimidating and controlling you have been with people. Consider these statements from Joshua, Kenneth and Bob. People are silenced and feel manipulated by you.

¹⁹ Another example of hypocrisy.

²⁰ You thought I was a hateful friend, not a faithful friend. It appears you still think I was largely motivated by offense with two exceptions where you've changed your perspective (i.e. vacation days, stepping down). You state, "I should have explored my concerns with you and been humbly open to the possibility that you weren't offended and were not motivated by a previous offense when you were correcting me."

²¹ You don't address these additional examples of withholding information. You felt free to withhold information under any circumstance or in any venue if you disagreed with it.

²² This was an example of supplying us misinformation. You intentionally put yourself in a good light and deceitfully misrepresented the CLC pastors. They expressed "broad agreement" with us. You don't address this illustration.

²³ You don't speak to Dave's "several illustrations." You only acknowledged withholding our input from the CLC pastors and their input from us. You failed to address the widespread pattern of withholding unfavorable information. This goes to your love of reputation and image management not just "superior discernment" resulting in the dismissal of input.

²⁴ This was another example of hypocrisy. You criticized others for using e-mail for correction or other purposes but did not follow your own counsel. You'd convey quick decisions or direction without discussion. As Joshua pointed out, "You were very decisive and hasty - often through e-mail." Over the years you have brought harsh, sometimes devastating, correction via e-mail. You've done the same with decisions effecting people's lives or employment.

²⁵ Something you expressed no concern for in either of your responses.

²⁶ You make no comment about this sinful craving and controlling idol in your life. Your love (i.e., obsession) of reputation and high opinion of yourself go together. You fear being misunderstood and misrepresented because you crave the praise of men. This explains the lying, deceit, cover-up, intimidation, etc. People think of you as humble, teachable, accountable and truthful. In part, because you make self demeaning comments which are general in nature. You don't reveal specific occasions of sin or their seriousness. You often pretend humility (e.g. during panel discussions at T4G). Real humility would result in the open, honest accounting of your sins and their effects on others.

²⁷ This was purposeful self promotion and not just due to spiritual blindness. You were deceiving us, not just deceived. You tried to persuade us that you received more accountability, correction and pastoring than anyone in the movement at CLC. And that you received their input with characteristic humility and teachability.

²⁸ You began an accountability group at CLC at our request. The pastors thought you did this on your own initiative and credited you for it. You didn't adjust their faulty perspective. Later they found out it was done in response to direction from us. This was another example of deceit that goes unaddressed.

²⁹ This was under false pretense. You did not have their commendation on these occasions.

³⁰ You've told us for many years that you were "the worse sinner I know...the chief of sinners." In practice, however, you believed the opposite about yourself. You've held yourself in high regard.

³¹ This mild, gracious and singular statement about hypocrisy was offensive to you. Later you confronted me for suggesting the possibility. You felt it had no relevance. Still today, you fail to acknowledge hypocrisy as an entangling sin. The only example you agreed with was not telling the CLC pastors about our input. Otherwise you disagreed with all my examples of hypocrisy.

³² Actually it did make it less serious. There is a big difference between being duped and intentionally duping others. I don't know if Joshua still thinks you are innocent of duplicity.

³³ You don't acknowledge any lack of integrity at any time for anything. You don't address Dave's illustrations. We asked you to approach others for input or observations. You ignored us and did not follow through. Things really did stop at C.J.

³⁴ Three months later you confronted me for saying "you were resentful" when I simply suggested the possibility - a suggestion you were utterly closed to. You didn't ask forgiveness for this abusive correction.

³⁵ Of course, you thought Dave and I were harsh but not you. This was another example of hypocrisy. You acknowledged no occasion when you were harsh in tone or content in either response.

³⁶ You never talked to us about this sinful craving for reputation or its fruits in your life. You made no reference to it in either response. It appears to be a non issue in your thinking. Certainly not a significant category since you made no reference to any love of reputation.

³⁷ This was a passing remark. You never asked forgiveness. We never discussed it further. For instance, whether you were resentful.

³⁸ You “consider[ed] it” but came to the conclusion I was wrong for even suggesting the possibility. You ruled out any resentment, anger or bitterness.

³⁹ This was a very important statement by Grant. Your response that “no one had to read, promote, or agree with the book” was manipulative. For trying to discuss the issue of “cross-centeredness” we received this punishing response which was “cloaked in the virtue of humility.” You frequently say or do things that appear humble but are motivated out of a love of reputation. You want to look good by looking humble.

⁴⁰ True, you think highly of yourself but you’ve led people to believe you think little of yourself.

⁴¹ You should never have allowed us to believe you were accountable.

⁴² That is, the lack of accountability, correction and pastoral care. This should be confessed to the movement and pastors.

⁴³ I don’t believe you were being honest. You purposely withheld unfavorable information and provided favorable information on many occasions. You must take responsibility for your deceit rather than attributing it to the blinding effects of pride. Your inward deception was largely the fruit of your outward deceit. Not the other way around. You disobeyed Scripture. Eph 4:25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Col 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices.

⁴⁴ No one agreed with you. You claimed humility in remaining silent. You claimed you didn’t want to interrupt the conviction you were experiencing. But it appears you were struggling with our input and “restraining” yourself from speaking up. Everyone else felt you were not being open and honest so we could know what you were really thinking and feeling. You saw your silence as humility, we saw it as pride. As Josh said, you didn’t want “to have other eyes on your thoughts.” You didn’t want us to know your temptations or sins.

⁴⁵ The lack of self-disclosure results in a lack of public-disclosure. Not walking in the light with us results in not walking in the light with the movement and pastors.

⁴⁶ Again the concern for reputation was partly behind the lack of transparency.

⁴⁷ This was untrue. As you’ve recently confessed, you’ve were very comfortable with yourself assessment and very uncomfortable with everyone else’s assessment of you.

⁴⁸ Of course, that way of processing correction is what you recently acknowledged.

⁴⁹ You denied doing this after the August 20 meeting in your second response.

⁵⁰ You did later but in a manner that proved unfruitful. You dwelt on offenses and disagreements. That is, all the ways you thought I sinned against you and judged you. We never talked about areas of agreement. You only talked about your disagreements.

⁵¹ True enough but we were never given the opportunity to cover specific areas and examples again, despite many appeals and requests.

⁵² This was a very important point by Joshua. It is far more accurate to view your “withdrawal” as resentment and distrust. In my case, however, you deny resentment had anything to do with your withdrawal from me or treatment of me. It has taken 10 years for you to see some aspects of your pride. I hope it doesn’t an additional 10 years to see your resentment. You didn’t trust my motives, discernment or illustrations and told me so. You thought my motives were bitter, discernment errant, and illustrations irrelevant. I was cut off by you.

⁵³ You didn’t address or acknowledge these specific effects on people which are types of spiritual abuse.

⁵⁴ You never repented of these major categories (e.g. withdrawal, resentment, lack of self-disclosure, love of reputation, being unentreatable, deceit, abusive reactions, etc.), confessed particular sins to individuals, or made any attempts at personal restoration or restitution. You were disobedient to Christ and the teaching of Scripture on these subjects. You don’t reference obedience/disobedience as a category by

which to understand your behavior. You tend to blame your actions on indwelling sin. You need to see your sins much more clearly as transgressions against God's holy law. That is, as willful choices not just blinded passions. You "agree[d] with all the major categories" but chose a path of disobedience. You need more illumination but your need for repentance and obedience is greater. For example, you know a public confession is required. I believe that is clear to you. You just have to humble yourself and obey our Lord Jesus.

⁵⁵ I always hoped you'd be the one to voluntarily and downwardly adjust people's opinion of you. Instead, that providential assignment fell to the blogs. Instead of humbling yourself, you've been humbled by God. I wish it were not the case. SGM Refuge began in June 2008. Since that humbling began Sovereign Grace has been busy trying to contain the damage. I don't think this public humiliation will abate until the sins of Sovereign Grace are publicly confessed as a fruit of private repentance.

⁵⁶ Yes but concerns for your reputation have outweighed concerns for integrity. I'm afraid Proverbs 10:9 applies, "He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out." Dave has compromised himself since August 20, 2004. He has been a major factor in covering up your sins, his sins and the sins of others.

⁵⁷ We never heard back from anyone regarding arrangements for accountability or the circle of confession. Obviously you, Joshua, Grant, Kenneth and Bob, decided it was unnecessary to confess anything to anyone.

⁵⁸ You didn't address this section regarding the need for a wider confession given your blatant hypocrisy, etc.

⁵⁹ This portrait was not flattering but it was true. It was no caricature. People assumed all these were happening because they trusted you. This list should be confessed to the movement and pastors. Tragically, you continue to acknowledge no hypocrisy in reference to any of these points. People should know you've been a hypocrite in serious ways "given the portrait that forms above."

⁶⁰ You passed over this section and said nothing about redirecting the focus to Dave and me. Moreover, you deny effectively taking over the process or removing us from the process. Here is your only comment regarding the same. "Following the August meeting...I did not think of myself as leading this process, nor was I taking steps to remove you from the process...I don't recall intentionally cutting you and Dave out of any process."

⁶¹ You did not allow this conversation to occur in the context of the larger group. I knew you wanted to correct me and I wanted the other men present to hear your offenses and disagreements. Instead you met with me alone on November 19 in Charlotte. I should have insisted that others were present. That was a mistake.

⁶² I should not have allowed myself to be manipulated. Your promise was empty that "then I am glad for everyone to hear anything and everything." You blocked or refused all interaction between us, you and the CLC pastors. For example, your repeated unwillingness to answer the four questions Dave sent you.

⁶³ "Front and center stage" describes precisely what happened. You were fixated on us and directed the gaze of everyone in our direction and especially on to me. I quickly became public enemy #1. You were out of the spotlight and off the hot seat. For the next 15 months I was "hounded and harassed" (if you don't mind me putting it that way) for my supposed sins against you.

⁶⁴ You deny this happened but you don't deal with any of the evidence supporting this fact based conclusion. You abused your position and took over the process. Joshua, Grant and Kenneth were complicit in allowing you to do this.

⁶⁵ Your actions contradicted your e-mail confessions. The fruit of repentance was absent. More hypocrisy.

⁶⁶ This was an extremely serious judgment. I vividly remember how shocked we were by your false accusation. More so because you and Steve were talking this way behind our backs. You didn't address this illustration.

⁶⁷ Before August 20 you assured Dave you had no unspoken concerns for him. A couple months later you told him you had two years of accumulated concerns. You misled him. This flip flop really affected him. Dave stated his concern for your integrity in very nice terms.

⁶⁸ You flatly denied this in your second response.

⁶⁹ You corrected me for my 1 hour 20 minute overview and the supposed lack of dialogue on August 20 (which is contradicted by the minutes) while delivering a 4 hour monologue of correction. You didn't address this example of hypocrisy.

⁷⁰ You acknowledged your sinful judgment of me on this one point in your Dec 16, 2010 response. At the time, however, you "insisted" one thing was true when the "opposite" thing was true. Your thinking was irrational and nothing could persuade you otherwise. It was scary and typical behavior in relation to me. You didn't have a grasp on reality. Your heart was raging. You couldn't think straight. Your reasoning was crooked.

⁷¹ Something you continue to deny. You don't remember any resentment, bitterness or anger in your heart.

⁷² You addressed and acknowledged only one of your sinful judgments (i.e., saying I wanted you to step down). You passed over the remaining twenty or so.

⁷³ You passed these judgments onto men like Steve, Joshua, Kenneth, Grant and Bob. You acknowledged nothing of the sort with no harm done.

⁷⁴ Even though you treated me in an abusive fashion, I wanted to support you, serve you and move ahead. I wanted to commend progress but there was little to commend and there was a lot to be concerned about since you were not cooperating with us. I was trying to be honest with you and help you.

⁷⁵ You saw no need to talk about them because you disagreed with them and thought I was blinded by bitterness.

⁷⁶ This was a terrible mistake. Bob followed lock step in your path of resistance and deception.

⁷⁷ As pointed out above you did not deal with the issues in this section. You passed over your sinful judgments and left them unaddressed. Nor did you acknowledge your expressions of hypocrisy.

⁷⁸ Not a reference to Benny Phillips.

⁷⁹ You crave encouragement and when you don't receive it become resentful. You felt deserving of our encouragement because of the high marks you gave yourself. We tried our best to encourage you but it was hard given your obstinacy, judgments, resentment and withdrawal. In actuality, we handled you with kid gloves.

⁸⁰ You didn't see your sins as serious.

⁸¹ You thought DH needed to confess to the church but you didn't see any need for you to confess to a small group of leaders like the CLC pastors. Your sins were far greater than DH's.

⁸² Something you were not doing.

⁸³ You were hard on BL and easy on yourself. BL handled your mistreatment well. His sins were less serious and he accepted responsibility for them. It took 7 years for you to take responsibility for your sins. BL was long suffering.

⁸⁴ You didn't address this serious example of hypocrisy. You participated in no couples retreat in 3 years, no care group in 18 months, and no men's accountability group. This was astounding. I remember being so shocked when discovered.

⁸⁵ You disputed this by saying you didn't remember any resentment, bitterness or anger in attitude or posture of heart toward me. Yep, clean as a whistle, pure as snow and holy as Hannah. Pardon the sarcasm.

⁸⁶ This e-mail was sent the next morning at 8:52 am. My comment about "an element of hypocrisy" appeared to be in the forefront of your mind. I suspect it was preoccupying because it was disturbing. Why? As it turned out you were offended by its use and felt it had no application to you. In less than 24 hours, your focus was on my supposed sins. You briefly acknowledged this hypocrisy in your second response. It is your only acknowledgment of hypocrisy and it pertains to not telling the CLC pastors about our input.

⁸⁷ True enough. You were faithful to let me know you did not perceive any hypocrisy in yourself but you did perceive resentment in my soul for making the suggestion.

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- ⁸⁸ You weren't interested in our perspective. You were intent on sharing your perspective. There was much you wanted to say to Dave and me. Starting August 21 your focus was on Dave and me. It stayed there. It was as if August 20 never happened.
- ⁸⁹ You acknowledged judging me in your first response but do you realize how abusive you were?
- ⁹⁰ You didn't address the adverse impact this sinful judgment had on others. In fact, you acknowledge no harmful affect on anyone at anytime for anything.
- ⁹¹ This was another example of appearing to be humble but in reality you had no intent of stepping down. You claimed you'd make stepping down easy for us if we felt it necessary. So not true.
- ⁹² Glad? Or did you really mean mad? You were not happy about this request.
- ⁹³ These were empty boasts.
- ⁹⁴ I was mistaken.
- ⁹⁵ I didn't mean six years. ☺ Seriously, this was a "black and white" illustration of sinful judging but you would not humble yourself.
- ⁹⁶ This sounded oh so humble but I/we/others experienced just the opposite. You barely benefited from our input. You rejected my feedback and didn't answer my questions. Two weeks later you badly stumble over my attempts to serve you at the August 20 meeting. This was humble sounding but you never followed through on your promises.
- ⁹⁷ Contrary to your boast, you zealously "persecuted" me for supposedly suggesting you step down. You were indignant. I experienced your hostility once again for something you made up in your own mind contrary to the facts of the matter.
- ⁹⁸ Another boast. Your offense was so great you could not let the issue go.
- ⁹⁹ A mere platitude.
- ¹⁰⁰ Which were entirely bogus.
- ¹⁰¹ Steve was bad for you and you were bad for Steve. You transferred offenses to each other and slandered me to others without my knowledge. Of course, Steve's comments were intentional. He intended to put me in a bad light. Did he do so knowing he was "intentionally" distorting the truth? I think so given the abundant evidence but only the Lord knows for sure.
- ¹⁰² This was Dave's perspective of me on October 19 – two months after the August 20 meeting. For over a year you, Steve, Bob, and Kenneth prosecuted your case against me.
- ¹⁰³ It was important. You were making a case against me and turning others against me. You discredited me as a way to discrediting my input. You rejected the messenger and the message.
- ¹⁰⁴ This was not an overstatement. Though you acknowledged no resentment, bitterness or anger; your offenses controlled you. Many of your thoughts and actions defied logic. This was another example of spiritual abuse – intimidation, manipulation, and control.
- ¹⁰⁵ Five months after the August 20 meeting I was still trying in vain to get all of us back together for a follow up meeting. You actively prevented this from happening.
- ¹⁰⁶ True. From December 2003 to December 2004. This continued indefinitely.
- ¹⁰⁷ With the exception of August 20 you had not allowed us to talk as a team with you about our concerns for over 12 months. We repeatedly tried but you refused. After August 20 you took control of the process and focused on our perceived sin. Never in the history of Sovereign Grace Ministries had anyone taken control of (effectively shutting down) their own disciplinary process, then turned the process against those bringing the discipline, and steadfastly refused to meet and talk about the original concerns. You lorded over the process for your advantage and selfish benefit.
- ¹⁰⁸ You just ignored all our concerns and requests and refused to engage us. Anyone else in the movement would have been fired for such actions.
- ¹⁰⁹ This was a shameful and deceitful response. To claim such ignorance was impossible to understand. For four months we appealed to meet and talk about the August 20 meeting, input from CLC pastors, relevance of illustrations, effects upon us, redirecting the focus, demand to be present at all evaluations, refusal to interact, withdrawing from us, etc.
- ¹¹⁰ Dave and I observed little good fruit. In fact, we were concerned for the growing presence of bad fruit.

¹¹¹ You led Joshua, Kenneth, Grant and Bob to believe you were discussing issues with us when in fact this was not happening. More deception.

¹¹² What did you tell the men about your intentions? They believed you fully intended “to press into these areas” (i.e., the effects of your sins upon us). This was the heart of their recommendations but you had no such intention. You dismissed their input and rebelled against their counsel. I know you thought their input was worthless but why did you deceive them into thinking you’d be getting back to us?

¹¹³ You often taught confession should be done in person not via email. Once again, you were hypocritical. You had no such conviction in your case. There were no “face to face” confessions – just two e-mail confessions. You skipped over this example.

¹¹⁴ To this day, I don’t know what “potentially sinful attitudes” the men were addressing in your heart. We were never told. All you acknowledged was a failure to inform us of the ways the CLC pastors were correcting you due to pride. You never filled us in on their correction.

¹¹⁵ You were proud but you were also rebellious, stubborn and deceitful.

¹¹⁶ This turned out not to be the case when we provided our perspective.

¹¹⁷ This was absurd. No one else could get away with a simple “I was proud, please forgive me.” The CLC pastors had instructed you to be specific in your confession of sin against us. This was the ultimate cop out but not even this occurred.

¹¹⁸ You did not acknowledge hypocrisy as a sinful pattern in either of your responses. In fact, you only acknowledged one incident of hypocrisy. It appeared in your second response and dealt with not passing on our correction to the CLC pastors. Otherwise, you took considerable space to deny being hypocritical in three illustrations I used. I don’t believe you are blind to this sin and therefore in need of more illumination. I think you are willfully suppressing the truth about hypocrisy which is evident to you. It is not a problem of perception. It is a problem of volition. You refuse to acknowledge what you see clearly. The same is true for the Board of Directors.

¹¹⁹ This is another example of lording it over us. When you disagreed with our evaluation you unilaterally removed me, took over the process and stopped any further evaluation of you. You used your position and exercised authority for your own sinful advantage and protection and in the process harmed other individuals.

¹²⁰ You didn’t acknowledge any wrong doing, only regret that you did not “quickly gathered the team together so that Steve could share his concern” with Dave and me. Otherwise you didn’t address this sinful interaction with Steve and the negative fruit it produced. It fueled your sinful suspicious of Dave and me.

¹²¹ Your heart was in a bad way and full of many sinful judgments. You skipped over this illustration in your responses.

¹²² This is a major concern for me! Countless times you have rejected correction because you think the person bringing it is bitter (e.g. Dave and me). This must stop! When people correct you, you practically equate it with bitterness. And you’ve often judged the person’s heart before talking to them. Hence many have pointed out how you judge hastily, prematurely, and without careful consideration of the facts. You frequently assume bitterness is present in their heart. Therefore, if someone adjusts you, they must be resentful of you. So often you turn the focus back upon the person and correct them for their pride, resentment, anger or bitterness. You may acknowledge some wrong but fundamentally you see the other person as the problem. In other words, if they weren’t resentful they wouldn’t be correcting you and their correction is erroneous because they are blinded by bitterness. This becomes a convenient excuse to dismiss them and their reproof. They are the one who need help! Not you. This is a prevalent error among Sovereign Grace pastors. Even when bitter, people need to be heard and heard fairly and sincerely. The easiest way to help them overcome their bitterness is to confess any sin committed against them.

¹²³ This too is a common response by you to correction. You reject the person because you’ve decided they cannot be trusted. They can’t be trusted because their motive for correcting you is bitter, their observations are errant, and their illustrations are sinful judgments. You felt so wronged by me. You felt

so justified in your harsh condemnation. You were angry. This was abusive in nature. It too goes unaddressed. You had no good reason not to trust me.

¹²⁴ This kind of thing frequently happens. You deny your words or actions.

¹²⁵ You also deny how forcefully and fiercely you can communicate.

¹²⁶ This pattern of denial continues. You repeatedly deny any resentful, angry or bitterness.

¹²⁷ This was another empty promise. Time after time you broke your word. You were the one who could not be trusted. You'd say the right thing and then do the opposite thing. You never talked to us and never let us know where you were convicted of sin.

¹²⁸ You denied doing this in your responses but it was obvious to Dave, Steve and me.

¹²⁹ Of you taking over the process.

¹³⁰ These began immediately after the August 20 meeting. You didn't address this deceitful activity.

¹³¹ Steve was a man pleaser in this process and compromised his integrity as a result. He'd say one thing to you and another to us. Or, he'd slandered us and connivingly interact with you without our knowledge. He wanted to look good in everyone's sight but especially in yours.

¹³² Steve was not willing to jeopardize his good standing with you. This was a historical pattern. He'd withhold his discernment and let us do the hard work. He didn't want to get in trouble with you. When he did speak it often lacked insight and sufficient firmness. He went easy on you. He lacked courage and a willingness to deny self. It was no wonder why you gravitated to Steve.

¹³³ They were under a wrong impression. You did not allow us to bring any input after August 20. It was 5 months later.

¹³⁴ What did you tell them? I hope it was the truth. That is, not much because you refused to interact with us even when we brought concerns and observations to your attention.

¹³⁵ Kenneth did not want to talk to us about you and he did not want us to talk to him about you. He was very concerned either would jeopardize your progress and violate your trust in the CLC pastors. They were silenced, we were cut off and you were mute. You refused to tell us about the input you were receiving and you refused to interact with us. In this way, you controlled and manipulated the process. We were separated from the CLC pastors and them from us. You also separated from us and therefore us from you. Furthermore, you refused all attempts to set up meetings with all parties in attendance. Six years later the Holy Spirit is bringing into the open what you attempted to control and conceal.

¹³⁶ Why were the CLC pastors under the impression you were filling us in on their input? Did you mislead them? We never talked about this and you didn't address it.

¹³⁷ This enabled you to control and cut off the flow of information. Allowing this to happen catered to your deceit.

¹³⁸ And all rejected by you. Dave and I were still sharing our perspective with you on retreats even though you refused to engage us.

¹³⁹ Which you now acknowledge you never did. You withheld this information. It was an ingrained pattern.

¹⁴⁰ This was a step in the wrong direction. Bob shared some of the same characteristics as Steve. Man (C.J.) pleasing was deeply imbedded in his soul. He coveted your favor and approval. He told me so. In consequence, Bob was far bolder (more arrogant) in his defense of you. He took up your offenses and shared your sinful judgments. He granted you great latitude.

¹⁴¹ These recollections were all true. The repeatedly use of "any" was accurate. This covered the time span from August 2004 through March 2005. Furthermore, these 5 general observations were never discussed despite our ongoing appeals.

¹⁴² None of these recommendations were adopted by you or the CLC pastors.

¹⁴³ None of these questions were discussed. You acknowledged this was wrong and due to your pride.

¹⁴⁴ In the first response, you agreed to distancing yourself and withdrawing your affection from me. In your second response, you deny this was due to resentment, anger or bitterness. To what then do you attribute your rejection and punishing reaction?

¹⁴⁵ Clarity on the issues and our relationship with the CLC pastors deteriorated after Bob took the point. Things decidedly worsen.

¹⁴⁶ You now say these questions should have been answered but weren't because of your pride. True but pride in what form? Be specific. And why did the CLC men also find these questions problematic and unhelpful? Clearly, it was due to your influence upon them and their craving for your approbation. Joshua, Grant, Kenneth and Bob need to take responsibility for their sins – man pleasing, sinful judgments, cowardice, favoritism, etc. These too should be communicated to the movement and pastors. They failed to hold you accountable to truth and allowed you to walk in falsehood and deception. They should have insisted these questions were answered immediately and thoroughly. Instead they struggled with them according to Bob and Kenneth. They were now your puppets and pawns. They changed our definition of humility in order to accommodate your pride.

¹⁴⁷ This was a lie not self-delusion. You knew you were doing none of these things. We repeatedly told you so over that 7 month period. It is dishonest to chalk this up to deception and a lack of illumination.

¹⁴⁸ This was another lie. You promised you'd talk to us at the October 2004 retreat about your e-mail confession but then refused to do so when we tried to draw you out. We "talked" about your refusal but not about the substance of your confession. You intentionally distorted the truth.

¹⁴⁹ We were at opposite ends of the spectrum. Even Steve agreed with Dave and me. The questions (and issues) we felt most critical to answer were dismissed as unhelpful and problematic intrusions. This was incredulous.

¹⁵⁰ Bob, Kenneth, and your opposition to the questions was so univocal and unequivocal there was no reason to talk further about Dave's four questions. No good would have resulted.

¹⁵¹ Just another example of deceit you chose not to address and skipped over in your responses.

¹⁵² From what you've recently confessed, I think my notes have proven to be wise and helpful. Similarly I was not being proud, I was risking everything by being truthful in order to help you. Bob and Kenneth lorded it over me that day. Long ago they should have asked my forgiveness.

¹⁵³ Bob and Kenneth were the ones being unhelpful, unwise and proud. Do you agree? If so, have your brought it to their attention?

¹⁵⁴ I was rebuked and reprovved for these five observations. You now acknowledge their truthfulness with the exception of number 5. You still deny any resentment, etc.

¹⁵⁵ Their only defense against my critique was based upon a lie you told them and they believed.

¹⁵⁶ This was a terrible injustice and horrible experience. Bob and Kenneth were full of arrogance and wrong headedness. They were completely duped yet supremely pompous.

¹⁵⁷ Something you denied in both your Dec. 16, 2010 and Mar. 11, 2011 responses. Remarkably, you failed to recognize having any negative impact upon anyone in their opinion of me or relationship to me. Wow.

¹⁵⁸ Innumerable times I asked you to be honest, candid, revealing, and thorough in your response to RRF&D and AFA. Here you made no comment on whether you sent Bob and Kenneth to confront and reprove me. If you did, this constitutes a terrible abuse of authority. This kind of lording needs to be confessed to the movement and pastors.

¹⁵⁹ This was more than "an" example. It became "the" example of my extreme pride and unteachableness. It was entirely unfounded.

¹⁶⁰ Of course, you didn't think it was harsh. You really believed these attributes were entirely absent in my life. To date you have never acknowledge any harshness or extremity in your evaluation of me. Nor have you ever acknowledge bitterness as the source of your harshness.

¹⁶¹ You acknowledged no "radial" change in how you related to me. Moreover, you denied the "loss of relationship" had any bearing on the loss of responsibilities. In other words, you see no tie between your attitude toward me and your treatment of me.

¹⁶² Later my responsibilities were decreased due to a newly discovered lack of gifting and capacity. This discovery was never explained to me. And my "more character" quickly became no character in critical categories.

¹⁶³ Not for long. Things quickly and radically changed after August 20, 2004. You denied this happened.

¹⁶⁴ You didn't address this issue.

¹⁶⁵ Dave was absolutely right. Your influence or control over people and circumstances was unhealthy and unprofitable. You denied doing this.

¹⁶⁶ You saw (or were unwilling to acknowledge) no connection between the sins in your e-mail confessions and how you controlled and directed the process in a self serving manner.

¹⁶⁷ Functionally, people feared you more than they feared God. Proverbs 29:25 applied, "The fear of man brings a snare." Good men were afraid to speak the truth. They were caught in sin.

¹⁶⁸ You chose not to comment on this blatant example of hypocrisy. You purposely passed over it. Hypocrisy is a prominent sin in your life. It should be confessed to the movement and pastors.

¹⁶⁹ A full year after the August 20, 2004 meeting, we were finally given the opportunity to share our concerns for "the culture of accommodation" we repeatedly observed between the CLC pastors and you. But Bob was defending you and fighting us. He brushed away our concerns with a "helpful to hear your perspectives" but forged ahead in his prosecution of us.

¹⁷⁰ For a whole year you refused to answer these questions and the CLC pastors allowed this to happen. Nothing like this has ever occurred in the history of Sovereign Grace Ministries. You were in a class all by yourself. You were above the rules. They didn't apply to you.

¹⁷¹ The CLC pastors shared many serious concerns with you at the August 20, 2004 meeting a year earlier. I wondered if you ever followed up with them on those concerns. If you did, you never filled us in on those conversations.

¹⁷² Earlier in the day Bob told me I needed to evaluate whether or not my expectations of you were sinful.

¹⁷³ We weren't looking for "more specifics," we were looking for any specifics. My expectations were not the problem and they were not sinful. The problem was Bob's ungodly laxity and your unwillingness to walk in the light.

¹⁷⁴ This wasn't the problem either. Bob's de-emphasis was the problem. He did not hold you accountable for your actions. According to Bob, we were supposed to be celebrating, moving on, and rejoicing even though you had not talked to us for a year and had not acknowledged any sin to us.

¹⁷⁵ I've never seen such bias and prejudice in a pastoral situation. Bob was blinded by his cravings to please you and by his own sense of self importance. Bob has often confessed his temptation to be a "messiah" in situations like this one. Audaciously, he dismissed our concerns and redirected the focus back onto us. I tried to respond humbly to Bob and avoid further disagreement but upon further reflection had to bring up the issue of "sinful expectations."

¹⁷⁶ Dave, Steve, Bob, Kenneth and I talked by phone three days earlier. During that conversation Bob suggested my expectations of you were "sinful" and needed to be evaluated. Six years later, you acknowledged in your Dec. 16, 2010 response that my "expectations" were legitimate and should have been met. Bob's mind was darkened. Our requests were reasonable and decent. They were not sinful as Bob implied. Rather, they were guided by wisdom and motivated by love.

¹⁷⁷ Something for which Bob showed no concern.

¹⁷⁸ We made no progress with Bob and Kenneth. As Dave said, we were "coming up against a different understanding of humility and what leadership looks like."

¹⁷⁹ You were silent on these four points. You made no comment. You should encourage Bob and Kenneth to acknowledge their error and learn from their mistakes so they don't repeat them.

¹⁸⁰ Only because we made no progress with Bob, Kenneth and you. You were viewed as the victim. We were viewed as the perpetrators.

¹⁸¹ More than confusing. Dave was extremely troubled by Bob's comment that he had been unclear. Bob and Kenneth were hearing us but not listening to us. We'd been perfectly clear with them. They assigned so little value to our observations it was as if we never shared them. They were focused on us (how issues were brought) and not on you (what issues were brought). This was in large part due to your influence upon them. You were offended at us. Their focus was your focus - our perceived sin, not your actual sin.

¹⁸² Two months after my last correspondence with Bob, he contacted me again. His focus was still upon me and how I sinned against you. I suspect you were asking him to press the issues. The hounding continued...

¹⁸³ Bob was concerned these statements included "sinful expectations." I suspect you felt the same way since you thought these kinds of requests were motivated by personal offense. Was this why Bob

brought it up yet another time? In any case, Bob's response was beyond comprehension. We'd being over this ground many times in print and in conversation. You had not addressed any of our concerns and we never heard back from you regarding our questions.

¹⁸⁴ You disagreed with or denied each point in this section in your second response.

¹⁸⁵ You didn't address this illustration or offer any explanation.

¹⁸⁶ You claimed not to remember this important letter.

¹⁸⁷ Bob has never answered that question. In short, this was another example of preferential treatment. Bob should have been earnest to ask you about the letter.

¹⁸⁸ I didn't hear from you again for 7 months which was 4 months after I left Sovereign Grace Ministries. You acknowledged this was "a failure of love" but not due to bitterness, resentment or anger. It was simply a sin of omission.

¹⁸⁹ You skipped over this in your responses. You made no comment on your complete withdrawal from me as soon as I stepped down from the apostolic team.

¹⁹⁰ You denied "a change in...disposition toward me" had anything to do with the correction I began to receive starting in June 2006.

¹⁹¹ You did not address this illustration. It was passed over without comment.

¹⁹² That's why these documents will be a complete shock to them.

¹⁹³ Your claim of ignorance in your January 2010 letter was manipulative. This was another example of deceit you didn't addresses in your two responses.

¹⁹⁴ Another example of hypocrisy. You taught one thing while you lived another thing. You didn't speak to this illustration.

¹⁹⁵ Great teaching. No application. Dave's response was staggering. Pure hypocrisy.

¹⁹⁶ "The demands of many other situations" and "other matters in the movement that appear urgent" were excuses for not meeting with us to talk about 9 pages of extremely serious offenses, concerns and issues that were urgent and not apparently. We were shocked by the indifference and manipulation.

¹⁹⁷ On the occasion I just referenced you were addressed by Larry Malament regarding bitterness. Bob was on the phone also. You disagreed with Larry. Later, Dave and Steve commended me because they thought you might use my confession against me (i.e., I was bitter in general while you were bitter-less).

¹⁹⁸ These were the only examples from RRF&D and AFA you dealt with at length. Unfortunately, your 1,200 word response was in the form of a denial. You found these three illustrations irrelevant as it pertained to hypocrisy.

¹⁹⁹ Here you used the present tense with Gene. "We are walking through a lengthy process where they are kindly spending many hours evaluating what I am to do over the next 7 years Lord willing.... There are a number of possible recommendations on the table." Two weeks later you used the past tense with me. "Well, I haven't thought about it for a few months so I am not sure I have much to share at this time." You denied being deceptive with Gene but you made no effort to explain the obvious contradiction. Both assertions can't be true. You misled one of us. This was another example of deceit that went unaddressed.

²⁰⁰ During the previous year you made three trips to Charlotte to confront me on issues like independence. You used three examples. Two were comprised of sinful judgments (i.e., Carolyn's booklet, how I chose messages) and one dealt with how I presented my proposal for planting a church in April 2006. In the example above, you not only denied being deceitful and hypocritical, you also denied being independent. You frequently confront sins in others that don't exist or are less serious than the same sins in your life. For example, you'll confront bitterness while bitter, pride while proud, independence while independent.

²⁰¹ You addressed this illustration at length in order to repudiate any hypocrisy, deceit or independence. I'm glad you were honest. It helps me to understand your self assessment.

²⁰² You knew Dave, Steve and I disagreed with Jeff. It was not a question of forgetting our previous agreement or failing to discuss it further to make sure we were in agreement. You revised history. Knowing we were not in agreement you nevertheless had Jeff introduce contrary doctrine/practice. Why? Because you agreed with him! That was the explanation you gave us. That's what mattered and

all that was necessary. You disregarded our previously decision and decided to introduce changes because you agreed with Jeff. This was an example of hypocrisy, deceit and independence, not just “bad leadership.”

²⁰³ You should not have been writing the book on humility. But since you did, it should have included references to our dealings with you as a team. How could you leave this out? I hope you will include our experience with you the last 10 years when you revise the book in the future.

²⁰⁴ I remember how hard it was to read this statement from *Humility: True Greatness* (pp. 128-129). You spent years resisting and refusing our care and correction. You didn’t embrace it or pursue it. You were also unaccountable to the CLC pastoral team. This comment (along with others) was so troubling and disillusioning. It misled people and gave them a false impression of you. It was a breath taking expression of hypocrisy. If you ever make a public confession you should cite this quote and make clear the full extent of your hypocrisy. The following was true in practice. “Hypocrisy is the state of pretending to have beliefs, opinions, virtues, feelings, qualities, or standards that one does not actually have. Hypocrisy involves the deception of others and is thus a kind of lie.” (Wikipedia) Or, hypocrisy is “an expression of agreement that is not supported by real conviction; insincerity by virtue of pretending to have qualities or beliefs that you do not really have.” (Princeton Wordnet)

²⁰⁵ This was brought to their attention by the Assessment Team. These were persistent and serious charges by Dave and Gene based upon hearsay evidence.

²⁰⁶ Which was a predictable pattern.

²⁰⁷ Questions involving accountability were almost never answered by Dave or Gene.

²⁰⁸ I’ve repeatedly ask for clarification over the last two years. No one has ever answered by questions. What doctrine and practice merited removal from Sovereign Grace Ministries? Dave mentioned only one area of possible difference. I still have no idea what other “areas of disagreement in respect to doctrine and practice” were of such great concern to you.

²⁰⁹ Dave wrote the letter but it was on behalf of you and the SGM leadership team.

²¹⁰ This quote came from your book on *Worldliness* (p. 175). How was it that you were not corrected for legalism when others were corrected for far less intrusive regulations of conduct? Simply explained, what you may do, say or write; others may not do, say or write. This served as another example of a different (i.e., watered down, diluted) standard for you.

²¹¹ You could not have been clearer! You knew and stated explicitly that it was no longer possible for me to serve in pastoral ministry in SGM because of your differences with me in doctrine and practice.

²¹² Pure pretension. Shifting from certainty to uncertainty.

²¹³ Pure spin. Shifting from knowing to not knowing.

²¹⁴ Pure manipulation. Shifting from one subject to a different subject.

²¹⁵ Like so many other examples in RRF&D, you chose to skip over this clear cut illustration of duplicity. I asked you to be open, honest, transparent, frank and thorough in your response to what I wrote. In large measure you avoided my request. This “flip flop” was a prime example of spin as practiced by you, Dave, and others. It’s not the same Sovereign Grace I once knew but I remain hopeful you will renounce your sins, turn from them, confess publicly, get genuine accountability, and make restitution to those you’ve wronged. No more covering up.

²¹⁶ Fifteen men from Sovereign Grace Ministries or churches continued teaching in the Pastors College the year I was removed. I was bumped because you and Jeff wanted to make “a number of changes involving different teachers.” Truth be told, not a single change was made except for me. I tire of saying it, but you conveniently skipped over this sorrowful experience and provided me no answers. I don’t believe you were honest with me. You didn’t address this ploy. Making room for you and Jeff to teach the 3rd Wave position and supposed changes in the teaching rotation were half truths at best. In truth, you didn’t want me in the PC. You decided I no longer had anything to offer future pastors by way of life, doctrine, history or experience. My teaching and influence were undesirable. You denied your withdrawal from me, judgments of me, and resentment toward me had anything to do with my removal.

²¹⁷ You continued this repudiation in your March 11, 2011 response. You saw no correlation between your sinful assessment of me (i.e., many judgments) and your ungodly influence upon others whose perception of me was shaped by you in part.

²¹⁸ Dave cut off all interaction with me unless I stopped raising concerns and asking questions. This was a horrible abuse of authority. He was coercive and exploitive. If I wanted to be involved in a SGM church I needed to be silent and turn my attention away from others sins to my supposed sins. You didn't address this.

²¹⁹ For instance, this lie was told to all the Care Group leaders in Grace Community Church by Dave and Gene during a secret phone call I knew nothing about on June 4, 2007. People like Larry Malament also passed on this fabrication to others. It had a terrible effect upon people including close friends. Of course, you didn't address this illustration.

²²⁰ You have an amazing ability to forget the unfavorable. Remarkably, you don't remember a single person ever expressing any concerns that you were, or might be, resentful or bitter toward me! Here are several brief examples. First, Kenneth and Bob told me in June 2004 how mad you and Carolyn were at me for the effect our dealings with you would have on the Milestone Weekend. They tried to help your hearts with anger and resentment. Second, here is what Kenneth wrote in conjunction with Joshua, Bob and Grant. "Whenever we have observed any element of potentially sinful attitudes from CJ we have faithfully shared our thoughts and perspective and encouraged CJ to get back to you." Do you mean to say these four men never expressed any concerns for your attitude toward me? Of course, they did this very thing on August 20, 2004. For example, when you sinfully reacted to my use of the word, lambasted" and also Joshua's observations that your withdrawing from us was really resentment in action. There are many other examples. You have a selective memory on these matters.

²²¹ You don't address your hypocrisy and or the Board's favoritism. If I am unfit for ministry, then my friend, you are unfit for ministry. Rather than a confession, maybe it should be a resignation. If we're are going to apply the same standards you don't have a choice.

²²² You didn't address the "cover-up" of your sins and the effect of those sins upon the movement and individuals.

²²³ You acknowledged some sins in private correspondence but left unaddressed the majority of sins and the most serious sins. And you saw no need for public confession of any kind.

²²⁴ You rebutted and denied any such effect. Nor did you address most of the sins in this and the following paragraph. You denied lying, deceit, a lack of integrity, hypocrisy, resentment, bitterness, or anger.

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A FINAL APPEAL

OCTOBER 8, 2010

"To correct CJ, or to challenge his own self-perception, was to experience a reaction through e-mails, consistent disagreement (without seeking to sufficiently understand), a lack of sufficient follow-up and occasionally, relational withdrawal. Along with this, CJ was poor in volunteering areas of sin, temptation or weakness in himself." --Dave Harvey

Introduction¹

I'd like to begin by reiterating why I've put such great effort in writing you at length in a "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" (RRF&D) and, now again, in "A Final Appeal" (AFA). At the risk of sounding sanctimonious, I am genuinely concerned for the glory of God, the propagation of the gospel, the testimony of Sovereign Grace Ministries, the well-being of others, and the good of your soul. I love you. I love Sovereign Grace Ministries. I want the full measure of God's blessing to rest upon you.

If I craved personal vindication, I could have spoken up on many occasions over many years. Instead, I've remained quiet in public but made appeals in private. I've not slandered you. I've protected you. I have sought to serve you and the Gospel. This is the impetus and driving force behind my appeals. I have no animus. By God's grace, I've sought to keep my heart pure. God knows to what extent I've succeeded.

In this document, like the last one, I have painstakingly researched all I have written and taken great care to present things justly and in context. I am sure I fail at points but what I have written is reliable and based on fact not hearsay. Once again, my ability to present in detail is due to the use of primary source material. Otherwise, I could not recall all of this material. My memory of conversations and events is not due to a heart filled with bitterness. Quotations are *ipsissima verba* not *ipsissima vox*.

This writing constitutes a final appeal. Scores of other helpful illustrations remain but I have no plans to write you about them at this time. That could change in the future depending on circumstances.

Background

On January 14, you wrote me regarding our friendship and said you held "disagreements over doctrine and practice" that "now separate us from serving together" in ministry. I asked for a clarification on doctrine and practice which you refused to supply in writing. Then I wrote a response regarding our friendship.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 2:39 PM
To: Nora Earles
Subject: RE: Letter from CJ

I am glad to provide you an answer regarding our friendship, etc. but that will take a considerable amount of time. My question about doctrine and practice was just a "quick note for now." It also seemed an easy one for you to answer.

On March 17, I sent you my "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" (RRF&D). I didn't hear back so I wrote you on April 24.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2010 9:54 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Response

Hello C.J.,

I hope things went well for you at T4G. Do you have any idea when you can provide me a response?

Thanks
Brent

You wrote back explaining how busy you were and said you hoped to respond by mid-June. That was fine. You also said you didn't "know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your document." This comment was helpful to me. It gave me a small window into your soul. It shed light on how you viewed my perspectives on numerous people I mentioned in RRF&D. Finally, Bob responded to me on your behalf on June 18. This is something you've often had him do with me and others. I thought it improper. I did not want to work through a middle man so I redirected the interaction back to you. Here are the e-mails.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, May 15, 2010 9:59 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Response to Your E-mail

Briefly for now...I wish you could respond sooner. Three months seems like a long time to hear back.... Glad to hear you had the opportunity to get away and celebrate your 35th [anniversary]!

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2010 2:05 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Response to Your E-mail

Brent,

Thanks for your patience with the process. I don't know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your document and I'm seeking their observations, evaluation and recommendations as to how we can hopefully resolve this. Again, I appreciate your patience with me and the process...

In His grace,

C.J.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 19, 2010 9:49 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Request for Written Response

Dear C.J.,

Bob wrote me yesterday on your behalf. I thanked him for his note but explained that I'd like to continue corresponding with you directly.

As a next step, would you please provide me a thorough response in writing to my document, "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" (i.e., RRF&D)? After you do so, I am glad to talk about setting up a time to meet and discuss its contents including our friendship.

I hope this proposal meets with your approval.

Love in Christ,
Brent

This proposal did not meet with your approval.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2010 6:36 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Reconciliation

Brent,

I hope you are having a most enjoyable Father's Day as you are one fine father and your children are clear confirmation of this!

Thanks for your e-mail and desire to pursue reconciliation. I am eager to meet with you and I hope we can do this soon.

As for a written response I would simply want you to know that after reading your document I am aware of specific ways I have sinned against you and I desire to sincerely and specifically acknowledge those sins and ask your forgiveness. So this would form the sole purpose of our meeting. I have no desire or intention to cover anything else, just ask your forgiveness, if you would please allow me to do this. I'm sure I don't perceive everything you've observed but I do hope what I do perceive of my sin at present will prove helpful in pursuing reconciliation between us. And my desire is not simply for our reconciliation. Somehow I am hoping that one day you will be able to return to Sovereign Grace where so many love you and where I think you belong.

Would you be comfortable trying to schedule this meeting? We could meet at the Charlotte airport for a few hours so this would involve a minimum of travel/time for you. Let me know what you think when it's convenient.

With appreciation,

C. J.

Here was my response to you. I was eager to meet and forgive you which is easy to do when sins are biblically confessed (2 Cor. 7:10-13). In our case, the remaining "unconfessed" issues will determine whether restoration and reconciliation are possible.²

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2010 4:18 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Reconciliation

Greetings C.J.,

I hope your times with Metro Life Church and at the Ligonier National Conference went well and you were able to return home for a blessed Father's Day with your dear family.

I sincerely appreciate your desire to meet and ask forgiveness. I look forward to such a meeting and I am eager to forgive you. I am unable to meet with you at the present time, however, but I want to bring immediately relief to your conscience and minister grace to your soul. Therefore you are welcome to acknowledgment any wrong in this format rather than wait for a meeting. I want you freed of all guilt now through the precious blood of Jesus.

At the risk of being misunderstood, I must appeal again for a written response to my document that covers a plethora of important subjects. There is need for accountability. There is need for clarity. There is need for full disclosure. Therefore, I'd greatly appreciate if you were completely open and transparent about the matters I have raised with you.

In this regard, it is necessary to understand how you view the issues and concerns I've brought to your attention. This could go a long way in our pursuit of reconciliation and remedy. So while I sincerely appreciate your willingness to meet, and wish I could accommodate your request, I cannot do so until I have a written and plenary response to issues I have raised with you. This does not mean I cannot forgive you. You are welcome to ask my forgiveness by writing me.

In responding to the larger document, please be perfectly honest and share your thoughts in a comprehensive manner. For instance, what aspects of my presentation troubled you, helped you, or convicted you? What points do you agree with or disagree with? Do you believe there is a need for "a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?" Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them? You recently wrote for example, "I don't know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your document"? These are just a few questions to help you understand my appeal. I realize there will be

disagreements but those disagreements are important to understand in order to pursue reconciliation.

You say, "Somehow I am hoping that one day you will be able to return to Sovereign Grace where so many love you and where I think you belong." I'd love to return to Sovereign Grace Ministries but change must occur in order to restore my trust and confidence in its integrity. Nor am I currently welcome by you or acceptable to you. Gene counseled people to force my resignation before any evaluation, Bob has pronounced me unfit for ministry and in need of a lengthy rehabilitation, Dave has forbidden me from visiting all Sovereign Grace churches until I change, and you have said we cannot serve together because of your disagreements with me over doctrine and practice.³ I am also reminded of Dave's words to Jenny and me that I "have not represented the values, leadership or doctrine of Sovereign Grace Ministries" during my years of service. As a result, a sense of belonging in Sovereign Grace Ministries escapes me.

I wrote the 128 page document as an expression of my love for you and Sovereign Grace Ministries. I am for you and not against you. I want to speak well of you, support you, and protect you for the sake of the gospel. But there must also be reform for the good of the same gospel. I hope it will be forthcoming.

Because of the Cross of Christ,
Brent

Here is your response to me.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, July 02, 2010 4:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Question

Brent,

Thanks for your encouragement about my time in Metro. Actually the second venue was the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors Conference. What a privilege it was to speak at this conference and I certainly never expected to speak at this conference. Go figure. There is much to commend and learn from our SB friends, particularly their love for the lost. And it's difficult for me to comprehend the numerical size of this denomination. Their Pastors Conference is huge and that takes place just prior to the convention where thousands more show up.

I am so very sorry to read that you'd prefer not to meet with me so that I could confess certain sins to you and ask your forgiveness. I hope at some point you can agree to allow me to do this. I am grateful for your desire that I not be affected by guilt. I appreciate your heart for me in this. Brent, I am not familiar with your approach requiring written communication, especially of such detail and length. It appears I have a different perspective than you (if I correctly understand your perspective) in that I think written communication on issues of this nature is less helpful and doesn't necessarily ensure accuracy. And I think tone of voice, facial expression, conversation and personal interaction are superior in every way to an e-mail when someone is asking forgiveness, pursuing reconciliation or communicating differences and disagreements. So, although I have a number of questions about what you've written, I think trying to address and resolve them in written form is unwise and would only prove unhelpful. Scripture seems to support this idea of people connecting for confession. And at this time I want to ask your forgiveness before I even begin to express any concerns I have for you personally or my disagreements with you. I am not sure how to proceed at this point. So I think it would be wise for me to pursue the counsel of those wiser than myself and more experienced than I am on this in order to determine the best way forward.

And as for reconciliation with the guys you list in your e-mail and any future return to Sovereign Grace, it is obviously going to be a lengthy process and I am not sure how to proceed with this as well. From what I read in your e-mail I think you have misunderstood and misrepresented Gene, Bob, Dave (and me)⁴ in some of these things. And I am concerned that your heart may have been blinded by bitterness.⁵ It seems like a mediator will be needed to make progress and I know all these guys would be eager to participate with a mediator you and they can agree on if you are open to pursuing this. Sovereign Grace would cover the cost of this in its entirety and any expenses involved for you as well.

Brent, I don't think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is "lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc."⁶ Actually, at present, I'm involved with different pastors in different churches who are all acknowledging sin and asking forgiveness where appropriate. And this has been the norm in my experience over the years. But Sovereign Grace is made up of sinners who need a Savior beginning with me. And like every other Christian we can be blind to our sin. But in my experience we are desirous of perceiving our sin and where necessary confessing our sin by the grace of God. And we are pursuing reconciliation with folks in different contexts over the last 2 years⁷ and I have been humbled by the graciousness of folks to forgive us and encouraged by the reconciliation that has taken place. But there is more to do

and by God's grace more we will do. And I sure hope this involves you and me sitting down at some point so that you might hear my voice asking your forgiveness and I might hear your voice express the forgiveness that I believe you desire to express.

And thanks for your closing paragraph. I believe you are for me, that you care about me, want to support me and protect me for the sake of the gospel. I hope you believe the same about me in relation to you.

In His grace,
C.J.

I sent you this short note knowing my response would be lengthy. It has taken longer to respond than I anticipated.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, July 08, 2010 3:54 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Back to You Soon

Hi C.J.,

Thanks for your reply. I'll be back to you in next 2-3 weeks.

Brent

Objections Answered

We certainly disagree regarding the importance of written communication in our situation. You "think written communication on issues of this nature [cf. RRF&D] is less helpful and doesn't necessarily ensure accuracy." More to the point, you think "trying to address and resolve them in written form is unwise and would only prove unhelpful."

I think written communication has been more helpful not "less helpful." Here's why. For the last six years, numerous individuals including myself have had many conversations with you regarding ways you sinned against me. None of these ever resulted in the acknowledgment of wrong doing. This is the first time and it is due to the grace of God and the 128 page document I sent you. You acknowledged this on June 20, "After reading your document I am aware of specific ways I have sinned against you." No conversation or meeting has ever produced this result. What I wrote was far more effectual than any meeting I've had with you.

You say written correspondence “doesn’t necessarily ensure accuracy.” It doesn’t guarantee it, but it sure can facilitate it for many reasons. A written response provides accountability which has so often been lacking, a reliable record versus “he said, she said” recollections (hearsay evidence), clarity because writing requires precise thinking, transparency because you can address all the issues with frankness in a non-volatile environment, and completeness by providing details (which are important) which you could not recall or have time to cover in a conversation.⁸

You say, “Brent, I am not familiar with your approach requiring written communication, especially of such detail and length.” I think I’ve answered this above but it is normal to prepare for meetings whether business, legal, medical, sales or otherwise, via written communication. Businessmen submit plans in advance for study, lawyers do discovery before oral arguments in the justice system, nurses/PAs do case histories before a patient meets with the doctor, salesmen provide sale reports before meeting with their manager. The same approach is true with Scripture. Oral tradition was inadequate for passing on divine revelation – too much room for error. Instead, God in His wisdom moved men to write things down (cf. Luke 1:1-4).

In your case, this is particularly important. You have always been prone to forget, repudiate or recast what you said or did in the past. This was a serious concern to Dave, Steve and me. We raised it with you on several occasions. Here is how Dave put it in his April 2004 summary to the Josh, Bob, Kenneth and Grant.

“[It] sometimes seems as if [C.J.] not recollecting may greatly diminish his pursuit and the utility of possible illustrations. Should C.J. accept responsibility for his words even when he doesn’t remember?”

You often rejected our illustrations of pride, broken promises, sinful judgments, etc. You’d dispute our recollections, claim you didn’t say or do something or change things and put them in a positive light.⁹ As a result, this “greatly diminished” your “pursuit” of illustrations. In other words, we’d bring up an illustration and you’d dismiss it because you did not remember it or remembered it differently and often favorably. You’d also make promises but break them and then claim you never promised anything. It was exasperating for Dave, me and others. That’s why David asked the question above about whether we needed to hold you responsible for things you said and did. This happened frequently. It is one of the reasons you never asked our forgiveness for any of the illustrations we shared with you.

Writing can also be helpful in the resolution of conflicts. For instance, your recent e-mails have been nice. It is readily apparent you put considerable effort into what and how you wrote me. You chose your words carefully. This has not been true in person.

Therefore, I think writing is a better medium to begin a process of reconciliation if you'll also be revealing and forthcoming.

You said, "And I think tone of voice, facial expression, conversation and personal interaction are superior in every way to an e-mail when someone is asking forgiveness, pursuing reconciliation or communicating differences and disagreements." This raises an important point. I've not had the kind of positive experience you are describing. My meetings with you have typically been "inferior" in many ways. Why? Because your "tone of voice" and "facial expression" have not been gentle and kind. I've not had good experiences when you are "communicating differences and disagreements" with me. I've had bad ones and these meetings proved counterproductive.

I agree that "conversation and personal interaction" are great if they occur. I would not describe my experience in those terms. Words like entrapped, one-sided, and piled on are closer to the truth. I'll explain more latter. In the "conversation[s] and personal interaction[s]" I am thinking of, I had little or no freedom to disagree or share my perspective. So on the one hand, I am glad to meet hoping for better things. But on the other hand, I am reluctant to meet given my negative experiences over the years. You are in private who you are in public - generous, kind, insightful, encouraging, and empathetic - but you are more. When "communicating differences and disagreements" you are fearless, convinced, and intimidating. When corrected or held accountable you easily become resentful, angry and bitter. Let me share a few examples.

Asking for Input after the August 20, 2004 Meeting

When the August 20 meeting was completed, Josh, Kenneth, Grant and Bob all approached me. Each one commended me and thanked me for the job I did. Four days later I remained in good standing with everyone. Kenneth and Carolyn still felt I should take pastoral responsibility for the team. Josh also thought your proposal was a good idea.

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2004 12:01 PM

To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Pat Ennis

Cc: Joshua Harris; C.J. Mahaney

Subject: Confidential

Josh informed me that Kenneth spoke to Brent and Dave after our [August 20] meeting last week (Steve, I wasn't told whether you were included) and appealed that my proposal to have Brent replace me and become pastorally responsible for the team be adopted... Carolyn [Mahaney] thinks this change is wise and should be made but she thought I should wait and not make this

proposal at this time. Josh thinks the proposal has merit but he thought I should wait as well. And you know what Kenneth thinks.

Things began to quickly change however. You stopped interacting with us as a team and began meeting with the CLC men. We constantly asked for dialogue and meetings with you and them but these requests were denied. In October, I wrote everyone asking for personal input. They had little to provide.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2004 7:52 AM
To: Josh Harris; Bob Kauflin; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; Pat Ennis
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: Confidential - Critique

I'd appreciate it if each of you could send me a critique of any sinful attitudes, motives, words, or actions you have observed in me or any unwise, unhelpful leadership I've provided as it relates to C.J. and the process we have walked through.

Thanks gentlemen,
Brent

Here are all the responses.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, October 13, 2004, 10:26 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Critique

Thanks for asking for this Brent. Not surprising, given your consistent humility in this.

I have nothing to add to our last conversation on this. There are some word/phrase choices that you have used that were not aimed as carefully as wisdom might dictate or CJ would need. But I see those as being peripheral issues and not reflective of any heart motivation within you.

Thanks for asking.

Dave

From: Joshua Harris
Sent: Wed 10/13/2004 5:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Bob Kauflin; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; Pat Ennis
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: Re: Confidential - Critique

Brent,

This is very humble of you to ask for! Thank you for inviting this. First, we don't have some kind of huge list. But, second, I think it would be best for us to just share these thoughts with you in our phone call instead of trying to do it separately via email.

Thank you!

Joshua

When I talked with Josh he had two observations. First, he thought it would have been better if I facilitated dialogue from the beginning of the August 20 meeting. Second, he felt I could have communicated with you more via conversations and less via e-mail. There were no adjustments of my character. Pat had no concerns.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Wed 10/13/2004 11:09 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Critique

Brent,

I have no observations. I have been extremely grateful for your willingness to lead in the process, and for your love of CJ. Thanks so much for again being an example of humility for me!

Pat

Steve felt Dave and I were too hard on you. He agreed with us on all the principle concerns - he just thought we stated things too strongly. But he was also concerned for "an intentional turning" on me. Steve was aware this dynamic was already in the works.

From: Steve Shank
Sent: Wednesday, October 13, 2004 6:04 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential – Critique

Thank you Brent for asking... I would only elaborate on the things I have already introduced, but will think through them more precisely as to how they might reflect on your approach or leadership... please know you certainly have had the most unenviable chair in the house, and I wouldn't want you to feel that in your attempts to serve, there is an intentional turning on you... however, if in God's providence this process has provided a venue where you (and us!) can learn and thus serve God's people more effectively, then I would be glad to do so.

In less than two months you changed the focus to Dave and my sins as you perceived them. Now, we were put on the hot seat. This was an intentional turning and you were leading the charge.¹⁰

From: Joshua Harris
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2004 11:33 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Cc: Grant Layman; Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin; CJ Mahaney
Subject: Confidential

Brent,

Kenneth, Grant and I met with CJ to discuss the timing of him sharing his thoughts with you men. We encouraged him to do this next week at your retreat, and he was reluctant but willing to do this if this was what we thought was best.

But as we talked more and heard more of his perspective we came to understand why this might not be wisest or best for the overall process. The first reason is that CJ's desire is to have a whole day with each of you. The things he wants to share he wants to be able to explain in detail and not rush through with the concern of keeping the rest of the team waiting. He views this as an 8-10 hour process not something that can be handled in a morning.

Second, CJ hasn't had the chance to sit down and organize his thoughts on all this. Which is something he really wants to do so that it is helpful and constructive. He does not want to delay the process but he does want to take to sufficiently consider what he shares.

All that to say we came away assured that he will make it his top priority to schedule this time with each of you as soon as possible. We feel this approach will ultimately serve him and you better.

Thanks!

Joshua

Four Hours of Correction

When we met in Charlotte on November 19, 2004, you took four hours to correct me. There was no dialogue, just a monologue. I basically listened the entire time and didn't mind doing so. I wanted you to share your thoughts even though you were being hypocritical.¹¹

In comparison, I had taken 1 hour and 20 minutes to present 7 years of material to Josh, Kenneth, Bob and Grant. I also left 2½ hours for dialogue after my presentation on August 20. We invited your disagreement. We wanted to know your thoughts. Nevertheless, you were offended by the amount of time I took to share our observations as an apostolic team. In retrospect, it would have been better if there was "conversation and interaction" from the beginning of the meeting. I acknowledged this with regret and asked your forgiveness.

What surprised me the most about November 19 was your hypocrisy. You were oblivious to the double standard. You took 4 hours. I took 1 hour and 20 minutes. You were offended. I was not. This contradiction never occurred to you. It was one of many examples I didn't share with you at the time given your anger toward me. Months later, I shared this perspective with Bob in the most understated way I could - "a bit curious or ironic" because you were very offended by the use of words like "hypocrisy" to describe your behavior. I pointed out the hypocrisy to Bob in case he elected to discuss it with you. No one ever got back to me.

What shocked me the most about November 19 was your fierce turning on me. You had set a new trajectory. In less than three months, the focus was on us and off of you. There had been no interaction with you since August 20. At that meeting we shared numerous illustrations but you rejected all of them pertaining to us. You acknowledged no wrong doing. You never asked forgiveness. You never filled us in on the input you were receiving from the CLC pastors. You never discussed any of our concerns again. These are categorical statements...but all true. After August 20, your doggedly pursued our perceived sin and not your sin in relation to us.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, April 2, 2005 1:16 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential: Dialog

When you asked me if my time with C.J. on November 19, 2004 was a dialog, I didn't want to make an issue of it or provide you a fuller response. Mainly because it was fine to me for him to come Charlotte with the expressed purpose of going through his list of concerns. I didn't expect to dialog over his critique. I simply wanted to understand his perspective. So I didn't struggle over the lack of dialog. It just wasn't the purpose of getting together.

Having said the above, I do find C.J.'s approach on November 19 a bit curious or ironic given his struggles over the lack of dialogue (which I regret) during the first part of the August 20, 2004 meeting.

The Request for Chad and Vacation Days

Here is another example of "intentionally turning" the focus to me unrelated to August 20. It is long but important. I've chosen this particular one because it also involves Bob. It shows the way he enabled you, rather than helped you, by speaking the truth to you. Instead of addressing you, he corrected me. It is a clear example of Bob's bias and partiality.¹²

This example also demonstrates a predictable response. When you are corrected (or disagreed with and held accountable) you often become resentful.¹³ You frequently judge the person bringing the correction with your "superior discernment" and claim to know the sin in their heart. Then you'll send a representative to reprove the individual and defend you. This is a pattern for you.¹⁴ This is especially true if the correction addresses an area where you have a high opinion of yourself and a concern for your reputation.

RRF&D was 128 pages long but far from exhaustive. It was an abridged rendition with many points and illustrations left out of it. Here's is an example that introduces some new points while underscoring some old ones. It shows how you and Bob worked together in dealing with me when I sought to serve you by upholding our vacation policy while treating you generously and relating to you graciously.

This interaction occurred primarily in October 2005 or 13 months after our August 2004 meeting. I've included it because it was typical of your and Bob's treatment of me during the intervening time period.¹⁵ It began by you e-mailing Pat on September 29, 2005 to ask if SGM could cover Chad's flight expenses. Note your reason for the request

- you did not want to be away from your son too much. Pat involved me in the matter. Given your distrust of me and bitterness towards me, I was trying to avoid any situation where I had to adjust you in the smallest degree.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thu 9/29/2005 6:38 PM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: Traveling

Is there a way Sovereign Grace can pay for Chad's flight to Phoenix? Both Carolyn and I are going to teach and with all the traveling I do I am trying not to be away from my son too much and in this case both dad and mom are going.

I understand if this can't be done.

Thanks my friend,
CJ

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Thu 9/29/2005 10:35 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Traveling

Brent,

If we agreed that granting CJ's request makes sense, we would need to give him a taxable bonus. What are your thoughts about granting this bonus for the [above] reason?

Pat

Your request was a hard one for me to process for several reasons. First, it was contrary to our written policy. Second, it seemed out of place since your high salary positioned you to pay for Chad's ticket. Third, I knew you traveled less and vacationed more than others including me. I confidentially made Pat aware of this dilemma. I didn't want the disparity to negatively affect my counsel. That's why I put the decision back in Pat and Tommy's court. I was happy to make an exception for you and commended your work ethic. Though I had these observations, I wasn't concerned you tried to circumvent the vacation policy for your own benefit.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sat 10/1/2005 10:13 AM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Traveling

Hard one to respond to. That is, this year I will do 95 days of ministry travel. C.J. 76. I will take 17 days of vacation. C.J. 29 [it turned out to be 30]. This is comparable to past years also. I am familiar with these numbers since I track travel and do the schedule.

Having said this, I can easily support whatever decision you and Tommy make on paying for Chad to go to Phoenix. We can make an exception for the team leader. He works very hard – at home and away!

Pat wrote me back the next day. He asked for more clarity and answered a question I had asked about Sovereign Grace vacation policy. In the process of reviewing your days of travel, I also noticed how many vacations days you were taking.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Sun 10/2/2005 3:15 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Tommy Hill
Subject: RE: Traveling

Brent,

Tommy and I agree that this would need to be an exception to a current policy of not paying for children to go on trips. Do you think CJ's situation warrants an exception?

Also, our vacation policy for CJ would be the same as yours....4 weeks with two weeks carryover.

Pat

From the beginning of SGM, it normally fell to me to raise issues of collective concern for you. I think it is fair to say I also provided you the greatest measure of care, encouragement, honor, and affection. It was a joy and privilege to do so. Given this arrangement, other men avoided offending you by allowing me to lead or by quoting and referencing me. In this situation, I was trying to limit my involvement without compromising my integrity. I wanted Pat and Tommy to make the decision regarding money for Chad and to talk with you about unwittingly exceeding your allotted vacation time. I realized my concern for your vacation days and my answer to Pat's

question, "Do you think CJ's situation warrants an exception [for Chad]?" could come back to bite me. I still have the scars.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sun 10/2/2005 4:36 PM
To: Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill
Subject: RE: Traveling

Doesn't seem to warrant an exception but I don't want to be the only one "quoted" on this. On the other hand, I guess Carolyn is also going so she will not be home with Chad. I've attached C.J.'s complete schedule for your examination. You have my support however you proceed. Below I've "cut and pasted" his vacation time. Will you talk to him about going over the allotted days? Do you want to let the team leader have 5 weeks off next year? The rest of us stay at four weeks?

C.J.'s Vacation Days

3 days	May 14-16	Anniversary Trip	The Inn at Perry Cabin
8 days	Jun 5-12	Anniversary Trip	Orlando & Sarasota, FL
2 days	Jun 13-14	Carroll Valley Golf	
		Retreat	Fairfield, PA
15 days	Jul 17-31	Family Vacation	Knoxville, TN
6 days	Sep 18-23	Vacation with Family	

34 days minus 5 Sabbath days = 29 vacation days

Pat wrote you back with his decision regarding Chad. He was willing to make an exception if a lack of finances prohibited you from taking Chad. I genuinely appreciated Pat's generosity but would not have agreed with his reasoning since you made over 150k in 2005. And if cash flow was a problem, you could have paid for Chad's flight from the honoraria you and Carolyn would receive from the ministry trip.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2005 8:59 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Tommy Hill; Pat Ennis
Subject: FW: Traveling

CJ,

Tommy, Brent and I have discussed your request, and we would prefer not to make an exception to the policy of not paying for children to go on trips with parents. However, at the same time, we understand your desire and reasons for wanting Chad to join you and Carolyn. If you are in a position financially that would not allow for Chad to go, I would want to move ahead with an exception, so please let me know if that is the case. If that is the case, I would want to move ahead with the exception while at the same time discuss with you and the Team the possibility of increasing your salary so that you could more afford such trips.

Pat

On the one hand, you asked for an exception to our policy. On the other hand, you did not want an exception. I was confused. I didn't know what was going on in your heart or mind. Did you feel an exception was warranted? Or, did you just forget about our policy?

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Mon 10/3/2005 9:17 PM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Traveling

Not necessary. Don't want there to be exceptions.

Thanks,

CJ

I was relieved by the e-mail above. There was closure without contention or apparent offense. It turned out, however, that was not the case. The next day you wrote me, not Pat or Tommy, the following e-mail. You seemed extremely concerned for how I was viewing you.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2005 6:41 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

I would rather not pursue this by e-mail but please know that there is no need for any further consideration of Chad accompanying me to Phoenix. I completely understand and support your (Pat, Tommy) approach to this. From

the first e-mail I have informed Pat about my support but in his desire to serve me he has continued to pursue this. And if you have any concerns about my travel or vacation schedule I welcome your observations.¹⁶

I asked about Chad going with me not because of my travel but Carolyn's. And I will be glad to explain my perspective on this if that would serve you. But after I received Pat's e-mail I have already finalized everything for the trip Carolyn and I take to Phoenix and this has just further confirmed the limitations of future travel for Carolyn.

So let me know if you would like to talk about this. Sorry you guys have spent so much time on this. Won't happen again.

With appreciation,

CJ

Several things concerned me about your response. First, you said, "I asked about Chad going with me not because of my travel but Carolyn's." This was in direct contradiction to your stated reason when you wrote Pat. You were telling me something different. Here is what you asked Pat, "Is there a way Sovereign Grace can pay for Chad's flight to Phoenix...with all the traveling I do I am trying not to be away from my son too much." The original request was all about the amount of time you traveled and the amount of time you were away from Chad. This is another example of spin and the manipulation of facts.¹⁷

Second, I was taken aback by your comment, "And if you have any concerns about my travel or vacation schedule I welcome your observations." I had no concerns for your travel but I was mildly concerned for the amount of vacation time you took. I'll explain later. Unfortunately, Pat forwarded my "I don't want to be the only one "quoted" on this" e-mail to you. I only intended that e-mail for him. In that correspondence, I asked Pat several questions. One was, "Will you talk to him about going over the allotted days?" It seems, and I could be wrong, Pat forwarded my e-mail to you instead of raising the issue on his own. In any case, I didn't hear back from Pat about whether he'd talk to you.

Third, it felt like we were being "punished" as Dave frequently described your reaction in situations like this one. That is, our denial of funds for Chad resulted in "limitations of future travel for Carolyn." None of us wanted that as the outcome. I felt guilty for this development. And then your final comment which seemed to be self-pitying, etc. That is, "Won't happen again." What won't happen again? You won't ever make a similar request in the future? We didn't want that result either. Again, I felt culpable.

Why won't you do so again? Were you resentful? Did we do something wrong? Was it because we asked some questions and raised some issues?¹⁸

I was worried. I knew I was in trouble again. In addition to your normal increase in salary, I proposed an additional \$1,500 salary increase in 2006 to cover travel expenses for Chad even though I felt it unnecessary. That was shameful of me. I should have been truthful about my thoughts regarding your ability to pay for Chad. Please forgive me. I was also trying to avoid all conflict with you. I attempted to be honest but gracious in this next e-mail.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 10:58 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill
Subject: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

When asked for my counsel, I was provided with the e-mail below [i.e., the 09/29/2005 6:38 PM above]. It sounded like you were primarily asking us to cover Chad's flight because of your extensive travel and the resultant time you are away from him. By the way, I am glad you asked and I certainly appreciate your concern. I really wanted to say "yes" to your request, but I knew other guys travel more than you do and we haven't made such a provision for them.

I would encourage you to take Chad with you on these kinds of trips but I think it is better for you to pay for it. Since you could not afford to do this, I will recommend to the team that we increase your pay by \$1,500 (or more if necessary) so Chad can accompany you and Carolyn on similar trips in 2006.

As I was reviewing your travel schedule, I noticed you are taking 30 days of vacation time this year. (By the way, I assumed your personal retreats with Carolyn on Jan 4-7 and Mar 29-Apr 1 were work related. I did not count them as vacation time. Is that correct?). Our policy allows for 4 weeks or 24 days [actually 20 days for you under SGM policy, I was under CrossWay's policy and had 24 days]. Please know I am not concerned about your integrity. I assume you are not aware of the policy or the number of vacation days you have taken or some other factor I am not aware of.

Lastly, I didn't recommend we pay for Chad given the above but I conveyed to Pat and Tommy that I could easily support them if they wanted to do so for the following reasons. You are the team leader, Carolyn is going with, I empathize with you re: time away from Chad, and you work so hard at home and on the road. I also suggested that we consider increasing your vacation time to 5 weeks and keep the rest of us on the team at 4 weeks.

While I never thought you knowingly violated the vacation policy, I was still concerned for your and our example. Here are a couple reasons why. First, all the pastors in my sphere (60-70 men) carefully monitored their vacation time. Typically, they had to request time off and it would be officially recorded and monitored throughout the year. No one took more time than allotted by policy. As far as I knew that approach was true for everyone in the movement.

It was also true in corporate American. People in our churches didn't get to take three weeks off when they only get two weeks off. Nevertheless, I was not correcting sins of commission. I was not questioning your motives. I simply wanted to make you aware of the current policy and adjust it upwards for the sake of our witness and consistent application of our policy. Though you should have known the 20 day policy, and held yourself accountable to it, I was not preoccupied with these sins of omission. I was simply trying to serve you.

Second, we always said we wanted to be "squeaky clean" and not give any appearance of wrong doing. That is, maintain the highest standards of integrity. We talked about The Washington Post coming in to do an article and finding no inconsistencies in our conduct. We agreed to reveal our salaries, our benefits, etc. if this ever happened. So this was an inconsistency someone could take evil advantage of. That is, the President of the organization was not following his own vacation policy. The remedy I proposed, however, was to increase the amount of vacation time for you. This was no problem for me. I knew your normal work week. You worked six days and averaged 68 hours a week based upon the time studies I headed up for years. I knew everyone's hours. Our jobs were not 8 to 5.

Here is how you answered me. You claimed to know the vacation policy of 20 days. I still don't think that was the case. If it was then you ignored it or viewed yourself as an exception to it. I prefer not to believe this.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 11:06 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

There is no need to increase my pay in order for me to take Chad with me but thanks for the offer.

I am aware of the vacation policy and will be glad to explain to you my approach/understanding and if you disagree I will be glad to take less time next year.

I don't think there is any need to increase my vacation time although again, thanks for the offer.

And I would be glad to describe my normal work week for you if that would help.

I don't prefer to do any of this by e-mail.
CJ

I fired off a quick but unclear response. I was trying to avoid any setting where I might have to disagree with you or question you. I was glad to move on. It was not necessary to me for us to talk. But it became clear your heart was not in the same place.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 11:11 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Okay

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 11:49 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

I'd try to talk with you today but I am spending the day with Carolyn. I was in Chicago Monday and Tuesday so I am taking today off.

Do you have any available time to talk either Thursday or Friday afternoon?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 12:25 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Not at all necessary to talk. By "okay" I [meant] I am fine with things. Have a great [time] with Carolyn. Looking forward to hearing about your time with Lane and Justin.

I wrote Pat and asked him to follow up with you on Chad, work hours and the vacation policy if he thought it at all helpful. He wanted to drop matters also.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wed 10/5/2005 11:10 AM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: FW: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Pat

I'll let you follow up with C.J. if you think that is advisable or even necessary. Otherwise, I am going to let the issue drop.

Tks
Brent

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 11:17 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

I think we can let it drop.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 11:15 AM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Okay

You, however, could not let things go. A litany of e-mails followed. I repeatedly said I had no need to talk. You appeared obsessed.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 12:36 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

My friend,

I am glad to answer any and all questions you have about this and any other topic.

Ask away!

Are you sure you don't want to talk?

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 12:36 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Sure am...thanks.

Not content with my answer you continued to press but I had no questions or concerns about your vacations, travel, or work ethic. I simply wanted to bring the number of days you took for vacation into conformity with SGM policy but not because I thought you were knowingly violating it. As I repeatedly made clear, I thought it was a bad policy. More vacation time was merited. I wanted to change it for you.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 1:30 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

As long as you know I am available for any and all questions about my vacations, travel, work ethic and any other topic you want to ask about. And feel free to share any concerns you have with Bob or Pat.

I welcome any and all questions on any and all topics!

CJ

By this time, things had become clearer to me. You thought I had unfounded information and unjust concerns. You wanted me to share them so I could be corrected. You felt judged by me.¹⁹ You were not content to move on. You began supplying answers to questions I was not asking. You began to address me. Here for example, you were concerned I counted your work retreats with Carolyn as vacation days. I did not and this was something I already addressed. You were bringing it up again. You were also confused about the number of vacation days.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2005 7:04 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

I read this again and realized that I didn't answer about my retreats with Carolyn. Those were not vacations. They were both retreats all about ministry. Do you have any concerns about those?

Also, I did learn from your e-mail that I had more vacation time than I thought. I thought I had 21 days each year.

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:27 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Tommy Hill; Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

That's what I assumed. Thanks. I'll have Tommy clarify the policy for you. There has been some confusion re: # of days.

You continued to make a mountain out of a mole hill. What was motivating you? What was driving you? What were you craving? Vindication? Now you unnecessarily involved Bob. At first glance, it appeared you wanted Bob to be aware of these issues so he could question you or inquire of you. I appreciated your apparent integrity. In the end, however, the opposite turned out to be the case. Involving Bob was a way of positioning Bob to confront me. He never voiced any concern for your heart or your actions. You wanted Bob to know about my "questions" and "concerns" so I could be reproved.²⁰ This becomes clear in the end.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 10:09 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Just wanted you to know that I passed along your e-mail to Bob. I want him to know about your questions/concerns.

I welcome any other questions/concerns you would have my friend.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:25 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

Not necessary to do this but I appreciate your integrity.²¹

You continued to obsess over being misunderstood.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:29 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

What information are you working from for my travel days, vacation days, etc?

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:29 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

Attached

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Did you get this from Nora?

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:35 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

I've been getting your travel schedule from Nora for many years now. When I make schedule recommendations for team meetings, team retreats, conferences, etc., I compare them with your schedule to avoid conflicts. I also use it as a reminder for prayer and to ask you during team meetings, etc. about your travel.

Having twice answered your question regarding retreats with Carolyn, you followed up a third time. I had no concerns or disagreements. I understood they were work related and therefore paid by SGM.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:36 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Well, if its 24 [vacation days] is there anything Tommy needs to clarify? I just don't want to waste his time.

Also, do you have any concerns/disagreements about the retreats with Carolyn?

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:55 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Tommy Hill; Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

The policy says the Sovereign Grace staff gets 4 weeks of vacation assuming a 5 day work week. Technically, that means you have 20 days of vacation time. I've asked Tommy to revise it for men in ministry (vs. the general staff) knowing that men like you, Pat, Jeff, Bob, etc. work 6 days a week and often more. Therefore, I've used the number 24 instead of 20. The policy just needs to be revised to accommodate this change.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 1:58 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Really glad for you to get time away with Carolyn.

I knew work retreats for you and Carolyn were important. I was happy for you and Carolyn to get undistracted time away for work. Now again for a fourth time, you asked me about the nature of these retreats. This was baffling. I had repeatedly answered your concern starting with my very first e-mail to you (i.e., October 05, 2005 10:58 AM). I stated "By the way, I assumed your personal retreats with Carolyn on Jan 4-7 and Mar 29-Apr 1 were work related. I did not count them as vacation time. Is that correct?" Soon after, you confirmed what I already assumed to be true. Yet, you continued to question me.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 2:04 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

But do you understand the ministry nature of these particular times away or do you think if we are away together it is a vacation from your perspective?²²

Thanks,

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 3:34 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Chad / Vacation Time

Like I've said, I've always assumed ministry. The only reason I asked [the "Is that correct? question above] was the two retreats were not recorded on your travel schedule. They were on Carolyn's and referred to as a "Personal Retreat with C.J."

Even though they were recorded on Carolyn's travel schedule as "personal retreats with C.J.," I was confident they were work retreats. I treated them as such from the beginning. Why were so determined to know my thoughts? What did you believe

about me? Were you concerned, or had you concluded, I thought you deceitfully had Sovereign Grace Ministries pick up the tab for fun times away with Carolyn?²³

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 2:08 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Just one more question. How recently did you get this from Nora?

Thanks,

CJ

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 3:30 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

I think Oct 1. [i.e., a week earlier]

I forwarded all this correspondence to Pat and copied Dave and Steve. I knew where this was heading. I wanted to make sure they were aware and involved.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 5:13 PM
To: Pat Ennis
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: Confidential

I hope I've allayed his concerns and answered his questions. Thanks for your help Pat.

Brent

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Thursday, October 06, 2005 5:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

You are welcome. Thanks for answering CJ's questions.

For the second time I thought things were wrapped up. I was wrong.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 11:38 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Question for you as to how you view vacation time. When I am away on vacation with my family for two weeks in your thinking is that 14 days of vacation or 12 because one's day off figures into any calculation?

My numbers for vacation and travel are different from yours and I think there are some differences in Nora's calendar that you might not be aware of. An example would be that she would have listed our anniversary trip as 11 days. But we were with the Orlando church for 4 days before we started our anniversary trip.

Thanks,

CJ

At your request, I provided a detailed and precise accounting of your vacation time and easy to follow explanations to your questions. From the beginning, I had factored in all the mitigating factors you were concerned about. Here again is the accounting. SGM policy allowed for 20 days of vacation time. You took 30. That was a simple matter of accounting. You disputed this but never provided any factual adjustment. There was none.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 12:14 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

Good questions. In my calculation, I subtracted 5 days off and 2 holidays off when they occurred during your vacation time. I counted your June anniversary trip as 7 days of vacation time not the 11 days in Nora's calendar.

3 days	May 14-16	Anniversary Trip at The Inn at Perry Cabin	Saint Michaels, MD
8 days	Jun 5-12	Anniversary Trip	Orlando & Sarasota
2 days	Jun 14-15	Carroll Valley Golf Retreat	Fairfield, PA
15 days	Jul 17-31	Family Vacation	Knoxville, TN

6 days	Sep 18-23	Family Vacation at The Chatham Wayside Inn	Cape Code, MA
3 days	Nov 24-26	Family Vacation	Williamsburg, VA

The total comes to 37 days minus 5 days off minus 2 holidays = 30 vacation days.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 12:18 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Well, I don't think you have it accurate my friend.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 12:19 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

Please adjust me. By the way, I'd still like to see you have 5 weeks of vacation (30 days). No one works as hard as you or puts in longer days.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 12:25 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Kind of you but I don't need any more vacation.

CJ

Nevertheless, I proceeded to get five weeks of vacation approved for you.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 12:34 PM
To: Pat Ennis
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: FW: Confidential

Pat,

I'd recommend you get approval from Dave and Steve for 5 weeks of vacation (30 days) for C.J. Then at a later date put it into place. I can support this knowing C.J. is working very long days and likely doing some work on vacation. He is also the team leader and therefore I am glad for him to have more vacation time given the pressures and responsibilities he carries.

Thanks
Brent

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 1:32 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Dave & Steve,

Do you approve of what Brent is proposing?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 1:42 PM
To: Pat Ennis; Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Not sure I'm tracking this conversation and whether this is a real need or not. I would want to make sure we have accurate data to evaluate before we make an exception of this nature. If we wanted to pursue it, we could ask Brent to check his data with Nora. This way, we could find out whether an exception is really necessary and then decide.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 1:50 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Brent,

Do you feel you have adequate data/knowledge to support your recommendation? Can you further support your recommendation with any additional data?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 1:49 PM
To: Pat Ennis; Dave Harvey
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

I do (attached).... If you did proceed, you could simply review the attached with Nora.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 2:02 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey
Cc: Steve Shank; Tommy Hill
Subject: RE: Confidential

Actually guys, I could easily support increasing each of your vacation benefits to 5 weeks. I was at Fidelity for 10 yrs and I had 5 weeks. Fidelity did not have any carryover like we do here. How long have you guys had 4 weeks?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 08, 2005 2:02 PM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Confidential

Thanks for the thoughtful offer but I don't use up my current vacation time. We've had 4 weeks for a very long time...as long as I can remember.

I contacted Nora at Dave's suggestion to "triple check" my data regarding your travel schedule but not vacation time. That was already verified by her, you and Carolyn. For years, Nora and I worked together regarding your schedule. She'd tell you, I was the one who often had the most complete listing since I was in charge of master planning for the movement. As you know, I was always asking you about vacations, personal retreats, speaking engagements, times with Carolyn, etc. so I could coordinate everything we did as Sovereign Grace Ministries with your schedule.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 13, 2005 12:17 PM
To: Nora Earles
Subject: Travel

Hi Nora,

When you get a chance could you look over my travel schedule for C.J. and see if it is correct. Thanks so much.

Brent

Now, things begin to change for the worse. I followed up with Nora per Dave's request but it resulted in a "punishing" response for me and an unhelpful one for Sovereign Grace Ministries.²⁴ You no longer wanted me involved with your calendar or schedule, not just vacation time. Why was this necessary?

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thu 10/13/2005 12:55 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Nora informed me that you want the information about my calendar. I am glad to meet with her and go back through the year in more detail in order to provide you with the information you desire. But I won't be able to do this until next week at the earliest.

In the future would it be possible for Pat and Bob to have responsibility for my schedule? [Not just tracking vacation days.]

Thanks,

CJ

From: Nora Earles
Sent: Thu 10/13/2005 12:59 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Travel

Brent,

When I saw that your calendar had CJ's personal retreats, I asked CJ if he wanted me to track those. It was in that conversation that I found out that you are probably using my calendar to track in a manner that would not necessarily be completely accurate. I mainly keep this "itinerary" for the purpose of setting up a task list to purchase airline tickets in a timely manner and to keep Sovereign Grace abreast of when CJ is in or out of town.

So in answer to your question below, I will have to talk with CJ before I know whether your information is correct.

I trust this makes sense.

Thanks,
Nora

Now, you had Bob contact Pat to keep things moving and remove me. You never attempted to explain why this would "simplify things." In reality, it complicated things.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Sat 10/15/2005 5:44 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Pat Ennis
Subject: Vacation

Brent,

I think it may simplify things if Pat started overseeing CJ's vacation time. Nora could pass on the information to him and he could follow up with him through care group, if needed. If that's okay with you, let me know.

Pat, if you're okay with that, let me know as well.

Thanks!

Bob Kauflin

You continued to disagree with my calculations and claimed you had "different totals" but never produced them even though I was very willing to see them. I said "I'd be glad to see the more accurate totals for travel and vacation." I gave you the benefit of the doubt.²⁵

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tue 10/18/2005 10:24 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Just wanted you to know that in going through the vacation and travel days I would have different totals than you have in both categories. Nora has not (nor has she ever) kept my schedule with the precision you were asking for. So if it would help for me to provide you with my totals in both categories I would be glad to do so.

Thanks my friend,

CJ

In this next response from me, I attempted to respectfully and humbly address the various ways you were concerned for me or judging me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tue 10/18/2005 5:32 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Pat Ennis; Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

C.J.,

This is a response to several things in the e-mails [above].

It is not necessary for you to go over things with Nora. I just didn't want to misrepresent you in any way.

Please know I've never used your travel itinerary to monitor your vacation time. I just happen to notice it when asked about paying for Chad's plane ticket in light of your time away.

I am glad for Pat (and Bob) to receive your travel itinerary. With this change, Pat should assume responsibility for planning and maintaining the master schedule? Otherwise, it would be hard to do. I will send Pat the relevant information to serve him in this capacity.

I also want to assure you that I have never questioned your integrity or been concerned for any unethical conduct in relation to Chad or the amount of

vacation time. From the beginning, I have wanted to change the policy so you can take 30 or more days of vacation.

I am not struggling with you but I'd be glad to see the more accurate totals for travel and vacation.

Thanks
Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tue 10/18/2005 6:04 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

Thanks for wanting me to have more vacation time! That is very kind of you but not necessary.

The decision to remove my access to your schedule had significant implications. We never talked about them. For years I painstakingly and precisely recorded your travel and vacation time. I did this so we could effectively master plan for the entire movement and avoid scheduling conflicts. I've attached the very document I was using at the time. As you must remember, I constantly checked with you on team retreats and worked closely with Nora behind the scenes. At the end of every year, I reviewed your itinerary to make sure it was perfectly correct. I wanted it to serve as a "journal" or "history" for you. I did the same for the movement.

You never told me what your justification was for the change. It was never discussed. You simply made the decision.²⁶ You appeared resentful and distrustful of me.²⁷ To the best of my knowledge, no one ever challenged you on this decision or ever asked you any questions about your heart.²⁸

Removing me complicated matters and made planning more difficult. I felt no freedom to ask Nora for any information regarding your or Carolyn's travel schedule. This seriously hindered me in serving you and Sovereign Grace Ministries in our master planning. You never asked me why "it would be hard to do" the planning without access. For the next two years, I did the best I could.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Tue 10/18/2005 5:44 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

Thanks for sending this, Brent.

Can you help me understand what "responsibility for planning and maintaining the master schedule" is?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tue 10/18/2005 6:12 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

Scheduling team mtgs., retreats, conferences, etc.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2005 11:07 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

AAAAAHHHH!!!! Did I just get delegated the Master Schedule? Hope not!
Brent is doing a great job with it!²⁹

And, I don't know if I'm the best guy to keep track of vacation time for A-Team guys if we are going to be precise. I am not real precise with the guys that report to me (maybe I need to change) because I know they work hard and put in a lot of hrs. For example, if somehow Tommy Hill took all of his vacation by the end of Sept (which he doesn't do) and told me he and Elizabeth needed a few more days in November, I would tell him to take them because of how hard he works and how effective he is. If you guys think I would be wrong in doing that, please let me know.

Pat

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wed 10/19/2005 7:53 AM
To: Pat Ennis
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

Pat,

Do not be concerned my friend! You are not to track all the guys or Tommy, just me buddy. So this isn't a Master Schedule responsibility being delegated to you upsetting your entire life, etc. Just track my vacation by asking Nora for a total number of days.

CJ

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2005 7:59 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: Confidential - Travel/Vacation

Will do.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2005 9:12 AM
To: Nora Earles
Cc: C.J. Mahaney; Brent Detwiler
Subject: CJs vacation days

Nora,

I would be grateful if you could begin to send to me CJ's vacation days.
Thanks!

Pat

By Tuesday, October 18, I thought things had finally come to an end. I was relieved! But at 4:15 in the afternoon, I received an extremely troubling e-mail from Bob Kauflin. I had practically no interaction with Bob throughout this process. We had never talked about anything and we only had a couple insignificant e-mail exchanges.

In what follows, Bob served as a conduit for your thoughts. This was your normal practice in dealing with me since August 20, 2004. You'd send Bob (or someone else) to correct me on your behalf.³⁰ Though the e-mail came in his name it was also an expression of your heart and mind. I thought matters had concluded. I was wrong. You could not move on without having Bob address me.³¹ I responded to Bob point by

point. I quoted him and then responded to him. Those responses are in blue lettering. I've added additional comments in red lettering.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2005 4:15 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential – Vacation

Hey Bob,

I've provided a response to your concerns below regarding C.J.'s vacation time. Though we lack agreement, thanks for raising these issues with me. I am glad for you to do so.

Brent

- “Regarding the vacation questions, thanks so much for even asking. I don't think I got all of the interaction between you and CJ.”

All correspondence with C.J. is attached for your review.

Bob was confronting me on “vacation questions,” but he hadn't even seen or reviewed all the relevant and important information.

- “He [C.J.] did mention that you at one point had referenced your own travel schedule. I would want to ask you questions about whether or not you thought that was wise, helpful, or humble. Again, I don't know the context, so I don't know the answers. Typically, if I had questions about someone's vacation days, I wouldn't bring up my own vacation time in the conversation, because I don't trust my heart.”

Only very reluctantly and in private with Pat when he asked me whether C.J. should be considered as an exception. Never with C.J. or others for the reasons you set forth. This is the first time I've been made aware that C.J. even knew about this.

You provided Bob selective and misleading information. Why didn't you provide the context for him? The primary reason I told Pat about my travel schedule was so he knew I might not be objective in deciding whether to pay for Chad not because I was pridefully comparing myself to you or jealous of you. Why didn't you tell Bob this? Why didn't you tell him I never mentioned anything about my travel to you or anyone else? That I never brought up “my own vacation time” in any “conversation” with you.

It appears you withheld information from Bob, sinfully judged me, believed the worse about me and then impugned my motives to Bob.³²

- “As far as the actual numbers ago, I would agree with CJ’s perspective that he is well within the vacation days allotted to him – given the number of Mondays he’s worked, the vacation days that fell on Mondays during his times away, holidays that fell on Mondays that he hasn’t taken, and his work ethic in general.”³³

Other guys also work on Mondays and on holidays. Our policy, however, doesn’t allow for these days to be added on to our vacation time. I am open to changing the policy to include this stipulation. I think an easier and better solution is to increase his vacation time to 30 days (or more) and have you help him in taking days off. I did not count as “vacation days” any “days off” or “holidays” that fell on any of his vacations.

Bob didn’t have all the facts, didn’t understand how the policy worked, and didn’t understand how the totals were arrived at. Yet he confidently agreed “with CJ’s perspective that he is well within the vacation days allotted to him.” This e-mail from Bob made one other thing clear. You had no qualms about taking 30 days of vacation. Bob embraced and advocated your perspective but was misguided.³⁴

A lot of men worked on Mondays and holidays. None of them added those days to their vacation time. It was contrary to our policy because we were supposed to take a day off each week and spend time with our family on holidays. Also, several men put in the same amount of hours as you. No one added vacation days as a result. If we worked on Mondays and holidays it was our loss. We were not allowed to add those days to our vacation time. C.J., it now appears you did for yourself what no one else was doing for themselves. Maybe this does come down to an issue of integrity and you feeling the “rules” do not apply. If you knowingly added 10 days to your vacation time without permission that was wrong. You can’t create your own policy which is different from everyone else.³⁵

- “Your interactions make it sound as though you have genuine concern for him in this area, as though he’s seeking to take advantage of the rules. I don’t think you believe you think that, Brent, but that’s what it can appear like. This is due partly to the amount of detail you’re referencing, without looking at the overall picture (things I mention above).”

I think this is an unfair characterization but please help me to see where I give this impression (or worse). I’ve never had a concern that he was

“seeking to take advantage of the rules.” I have thought the Sov. Grace work and vacation policy needs to be revised so C.J. can come into conformity with it. My concern has always been “technical” not “personal”. Under the current policy he gets 20 days of vacation time. He took 30. When I discovered this discrepancy at the beginning of this process, I wanted to increase his vacation time knowing his work ethic, etc. I’ve been trying to do so. C.J. has not been agreeable to this.

I did look at “the overall picture.” That is why I wanted to change the policy (e.g., quote: “I’ve asked Tommy to revise it for men in ministry... knowing that men like you [C.J.], Pat, Jeff, Bob, etc. work 6 days a week and often more.”).

In my responses to his initiatives, [1] I never raised any concerns for him and [2] I never expressed any disagreement with him. Instead, [3] I affirmed his integrity from beginning to end, [4] assured him I was fine with things, [5] expressed understanding of his circumstances, [6] provided explanations for his questions, [7] asked to be adjusted on how I may have wrongly calculated his vacation days, [8] advocated favorable solutions, [9] sought to change our policy and [10] commended him for his unique work ethic.

Bob didn’t allude to any of these ten points in his e-mail to me. It was all about questioning my heart and probing for evil motivations. There was no acknowledgement of how I was trying to serve you. Bob uses “the amount of details” I supplied as evidence against me to suggest evil intent. Yet the details were always necessary in response. I was simply answering your on-going questions. I should also mention that Bob never responded to this last e-mail. He never addressed my concern for an “unfair characterization.” This was also paradigmatic.³⁶ I’d respond to concerns raised with me. You and Bob would not respond to concerns raised for you.³⁷ And I have no knowledge that anyone else ever raised any concerns for you during this process. This lengthy illustration shows your typical response to input when it affects your reputation or you feel judged.

C.J.’s Superior Discernment

One of the main issues of pride that Dave, Steve and I addressed over the years was your superior sense of discernment by which you sinfully judged others and isolated yourself from input. You acknowledged this deeply ingrained tendency to us in July of 2004. You talked to me at Celebration Mid-South in Lynchburg, VA. We were

encouraged by this new conviction from the Holy Spirit but it was not accompanied by any specific confession. Later on August 10 you wrote us and said,

“In recent history this arrogance has been evident in the following ways. On numerous occasions I have not been easy to entreat or correct. I have arrogantly assumed the superiority of my discernment when corrected. I can be quick to disagree when I am being corrected.”

The next month at the August 20 meeting, you also acknowledged not receiving correction from Dave and me because you thought it was rooted in offense. This prideful sin, however, continued to entangle you.

You regularly rejected correction because you “discerned” the person giving it was proud or bitter or angry. Similarly, you regularly withheld sharing correction you were receiving from others because you “discerned” it inaccurate. As a result, you withheld vital information from those responsible for you. For instance, you disagreed with the multitude of examples Dave, Steve and I brought to your attention. You knew your heart and it was innocent. You also knew our hearts. They were arrogant, resentful, deceitful. You acknowledged in principle your sense of superior discernment but you never applied it to any of the examples we used to illustrate the point.

You also regularly claimed to know people’s heart better than they did. They were deceived while you were illuminated.³⁸ They needed to agree with your discernment. This often resulted in sinful judgments. We brought this dynamic to your attention on numerous occasions but you never made any real life applications to our input or the illustrations we used.

Bob says of me, “Your interactions make it sound as though you have genuine concern for him [C.J.] in this area [days of vacation], as though he’s seeking to take advantage of the rules. I don’t think you believe you think that, Brent, but that’s what it can appear like.” This sounds like one of those occasions where your and Bob’s superior discernment trumps all. I am simply not believed. You and Bob knew better despite all my assurances otherwise.³⁹ In my first e-mail to you, I emphatically communicated, “Please know I am not concerned about your integrity.” I could not have been clearer and I was not lying.

You simply didn’t accept it when I repeatedly said I never thought you were trying to take advantage of the rules. I chalked up your actions to ignorance not evil intent. You were not one to know policies and track vacations days. But my explanations were dismissed. In fact, Bob went so far as to say, “I don’t think you believe you think that, Brent.” In other words, I was self-deceived. Bob could read my mind and my heart but even more, he could discern the antinomies in my very being.⁴⁰ In other words, I believed one thing in my mind but the very opposite thing in my heart. With my mind,

I didn't think you were deceitful. But with my heart, I believed you were actively "seeking to take advantage of the rules."

C.J., this is dangerous and not an isolated incident. You (and Bob) have done this on many occasions.⁴¹ It is one of the reasons people don't feel the freedom to disagree with you. You consider your "discernment" practically infallible and authoritative.⁴² You did this with Dave and me on different occasions. You assuredly knew the sinful motives of our hearts. For instance, you claimed I was bitter over teaching less in the Pastors College. Dave was bitter over not assigning him books to write or a seminar to teach. You told Steve behind out backs that we were acting deceitfully and controlling and/or managing information. On my...the list goes on and on. C.J., this entangling sin becomes a license for many other sins and sets a terrible example for others. Gene repeatedly did the same thing with me. Like Bob, there is good evidence to indicate he was following your directives and imposing your "discernment" on me. More later.

I hope this vacation illustration helps you see how difficult it is to raise concerns about the simplest matters when your pride is offended. It is a risky and exhausting enterprise.

"I Know What Is Going on in Their Souls"

Here is another example of "superior discernment." I'll share it because of its succinctness. On May 5, 2005, you and Bob talked with me by phone. You requested the call and it was largely about adjusting me and defending yourself on numerous accounts. I'll spare you the details and just share one illustration.

You said you disagreed with Dave and my input from August 20 but didn't voice it at the time because you "didn't want to put us in a bad light."⁴³ You said, "I think we have a limited role in each other's lives." Bob chimed in, "Totally agree." Then you said to Bob, "I should be minimally involved with all three of them [Dave, Steve, me]" You added, "I am not clear myself what sin gets shared with team."

In a nutshell, you didn't want to be involved in our lives or pursue fellowship with us any longer. This was a stark departure from the past. At this point, Bob asked you, "How can Brent win back your confidence and trust?"⁴⁴ You answered "I know how they [Dave and Brent] view me and what is going on in their souls toward me. I hope that will change in time but I am not living for their approval." You put all the blame on us for the breakdown in relationships. We were the problem. Further, you claimed to know the evil ways we thought about you and discerned the bitterness in our souls that motivated us. Therefore, all our observations were dismissed and our input negated. It didn't matter what we thought. You were living for God's approval not ours!⁴⁵ Wow...we were had!

Bob was totally unconcerned for how you needed to win back our trust and confidence. That was a question he never asked.⁴⁶ All the issues addressed in RRF&D had taken their toll on us. We were wobbling. This never concerned you. You never attempted to understand the affect of your sins upon us.⁴⁷ Your focus was entirely on how we wronged you. Josh described the pattern this way on August 20 per Bob's notes. "[Josh] doesn't think "withdrawing" is the best word. It seems to be more resentment and distrusting. At times there is a strength of response in C.J. that seems to be resentful." Josh was right. It was evident you resented our input, distrusted our motives, and withdrew from us relationally.

A year earlier, Dave described "the beachheads where the battle flares." Your on-going resistance, hypocrisy, lack of integrity, and broken promises wounded us badly. They were a "growing factor."

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2004 2:31 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

One feature of my situation that I did not discuss with you (I realized it about an hour after we hung up) was how the situation is preying on my own confidence and trust [in C.I.]. This may have been assumed in some of the things that have been said and you may be surmising it, but I have found that it is a growing factor for me over this season.

I'm not looking to make an issue of this or to do anything with it [because Dave knew how you'd react]. But I do want you to remain sufficiently apprised of the beachheads where the battle flares for me. Having said that, I believe that God is in this and I believe that he will meet me, though at this point, I confess that I do not know how.

Deceit and Independence - Ending New Attitude

Here is another example of lying and deceit.⁴⁸ Like other examples in this document, I share it not to condemn you but to help you. I'm trying to use representative illustrations that can bring illumination and conviction. This can lead to confession and cleansing. In June of 2003, you felt New Attitude (now called "Next Generation" or "Next") should be ended. So did Josh. You brought this to our attention but didn't think Dave, Steve or me should be part of the decision making process even though we had serious concerns about ending it. Here's what you wrote Dave.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2003 9:55 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

We are still getting more information but let me know how you think this decision [to cease NA conferences] should be made because I am still confused at the different approaches (it appears) of different team members.

What would your approach be?

We had been addressing you for several years about being too independent in decision making and about the need for greater plurality on the team. Dave was very careful not to offend you in his response. He laid out a simple prescription but one you were not following.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thu 6/19/2003 10:13 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Thanks for asking about my approach but feel free to lead in any way that serves you or Josh. However, if hearing my thoughts will serve you, my approach would be to decide whether I need the counsel of the team or not. If I think I need it, or if I believe this comes under the purview of the team because Sovereign Grace bears some responsibility for New Attitude, then I would need to offer more information so that I can benefit from 'informed' counsel from the team.

The approach I might suggest:

1. Decide if this is urgent.
2. If not, hold it for the next team meeting. At the team meeting, offer reasons for discontinuing NA, answer any questions and obtain the counsel you desire.
3. Josh then benefits from the counsel of the team without displacing the responsibility for making the decision.
4. This is more like the approach I believe we outlined [in previous conversations] and I don't think there is any disagreement [Steve, Dave and I did not have "different approaches"] among the team over it, but I could be wrong.

Thanks for asking.

You asked me if I agreed with Dave. I did with a "slight difference."

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2003 10:17 AM
To: Dave Harvey; C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Agree with slight difference on #3. Well stated Dave - thanks.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thu 6/19/2003 12:39 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

What would your slight difference with number 3 be?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2003 7:36 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Dave says, "Josh then benefits from the counsel of the team without displacing the responsibility for making the decision." I am not completely sure what Dave means by this. If he means it is Josh's sole decision to end NA I would disagree. I think it is a team decision. On the other hand, if Josh does not feel he is to do NA that is his decision. If so, we need to decide whether we want to continue NA without him (or possibly with him in a limited way) and who else would be involved.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Fri 6/20/2003 8:41 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

Helpful. I would approach it differently than you.

Thanks for sending me this stuff.

Your blunt response was characteristic and so was the lack of any explanation as to why you differed with me. In the end, our arguments in favor of NA prevailed, at least for the 2004 conference, which was held in Louisville, KY for the first time over the New Year break.

The following year you talked again about ending NA. I wrote Bill Kittrell for his thoughts given their effective outreach to young adults in Cornerstone and at the University of Tennessee. I sent them to everyone.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sat 2/14/2004 4:28 PM
To: Steve Shank; Pat Ennis; C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey
Subject: FW: New Attitude

I asked Bill for his thoughts below about us ending (at least for now) New Attitude. I'd assume many others feel similarly and are perplexed about why it is being discontinued. I know Josh can't plan it but maybe someone else could. Anyway...food for thought when we discuss conferencing at the [Feb 17-20] retreat.

From: Bill Kittrell
Sent: Sat 2/7/2004 11:50 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: New Attitude

Brent,

Per our conversation here are my thoughts on NA.

In a perfect world... I'd be leading Sovereign Grace... and in that perfect world we'd still be having NA with a greater emphasis than ever on college age. Here's why:

1. It serves my church best;
2. We want to be around awhile as a movement, so it's smart to be intentional in reaching youth. My experience has been that other Reformed folks seem to think being reformed and effective with youth is unique and encouraging. NA seems to be a great tool for us to do this.

3. NA draws folks from all over. It's even more effective - in one way - than the leadership conference in allowing us to serve the broader body of Christ. There are some great testimonies out there of people coming to us through NA.
4. College age is uniquely open to the gospel and discipleship. I think we can bear fruit reaching 18-24 year olds;
5. Sovereign Grace itself seems to be heading towards having more and more college age people that are members. Why stop now? All these babies are going to be going to college before you know it;
6. This last conference may have been our best. I can't help but believe even the current 'fallen world' Sovereign Grace leadership is having trouble not doing that again! I think Dever (actually I talked with him), Mohler, Grudem are probably thinking "You're canceling this?"...
7. It's the second best conference we do (Leadership Conference first...by a nose);
8. There seems to be some interest among Sovereign Grace people for campus ministry. I can't overestimate the value this conference has for a Sovereign Grace church who wants to do campus ministry. Campus Crusade has a Christmas conference...we used to... NA gives you something every year you can use to build the church locally with campus ministry! And if we focused more and more on this age... it would only be more effective.

I'm sure I could come up with more, but that's a few thoughts. Thanks for asking me to send it.

The next time we discussed the future of New Attitude was during our March 18, 2004 team meeting by phone. It did not go well. You wrote Pat that evening and asked if he had any concerns or observations for your attitude or approach to the conversation with us. Pat wrote you back the next day.

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2004 6:37 PM

To: Pat Ennis

Subject: Phone call

Help me out my friend.

Is there any suggestion you have about how I can lead us more effectively? Did you notice anything in attitude or approach that either concerned you or you would have an observation and recommendation concerning?

Please help me.

From: Pat Ennis

Sent: Friday, March 19, 2004 9:59 AM

To: C.J. Mahaney

Subject: RE: Phone call

Humble of you to ask. Is there something specific that you have question about regarding the call?

I thought it was wisdom in pushing further conversation about NA to another time. I think being more clear about why you thought it would be best that you talk about it another time may have served them (i.e., want to make sure my heart is right because I have a strong conviction about this). It seemed they may have liked to talk more about it then. Were you poised to seek further understanding of their position or did you assume you fully understood them already? You made a comment about not doing NA in the future after they made some of their points. I understood why you would say that (it wouldn't be same conference), but that is a big decision to be made that quickly with so many passionate thoughts being communicated. How was your heart when you made that statement? It was obvious you have a conviction regarding Team involvement. I did not hear you clearly articulate your reasons for being hesitant for the Team to have more of an imprint on that Conference. It seemed they were struggling to understand your perspective and how it differed from theirs. You made the comment that there were differing perspectives but I don't know that they understand yours and it seems they want to.

I had no concerns when I left in that you may have simply been exercising wisdom and decisiveness throughout.

Thanks for asking for help!

Here are official minutes from the March 18 phone meeting recorded by Pat. They are general but give a feel for the discussion also. Dave's comment at the end summed it up. There was no plurality regarding the future of NA.

Brent/Dave: Team may need to have more of an imprint on conference if it more becomes part of our strategy.

Steve: Should it stay as it is, or should Team assist in structuring so that it is more focused on our movement.

Brent: Possibly, we should have more input to messages.

CJ: I do not think we should change it [meaning you didn't think the rest of us should provide direction for New Attitude].

Steve: If using NA going forward is a venue where we keep continuity, then team may need to assist in structuring to be more focused on our churches.

Dave: I think we may need to discuss our plurality regarding NA.

We were sharing our reasons for continuing NA when you abruptly and curtly expressed your disagreement and unilaterally decided to cancel it in 2005. This was discouraging. For years we talked to you about the need for greater team ministry and not acting independently when making important decisions. This was more of the same. Here again is Pat's description.

"You made a comment about not doing NA in the future after they made some of their points. I understood why you would say that...but that is a big decision to be made that quickly with so many passionate thoughts being communicated. How was your heart when you made that statement?"

Even more distressing was your lack of transparency. You asked for Pat's input but when it was unfavorable you did not forward it to Dave, Steve and me. This was extremely troubling because the three of us had talked to you about not keeping this kind of information from us.

At our next team meeting on April 21, we brought up the subject of plurality and your response to Dave and me on March 18. During the conversation Pat mentioned how quickly you reacted to us when we shared perspectives or observations you disagreed with.

After the meeting Dave checked in with you to see how you were doing, etc. We had shared our concern for your heart during the meeting. Here is your response to him.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2004 4:41 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Kind of you to ask! I don't think I am weary, just tired but not exhausted. Pat said I looked joyful to him. And I think I have experienced joy throughout the day. So please don't cancel anything.

Up until yesterday they gave me April 30 as the due date and then it changed yesterday to April 26. But it is achievable and it concentrates the mind to have this new date.

I am sorry I had to end the meeting when I did but I hope you and Brent in particular thought/felt you were able to communicate your concerns. If you would like to do so again I would welcome hearing your observations and perspective. Though I would have a different perspective of what took place and why, I will consider what you guys said and pray about it and if I am convicted of sin I will definitely ask your forgiveness.⁴⁹ Again, I wish we could have continued but I just had to have a meeting with Josh before he left about the book (and it's date night) since I have a very important meeting with Multnomah tomorrow.

Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Even though you said, "I would welcome hearing your observations and perspective" this did not occur. You were never convicted of any sin. You never asked anyone's forgiveness. And you continued to disagree with Dave, Pat and my concerns for your heart and how you unilaterally made the decision regarding NA.

After the meeting, I e-mailed Pat asking for a clarification regarding his comment about how quickly you reacted to us.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2004 4:17 PM

To: Pat Ennis

Subject: C.J.'s Response

Were your observations re: C.J. responding "quickly" related to our discussion last time [March 18] about New Attitude or other things?

- Were your observations parallel to Dave and me re: his response to New Attitude?

- Thanks buddy.

Brent

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Wed 4/21/2004 5:31 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Phone call

Brent,

This e-mail [the March 19 one above on p. 51] would better represent what my thoughts were at the time. CJ asked for my input the following day.

I followed up with Pat a few days later. I wanted the content of his e-mail shared with the team but I did not want to misrepresent Pat. I wanted to know what he attributed to a lack of wisdom and what he attributed to sin. I was putting him in a difficult position. I let him know I'd be forwarding his answers to you, Steve and Dave. I was doing everything above board and in the light.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2004 9:32 AM
To: Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Phone call

I don't want to read into your e-mail to C.J. so could you clarify something for me. Did you feel C.J. simply could have handle the situation better as a matter of wisdom or were you concerned for how he responded to us as a issue of attitude or character. In other words, were you only concerned for how he led the discussion but not concerned there could be issues of sin in his heart and in response to us?

Thanks for helping me to understand.
Brent

P.S. I'd like to forward your response to C.J., Steve and Dave.

From: Pat Ennis
Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2004 10:03 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Phone call

Brent,

I had questions about CJ's heart in the situation due to some of his short responses, but not concerns, in that I have not observed any patterns of such behavior. I left the call having an opinion that he may have lacked wisdom in how he handled that section of the call. He gave you all much time to express your opinions about NA... I thought his responses were abrupt while disagreeable, and then he moved the call along as it seemed you guys were trying to understand his perspective... my opinion was that was not wise and I had questions about his heart in regard to the short answers. Hopefully, this is helpful.

Pat

Pat confirmed his observations of your leadership and heart. He thought you were unwise, abrupt, and disagreeable. Now, what was even more troubling was your misrepresentation of Pat to me the day before during a phone conversation between the two of us. You emphatically told me Pat had no concerns for your leadership, heart or attitudes at the March 18 meeting. You went further. You said he disagreed with Dave and me. But the day after your comments, I received the e-mail above from Pat. I wrote you and the other men. You lied and sought to deceive me.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2004 7:02 PM

To: C.J. Mahaney

Cc: Pat Ennis; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank

Subject: Confidential - C.J. re: NA Discussion

I e-mailed Pat during our team meeting on Wednesday to get more of his perspective on the conversation at our March meeting re: the team's involvement in NA. It seems Pat has questions or observations similar to Dave and mine.

I did not receive Pat's clarification until after my conversation with you [C.J.] yesterday. During our conversation you said that Pat was in agreement with Steve's perspective as contrasted with Dave and me. That is, he had no concerns regarding your heart or attitudes.

You can re-read his March 19 e-mail and his April 24 clarification below.... Thanks my friend for your continued willingness to hear us and consider these issues.

I never received a reply and you never talked to us about this example. Four months later, I brought it up as an illustration at the August 20 meeting. The following is taken from Bob's official notes. Steve and Pat were in attendance and in agreement with what I said. They did not adjust my accounting or Bob's minutes.

Brent At times CJ puts himself forward in a favorable light, more favorable than the facts support. Illustration: When Dave, Brent, and Steve talked to CJ about CJ unilaterally ending New Attitude on the heels of 6 months of talking about how decisions like that should be made, and CJ mentioned that Pat disagreed with Dave and Brent. Brent followed up with Pat and he acknowledged that he had concerns about CJ's heart, although he hadn't reached any conclusions. CJ painted a picture of Pat being supportive of CJ. Thinks CJ can be deceived in this area. The opposite is true, also. When people are giving CJ an unfavorable report, he doesn't always share that.

Steve Numerous times CJ has used Carolyn's or the CLC pastors' commendation to support disagreement with the A-team's perspective.

We'd been talking to you even more purposefully about decision making and plurality for past six months when you decided to end NA regardless of our perspective during the April 21 team meeting. More seriously, two days later you said Pat disagreed with Dave and my concerns for you, when in fact, he shared those concerns. You withheld his "unfavorable report" and reshaped it like a nose of wax into a "favorable report." Steve also shared his perspective that on numerous occasions you'd cite others as a means of discrediting our observations.

New Policy: C.J. Must Present at All Evaluations

This is an example of controlling a process and hypocrisy.⁵⁰ A year before our meeting at the Covenant Life Church bldg. on August 20, 2004 you staked out a new and unprecedented position for yourself. You forbid us from having any interaction with Josh or the other pastors at Covenant Life Church to discuss issues related to your character or ministry unless you were present. You made this decision without consulting with us. You established this policy for yourself and for all others in the future.

This approach prevented us from freely interacting with CLC pastors. When I repeatedly tried to set up meetings with the CLC pastors, you and the apostolic team, the meetings were in every instance turned down by you or the pastors. I tried extremely hard on several occasions to get us all together. After August 20, 2004, we

never met again. We were effectively cut off from the pastors and you would not respond to our attempts at team retreats to engage you in conversation.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2003 9:52 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

I was going through the agenda with Carolyn last night and realized when we came to your desire to meet with Josh, etc. that I would like to be there whenever there is an evaluation of me. Two mistakes I made last year were meeting with your team and Dave's team without you guys being present. For a number of reasons I will never do that again.

I think any communication of this nature should be direct. We end up talking with all the people involved anyway so it is not only wise it is the best use of time. And you and Dave should have been present to hear, ask questions, agree or disagree, etc.

So let me know what you have in mind and who you want to be involved so hopefully I can benefit from the time.

Thanks,

C.J.

It was true - you entertained a number of sinful judgments against Dave and me because you excluded us from meetings and came to erroneous conclusions without talking to us. We were not doing the same. While we needed some freedom to interact with the CLC pastors, we were careful to update you, invite you to ask us questions and have the freedom to agree or disagree. Nevertheless, you positioned yourself as the sole mediator and controlled the flow of information. I agree with Dave's observations.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Wednesday, August 11, 2004 3:37 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential: RE: Dinner on Aug 20th

-
I have not written this assuming it will be circulated. Should you ever desire this, I will craft it accordingly. [I appreciated Dave's unvarnished honesty⁵¹ here.] Here's my quick thoughts:
-

As you may recall, I've never been comfortable with the development of this position [that we can't talk to the CLC pastors about C.J. and they can't talk to us about C.J. unless C.J. is the courier of information or personally present], particularly as it relates to guys with substantial responsibility (like us on the A. Team and also Sr. Pastors). I think the effect is basically to protect the guy under critique⁵² rather than to facilitate the communication of perspective. I understand the rebuttal "Can't we all just move beyond our fear of man and share our thoughts like men are supposed to do" OR "it gets too confusing because things are shared that can't be addressed or reviewed by the guy under scrutiny". My response is three fold:

- 1) It's a fallen world and even the best leaders will share more freely without us there. Our hope is not in participating or overseeing the dialogue but in the guy (for instance, Josh or Brent) leading the meeting. I would also say that what has been revealed about how much the CLC guys were bringing [which was very little] to CJ under the system he was advocating would be additional evidence for my point. It doesn't appear as if there was a healthy exchange. If I'm CJ, I might now want an extended period of time to advocate a 'no restriction policy' on guys talking to one another for my benefit [you were doing the opposite].
- 2) Secondly, it was us pulling the CLC guys together without CJ that ultimately resulted in the movement forward. Had that not happened, I wonder where we would presently be. So I think the opposite approach is bearing the better fruit right now.
- 3) It is more confusing perhaps, but it is better than things not being said at all. I'm not advocating we establish a habit of doing meetings apart from the guys being addressed. I'm simply advocating that a discipline process, even a modified one such as the one we are presently in, sometimes necessitates these kinds of meetings and conversations. There are also other times where it is appropriate for guys to discuss someone not present. To me, and I could be wrong here, Josh being concerned to meet with us because of how CJ desires these kinds of things does not seem healthy or profitable.⁵³

I think CJ's position on not meeting apart from him is something he established, but never really discussed with us,⁵⁴ so I wonder whether that needs to re-examined. This is partly because I wonder how much of it may have been influenced by the sin he is confessing.... and partially for the reasons I already sent you in the e-mail excerpts below last summer:

- a. "If some of Dave and Brent's perceptions are accurate, then CJ's presence may actually discourage productive dialogue [because of sinful reactions]. Also, if folks are excessively concerned with 'how'

they say things, then things may not get said. [Everyone was very concerned with what they said so as not to offend or anger you.]

- b. The reason why it may not be wise for CJ to meet with [pastoral] teams without the Sr. Pastor present is that – in my opinion - it does not play to CJ's strengths (a tendency towards 'haste' in process, conclusions and communication...?) [i.e., sinful judgments]. I'm not sure that this same issue would be (or has been) a serious factor with the rest of the apostolic team meeting with pastoral teams, nor do I think that CJ's new position is one we want to advocate for our extended teams. I wouldn't want to draw a universal conclusion on the practice because CJ – due, I believe, to his style and approach – had unfruitful experiences. It seems as if you and I, and our local teams, are saying that this had to do with CJ's approach...not the overall practice. If we did make this change (only dialogue with teams with senior guys present), I would want to talk about it and ratify it as a team. It seems as if CJ may be taking his assumptions and making it policy.

We were expressing concerns and asking questions about your new policy but we got no traction. It remained intact.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Fri 9/3/2004 11:33 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential - Clear Road Forward

I think that might be a good idea [that is, my proposal for all of us to meet]. However, even more important than their attendance would be our certainty of the role they are playing and the clarity they are bringing. I view this season to be one where we are establishing them [the CLC pastors] on the point and arming them with the necessary insights to serve CJ. If we don't clearly display that goal, then you and I will just look like we're badgering CJ...

This is also where CJ's newer doctrine of discouraging the talking about situations when the corrected is not present is going to be seriously counterproductive.⁵⁵ If we cannot connect with them to evaluate clarity and direction except in CJ's presence, this process will be much longer than any of us would want. I hope to make these points to Josh sometime.

Later on February 3, 2005, Dave wrote Kenneth and copied Josh, Grant and Bob asking this question. "Can you help me better understand why it is important for CJ to be the exclusive courier of information between both teams? Would there be any benefit in kicking around whether that is a wise approach in serving a leader of CJ's stature & responsibility?" This question was never answered.⁵⁶

These illustrations show your determination to control and take over the process⁵⁷ in your case. But at least you committed to be equitable. You resolved never to evaluate Dave or me (or others by implication) without us being present to “hear, ask questions, agree or disagree.”

A Kangaroo Court – Brent’s Assessment

In reality this new policy was never applied to me. I don’t know about Dave or others. I use the word “never” realizing it is a universal negative – a categorical statement. But beginning in June 2006 and up until July 2009 when I resigned from Grace Community Church, this policy was not followed by you, Dave, Gene or Bob.⁵⁸ Each of you habitually met without me to talk about me and came to all manner of conclusions regarding me. This more than any other example, underscores the extent of your hypocrisy. What you swore to “never do...again” you did constantly and flagrantly.⁵⁹ During my assessment last summer, I was given no opportunity to “hear, ask questions, agree or disagree” in the presence of those bringing charges or in the presence of those hearing the charges. Every meeting took place in my absence. I pointed this out this fatal flaw to Bob, Phil and Wayne and asked them to include it in their reports.

You appointed Bob to lead my assessment even though I asked he not be included on the assessment team.⁶⁰ What I experienced amounted to a kangaroo court. I was allowed “no defense at all” even though I was promised the opportunity to face each of my accusers. I was likewise denied all “due process rights in the name of expediency.” These statements are easy to substantiate. Here is an excellent description of what I experienced.

A **kangaroo court** or **kangaroo trial** is a colloquial term for a sham legal proceeding or court. The outcome of a trial by kangaroo court is essentially determined in advance, usually for the purpose of providing a conviction, either by going through the motions of manipulated procedure or by allowing no defense at all.

A kangaroo court’s proceedings deny due process rights in the name of expediency. Such rights include the right to summon witnesses, the right of cross-examination, the right not to incriminate oneself, the right not to be tried on secret evidence, the right to control one’s own defense, the right to exclude evidence that is improperly obtained, irrelevant or inherently inadmissible, *e.g.*, hearsay, the right to exclude judges or jurors on the grounds of partiality or conflict of interest, and the right of appeal. (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia)

Under your leadership and largely due to your example and counsel in multiple situations, this kind of process has consistently occurred in Sovereign Grace Ministries.⁶¹ More than I was aware. For example, several former sr. pastors in Steve's sphere claim to have experienced the same kind of treatment. In overseeing churches, no one's depended on your counsel more than Steve.⁶²

Repositioned Due to a Lack of Gifting⁶³

This is a brief illustration but one many people have observed in Sovereign Grace Ministries. It is also a criticism commonly referenced in the blogosphere. There is truth to it. I don't deny that repositioning is sometimes necessary upon further evaluation of gifting. But when someone falls out of favor with you or someone like Dave or Steve, they often end up being repositioned on the grounds of gifting. Typically, this same person was formerly commended by you or them for their pronounced gifts when in good standing. Then something happens...conflict, disagreement, offense, dislike, etc. Rather than divulged your true feelings for the person they are simply repositioned. I believe this happened to me.

Here's what I mean. Dave and I talked by phone on May 25, 2007 regarding my future. He called on your behalf. During our conversation, he told me you decided to reposition me and curtail my responsibilities because of a lack of capacity and gifting.⁶⁴ Dave didn't indicate what these limitations were and he didn't tell me if he agreed. I wrote him to follow up. Unfortunately, my questions were never answered but changes were made.⁶⁵

This was another example of you unilaterally making an assessment and a decision with no discussion as a team or with me as an individual. Ironically, I always received high marks on my performance evaluations by you and others every year. No one, including you, ever suggested a lack of capacity or gifting in the execution of my responsibilities which were second only to yours for nearly two decades. No specifics were provided. No objective illustrations were presented. I was repositioned with no explanation.⁶⁶

This was not a surprising development given your disposition toward me. Over the years, I've seen you use "a lack of gifting" as a convenient excuse for demoting a person you no longer trust or like due to personal offenses.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, May 25, 2007 2:03 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential

Hey Dave,

Thanks so much for the time today. A residual question came to my mind afterward. Where and how would C.J. see the adverse affects of my limitations in capacity and gifting in executing my current responsibilities? Would you agree or have additional observations. I am not attempting a defense – just love to know C.J.’s (and your) assessment of me. Thanks for providing it.⁶⁷

Brent

My “Legalistic” Teaching at a Men’s Retreat

One main concern everyone has repeatedly brought to your attention is the matter of sinfully judging other people based upon little evidence, no evidence, faulty evidence or even contrary evidence. This has affected the movement. What follows is an example of sinful judging and having “back room” discussions contrary to your strongly avowed commitment to never do this or allow this again.

At our June 2007 retreat, I was falsely accused of legalistic teaching at the “The Making of a Man” conference in Lynchburg, VA on September 21-23, 2006. The erroneous information used for these charges came from Mickey Connolly and Larry Malament but was unflinchingly believed by you, Dave, and Steve. Behind closed doors you agreed to have Larry attend the retreat, in part, to confront me on these charges.

During one of our meetings, I was rather suddenly and strongly reproved for my legalistic teaching. A case was made against me. I gave no answer to these charges. I should add that you and Dave added your own indicting comments. I remained quiet. I knew any defense would further condemn me. I’d be accused of being proud and unteachable.⁶⁸

After the retreat I contacted Larry. In the end, he wrote you and asked forgiveness for being a false witness but there was no follow up by you with me. No, “I’m sorry” or “I apologize.” And certainly no, “Please forgive me.” Follow carefully.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 12:09 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: Joe and John

...Also, at the [June] team retreat you told the guys [C.J., Dave, Steve and Pat] that Mickey had told you that Gene needed to talk to all the sr. pastors from the

upper Mid South about concerns he had for my legalistic teaching at the Men's Retreat? Is that accurate?

Larry responded but gave a very different account than the one he gave us on the team retreat. He distorted and diluted his story beyond recognition.⁶⁹

Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 2:05 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Joe and John

From what I was told Gene wanted to make sure the men in his sphere were clear on principal vs. practice. It was not in direct relation to your messages at the men's retreat, but since your messages were on the practical side Gene wanted to insure that the men were clear on the subject.⁷⁰

I responded to him seeking to understand the truth. I also asked him where he got his information.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 2:33 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Joe and John

That sounds quite different from what you shared at the retreat. I thought you said Gene followed up with each of the sr. pastors regarding my teaching at the Men's Retreat. What am I missing?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 2:29 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Joe and John

Who told you this?

According to Larry, Mickey was the source of this bogus information. I don't know who else Larry talked to after his initial contact with Mickey.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 3:20 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Joe and John

My initial conversation was with Mickey. I'll follow up with him. I don't want to assume I heard him correctly.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 3:20 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Joe and John

My original understanding [from Mickey] was that Gene was following up with the guys in response to your teaching. When I talked with Gene he said it was not in response to your teaching but something he had wanted to address prior to your messages. I think I may have misunderstood the initial conversation [with Mickey].

This was an unsatisfactory answer. I don't think Larry was being transparent.⁷¹ Nevertheless, I covered Larry and Mickey's apparent sin when talking to Gene. I did not reveal their identities.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 10, 2007 9:44 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Joe and John

I don't understand then. Why would you tell the guys at the retreat that Gene talked to all the sr. pastors after the Men's Retreat about concerns for my teaching? Gene told me this weekend he never did anything like that. That is, he never talked to any of the men about concerns for my teaching. He was very grieved that he was being represented as doing this. I did not indicate to him where I heard this stuff from [in order to protect Mickey and Larry]. I only mentioned to Gene that someone [Mickey] had told someone [Larry] who told C.J., Steve, and Dave that he had done this.

Larry talked to you about all of this before the June retreat began. You were fully aware and behind his confrontation of me at the retreat. In this e-mail, Larry expressed no uncertainty about what Mickey told him.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2007 8:42 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Joe and John

Brent,

I'm very sorry about this miscommunication. I had heard this from Mickey and talked with CJ about this. CJ had been with Gene prior to our conversation and did not correct the perception I had been given. I've gotten back to Dave and corrected what had been said at the retreat. I've also spoken with Gene. I've yet to have a conversation with Mickey to find out why he communicated the information to me in the way he did.

Larry

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2007 8:48 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Joe and John

The only other person [besides C.J.] I spoke to about Mickey's comment regarding Gene was Dave. He encouraged me to mention it at the retreat. I sadly made a mistake of not getting to Gene sooner. Please know I don't want to have you wrongly accused or maligned⁷² in any way my friend. I am very sorry about this. Would you please forgive me? I will certainly get back to CJ and Steve as well.

Larry changed his story back to the original version and asked forgiveness of you and Dave. I appreciated him doing so. I don't know if he ever got back to Steve and Pat.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2007 9:00 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Dave Harvey; Brent Detwiler
Subject: Brent

CJ,

A number of months back, from my recollection, Mickey shared with me that Gene E. felt as though he needed to follow up some of Brent's messages after their men's retreat in VA last year. From what I remember Mickey said Gene

felt like he needed to insure that the churches clearly understood the differences between principal and practice. It appeared to me that Mickey was communicating that Gene needed to do this based directly on concern for Brent's teaching. I'm sure at that point I formed some critical judgments⁷³ in my mind.

I mentioned Gene needing to follow up at your [June team] retreat in regards to Brent's preaching. I was able to speak to Gene afterwards and found out that his going to the churches was not directly related to Brent and any concern for what he shared. Gene said that for a while he was concerned that the churches in his sphere were not clear on principal vs. practice and in light of the practical messages Brent was sharing with the men he wanted to insure they knew how process and apply what Brent shared.

He did not share any concerns when asked about the messages Brent brought. I think I sinfully just listened to what Mickey shared⁷⁴ and didn't follow up like I should. I was surprised to hear Gene's perspective in comparison to what I remember Mickey saying. I haven't talked to Mickey yet about this so I'm not sure what this will look like in the end. Regardless I did poor job of following up and learning the truth. Would you please forgive me for sharing inaccurately as well as wrongly characterizing Brent's teaching.⁷⁵ I think I just pridefully assumed I had all the facts. And please know that I'm not laying the blame at Mickey's feet. I'm assuming I just didn't listen well to what he was saying. I'll let you know more once I follow up with Mickey.

A couple weeks later I followed up with Larry regarding what he heard from Mickey. Mickey took no responsibility for passing on faulty information to Larry.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2007 6:36 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: Legalistic Teaching

What did you discover from your conversation with Mickey?

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2007 4:31 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Legalistic Teaching

He didn't remember exactly how it was shared [with me].

This scenario has played out hundreds of times in your dealings with people over the last 30 years. It has reeked a lot of devastation in people's lives.⁷⁶

Recruiting for Church Plant During Sunday Message

Here is another example of how things worked with me. The Monday before our November 2007 team retreat began, Larry Malament sent the following to you, Dave, Mickey and me. I was heartbroken when I read his assessment of my Sunday message at CrossWay Community Church. Not because I thought it was a great message, but because Larry didn't wait to talk with me until after the retreat. Instead, he rifled off an e-mail. It was another blindside.⁷⁷

Dave believed Larry's report without listening to the message⁷⁸ and brought it to my attention on the last day of the retreat. This is the retreat I resigned as a Board of Director. A couple weeks later on November 31, I met with Mickey, Larry, Jim Hawkins, Joe Lechner, and John Morrison. During that time, Mickey and Larry told me that I used the message to recruit more people for the church plant and that I was largely unconcerned⁷⁹ for the welfare of CrossWay Community Church. They passed these perspectives onto you, Dave and Gene. All of you readily accepted them.

Later, Dave and Gene confronted me for recruiting and not caring about the welfare of CrossWay⁸⁰ even though they had not listened to the message. They simply believed what they were told. Last summer, the Assessment Team actually listened to the message and had no such concerns. I hope they provided this perspective to you, Dave, Gene, Mickey and Larry. In any case, no one ever got back to me. I should also add not a single person went on the church plant because of my message or after my message.

These charges went to motive but I was not motivated to recruit and I cared deeply about the welfare of CrossWay. Later, Mickey went further and told me I should return to CrossWay on a Sunday morning and make a public confession of selfishness to the church.⁸¹ If you have not, please listen to the message yourself. It was titled "Living for Him Who Died for Us" and given on November 18, 2007. It's on the CrossWay website. According to Larry it was biblically unsound, superficial, and ill motivated. Here is his e-mail.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Monday, November 19, 2007 2:34 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Mickey Connolly; Dave Harvey; C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Sunday

Brent,

I wanted to pass on to you my thoughts regarding Sunday's message. I know you have much on your plate as you prepare to travel but thought my observations might be helpful. First, thank you for taking the time to prepare and endeavor to serve the church. Sunday messages are always a labor of love and sacrifice and I know you worked hard to prepare. I was excited about the passage you had chosen and was looking forward to your exegesis of "the great exchange" (my understanding of your original title). I know e-mail is at best a mediocre way to communicate but knowing you're preparing to leave [for the SGM leadership team retreat] I'll have to move forward in spite of its limitations. Please know how much I love and respect you and my observations do not reflect a change in this.⁸²

- First, I was concerned for your exegesis of the passage. It appeared to lack depth as well as precision. You initially commented that the primary context of the passage was one of reconciliation between us and God and yet you did not make that your *primary* focus. It appeared as your first main point, but then you quickly moved over to Bunyan's sacrifice and the need for us to sacrifice without returning to your main point about Christ reconciling us to God.
- Your focus then gravitated towards the sacrifice of church planting. I wasn't sure how church planting really applied to this passage and it seemed unnatural to bring the church plant in Mooresville into your message.
- In point two when you discussed being ambassadors for Christ, your illustration of the Kan's martyrdom ended with you saying, "*we're called to be ambassadors whether we're called to Pakistan or Mooresville.*" It made me think, "*what about being called to CrossWay as ambassadors?*" Why just mention Mooresville? Again, the focus seemed to gravitate towards what you were doing and not putting CrossWay first.
- I did appreciate your comment to the folks going on the plant that they should continue tithing to CrossWay until they leave, but other than that reference CrossWay appeared to take a back seat to what was about to take place in Mooresville.
- Instead of positioning folks to understand they are called to CrossWay and must hear a clear word to go, in essence you positioned them more on the 50 yard line, with everyone needing to consider the sacrifice of going. Brent, I don't think that's how a church plant should work. My assumption is that everyone is called to stay until God clearly speaks about going. Positioning them to believe that all should consider going seems counterproductive to the local church that is sending the church plant.

- Throughout your message, (as far as I remember) there were no references to the CrossWay pastoral team, how CrossWay is living as ambassadors for Christ, how we are being effective in evangelism, your appreciation of the pastoral team, and the sacrifices being made here locally.
- I know of no references where you've communicated your appreciation for the sacrifices we are making and will experience by sending out a church planting team. I trust you have said things but nothing that I'm aware of publicly.
- Overall to me it appeared that the message came across more as a pep talk about the sacrifice of going on the church plant to Mooresville and did little to honor and highlight this local church, or encourage them that most folks should be staying, not considering going.

Brent, I know this will be a challenging e-mail and one that would tempt anyone to discouragement, but please receive as one friend desiring to care for another. Over the past few months I have had some other observations and concerns about your approach but have held off thinking they were isolated moments. But Sunday I felt as though you unwisely used the pulpit.⁸³ Now please know, these are my thoughts – one's I've shared with Mickey, (and now CJ and Dave), but they are my thoughts just the same, and ones I don't assume are all correct. At some point I would love to talk about these things.

As always, your friend.

Larry

I use this as a typical example. You allow others to entertain uncharitable judgments against a person without holding them accountable. This is particularly true when you are resentful of the same person.⁸⁴

Eldership in the New Testament Cover

One of the false charges made by Dave and Gene to the Assessment Team and others had to do with the longevity of my "sin." That is, they were injuriously telling my friends that for "many years" I'd been adjusted by the apostolic team on pride, independence, and unteachableness. That was entirely untrue.⁸⁵

The first time these issues were raised with me was at the June 2006 team retreat. Two examples of pride and independence were introduced. The first regarding my booklet on "Eldership in the New Testament" and the second regarding the church planting proposal I submitted in April of that year.

While in seminary, I wrote my Master's thesis on "Eldership in the New Testament." I gave a copy of it to you and Larry Tomczak on my first visit to Gathering of Believers in the summer of 1979. You commended it to all the pastors. It became the foundation for our understanding of eldership. For many years, I distributed it in the Leadership Training School and the Pastors College when teaching on ecclesiology.

I had made some revisions to the document to hand out at "The Summons for Called Men" – a conference two weeks earlier in Charlotte for men who felt a possible call to ministry. This document long predated anything Dave wrote on the subject. I brought copies to the June 2006 retreat. I thought you'd appreciate the revision. What happen next was totally expected.

Behind closed doors, you talked with Dave, Steve and Pat about this being an example of my pride and independence.⁸⁶ You were especially concerned about the cover which was like the Perspective Series booklets produced by Sovereign Grace Ministries. You believed I unilaterally decided to include my work in the Perspective Series without permission. During one of our sessions you confronted me on this. There were no questions. Just conclusions – that is sinful judgments. I was also told I was independent for using the Perspective series format and that I pridefully produced a book we did not need. That I should be using Dave's material on "Called Men," not my own.

There was no freedom to explain myself. It was an oppressive environment. Like many other occasions, I did not speak out against these false charges. In part, because I was trying to be humble.⁸⁷ In part, because I feared being told I was proud for disagreeing.⁸⁸ Here is an e-mail to Dave where I referenced this illustration.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2009 9:12 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Process

I think you are mistaken [about the longevity of my "sin"]. The process began at the June 2006 team retreat. It was flawed from the beginning. I could cite several examples. For instance, I am sure you remember C.J. meeting with you, Pat and Steve in private and talking about concerns related to me without me being present. Sinful judgments were entertained like the matter of me independently putting a Perspectives cover on my Eldership in the NT booklet. It was assumed I did this. When pressed upon me, I felt no freedom to correct your perception. Months later, Larry brought this to your attention. Other examples could be cited.⁸⁹

More importantly, the private meetings during the retreat were contrary to C.J.'s emphatic declaration that he would never do that with anyone after what he claimed to have unjustly walked through with us (you, Steve, and me) from 2000-2004. That is, his assertion that we were wrongly talking about him without him being present.

You may think I am bitter in bringing this to your attention. I am not. I do think it is time to raise these kinds of issues given the consistent misrepresentations. If you have another opinion, I'd love to hear and gladly be adjusted.

Brent

I will come back to the matter of your hypocrisy regarding private meetings but first let me present the e-mail history regarding the cover. Nine months after our June 2006 retreat I received the following e-mail from Larry.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 11:33 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Talk with Dave

Would you mind at some point allowing me to mention how the cover [for *Eldership in the New Testament*] came about?

At this point, I contacted Nick Swan and Jeremy Oddy. I could not remember for sure which one of them produced the cover.

From: Nick Swan
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 3:30 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Cover

I designed it. I just copied it from the other Perspectives books. I have attached what I have.

We had a great time as well. It is nice to know we will be seeing each other regularly in May.

Talk to you soon,

Nick

I never saw the cover until after the booklets were produced just two weeks before the team retreat. Larry followed up with me again.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 3:47 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Talk with Dave

I don't want to mention this if you're comfortable with me doing so, but why not? Do you think it will cause a problem? I certainly don't want to do that.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 3:52 PM
To: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Talk with Dave

I've let these kinds of things go uncorrected in the process.⁹⁰ I don't want to major on minors by "defending" myself.

From: Larry Malament
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 6:01 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Talk with Dave

I understand. Wise thinking on your part. I don't have any clue whether or not it might be mentioned but if it does I would like to have the freedom to mention all the specifics.

Sometime after this Larry took the initiative to present the specific facts to you and set the record straight. I say the following without scorn, but in characteristic fashion you never got back to me and we never talked about this incident as a apostolic team.⁹¹

These kinds of experiences have a terrible affect upon people. I hope you gain a greater appreciation for the justice of God and the equitable treatment of his image bearers.

The Church Planting Proposal – April 2006

I made Mickey the senior pastor and turned CrossWay Community Church over to him on December 15, 2002. A few years later, Mickey, Larry, Jim and I occasionally talked about the possibility of me planting a church. In the spring of 2006, I presented the

following proposal to Mickey, Larry and Jim at our senior staff meeting on Tuesday, April 11. They were unsurprised and intrigued. We discussed it merits. I did this knowing I'd have opportunity to talk with you that same afternoon during our monthly phone call. I also planned it this way since we had a team meeting the next day, Wednesday, April 12. I planned to submit my proposal to everyone for consideration.

Proposal for Church Planting
04/12/06

Training My Replacement

Over the past 6 months, I've been doing a lot of thinking about how to train my replacement on the apostolic team. Ideally, I'd like the person to be 20-25 years younger than me. If I turned over my responsibilities at age 60-62, I'd have 8-10 years to position such a person. In order to do this I think it will be necessary to plant a church in the greater Charlotte area. I'd endeavor to begin the new church with my likely successor.

Training Future Leaders

This church planting would also create a context in which I could disciple and train future church planters and pastors. In time, I'd like to see other churches planted in the Charlotte area. This would facilitate even greater ministry opportunity for upcoming men while giving me easy access for the purpose of training.

Model

I feel a need to build a church that reflects in greater measure my values, priorities, and theology.⁹² CrossWay is a wonderful church and I respect the job Mickey has done these past 3½ yrs. I am also aware that differences exist in how we approach ministry and in the things we emphasize. I'd like to establish a church where I can continue to shape the church and influence the staff over the long haul.⁹³

Strong Functional Connection

In this church, I'd build a strong sense of identity with the mission of Sovereign Grace. Each staff member would have "Sovereign Grace" written into their job description. By that I mean I'd create a context where all the resources of the church were available to serve Sovereign Grace. The staff would be fully assessable to advance the larger mission. There would not be a division of labor.

Strong Relational Connection

This church would allow Jenny and me the opportunity to be relationally “immersed” with the staff. It would become my base and we’d be identified with this church. We would receive pastoral care and also provide pastoral care and mentoring to the staff.

Particulars

I would take the lead in planting the church but hopefully do it with a young named Nick Swan. He has been my personal assistant over the last 6 months. I’d like for him to attend the Pastor College this year. If he did well, I’d bring him back and further train him as a church planting intern. The goal would be for him to become the sr. pastor in the timing of God. We could plant the church in January 2008. If he excelled as a sr. pastor I would further train him for apostolic responsibilities. Nick may not be the man to replace me but you can see the concept I am working with.

During our personal conversation on Tuesday afternoon, you corrected me not talking to you first. It was a good point. In retrospect I should have done this though it was not my intent to act independently. I thought I was approaching the process of church planting submissively...first talk to the pastors, second talk to C.J., then talk to the apostolic team.

No one ever made the claim that I was independent until our June 2006 retreat. I’ve always been a team player. But it was during this time that you confronted me for the Perspective series book cover and the manner in which I presented the church planting proposal.⁹⁴ That is, for not talking to you about it first. In the later case, I saw how this was an expression of independence though unintended. I asked your forgiveness and everyone else’s.

This illustration [the church plant proposal] was repeatedly brought to my attention by you and those making a case against me for several years. It became a defining example of pride and independence in my life. This was wrong. When corrected, I immediately asked forgiveness. I didn’t deny the presence of pride and independence in my heart. I should have talked to you first but this wasn’t a major transgression and I quickly humbled myself. For your benefit, I hope you see the harsh and hypocritical way in which you conducted yourself.⁹⁵

Eager to Meet and a Final Appeal

Let me reiterate an important point I repeatedly made in RRF&D, subsequent correspondence and now again. I am eager to meet with you but I must have a written response to RRF&D, and now AFA, in advance. This is not a substitute for meeting but a precursor to meeting. On March 17, I wrote “I will gladly meet [with you] but first I need some assurance you have processed what I’ve written by providing a meaningful response. I do not expect complete agreement.”

I’ve been open and honest with you. I’ve put my thoughts and concerns in print. They are open to examination and scrutiny. I’ve been candid and I welcome the accountability such a format secures. I’ve also asked for your critique and invited your correction. To these I will gladly respond in print in advance of any meeting. In addition, you are welcome to show my response to others in preparation for any such meeting.

For these reasons, I don’t understand your adamancy. Why are you unwilling to do the same? What might this reveal? Do you really think written communication will make things worse? Or, are you avoiding accountability? I don’t know. In any case, I need you to be open, honest, candid and accountable in print.⁹⁶ You’ve had months to think about RRF&D and talk to others about it. I am simply asking you to supply me what I have supplied you. I am not trying to “catch you” or “trap you.” I just want you to be transparent about your agreements and disagreements. This will help me immeasurably in preparing for a meeting. For instance, it still baffles me that you remain unwilling to share in writing what differences in doctrine and praxis preclude ministry in Sovereign Grace Ministries. I guess that question awaits heaven.

Finally, you said, “So, although I have a number of questions about what you’ve written, I think trying to address and resolve them in written form is unwise and would only prove unhelpful.” Trying and resolving are two different matters. Please try to address them in written form. And remember, my request for written communication has always been in preparation for meeting, not a replacement for meeting. I am not expecting total resolve via writing but it could go a long way in that direction. Please reconsider.

My Biggest Concern – Integrity, Truth Telling, and Justice⁹⁷

I wrote RRF&D with you in mind. I did not elaborate on concerns for others. I purposely limited the scope of my writing because change in those around you must begin with change in you.⁹⁸ By that I mean, there is little hope you can effectively help Dave, Steve, Bob, Gene,⁹⁹ et al. apart from personal illumination and reformation. They are a reflection of you. That is why I wrote:

“Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically, and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect.”

The issues I’ve raised are not obscure or difficult to discern. The examples are numerous and easy to perceive. I hope RRF&D and AFP serve your soul and result in public confession. I completed RRF&D and sent it to you three weeks before the Pre-Conference Gathering at Together for the Gospel in April. I prayed you’d take the opportunity to tell the Sovereign Grace pastors about the last 10 years (or longer) and acknowledge your hypocrisy. I didn’t hope or pray for these things with a desire to humiliate or embarrass you. I simply hoped you’d follow your own teaching and the example of other men who have publically confessed sin of a much less serious nature and often at your behest. I believe you know the right thing to do but I realize there are many temptations you must resist and overcome in order to do so. ¹⁰⁰

Therefore, I’d encourage you again, to be open and honest with the Sovereign Grace pastors and the movement. For instance, follow the humble example of your friend, John Piper. Here is a short excerpt of his public comments.

“I see several species of pride in my soul that, while they may not rise to the level of disqualifying me for ministry, grieve me, and have taken a toll on my relationship with Noël and others who are dear to me. How do I apologize to you, not for a specific deed, but for ongoing character flaws, and their effects on everybody? I’ll say it now, and no doubt will say it again, I’m sorry. Since I don’t have just one deed to point to, I simply ask for a spirit of forgiveness; and I give you as much assurance as I can that I am not making peace, but war, with my own sins.”

There is no greater service you could provide. A public confession would bring glory to God, protect the gospel, restore confidence in Sovereign Grace Ministries, bless the pastors, set an example for the next generations of leaders, and benefit your soul.

The Case of North Coast Church

I also think you would benefit from the feedback of men who have left the movement. What I have experienced is unusual in degree but it is not new or novel. Here is another paradigmatic example. I’ve chosen this one because it exemplifies several

important points. Below is the letter you wrote Ken Roberts, Chet Fahrmeier, Mike Noble, and Mark Telepak at North Coast Church (NCC) on August 9, 1997. Two months earlier on June 13, 1997, they wrote “to officially and respectfully request NCC to be released from our long standing and valued relationship with the movement and ministry of PDI.” Since they were leaving PDI, you thought they should return a 5k gift from Covenant Life Church. This was your first interaction with them after receiving their letter.

August 9, 1997

Dear Ken,

[I] just wanted to communicate my appreciation for the return of the \$5,000. I do think that was integrity and I commend and respect you for doing this.

I am disappointed that the same kind of integrity has not been evident in the decision to withdraw North Coast Church from P.D.I. Unless there is an explanation I am not aware of (and please provide one if there is), I do not understand how you and the men you serve with can withdraw the church from those who originally delegated you this responsibility. I am sure Dave has communicated our disagreement and dismay, but this continues to be the most perplexing and disturbing aspect of your decision to me and those from Covenant Life Church and other churches who upon discovering the news have simply asked, “How can they do this?” My hope would have been that in light of your disagreement, we could separate peacefully and send you to begin another church in an agreed upon location.

Let me also communicate disappointment with how you have misrepresented the team’s theological position, our practice and our heart attitude through your letter and public communication. Sadly, this was confirmed when Dave and Steve met with folks from North Coast Church. Their perceptions of the team, how we build, and the recent transition were simply inaccurate. I had hoped this would not happen.

This letter contains nothing you have not heard previous from Dave, but I wanted to express my disagreement and grief with how you men have proceeded.

With sadness,

C.J.

I remember how troubled I was with your letter to Ken and especially when you sent it out to all the pastors in PDI on September 8, 1997 with a cover letter. It was harsh and errant in many respects. It put Ken, Chet, Mike, and Mark in a very bad light

I was embarrassed for you and concerned for them. Your letter was very different in tone and content from the one I first wrote on June 19 to all the PDI pastors about North Coast's decision to leave. Here is an excerpt from that 2 page letter.

"Greetings in the name of our sovereign Lord Jesus! C.J. is away on vacation. Therefore, I have been asked to write you on behalf of the apostolic team concerning developments with the church in Cleveland. Recently, the pastoral team of North Coast Church made the decision to leave PDI. This is not a rash decision on their part, nor have they made this decision with enmity in their hearts toward us. Indeed, they have sought to communicate their apperception for us. Though disappointing, the process we have walked through has been cordial and charitable.... We also have confidence in the sovereignty of God and affirm the genuine desire of the NCC pastors to serve the Lord as they move on. Our relationship with the NCC leaders (and church) has clearly changed, but it has not been severed. We affirm our love for them and have confidence in the blessing of God upon them."

Ken wrote me back.

Dear Brent

Just wanted to say "thanks" for the letter you wrote on behalf of the apostolic team to all the PDI senior pastors. I appreciated the tone and clarity and thought it rightly represented all of us in this difficult decision and transition.

Thanks for your contribution into my life over the years...I pray God's continued grace upon you and those you serve."

In respect,
Ken Roberts

Ken, Chet, Mike and Mark provided you their perspective on how things were handled in an 8 page letter, dated April 1, 1999. Much of what they said was true. Here are some excerpts.

"I believe that the way the separation [from PDI] occurred is very important. I don't believe that this chronology has been communicated accurately or was accurately represented to others in the ensuing months. This issue is important because it speaks to areas of our motive in the separation. It was later made to

look like I “pulled the church out of the movement”. It was implied to people that I was attempting to avoid being repositioned or had something to hide and therefore quickly took the church of the movement. This couldn’t have been further from the truth. Much of the confusion, suspicion of motives, and accusation could have been avoided if the way the separation came about had been accurately and forthrightly communicated, “ (page 4)

“After 17 years of relationship with the apostolic team and the movement, I [Ken] have been extremely disappointed with C.J.’s response. During those 17 years we/I have always attempted to submit, show respect, walk in truth, loyalty, integrity, discuss our differences, communicate, communicate, communicate, and be a positive contributor to the movement. However, once the dialogue regarding the separation began, I didn’t hear anything from C.J. at all [you resentfully withdrew from them] until we got a note [the one above] in response to our return of a financial gift from Covenant Life Church to NCC in December of 1995. Then his response was to question our integrity in walking through the situation. This was painful and inappropriate. I also didn’t, nor have I, heard anything from Steve Shank. It appears once you don’t agree with the apostolic team you no longer exist [p. 5]....

“[You] undermined the character, call, conscience, and convictions of the entire eldership, and North Coast Church. This is probably the biggest issue to me. Once the separation became apparent, the tactic of the apostolic team seemed to be to subtly but certainly discredit me [p. 5]. This is evidenced through:

1. Dave’s conference call with our entire eldership shortly after our meeting at Celebration.
2. Dave’s letter to NCC’s membership.
3. Private telephone conversations between Dave, Steve and Jim Walter with current NCC members.
4. Statements made and the presentation of the issues at the open meeting in Cleveland in July with Steve, Dave, and Jim.
5. Other conversation from various PDI pastors to NCC staff personnel.

It has also been confusing to all of us that the last time Dave was in NCC, (February 1997) he publically commended me (KR) and all the pastors of NCC before the congregation. It is also confusing to us why there were issues concerning me that were never addressed with me, Debbie, or NCC’s eldership and only surfaced later. At what point did the apostolic team’s commendation of my call and the qualifications of the entire eldership change and come into question? How did we go from being commended to our congregation in February of 1997 to being under suspicion in June of the same year?...

People were influenced to be suspicious of our motives, question our integrity, and subtly influenced to question our character. This caused people to question the rightful place of our authority in the local congregation and to question our leadership ability and dependability.... I believe this is a serious issue that the apostolic team needs to reflect upon! Once man begins to decide what is God and what isn't, what is God's will for others, what other people's motives, agendas, sins are...I think it's a serious issue. This seems to be a consistent pattern with the apostolic team.... I believe that it is in this area that the apostolic team has wronged us the most!" [p. 6]

They also expressed concern for Dave. They felt manipulated by him. Here are a couple examples.

"The last time Dave was in Cleveland was February of 1997. At a meeting with Dave and NCC pastors, we were discussing the reformation theology emphasis and direction, etc. I directly asked Dave if NCC pastors were the only ones within the movement questioning some of these emphases. Dave's answer to us was that we were the only ones questioning or struggling with this direction. It clearly appears that this was not the case then, nor has it been the case since then. We later found out from current PDI leaders and several people who have left PDI churches that reformation theology emphasis and direction was an issue and concern for many and still continues to be. I don't understanding Dave's answer to us....In hindsight, this response seems partial, misleading and inaccurate." [p. 7]

"At the conclusion of our Celebration 97 meeting. Mark Telepak asked Dave if he saw any sin with us in this process as we had been walking and working through issues as a leadership team with the apostolic team and movement. His direct answer to us was "no". Again, we were surprised at how things seemed to quickly change and areas of motive, personal agenda, mistrust, suspicion, etc.. started to surface. Again, we do not understand this seemingly inconsistent action." [p. 8].

I fundamentally agreed with Ken and the pastors. I was concerned for you and brought these things to your attention. Finally, three years after you wrote the harsh letter to Ken, you met with him and the other pastors to ask forgiveness for a couple of things. You also wrote Ken's wife, Debbie, on June 19, 2000, and said "When the separation occurred between North Coast and PDI, I sent a letter to your husband that I now realized was woefully inadequate and certainly not kind and gracious...The letter also should have been followed by a personal meeting with the pastoral team to primarily communicate my love and, only, secondarily my disagreement with the decision."

This was good and meaningful to them, but it didn't address the root issues in your heart or the other issues they brought up in their 8 page letter. Your handling of the situation was one of the reasons I began to press for changes in your life in December 2000. Soon after this situation with North Coast Church, we were addressing the same kind of issues in your relationship with Bo Lotinsky. It took seven years of constant input before you fully acknowledged your sin against him.

The NCC pastors had some good advice a decade ago. It still holds true today. There is a pattern in your life of reacting with sinful judgments, withdrawing affection, separating relationally, speaking harshly due to resentment and anger, misrepresenting others, undermining reputations, and dismissing input. Ken cites "twenty to thirty leaders" or "good men" who had this same kind of experience. The list is much longer today.

"If you really want input and candid observations from others concerning the movement, I would recommend that you send a standardized letter to twenty to thirty leaders who have left the movement. Ask certain questions and request input on specific topics in this letter. I know every situation isn't the same - guys leave for different reasons, under different circumstances, with different attitudes - I understand that. But I would venture to say that you would find very similar input for the movement through each of their own observations and experiences. Truth can be found from the observations of our friends, critics, and even our enemies. [p. 8]

Since leaving the movement, I have been amazed at the same observations and concerns for PDI from good guys who have left the movement, as well as national, and international leaders. Many of these observations have come to us unsolicited as people/leaders heard North Coast Church had left the movement. I think there are some very legitimate issues that are crucial and are very significant for PDI to pursue, discuss, and possibly address." [p. 8]

Over the last decade I've tried to "pursue, discuss and...address" these crucial issues with you. If you are interested in pursuing reconciliation and input from others, I can recommend the names of men from the past 30 years. Some very recent...some from long ago. Most left the movement. Some remain but are no longer in ministry. A handful continue in ministry within Sovereign Grace Ministries. Practically all of them have been loyal and often to their own detriment.

What I've experienced is analogous to what Ken experienced 10 years ago. These patterns of sin in your life are the best kept secret in Sovereign Grace Ministries. Yes, there were often issues in their lives, but these men could be helpful to you if you approached them with humility. I think they'd provide legitimate insights. Let me know if you are interested.¹⁰¹

A Minor Example Illustrates Major Points – “Lambasted”

Here is an example of resisting input and sinfully reacting. During the August 20, 2004 meeting, Pat asked why you weren’t being transparent with us. He wanted to know how you were processing the input you were receiving. He attempted to engage you in dialogue with us. You gave him a general answer which was more a deflection than a candid response. Everyone was concerned for the consistent pattern of holding back your real thoughts so they could be evaluated. This went to the heart of your pride in thinking you didn’t need others to help examine your heart. Here are Bob’s notes.

- Pat Asked CJ why he wouldn’t share what he was thinking.
- CJ Doesn’t want to interrupt the conviction that is taking place in his heart.
- Josh Obviously there is a place for self-control. But because this has been a consistent issue, it would help in the evaluation of CJ’s heart if he told others about his thought processes. We need to see how CJ thinks, where cravings are present, etc. But it would help CJ to have other eyes on his thoughts.
- Pat Would it be humility to let others judge whether his thoughts were accurate or not?
- CJ Struggles with the area of restraint. Trying to not say as much. What just happened was a good thing (him not saying what he was thinking), he thinks.

No one in the room agreed with your perspective. Rather than reveal your thoughts, you concealed your thoughts in the name of self-control. Everyone wanted you to open up and be honest. Restraining yourself from sin was good, but withholding your honest thoughts was not. Like others during the meeting, Dave appealed for self-disclosure. He asked you to model what you’d taught others. He pointed out how you avoided accountability by “staking out something of a moral high ground” (e.g. don’t want to interrupt conviction, you struggle with self-restraint) and controlling any process of evaluation. The end result was not walking in the light.

- Dave Thinks this is an important point because this exemplifies certain places certain examples he has tried to build into us – self-disclosure, inviting others into our thought processes. CJ didn’t bring up at a [apostolic] team retreat what we [CLC pastors] had talked about [with him]. CJ’s approach doesn’t exemplify walking in the light. CJ

ends up controlling and leaving unevaluated too many things. CJ ends up staking out something of a moral high ground, not intentionally.

Brent In CJ's exchange with Pat, CJ mentioned the word "perceived." Whatever he was thinking, he didn't want to share in part because of how he might be perceived. Most helpful if CJ said he was a work in progress, told us the things he agreed with, and then the things he's not seeing. Doesn't think CJ does a good job telling us what he is seeing. Realizes he hasn't had time to contemplate all this. Also important to share with us what he's not seeing and may disagree with because of the way we'll perceive him, thinking that he might be lambasted.

I was convicted the moment I used the word "lambasted" and almost immediately asked forgiveness. It was too strong and volatile a word. It was uncharitable and included an element of sinful judging. In other words, it was wrong to characterize how you might sinfully view our response if you shared openly. I was thinking of a recent statement you made to me on August 5. You said Dave and I would say "Aha! We've got him!" if you shared openly.

Nevertheless, I should have said "sinfully judged" not "lambasted." That was accurate and it was a great concern to you. A week before the meeting, I wrote Joshua and Dave based upon our August 5 conversation. Here's what I said in part. "C.J. acknowledged to me that he has been tempted to sin in relation to Dave and me re: our motives, how we've conducted the process and in light of character deficiencies he sees in us... He fears we will sinfully judge him if he shares his observations."

Kenneth continued the August 20 conversation and pointed out one of the main issues we'd been trying to help you see for years. You quickly dismissed Kenneth. But he was correct. You were consistently "comfortable" with your self-assessment and "uncomfortable" with everyone else's assessment of you. You'd judge those bringing correction and exonerated yourself. You were confident you could discern your own heart without the help of friends. Kenneth also raised your sinful response to me. Others followed. Josh expressed concerns for how you responded to correction or disagreement "in these moments and meetings" by taking charge and wanting "to be one to direct the focus of things." It was similar to Dave's comment about being "controlling." You also dismissed everyone when they raised concerns for your sinful reaction to me.

Kenneth Seems like CJ's comfortable with his own assessment.

CJ Says he's not comfortable with his own assessment.

- Grant Don't lock on to one thing that has been said that you disagree with.
- Kenneth Seems like CJ was offended with what Brent said.
- Brent Asked forgiveness for using the word "lambasted." CJ can make the fatal mistake of judging the response of those bringing him correction and then trying to figure things out on his own. Concerned that people will think, "Aha! We've got him."
- Josh Everyone would say there is a humility and perception we would affirm. Not sure Brent's statement was helpful, because it was so general. But thinks CJ's temptation in these moments and meetings is to want to be one to direct the focus of things.
- Kenneth Felt that CJ's response to Brent when he used the word "lambasted" was intense. Wondered if CJ's response couldn't be more kind.
- Dave Sometimes CJ can get hooked on what people say and respond in a way that has a silencing, punishing effect on the person he's talking to.
- CJ Didn't see that in his response to Brent.
- Grant What happened today isn't the clearest example of this response. But there seemed to be some of it there. When CJ says, "if that's the effect, then we just need to start over," that has an effect. Seems like CJ has concluded, and isn't asking questions.
- Josh Even if there wasn't sin in CJ's heart, that response [to Brent] doesn't position CJ to position and hear. It isn't a question, and it could be said in a way that's humble. Sounds like "I'm doing my best here, and if that's all you think of it, then let's start at the beginning." That's not the best way to get at the good content from Brent.

Kenneth said it "Seems like CJ was offended with what Brent said.... Felt that CJ's response to Brent when he used the word "lambasted" was intense. Wondered if CJ's response couldn't be more kind." Dave followed and said, "Sometimes CJ can get hooked on what people say and respond in a way that has a silencing, punishing effect on the person he's talking to." You immediately dismissed Dave and said you "Didn't see that in...response to Brent." Grant agreed with Dave but noted it was not the most pronounced example of "silencing" and "punishing." He said, "What happened today isn't the clearest example of this response. But there seemed to be some of it there."

Josh concluded with “Even if there wasn’t sin in CJ’s heart, that response [to Brent] doesn’t position CJ to position and hear.... That’s not the best way to get at the good content from Brent.”

This minor example illustrated major points. First, you disagreed with everyone’s assessment. All of us were wrong. You were right. This was the very issue we were addressing at the time. Second, you did not ask for any additional input to help you see what everyone else was seeing. Third, your “intense” reaction was typical. It had the effect of “controlling,” “silencing,” and “punishing.” Fourth, you did not ask forgiveness. Fifth, you missed the “good content” because you were focused on my sin.

Even though the illustration was not a big deal it perfectly illustrated many of the important points we had been raising with you for a long time.¹⁰²

Dave’s Missing Letter¹⁰³

From August 20, 2004 (the meeting with the CLC pastors) to November 20, 2007 (my last day on the leadership team), you never again talked to us as a team about heart issues in your life. You withdrew from all of us. In January 2006, Dave wrote you a lengthy personal letter. You did not respond to the letter and you never told anybody about it. This was Dave’s last attempt at helping you see what his greatest concern was in terms of effect. That was the end of meaningful team ministry born out of sinful reaction to our correction. He strongly appealed that we talk about plurality and your isolation from us.

I had no knowledge of this letter until Dave told me about it during a phone call with him on April 29, 2008. That was 2¼ years (or 27 months) after he wrote it. I asked Dave if I could read the letter but he declined. He wanted to keep it “private.” Instead, he told me about the contents.

Understandably, this letter was a big deal to Dave. The team had not been functioning in an authentic way. This was a last ditch effort to restore our relationships. In integrity, he had to share his perspective one last time before dropping it.

When Dave told me about the letter he had no lack of recall. He told me the following in vivid detail. First, it was a “lengthy private letter sent to C.J.” Second, he sent it “in January 06.” Third, it was “regarding the end of team ministry in response to our correction.” Fourth, he was “especially concerned for C.J.’s reaction to you [Brent].” Fifth, he “never heard back from C.J.” regarding the letter. I took careful notes as Dave describe the purpose and contents of the letter. None of this is made up.

I wrote Bob, Phil and Wayne about Dave’s letter during the assessment they did of me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, July 25, 2009 8:29 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Dave's Letter to C.J.

In January 06, Dave wrote a lengthy personal letter to C.J. In it he tried to help C.J. see how his sinful response to our correction had adversely affected his relationship with the team and especially me. Dave told me C.J. never got back to him on it. Perhaps he [C.J.] shared this letter with those watching over his soul.

If you are interested in understanding my perspective [that your disposition toward me changed after August 20], you should ask Dave for this letter and share it with those caring for C.J.

Bob was not interested in understanding my perspective so he didn't ask Dave or you for the letter in July 2009.¹⁰⁴ I never heard from Bob so I wrote him again on February 15, 2010. I inquired, "Did you ask Dave or C.J. for the letter? Did you talk to C.J. about it?" He had not.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2010 5:51 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Follow Up with C.J.?

...I haven't asked for the letter, but that's something I'll be happy to do. Once I've read it and talked to CJ about it I'll get back to you...

The next day I asked Bob "if [he] would send me a copy of the letter Dave wrote C.J." Here's Bob's response.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 9:23 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Follow Up with C.J.?

...I talked to both Dave and CJ and neither of them remembers the letter you're referring to. Dave remembers bringing up the issue of CJ's response to the correction a few times, but said that issue would have been secondary on his list of concerns for CJ. He also stressed that he didn't think CJ's perceived sinful responses were behind the changes or restructuring decisions he made in Sovereign Grace.

This probably isn't helpful, but it's what I was able to discover. Let me know if there's any way I can follow up.

I assume you don't, but if you have a copy of the letter you say Dave referred to, can you forward it to me? I know Dave and CJ would like to see it as well...

I was unsurprised you forgot about the letter. I was shocked Dave forgot. Maybe Bob's description of the letter was so wide of the mark that it did not trigger Dave's memory. Or perhaps, Dave's memory has deteriorated greatly. If so, he should be checked out by a doctor. This much is certain – the letter described above was written and sent.

Baring the above, I don't believe Dave forgot about the letter based upon the evidence. He told me about it 27 months after he wrote it. He had no difficulty remembering the details. But 16 months after our conversation, he can't even remember writing it. This does not compute.

This letter was extremely important to Dave. He told me so. I can't imagine he did not keep a copy of it. I was out of favor with you when Dave told me about the letter. That's why he informed me about it. He wanted me to know he had appealed to you one last time regarding your resentment, bitterness and anger at me. He covered other matters but Dave was interceding on my behalf. That may explain why it's gone missing. It certainly explains why you never shared it with others. When you received the letter from Dave it should have been discussed with the CLC pastors. You'd expect this of others. That is, transparency and accountability – not concealment.

This "missing" letter was simply a restatement Dave's concern that he repeatedly brought up over the past decade. That is, you sinfully reacting and pulling back from others.

Jenny Never Heard from Carolyn¹⁰⁵

In this regard you set a terrible example for your wife.¹⁰⁶ Let me illustrate. Less than three weeks after the August 20 2004 meeting, you told me "Carolyn had questions about the process" leading up to the meeting. You also asked for a private meeting with me to ask questions about "the large the body of material" I presented. This meeting eventually occurred on November 19 but it was not to ask questions. It was to provide correction.

Earlier over the summer months, Bob and Kenneth told me Carolyn was quite angry at me. I knew she didn't understand what had actually transpired. Given your comment about her, I wrote the next day offering to help her. You denied my request. I am not

sure why you wanted me to know she was struggling since it wasn't to meet with her and work things out. I wrote you the next day.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, September 09, 2004 10:11 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Joshua Harris
Subject: Confidential: Carolyn

Please communicate to Carolyn that I'd be very happy to talk with her and answer her questions about the process.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, September 09, 2004 9:22 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential: Carolyn

Thanks my friend but it's not necessary. The guys here have been a more than sufficient help. They have just done a great job caring for us both.

I will let you know if it is necessary.

A week later, I had the privilege of honoring you at the Friday evening gathering with all the Sovereign Grace pastors and leaders during the Milestone Weekend at CLC. Before the official program began, I purposely made my way to Carolyn. I knew she was struggling with me and the affect of August 20 on the weekend.

The later was beyond my control. I did all I could to tamp things down after the August 20 meeting to allow space going into the Milestone Weekend. I was trying to put things on the back burner but you and Steve kept things on the front burner. Nevertheless, I sought to identify with Carolyn's disappointment knowing she blamed me. She was not amenable to conversation. She was visibility upset with me.¹⁰⁷ A few months later, Jenny talked to Carolyn by phone for the last time on November 16. Carolyn conveyed that she was "really struggling with the process."

Three years later in November 2007, Steve and I resigned from the core apostolic team but remained on the extended apostolic team. Much had changed in all of our relationships. In January 2008, Jenny and Janis received the following e-mail from Nora on Carolyn's behalf. This communication should have been done in person or by phone.

From: Nora Earles
Sent: Wednesday, January 02, 2008 4:45 PM
To: Jenny Detwiler; Janis Shank
Subject: Phone Calls with Carolyn

Dear Jenny & Janis,

Happy New Year! I trust that this year will be one in which God's grace will be even more amazing to you.

CJ & Carolyn recently met with Dave & Kimm and it was determined that Kimm will now take the lead in these phone calls and there will be a new format. Carolyn understands the need for this change but she is saddened that she will no longer touch base with each of you on a monthly basis.¹⁰⁸

My understanding is that this will take effect immediately so the previously scheduled phone calls for January and February will no longer occur.

I, too, will miss contacting each of you. Please don't hesitate to ask if there is ever a way I can serve you.

Nora

Jenny was disappointed but took the opportunity to write Carolyn. She also wanted to thank her for the note and generous Christmas gift that she, Kimm, and Janis received.

From: Jenny Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2008 7:05 AM
To: Carolyn Mahaney
Subject: Thank you

Dear Carolyn,

First of all I want to thank you (and C.J.) for the very kind note and extremely generous gift I received before Christmas. You have always been so overwhelmingly extravagant in your expressions of thanks and friendship.

Secondly, I want to thank you for your friendship, care and the impact you have had on my life over these past 25+ years. I really don't have the skill to express it adequately. "Thank you" is so small compared to the life changing difference you have made in every area of my life by your example, teaching, and fellowship. I have so many fond memories of our times together and conversations that I will always treasure. I'm amazed that the Lord so kindly

blessed me with this season of interaction with you. You have been such a wonderful means of grace. Thank you for sharing your life with me.

With much gratefulness,
Jenny

What I am about to share is not born out of offense. My wife continues to feel a debt of love to Carolyn. It is simply another example I hope you can benefit from. For many years, Carolyn referred to Jenny as one of her “dearest friends.” Unfortunately, Carolyn never responded to this e-mail from Jenny. In the same way, I didn’t hear from you for 18 months; so too, Jenny didn’t hear from Carolyn for 18 months until their paths crossed at the Pastors Conference in April, 2009. Your wife followed your example and entirely cut off a friendship due to offense. Nor has Jenny heard from Carolyn since the Pastors Conference.

Dave Gives Up – Joins the Culture of Accommodation

Dave fought valiantly (and lovingly) but gave up in the end. The process had taken a toll on him. He was exasperated by you and lost faith to help you. He told us so. He was discouraged “coming up against a different understanding of humility and what leadership looks like” in his discussions with Bob and Kenneth. Dave was pragmatic. In his mind, it wasn’t worth the effort any longer. He was also hindered by his idols. He often told you/us that he “can fear C.J. and crave C.J.’s approval” (May 13, 2003). Lastly, he was ambitious – something he frequently acknowledged to us. He didn’t want to jeopardize his future in Sovereign Grace Ministries by continuing to offend you. All these factors came into play when he finally crossed over and joined, as he described it, the “culture of accommodation” – the very culture he believed insulated you in large measure. Here are a few e-mails to make my point.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, October 19, 2004 4:03 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Confidential – Retreat

I’m walking out the door, but I will throw you some quick thoughts:

1. I think I would appeal [to Josh] that meeting before or during [our upcoming team retreat] remain a priority. My sense from the CLC guys was that the [apostolic] team dynamic is their primary concern. I think that would be the same for the A. Team. Therefore, I think addressing these issues at the retreat becomes the best use of the time (even if CJ is only able to share in a preliminary way and we come back to it in the future).

2. Another thought: I think the process is now stalled unless we do move forward on these conversations.... Personally, I think moving this forward will serve the team health (and our mental health!) best.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2004 7:55 PM

To: Joshua Harris

Cc: Grant Layman; Kenneth Maresco; Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank

Subject: Confidential

...Is CJ demonstrating a sufficient appreciation for what this process imposes on team dynamic, unity and communication? It seems the more common approach among us would be to elevate the priority of these kinds of discussions - partially to care for all involved; partially to uphold the unity of the team(s); and partially because these situations play out on a relational stage and those relationships are important. The fact that we could have weeks, even months pass with no discussion or deliberation is difficult to interpret, but not unusual for how we tend to proceed when there is misunderstanding or unresolved relational issues...

To summarize, the following is my best shot at a summation of my original concerns.... *To correct CJ, or to challenge his own self-perception, was to experience a reaction through e-mails, consistent disagreement (without seeking to sufficiently understand), a lack of sufficient follow-up and occasionally, relational withdrawal. Along with this, CJ was poor in volunteering areas of sin, temptation or weakness in himself.*

A couple months later, we had a team retreat in Herndon, VA on January 11-13, 2005. Dave attempted to draw you out on your e-mail confession to us from October 13. You were unwilling to engage us in any discussion. Dave was distressed and wrote me the following.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Saturday, January 15, 2005 4:25 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: confidential

This would be my recommendation on how to proceed. What do you think.... Follow up with CJ's team to answer any questions and offer them our assessment on their participation in the process. Dave retires. Brent takes over

point. I hated leading that discussion, so your indebtedness to me should be huge.

Soon after this e-mail I had a phone call with Dave. He wanted to move on but I was having a hard time letting things drop. You had been unresponsive to us, taken over the process and turned the focus on us.¹⁰⁹ I asked Dave how he could move forward without compromising his integrity or violating his conscience. I purposely left Dave's answer out of RRF&D because I didn't want to tempt you or harm your working relationship with him. But at this point, I think it's important for you to hear Dave's answer. These are his exact words and his meaning in context. He was not being mean or satirical. There was no invective in his speech. Nor was he trying to be funny. He was matter of fact.

Simply put Dave said "we have to approach C.J. like a teenager." He went on to explain his meaning. Like with a stereotypical teen, we must "work to make our points" and "lower our expectations." In other words, when talking to you we needed to be as affirming and winsome as possible and be careful to avoid any language or expressions that might offend or tempt you.¹¹⁰ In addition, we should not expect you to behave or respond like a mature adult but like a difficult teen. Lastly, Dave said "we don't have a position or role with C.J. like you do with a younger person [child]." This last point was important. In Dave's analogy, parents have a position or role that allows them to direct and correct a child; they don't have the same role with a teenager. In other words, Dave was now advocating a dumbed down and "hands off" approach to you. I don't say this to shame you. Dave was trying to help me adopt a new paradigm for relating to you.

Dave was also frustrated with Steve. He could not be counted on. In this same conversation, Dave said there are "only two of us throwing a flag on the field. Nothing can be done about Steve not confronting C.J. He will be satisfied with far less because he feels an indebtedness to C.J. that renders his discernment not sharp. Steve won't be able to sustain a challenge to C.J. because C.J. is in a defensive posture [i.e., you were defending yourself] to Steve. We should take him off the table."

On February 17, 2005, Dave wrote Kenneth with six questions regarding major concerns. He copied Josh, Grant, and Bob. Dave was treading water in the deep end of the pool and wanted to get out. He realized the CLC pastors were reluctant to address you on the kinds of issues Dave was raising, for instance your hypocrisy regarding the October 13 e-mail confession. Here is an excerpt.

I guess these would be the questions where I would love to get some feedback from you [Kenneth]. Most of them (with the exception of #6) relate to how we should conduct the process from here...

I'm not always sure that CJ is effectively evaluating his impressions of what he is hearing and experiencing from us through what he has confessed. He seems to have a difficult time applying his written confessions of sin to this team (as an example, he has never discussed or referenced the October e-mail confession with us even though we brought it up and asked him to talk about it. Seems like you men assumed that he would be doing this also.... I really want to understand this paradox [hypocrisy]¹¹¹ better because I think it causes us to see his growth in a slightly different way than you men.

Guys, I understand your reluctance to jump into this side of the pool. Actually, I'm not looking to tread water very long here myself [your anger and resistance deterred all of us] – provided we (the A-team) can be certain that in moving on, we are not compromising our friendship or care for CJ. I guess I'm just not sure what significance to assign to some of the things above. We just don't have the consistent exposure to him that you do, and perhaps this magnifies the apparent inconsistencies.¹¹²

Dave talked with Kenneth and Bob about these recommendations. He filled Steve and me in on March 24. Dave told us that "C.J. and CLC guys had problems with the questions." Dave felt we were "coming up against a different understanding of humility and what leadership looks like." That Kenneth and Bob "saw [Dave's] questions as unhelpful" and "had more questions from the questions."¹¹³ Dave said "C.J. was not at a high level of faith to talk about these things and "feels he is doing the things addressed in our questions." For instance, "C.J. thinks we covered and talked about his October 13 e-mail confession." This never occurred.

As a result, Dave went onto say he "does not have confidence in moving forward with our [planned] conversation tomorrow with C.J." If we did "C.J. would like for Bob and Kenneth to be there on phone call." Dave reiterated he "does not have any faith for discussion tomorrow." He wrote you the following.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2005 3:05 PM
To: Mahaney CJ
Cc: Steve Shank, Brent Detwiler; Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential

Hey buddy. Hope you are feeling better.

After taking counsel with our friends at CLC and your fellow A. Team members, we no longer think it profitable or advisable to cover the questions tomorrow.... Please know of our faith in God and confidence in you as we entrust this 'process' to God and move forward into the future.

Dave

In March 2005, you made Bob, instead of Kenneth, your point man. The next month Dave wrote him regarding his thoughts about the future.

From: Dave Harvey
Date: Sunday, April 17, 2005 08:09 AM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential

...I will be glad to circulate this to the team, but my sense is that we have determined to move on and that this might be best... Be glad to forward this to the guys though.

Dave asked me (and Steve) for my thoughts. He wanted to go silent and he was trying to bring closure.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2005 2:58 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Confidential

Before I get back to Bob and clarify that I believe I am supposed to keep my mouth shut for a while, but nevertheless giving into a momentary bout of lunacy in asking this question...what are your thoughts on Bob's question about unaddressed areas or conversations needed?

Steve and I provided Dave our feedback. He wrote Bob back.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 5:16 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Steve Shank; Brent Detwiler
Cc: Kenneth Maresco
Subject: RE: Confidential

Our communication around these issues...does not appear to be producing the kind of clarity that justifies the time and effort necessary.... It seems as if we now find ourselves re-stating perspectives and concerns without a distinct sense of what God wants us to understand and pursue.... I think we should follow Bob and Kenneth's advice and pursue any conversation over remaining

concerns with CJ.... I think this step should be done individually (if at all) and not as a group.

Bob and Kenneth wrote back on September 8, 2005. We had resigned ourselves.

Dear Dave, Brent and Steve,

We have asked Dave what remaining issues he feels CJ has not addressed or would still concern him, and are still unclear which specific things he believes need further discussion. We're concerned that the team is moving on in a spirit of resignation rather than faith. Would you agree and if so, do you have any plans to come to agreement?

Dave wrote them back. They were not hearing our concerns or accurately processing our input.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2005 7:38 AM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

Your observations that I have been unclear are confusing to me in light of our many conversations and the four questions for closure that I summarized on behalf of the team. Also, I think you may recall how often I have raised the possibility of an undetected pattern of behavior in CJ that translates into 'withdrawal' when he feels misunderstood or sinned against.... From here, I want to pray and ponder the helpfulness of a more thorough response over against whether it just serves more to allow closure on this note and live with the lack of clarity and/or disagreement.

So far as I know this was Dave's final correspondence with Bob and us. A few months later he wrote you "a more through response" in his "lengthy private letter" in January 2006. Otherwise, Dave joined the "culture of accommodation." He was willing "to allow closure on this note and live with the lack of clarity and/or disagreement." Therefore, I assume Dave is still relating to you "like a teenager" and keeping his concerns and disagreements to himself. But maybe RRF&D clarified the issues and the reasons for our disagreement with you, Kenneth and Bob. If so, I hope it produces good fruit in building an authentic "adult" relationship with Dave and others where they feel the freedom to speak openly without fear of your reaction.

Here is another example of Dave feeling helpless to address you. I met with Larry Malament on January 6, 2006. Larry filled me in on a recent conversation he just had

with you. He tried to help you see how you related to Mickey in a completely different way when addressing his sins than you did to me. For example, he pointed out how you were compassionate, merciful and patient with Mickey's sins but not with mine. Also, that you were encouraging of Mickey but not me.¹¹⁴ He told you he thought this was due to your bitterness and anger at me.

You experienced no conviction and disagreed with Larry and the assessment of others. I wrote "King" David on bended knee. Pardon the humor. Your treatment of me was consistent with Larry's observations.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, May 10, 2007 2:36 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Larry Malament
Subject: Confidential

Dear "King" David,

For your information - my observations from the past 9 months re: C.J. would be analogous to Larry's observations.¹¹⁵ Larry has shared these with C.J. on a couple/few occasions. C.J. has considered Larry's input but let him know he has not experienced any conviction or illumination regarding the relevancy of those observations. That being the case, I don't think it would be helpful for me to cover similar ground.

On bended knee,
Brent

From: Dave Harvey [mailto:dh Harvey@Covfel.org]
Sent: Thursday, May 10, 2007 2:51 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Larry Malament
Subject: RE: Confidential

There is no easy answer for this one buddy. It seems that we have all been faithful to raise the remaining questions we have for CJ.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, I believe it is in CJ's heart to take a humble step and ask you again. So you must pray and be prepared to respond, even if it is just to say what you mention below - your experience would be analogous to Larry's¹¹⁷ [description] and there is nothing new to add. Or, to make it simpler, there is nothing new to add.

Sorry I can't be more helpful.

You and I ended up having a brief conversation.¹¹⁸ I shared the same thoughts as Larry. You told me you remained unconvinced and were not convicted.¹¹⁹ You needed additional help to see your heart but instead you were enabled to continue on in these sinful patterns.

Bob as Enabler

With the August 20, 2004 meeting at CLC only ten days away, you sent us an e-mail confession at our request. It was wonderfully encouraging. After many years, it was the first time you acknowledged categories of sin.

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 10:04 AM

To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris; Grant Layman; Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin

Subject: Confidential

My friends,

Below is my confession in this form for your critique and evaluation.... I am convinced this discipline was necessary because of the pronounced and pervasive presence of pride in my heart.... In recent history this arrogance has been evident in the following ways:

1. On numerous occasions I have not been easy to entreat or correct.
2. I have arrogantly assumed the superiority of my discernment when corrected.
3. I can be quick to disagree when I am being corrected.
4. I have disagreed with those correcting me before I have sufficiently understood the nature and content of their correction.
5. Too often I have failed to humbly ask questions and draw out the one correcting me.
6. I have not consistently made the individual correcting me comfortable by inviting and encouraging their correction.
7. I have failed to discern the effect of my disagreement upon the one correcting me.
8. I can be quick to find fault with the one correcting me thus revealing my self-righteousness.
9. I have not sufficiently perceived the effect of my words and decisions upon individuals.

10. There has been a pattern of sinful judgment toward those who are correcting me.
11. I have not communicated the correction of the team to the CLC men, arrogantly assuming the inaccuracy of their correction and wrongly assuming the agreement of the CLC team with my perspective.

The above list is far from exhaustive. It is merely representative and there are many expressions of pride that can be listed under each one and sadly no lack of illustrations for each one. These numerous expressions of pride are offensive to God and particularly serious¹²⁰ because of my position. In my position and because of my position I should be an example of humility and very easy to correct. To my shame there have been many occasions in recent history where my arrogance has been pronounced and I have not been easy to entreat. That is unacceptable for a Christian and even more for a leader. So there it is as I presently perceive my sins. This is just a beginning and I am sure it is inadequate...

And I would like to express my deep gratefulness to Brent, Dave and Steve for their kindness and patience. I think these sins have been most evident to you and sadly manifested the most toward you men. I am so deeply grieved by this. And yet your response to my many sins has been forbearance and forgiveness. I am unworthy of your friendship and you certainly deserve better leadership than I have provided.

I wrote you a kind and encouraging note after I read this. You wrote back.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, August 13, 2004 7:44 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

The thanks is to you and all my other friends. It is because of your care, correction and patience that by grace I have been able to perceive my many sins. I hope you men can experience the reward of your care through changes you observe in my life.

You claimed to “perceive” your “many sins” against us and hoped we’d “observe” changes in how you related to us. You acknowledged:

“In recent history this arrogance has been evident in the following ways.... The above list is far from exhaustive.... And there are many expressions of pride that can be listed under each one and sadly no lack of illustrations for each one.... To my shame there have been many occasions in recent history where

my arrogance has been pronounced and I have not been easy to entreat I think these sins have been most evident to you [Brent, Dave and Steve] and sadly manifested the most toward you men."

What you said was true. There were no lack of illustrations for each category. You had sinned against us in "recent history" on "many occasions" and in many ways. And yet, you never made any effort to confess particular sins, ask forgiveness for specific incidences or repair particular breaches in our relationships. In fact, you said it was unnecessary to get back to us on any specifics since you were acknowledging general categories of sin. None of us could believe your depraved logic on this point.

Four months later, I wrote Josh on December 17. You were unwilling to talk about the many ways you sinned against us. On the other hand, you were very willing to tell us how we sinned against you. This kind of hypocrisy was unprecedented.¹²¹ Matthew 7:3-5 applied directly to you.

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Here is my December 2004 e-mail to Josh.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Friday, December 17, 2004 1:12 PM

To: Joshua Harris

Cc: Bob Kauflin; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank

Subject: Confidential: Joint Meeting at January Team Retreat

Thanks Josh for getting back to me and thanks for your willingness to consider a joint meeting. Here are few of my thoughts that may help you to understand my perspective.

C.J. has been talking to us individually about his evaluation of us and the process (which I appreciate), but I don't think we have ever talked [which was true] as a team over the last 12 months about anything leading up to or flowing out of the August 20 meeting as it pertains to him. If my memory serves me well, this is an unprecedented way of handling things.¹²² I'd also add that we've had many opportunities to talk as a team but have not done so...

As a result, I remain perplexed why we have never talked with you men or with C.J. as a team. From my perspective, there remains a substantive list of things that have never been addressed or explained...

As you said, there had been “many occasions in recent history” when you sinned against us. Yet, you never acknowledged a single one of them. In fact, you refused to talk with us about any of them when we graciously sought to engage you. Once again, you were controlling the process.

In February 2005, you appointed Bob as “point man.” This was a bad move for you and for the apostolic team. Bob was undiscerning and biased in his approach. From our vantage, he was on “point” but always pointed at us and never at you. This may sound strong, but like the co-dependent of an alcoholic, he enabled you to live on unchanged and unchallenged.¹²³

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, February 17, 2005 7:16 AM
To: Kenneth Maresco
Cc: Grant Layman; Josh Harris; Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: confidential

...Kimm spoke with Carolyn yesterday and she mentioned that the Mahaney's are changing CG's and that the Bob may be their new Care Group leader. So, if Bob is now 'point-man of the month' for the Mahaney (ha, ha), then please feel free to redirect me to him and not Kenneth for this conversation. Whatever you men prefer is fine with me...

The following month which was six months after your August e-mail confession, I wrote the following to Dave and Steve. Each of the five points was entirely true. None of the following ever transpired. To this day the same holds true.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, March 3, 2005 4:39 PM
To: Dave Harvey, Steve Shank
Subject: Confidential

To the best of my recollection I make the following general observations since the December 2003 Retreat:

1. C.J. has not initiated or engaged us in discussion as a team on any of the issues that have been raised with him.

2. C.J. has not informed us as a team of any input or illustrations shared by the CLC pastors related to issues of character raised with him.
3. C.J. has not asked forgiveness for any illustrations that have been share with him by us with the exception of the situation with Bo and Tyler.
4. C.J. has not acknowledged any sinful judgments toward us.
5. C.J. has not acknowledged any resentment, bitterness, or anger toward us.

Dave and I brought these points to everyone's attention. Nothing changed however. Bob continued to confront Dave and me and defend you. He required nothing of you in relation to us. In August, Bob and I had the following e-mail exchange.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Fri 8/19/2005 6:06 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential – Communication

Brent,

I wonder if this is part of the problem. You're looking for more specifics, but I'm not sure you're going to get them.

...I wonder if you place too much emphasis on the illustrations you've brought up and can't rejoice in what God is doing in CJ. There seems to be a hesitancy in your rejoicing in the fruit in CJ's life (at least that's what I sensed in our phone call with the three of us), which would be understandable if you think he's not responding to correction or making attempts to see his sin.

It is now August 2005, one year after the August 20 meeting.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Sat 8/20/2005 11:40 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential – Communication

Brent,

...Do you think my observation has merit – that you can sometimes fail to see or to rejoice in the changes in CJ's life because you're expecting a certain response?...

I so wanted to rejoice in changes in your life but there were none as it pertained to us. Your consistent responses after August 20, 2004 only discouraged us. I wasn't "expecting a certain [unreasonable] response." I would have been happy with any kind of a contrite response. A year earlier you said, "I hope you men can experience the reward of your care through changes you observe in my life." There were no rewards, only sadness.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Sunday, August 21, 2005 10:47 PM

To: Bob Kauflin

Subject: RE: Confidential – Communication

If it helps, I think I am just limited in being able "to see or to rejoice in the changes". Since August of last year, we haven't talked as a team about issues related to C.J. On the occasions when he and I have met in person, C.J. has provided me his critique.... Given these circumstances, it's hard to be aware of his growth in grace. You are able to engage him and observe him regularly. That is not something we are doing. So please know, I rejoice in the good reports you have given and in all the changes you have observed.

After I wrote this e-mail to Bob I felt the need to be more open and honest about our expectations. I had in mind the five points from March 3. You had "not initiated or engaged us in discussion as a team on any of the issues," "not informed us as a team of any input or illustrations shared by the CLC pastors," "not asked forgiveness for any illustrations," "not acknowledged any sinful judgments toward us," and "not acknowledged any resentment, bitterness, or anger toward us." Though you confessed in writing (not in person) that you sinned against us on "many occasions and in many ways," you never talked to us about any of them.

Bob labeled my most rudimentary expectations "sinful." You never so much as said in person, "Hey guys I've made some mistakes...I am sorry." Bob was following your example of "silencing" and "punishing" with great hubris. I sought to write graciously and humbly but honestly. No one was holding you accountable. Certainly not Bob. I intended for it to be my last attempt – my final statement. I knew my days were numbered. That's why I said, "I...continue to count it a great honor to serve and encourage him in whatever ways the Lord permits in the future." I risked "job security" out of love and affection for you.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2005 3:55 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; Kenneth Maresco
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL - Expectations

In re-reading your E Mail, I recognized I didn't respond to your inquiry about expectations. It would be my view that C.J. has not responded well to us as a team since the August 20, 2004 meeting. That certainly doesn't mean he hasn't responded or that there are no evidences of grace. I also realize and respect the fact that you have a different view born out of your own experience. I rejoice in this.

It would also be my perspective that some things have apparently gone unaddressed by you men with C.J.¹²⁴ Granted, I know little about what you have covered over the past 12 months. I am aware, however, there are important matters (in my opinion) we have never heard from back from C.J. on. Having made these points, I nevertheless thank you for your exhortation to evaluate whether my expectations are sinful. Though I have not been convicted of sin, I do not dismiss your concern. I share it.

I don't think there is profit in rehearsing the points above. I have communicated my observations and concerns in person and in print to everyone involved.¹²⁵ As I expressed during my March 30, 2005 meeting with you and Kenneth, I have committed these things to God knowing we have all attempted to glorify God in this difficult process. I also realize and regret that I have served C.J. poorly at points in this process [e.g. using the word "lambasted," not starting August 20 with dialogue]. Thanks my friend for the care you have extended to all concerned.

I am saddened that C.J. feels I have been motivated by offense, but I also know of his love and continue to count it a great honor to serve and encourage him in whatever ways the Lord permits in the future.

Bob continued to defend you and twisted the facts in so doing. Here are two examples The first about "not practicing fellowship." The second about "remaining issues."¹²⁶

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Thu 9/8/2005 5:27 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank; Dave Harvey
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential

Thank you for taking the time to give us feedback on how we might have served you better this past year....

It seems from our last phone call that our view of CJ's interaction and past practice of fellowship with the CLC pastoral team is very different from Dave and Brent's. We trust you heard us communicate that we don't believe CJ was at any point not practicing fellowship. Certainly, there are ways he can grow and has grown in this area, but as long as we have been involved with CJ, he has sought input from us and opened up his life to the men he serves with. We see the changes in CJ in the pursuit of fellowship as a matter of degree and not (*ex nihilo*) existence...

It seems as though there is lack of clarity and agreement on what issues in CJ's life are to be "covered over" in love and which ones are to be pressed through in the interest of integrity and unity of the team. Steve mentioned at least two items when we met at the leader's conference. Brent has indicated there are a number of important matters he feels are still unresolved. We have asked Dave what remaining issues he feels CJ has not addressed or would still concern him, and are still unclear which specific things he believes need further discussion. We're concerned that the team is moving on in a spirit of resignation¹²⁷ rather than faith. Would you agree and if so, do you have any plans to come to agreement?...

We would also like to forward this letter to CJ so he can be aware of our thoughts after meeting with all three of you men individually and together. Please let us know if you have any objections to this.

Bob was grossly misrepresenting us and the CLC pastors. Their concerns for a lack of "fellowship" were every bit as serious as ours. But Bob leaves out all reference to the later, builds a straw man argument, and then confronts us with a distorted view of reality. All the time he is acting on your behalf and at your bidding. You are directing him.¹²⁸ He (and Kenneth) continued to represent your arguments which were obviously offenses. After reading this letter from Bob, I wrote Dave and Steve the following.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sat 9/10/2005 10:19 AM
To: Steve Shank; Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential - Final Thoughts

There are numerous things in this letter I think are unhelpful and misrepresentative. For example, "Our view...is very different from Dave and Brent's.... We don't believe C.J. was at any point not practicing fellowship.... We

see changes in CJ in the pursuit of fellowship as a matter of degree and not...existence." Implication, we believe C.J. hasn't practiced fellowship with the men over the years and it is therefore non-existent. Of course, this is not our perspective. Neither, does this implication serve C.J. Furthermore, our concerns for C.J. in this area are based, in part, upon statements made by the CLC men. These statements have never been explained to us.

I don't think this letter will serve C.J. for numerous other reasons. For instance, "Brent has indicated there are a number of important matters he feels are still unresolved." Though true, I don't think it is beneficial for C.J. to hear this kind of thing again.¹²⁹ He may interpret it as me pressing for these things to be addressed. Actually, I have not raised any issues with C.J. [one on one in person] for a long time.

Though they thanked us for our feedback re: C.J. and the CLC men, Bob and Kenneth do not express any agreement with it or benefit from it. It they did, I assume they would include those things in this letter. On the other hand, perhaps their intent is simply to raise on-going issues with us and inform C.J. of the same.

These are just a couple of my thoughts. I am leaving it to you men to respond to Bob and Kenneth...

Dave responded and ask me to forward these thoughts to Bob and Kenneth. I followed through but knew it would cost me unless you repented.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, September 10, 2005 12:40 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential - Final Thoughts

Thanks Brent. I think you should send them these thoughts, if only to clarify your concerns. I hope to send out an e-mail to them sometime in the next few days.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Mon 9/12/2005 9:46 AM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Steve Shank; Dave Harvey; Kenneth Maresco
Subject: Confidential - Final Thoughts

Here are a few thoughts that I expressed to Dave and Steve after receiving your “final thoughts” letter.

Thanks gentlemen,
Brent

Bob wrote back.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Tue 9/13/2005 9:06 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank; Dave Harvey; Kenneth Maresco
Subject: Re: Confidential - Final Thoughts

Thanks, Brent. This kind of feedback is helpful and clarifying. We’ll get back to you after we’ve heard from Steve.

While saying the information was helpful, Bob never got back to me. Dave also provided Bob some corrective feedback.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2005 7:38 AM
To: Bob Kauflin
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank
Subject: RE: Confidential

...A few passing thoughts that I hope will bring clarity (“sure they will Dave!”)

I think the comment about CJ “not practicing fellowship” is a bit of a straw man. I don’t recall anyone advocating that position. The way I would summarize my perspective would be: I don’t believe that the clarity and consistency of input into CJ’s life was sufficient prior to this process. I think you men admitted as much when the two teams initially connected over these matters. Since that time, I think this is changing – due in no small part I presume to CJ’s change and the leadership of you two men – and for that I rejoice. Personally, I would now advocate less concern on your part over how things are brought to CJ and more attention to certain issues that have been put on the table, but I’m not entrenched in a conviction that I am right...

Your observations that I have been unclear are confusing to me in light of our many conversations and the four questions for closure that I summarized on behalf of the team. Also, I think you may recall how often I have raised the possibility of an undetected pattern of behavior in CJ that translates into

‘withdrawal’ when he feels misunderstood or sinned against. I understand that you don’t think this word is a helpful one and that CJ doesn’t see this particular issue. But I bring it up only to stir your recollection of the conversations we have had around my unresolved items...

In reference to forwarding the letter to CJ, I remember when I asked you whether you were going to be informing CJ about our dialogues, you indicated that you did not think this was wise at this time because it could tempt CJ. Has your thinking changed on this? While I want you & Kenneth to act in any way that seems best to you, I did wonder the same thing about forwarding this letter in this form and at this time. Could it tempt CJ in unprofitable ways? Does it really serve the goal of strengthening the team and moving us forward? Is it really representing our positions?¹³⁰ When we do have a chance to connect, I would also like to share why it seems letters like this have not been entirely helpful to the process.

Bob, I do trust you and Kenneth and I could come to faith if you decided you wanted to do it anyway, but I would appeal that you represent my perspective differently if you do. One way or another, I will review my perspective with you again when we are together, if you think that would be helpful.

Dave had been crystal clear with Bob and Kenneth on many occasions. I can’t explain Bob’s ineptitude. I guess he was so focused on correcting us and defending you, he wasn’t listening to or remembering anything we were saying or writing. Here again are the “four questions” Dave asked going back to March. It was now September and these critical issues remained utterly undiscussed. You had not talked about these matters for over a year and you forbid CLC pastors from doing the same.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2005 10:45 AM

To: C.J. Mahaney; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman

Cc: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank

Subject: Confidential

Remaining Questions for Discussion:

1. The A. Team would not be aware of the major areas of focus or concern where the CLC guys are seeking to serve CJ.... and we are not sure if you are aware of the categories we have been visiting with CJ either. Moreover, it would not appear to us that CJ is sufficiently intentional at initiating dialogue or disclosing important illustrations in a way that would help us understand his clarity of soul and deepen our experience of fellowship. Could CJ and the CLC guys discuss whether it is reasonable for us to expect

him to initiate these conversations and relate the notable patterns of sin being discussed in this season?

2. Returning back to Brent's question posed to the CLC guys, "Should C.J. have talked to us about his e-mail confession of October 13 so we could understand how he came to see the things he acknowledged? Did any of the things acknowledged have a personal bearing upon us?" Perhaps CJ and the CLC guys could dialogue about why this might be an important exercise and why this confession was not discussed or applied to the A. Team.
3. In the summary for CJ, the CLC guys indicated that though you don't know his motives, CJ can at times appear to become withdrawn or resentful when he feels sinned against or misunderstood by others. This potential pattern is a remaining concern for the A. Team. Are there any specific areas/illustrations or patterns where the CLC guys have observed that CJ may have become resentful or withdrawn in respect to A. Team members? How would the CLC guys and CJ recommend we engage in a profitable conversation around this area?
4. The A. Team needs to establish an understanding - applicable to all - that recognizes the need to occasionally discuss the care or perspective of A. Team members with the people entrusted with primary pastoral care (CJ to Mark Prater or Mickey; A. Team member to Kenneth/Bob, etc). What advice would you & CJ have for us towards sharpening our approach in this area?

In August, Dave talked again to Bob and Kenneth about the four questions. Rather than benefitting, they had "concerns" and "problems" with his extremely relevant, legitimate, and important questions. Here was Dave's response to me about his most recent conversation with Bob and Kenneth.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Mon 9/12/2005 11:44 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Confidential

No, we didn't talk about it on August 19th, but the purpose of that meeting was more for them to hear our concerns. There was another meeting that I had with Kenneth and Bob where they gave me some feedback on the [four] questions (I don't know whether that was before or after Kenneth talked with CJ and came back to us with concerns about the questions) but I seem to recall us talking mostly about the problems with the questions.

These four questions are still on the table.¹³¹ I hope you'll answer them in writing in preparation for a personal meeting. They represent the kind of issues that must be addressed by you if reconciliation is your goal.

The Need for Genuine Accountability¹³²

Let me go back to April 2003 to further establish how errant Bob was in his assessment of us and how unaccountable you were to the CLC pastors. You wrote me the following about confessing sins.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2003 10:43 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Ideally I want to talk with you by phone about this but my schedule is so full right now I am not sure when I can make this happen. So in order to get this started I am sending this e-mail. You can be brief in your response.

Dave said to me yesterday (he indicated he had talked to you about this) that he didn't think I consistently confessed my sins to the team and that I am apt to make quick judgments.

Is this your observation of me or experience with me in the last year?

One benefit of yesterday is that I want to bring definition to who we are accountable to and who we are to be confessing our sins to, etc. I don't expect to hear about the sins of team members unless they are patterns, etc. because I think this is best done with the local guys. There is stuff happening here daily that I don't think it wise or necessary to keep you guys updated on. The ideal is that local pastors are holding each of us accountable.

Let me know what you think my friend.

Thanks,
C.J.

Dave, Steve and I had always confessed our sins to you and considered ourselves accountable to you. The same wasn't true for you. During the past decade we and others pointed out how your acknowledgments in person and in preaching were typically vague. You'd reference pride or depravity in general but not give specific

examples. You'd say things like, "I'm the worse sinner I know." "I stumble in many ways." "All my works are shot through with sin." But you didn't share details or develop personal illustrations.

We were raising this concern with you when you began to change our methodology. You said we should be accountable to the pastoral team not the apostolic team. This was in response to Dave's observation about not consistently confessing sin. You said, "There is stuff happening here daily that I don't think it wise or necessary to keep you guys updated on." We knew you weren't confessing to us but we were glad you were confessing "daily" to the local pastors who were holding you "accountable." Or at least, that's what you told us.

The next month we talked about this at our Team Meeting on May 13, 2003. Here are Steve notes from our discussion.

CJ: Has it been my practice [to confess sin]? To the local guys? Yes. During the team meetings? No. Not as much with Dave...with Steve and Brent...

I confess to Gary, John, Josh, Grant and Kenneth, Carolyn... between them, they all know about my sin...

We took you at your word even though we had doubts. That's one of the reasons, I asked for written evaluations from Kenneth, Grant and Josh. Dave and Steve were in full agreement with the need to do this. After receiving the written reports, I followed up with phone calls with Kenneth on December 12 and Grant on December 13. I provided you their written evaluations and my notes from our conversations in advance of our retreat on December 16-18. I met with Joshua later on January 24 and he shared the same concerns as Grant and Kenneth. We brought up the topic again. Incredulously, you responded by emphatically stating, "I receive more accountability, correction and pastoring than anyone in the movement. I am always being corrected." No one corroborated your story. You had no witnesses in your defense.

A few days before the retreat Kenneth told me, "C.J. is not making me aware of input from others like the CLC pastors, apostolic team, and Carolyn. I don't know if he is receiving correction. I assume no one is bringing correction or things to him."

Before talking to Grant he sent me the following e-mail.

From: Grant Layman
Sent: Saturday, December 13, 2003 9:44 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Confidential - Job Review for C.J

Sorry for the delay in getting this back to you Brent. Let me know if the attached form [the written evaluation] that I filled out did not come through. My primary concern for CJ would be in the area of who is supposed to be caring for him? Perhaps this is taking place with you men on the apostolic team? We have tried numerous times to get together here over the past year but have not been able to make it happen. So care for he and Carolyn is not happening here unless there is something I am unaware of.

Hope this helps,
Grant

Later that day Grant told me, "I am not aware of any correction C.J. is receiving from the apostolic team or others. This issue has always been concern for C.J. I have raised my ongoing concern over the years that C.J. receive pastoral care. I am not aware of anyone raising any issues or concerns with him in private. I've assumed it is happening with the apostolic team. I think C.J.'s self assessment may be such that he and Carolyn just don't require input."

Grant went on to say of the pastors, "We have a very limited view of what is going on in his life, a narrow window to look through, and limited opportunity for observation of C.J. Over the past year, correction of C.J. and confession by C.J. has not happened at all – there is no context for this to happen."

You mislead us.¹³³ You were not involved in a men's accountability group, had not been in a couple's care group for 1½ years, and did not participate in a couple's retreat for the last 3 years. You and Carolyn were on your own. I still remember how shocked I was to discover this deception.

The following summer on June 15, 2004, I followed up with Joshua regarding confession of sin. He said, "C.J. provides input for others and not the other way around. I am not in settings where C.J. confesses specific sin especially in marriage...more on the level of his schedule. Maybe C.J. doesn't sin as much as we do." He went to say, "C.J. recently confessed a specific sin related to his marriage in a [May 2004] sermon. That's the first time I can remember him doing so." Josh did not know we just talked to you on the retreat about specific confession in your sermons. The inclusion stood out to him.

Though I knew all of this going into the August 20, 2004 meeting, I was still alarmed by what I heard from the CLC pastors. They were barely involved in your life. There was

little to no confession of sin by you. This was a long standing issue brought to you many times. Here are Bob's notes.

Brent Wants to submit that CJ has a high view of himself in some ways that are now being challenged.... Thinks CJ has represented himself as accountable in a way he hasn't been. CJ told Brent at one point that he receives more accountability and pastoring than anyone in the movement. Thinks there is an element of deception there. For a year and a half CJ didn't participate in a care group. The picture CJ painted of our [the CLC pastors] involvement in his life has not been accurate. Also thinks CJ has represented himself as being teachable, and would think of himself that way, up until now. The CLC pastors communicated a different view of CJ's teachability.

Dave CJ would represent himself as a man who humbly receives from the team, but there are big gaps. He would not characterize CJ's leadership of the A-team as humble.

Brent CJ would see himself as strong in confessing sin. But the team has made the observation that there seems to be a weakness in terms of specificity in his preaching when it comes to confession of sin. Sins in his marriage or sins in general weren't being confessed regularly to the CLC pastors.

Feels there's been an element of hypocrisy in CJ. If he doesn't agree with observations from others, that's one thing. If he doesn't share that with others, that's another issue.

Josh Agrees with the assessment of the sin at work and the way it was deceiving CJ. Doesn't think CJ was intentionally seeking to deceive us, which doesn't make it any less serious.... We're seeing CJ's reaction to observations in a new way because we're bringing observations more frequently and specifically.

Dave There is an issue of perplexity, which he has raised with CJ, which may be an issue of integrity. That is the times the team has asked him to get specific observations from others and he hasn't done it. Example of Dave asking CJ to follow up with Brent, and have the team talk about his unteachability, and CJ not following through. Seemed like these things stopped at CJ. Another illustration was a letter of concern from the Philly team which the A-team and the CLC pastors never heard about.

- Brent The [apostolic] team doesn't often hear of areas that we [the pastoral team] are correcting CJ on, and it doesn't sound as though the pastoral team is hearing concerns from the A-team.
- Grant There are various issues in CJ's life that he hasn't received input well on. In general, Grant feels CJ hasn't had enough accountability, and allowed the A-team and the CLC pastors to believe the other group was taking care of it. This has been a longstanding issue.
- CJ Would have assumed he was more accountable than he was. Looks back and sees that what he was doing was woefully insufficient. Hasn't just been sitting here, but has been convicted. Agrees immediately that he has a sinful craving for reputation.
- Brent To simplify, Brent thinks CJ's view of himself is accountable, teachable, and good at confessing sin. Doesn't think those things are as present in CJ's life as he thinks they are.
- CJ Sees a whole lot of pride in the past. Wasn't lying to each group, trying to cover up.
- Kenneth Was part of the motivation, if you have a higher assessment of yourself, you don't feel like you need accountability, and when guys ask if you're getting it, you don't feel you need as much as others. Thinks that's critical in terms of the future.
- Humility and confession of sin lead to accountability. They communicate a perception of need.
- CJ During the period he wasn't seeking accountability, CJ thought he was fighting sin and informing others what was going on.
- Grant That's how you draw others into the conversation and into your life. In specific areas, Grant hasn't heard CJ confess sin, like lust. Lack of specificity will keep CJ from growing.
- Bob It seems there is an air of finality in CJ's responses that doesn't invite questions or evaluation. At times he states his disagreement, at other times he doesn't disclose what's going on in his heart. In either case, he thinks his conclusion is accurate and isn't allowing others to help him.

You never talked to us about this deception. You never asked forgiveness for your lack of integrity. You never got back to us regarding your hypocrisy. Instead you took control of the process, turned things back on Dave and me, and sent Bob to correct us. Here again is Bob's revisionist history. As the above proves, "our view" was identical to the view of the CLC pastoral team and not "very different." In fact, our view was largely based on the clearly articulated views of Josh, Grant, Kenneth and Bob. It appears you took these boys to the woodshed and they emerged with a very different story. Once again, Bob distorts the truth, misrepresents the facts, unjustly accuses, and defends you.¹³⁴

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Thu 9/8/2005 5:27 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Steve Shank; Dave Harvey
Cc: Kenneth Maresco; Bob Kauflin
Subject: Confidential

It seems from our last phone call that our view of CJ's interaction and past practice of fellowship with the CLC pastoral team is very different from Dave and Brent's. We trust you heard us communicate that we don't believe CJ was at any point not practicing fellowship.

Towards the end of the meeting, I wanted to make sure changes were put into place so you received the input and accountability you needed and everyone was else in the room enjoyed. At the August 20, 2004 meeting, I asked that one of the CLC pastors stay in touch with us and provide quarterly updates on your progress in grace for a year. Here are Bob's notes.

Grant There are various issues in CJ's life that he hasn't received input well on. In general, Grant feels CJ hasn't had enough accountability, and allowed the A-team and the CLC pastors to believe the other group was taking care of it. This has been a longstanding issue...

Brent CJ needs a lot more input from the guys on the pastoral team. Quarterly couples times that Josh is leading, starting with CJ. Monthly accountability meetings, starting with CJ, Pat is joining us for that. Spontaneous times. Good to iron out who's responsible for whom pastorally. Who should be caring for the Laymans, Kauflins, and Marescos - Josh or CJ? Some other arrangement? Thinks we need to make sure that the Mahaneys are cared for first if we're only meeting quarterly.

Kenneth What about Carolyn?

Brent Heard that Carolyn has regular times with Betsy and Nancy, but not sure that's sufficient. Thinks the contact between the A-team and the CLC pastors has been insufficient. For the next year, would like one of the guys on the CLC team to fill the team in quarterly on how things are going, as part of the monthly team phone call. Would probably take an hour. If something significant occurs, positive or negative, Brent would want someone to call him. Also, as things come up with the [apostolic] team, they will point CJ back to the pastoral team.

Thinks we should bring Carolyn into the equation as often as possible. Thinks that it would be helpful to have CJ ask for feedback from relationships outside Sovereign Grace [i.e., national leaders like Piper, Powlison, Dever, etc.]...

Josh We will definitely consider those things. Thanked the apostolic team for effectively caring for CJ and for us.

We never heard back from Josh or you about any of the above suggestions. We asked that one of the guys over the next year "fill the team in quarterly on how things are going, as part of the monthly team phone call." No such reporting ever occurred. For the next three years, from August 20, 2004 until November 17, 2007 when I resigned, there was absolutely no accountability to the apostolic team and we were never updated by the CLC pastors.¹³⁵

The Need for Public Confession¹³⁶

Going into the August 20, 2004 meeting, we talked about the appropriate sphere for you to confess your sins. In the end, you confessed them to no one including Dave, Steve and me.

I initially recommended you confess to the entire pastoral staff at CLC and to all the men on the extended apostolic team (i.e., the men providing extra local oversight to churches). This was a gracious proposal. Under your leadership since 1991, you've had other men in the movement confess to a wider circle for less serious sins. Dave agreed. Steve didn't think we needed to include the extended team.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2004 2:31 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: Recommendations

I like to recommend the following on Friday [August 20]:

- C.J. make a confession to CLC pastors and extended team.
- Josh, Bob, Kenneth, or Grant join us for part of a team meeting [by phone] on a ¼ basis or as needed. We'd start the team meeting at 10 am.
- Josh, or someone he designates, e-mail us or call me if anything significant comes up with C.J. re: discussions of sin or incidents of sin so we can be informed or involved (if ever appropriate) in a timely way.
- Encourage Josh, or someone he designates, to ask us about any new developments with C.J. be they good or bad. In other words, draw us out on our on-going experience with C.J. and our observations of C.J.

Would you agree with these? Any other ideas or suggestions?

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2004 2:34 PM

To: Brent Detwiler; Steve shank

Subject: RE: CONFIDENTIAL – Confession

I considered this completely independent of you and came up with the same recommendation (confession) and one of the two groups you cited (the extended teams). Don't know whether that means that this is God but it does mean that I think it is a good idea.

Dave

PS: Since it would be odd to do it to the extended team and not to the CLC guys as well, I would also agree that they should be informed.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2004 4:35 PM

To: Joshua Harris

Cc: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank; C.J. Mahaney

Subject: August 20 Agenda

Here is a basic outline for our time together on Friday.

1. Encourage C.J. for what he is seeing and acknowledging.

2. Talk about remaining areas of concern not addressed in his confession.
3. Confirm the CLC strategy for the on-going care of C.J. and Carolyn.
4. Recommendations from the team regarding how to proceed in the future [e.g., a confession].

Any suggestions are welcomed Josh.

Thanks
Brent

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2004 4:52 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL - Confession

I'd like to recommend on Friday that C.J. make a confession to all the CLC pastors and to the extended team in Nov/Dec.? Do you agree that this would serve him and is a good and necessary thing to recommend?

From: Steve Shank
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2004 5:46 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: CONFIDENTIAL - Confession

At the moment, I do not believe it needs to go to the extended team... I believe we and the CLC guys are serving him well...

Steve's was not entrenched in his position. Dave felt a moral obligation to write him about the seriousness of the issues we were addressing in your life as the apostolic team leader and President of Sovereign Grace Ministries.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Wednesday, August 18, 2004 7:46 AM
To: Steve Shank
Cc: Brent Detwiler
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL - Confession

I may try to call you on this today or tomorrow to explain my thoughts further, but I recently had a chance to sit down and look over a # of documents that help to bring interpretation to this event for me. One would be the summaries we all sent to the CLC guys. A cursory read validates the sense of gravity that I felt (although it is easy for me to lose this sense of gravity now that CJ is responding so humbly – don't know whether that is a good thing or a bad thing), and I believe Brent's is equally grabbing. In response to my experience over the past few years (at least the way I interpret it), I recently sat down to try to summarize, in an overarching way, what I am hearing from everyone involved. This is what I came up with:

But I think his responsibilities before God and the people in movement that love him and trust him led all of us to assume that:

- a. CJ was pursuing correction about self – he was not
- b. CJ was humble towards correction – he was not
- c. CJ was talking to other people about the primary concerns being raised with him – he was not
- d. CJ was truly accountable in certain important areas – he was not
- e. CJ was responding lovingly to misunderstanding & pressing into his friendships for clarity & with affirmation – he was not
- f. CJ was leading the movement through the primary influence and direction of the A. Team (or team was involved in strategic planning for future) or that we were actually talking about where we were weak and needed improvement – he was not
- g. CJ was seeing the need to illustrate his sermons with examples of his own weakness and sinfulness (this was weak) – he was not
- h. All the while teaching on humility, writing on it & referencing himself in regards to it when we were calling him to account.
- i. Been enormously troubling to us & personally grievous for me.

Because of the portrait that forms above, I don't think we want to limit the confession to the CLC guys involved (not sure CJ would want this either, but I don't know). Also, I'm not sure that the fact that others that don't relate to CJ as much (rest of CLC team) is a good reason for not having him go broader. I don't think we should evaluate the circle of confessions by the aggrieved parties but by the longstanding nature of the pattern, the resistance of the person, the measure of his responsibilities, the norm in Sovereign Grace, etc. etc. For CJ to confess his sin to his team and the upper echelon of leadership in Sovereign Grace (extended teams) does not appear to me to be excessive. The groups are both highly contained and very mature (present company excluded!)

The last topic I raised at the August 20 meeting was this matter of confession.

- Brent Asked whether or not CJ should at some point confess his sins to a larger group, whether that be the Sovereign Grace staff, the CLC pastors. His thoughts: 1. It's always good for the person who does it. 2. Are there historical situations where we've had other guys do this? 3. Is it proper as an issue of integrity, to have key guys brought in to our assessment of CJ, so that their opinion of CJ is more accurate? Does integrity require that they be informed?
- Steve Thinks the CLC guys should consider Brent's questions. Personally, he can see the CLC staff as being a venue, and possibly the Sovereign Grace managers. Wouldn't go the extended team right now. Reasons: Progress is being made, guys that are now being added wouldn't have any experience with CJ.
- Dave Wants to reflect on all that's been said today, consider how CJ is processing all that he's heard, before he makes a formal recommendation [regarding scope of confession]. Given the seriousness of the situation, and the fact that the pattern has been a pattern of resistance, and the measure of CJ's responsibilities and role, and the fact that we would typically have guys humble themselves before some group.
- Josh We will definitely consider those things. Thanked the apostolic team for effectively caring for CJ and for us.

Once again, we never heard back from Josh or you. Dave, Steve and I all agreed you should confess to the entire CLC pastoral staff. If you had followed your own teaching and counsel to others, you'd have volunteered and confessed to the them, the Sovereign Grace managers, and the extended team (e.g., Danny Jones, Gene Emerson, Mickey Connolly, Jim Britt, Larry Malament). Incredulously, three months later on November 19, you wanted to know from me "why a wider confession of sin was necessary" especially since you have "historically confessed your sins to others." All our input had accomplished nothing. We labored in vain. It was obvious why a wider confession was necessary. And it was blatantly untrue that you had "historically confessed your sins to others." No one agreed with that lofty assessment of yourself. Everyone communicated the opposite was true in their experience with you.

There was a need for confession then and there is an even greater need for confession now. This greater need also necessitates a wider audience. That is why I wrote you the following in RRF&D on March 17, 2010.

“In your case, there has been no confession but there has been considerable damage control. I suggest you acknowledge to the blogosphere and confess to the churches in the movement, the patterns of sin we’ve addressed in your life. In addition, I think you should give a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and senior staff at the upcoming Pre-Conference Gathering before T4G. It presents a great venue and would be a wonderful display of humility.

So I will gladly meet with you and work to see our friendship restored provided you are willing to acknowledge your sins in private correspondence and confess your sins in public.”

To date, you have expressed no interest or willingness to do any of the above. We’ve been corresponding for ten months. It is time for closure. Are you willing and ready to be honest and talk to the movement? This is extremely important so please provide me a response in the next week. You don’t need time to think about this or get counsel on this – you just need to do what you’ve had so many others do over the last three decades.

Nothing Caused Bob Any Concern

During my assessment last summer, I communicated my concern for your “sin focused” approach to me which began in earnest at the June 2006 team retreat.

From: Brent Detwiler
Date: Sunday, July 19, 2009 1:28 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Sin Focus

In your feedback for SGM, it is my perspective that the three year “sin focused” [approach to me] began with C.J. Then he conveyed it to Larry and Gene.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 6:55 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: RE: Sin Focus

If you want me to explain my statement or provide you information to support my statement, I’d be willing to.

Bob never responded in the affirmative so I decided to send him some uninvited additional thoughts.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2009 12:38 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Report to SGM

One of the things that has been very difficult is the lack of any relationship with C.J. over the past 18 months which has been the hardest time in my life. Asking about my forced resignation is the first time I have heard from him since Nov. 20, 2007 with one exception. At T4G 08 I approached Pat Ennis to ask if I could receive my 25 year service award from the previous year. The award had been forgotten. C.J. wrote me a short note with the check.

Otherwise I've had no contact with him since I (and Steve) stepped down from the apostolic team. I think this is due to a change in his disposition toward me¹³⁷ after leading the three year process in helping him to see issues of sin that resulted in our August 20, 2004 meeting with the CLC senior leaders.

In my opinion, this breakdown in relationship has had a significant bearing on the process that began in June 06.¹³⁸ I appreciate C.J.'s interest below but it is hard to interpret after 1½ years of no communication. Could you include this in your report also?¹³⁹

In addition, I wrote Bob to ask about the letter from Dave to you that I've already referenced earlier.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, July 25, 2009 8:29 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Dave's Letter to C.J.

In January 06, Dave wrote a lengthy personal letter to C.J. In it he tried to help C.J. see how his sinful responses to our correction had adversely affected his relationship to the team and especially me. Dave told me C.J. never got back to him on it. Perhaps he shared this letter with those watching over his soul.

If you are interested in understanding my perspective, you should ask Dave for this letter and share it with those caring for C.J.

Six months went by with no response from Bob to any of the 4 e-mails above from July 19, 21, 23, 25. That was wrong. It was also predictable. These were important

questions. An “unbiased” counselor would have been careful to follow up with me. I wrote Bob again in February and included the earlier correspondence.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2010 5:09 PM
To: Bob Kauflin
Subject: Follow Up with C.J.?

Would you please refresh your memory and read the e-mails below and then answer a few questions?

1. Did you ask Dave or C.J. for the letter? Did you talk to C.J. about it?
2. Did you talk to C.J. about having no contact with me since I stepped down from the apostolic team?
3. Did you ask him about his disposition of soul toward me?

Thanks
Brent

Here are Bob’s answers to my questions.

From: Bob Kauflin
Sent: Monday, February 15, 2010 5:51 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Follow Up with C.J.?

...I have talked to CJ about contact with you since you stepped down from the apostolic team and his disposition towards you. There was nothing in his response that caused me concern, but I’ll revisit it with him. I know he really wants to work through any obstacles in your relationship. I haven’t asked for the letter, but that’s something I’ll be happy to do. Once I’ve read it and talked to CJ about it I’ll get back to you. I pray this leads to helpful conversations...

It was remarkable that Bob got your perspective but never asked Dave for the letter to get his perspective. How can this be? This is not pastoring. Bob was catering to you and shielding you. There was no effort by Bob to pursue the truth and discover the facts.¹⁴⁰

I’d written him, “If you want me to explain my statement or provide you information to support my statement, I’d be willing to.” Bob didn’t want my perspective and therefore never asked for any information to substantiate my claims. He rested his case entirely on a conversation with you.

That is like a judge acquitting a felon based solely upon his own testimony and accepted it *prima facie* without examining any evidence against him. This was Bob's *modus operandi*.

Based upon your singular testimony, Bob had no concerns that:

1. You were focused on my perceived sins for three years.
2. You passed on this approach to Gene and Larry.
3. Your orientation to me changed after the August 20 meeting.
4. You cut off all contact with me for 18 months as a result.¹⁴¹

Bob wasn't serving you. He was protecting you from input and enabling you to go on unexamined. Bob handled you with kid gloves. I can only imagine what would happen if you raised the exact same concerns for me.

One other point on a different subject. On January 14, 2010 you said "Recently I was informed that you might have some offenses with me." I covered the deceptiveness of this statement in RRF&D but I want to restate my concern with greater clarity. Your comment is manifestly untrue in two ways.

First, you concretely knew I believed you sinned against me in multiple ways (cf., my July 19, 21, 23 and 25 e-mails to Bob which he talked with you about). There was no "might" about it. Second, you knew this for a long time, at least the last 6 years. There was nothing "recent" about it. This statement of yours is manipulative. It gives the false impression you are coming for reconciliation now because, only recently, you heard I might have some offense against you. This could hardly be further from the truth.

No One You Know Has Sinned

I sent you RRF&D on March 17. I said the following on page 128 under the subheading, "Final Comments"

I'd love to see our friendship restored. I'd love to see some acknowledgment of wrong-doing. I'd love to see issues from the past resolved. I'd love to be in good standing with Sovereign Grace Ministries. But all of these hopes and desires are very secondary!

Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically,

and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect.

You refused to address these concerns in writing. I followed up on June 21 and asked, “Do you believe there is a need for “a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?”” You briefly answered on July 2 and said, “Brent, I don’t think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is “lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.”¹⁴²

I found this statement extremely helpful. It conveyed your perspective with clarity and conviction. There was no ambiguity or obtuseness, no doubt or reserve, no hemming or hawing. Your meaning was clear and that was refreshing.

Let me clarify one point. My concern has been for “some men,” not all men or most men (i.e., the pastors) in the movement. Those men I am most concerned about, however, are significant leaders whose example and actions have harmed and injured others. They are numbered among your inner circle and close friends. Though I carry concerns for the movement, these concerns are grounded in particular concerns for particular individuals.

But in contradistinction, you don’t know anyone who is guilty of duplicity, dishonesty, injustice, lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, partiality, deceit, sinful judging, unbiblical actions, or hypocrisy. All these were included under your “etc.” (lit., “and other things” or “and so on”). This assertion is alarming. It is a carte blanche dismissal of each and every one of my concerns.¹⁴³ In other words, no one you know has sinned in any of these ways. Especially not Dave, Bob, Gene, Mickey, Larry and Eric Kircher. This goes to show how far apart we are on the fundamental issues that separate us. You are totally unconcerned for my main concerns.¹⁴⁴ I’m afraid we live in different galaxies separated by light years. I hope this can be remedied in the future.¹⁴⁵

In fact, your concerns lay in a completely different direction. To quote, “From what I read in your e-mail I think you have misunderstood and misrepresented Gene, Bob, Dave (and me) in some of these things. And I am concerned that your heart may have been blinded by bitterness.” I appreciate your honesty.

Clearly, you are focused on being misunderstood and misrepresented. You express no concerns for Dave, Bob or Gene. You reference mediation but there is nothing to mediate. I am the only guilty party. You exonerate all your friends.¹⁴⁶ Oh C.J., this is foolish and dangerous! It goes to the heart of the problem. You are not holding them accountable and they are not holding you accountable. The proverbial foxes are guarding the hen house and that is frightening. For so long, and in so many ways, you

have not held yourself accountable, not held others accountable (i.e., select friends), and others have not held you accountable.

This piggybacks on what you wrote on May 18, "I don't know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your [RRF&D] document."¹⁴⁷

Here is what I said about these men.

"I'd love to return to Sovereign Grace Ministries but change must occur in order to restore my trust and confidence in its integrity. Nor am I currently welcome by you or acceptable to you. Gene counseled people to force my resignation before any evaluation, Bob has pronounced me unfit for ministry and in need of a lengthy rehabilitation, Dave has forbidden me from visiting all Sovereign Grace churches until I change, and you have said we cannot serve together because of your disagreements with me over doctrine and practice. I am also reminded of Dave's words to Jenny and me that I "have not represented the values, leadership or doctrine of Sovereign Grace Ministries" during my years of service. As a result, a sense of belonging in Sovereign Grace Ministries escapes me."¹⁴⁸

As the President of Sovereign Grace Ministries (a.k.a. the apostolic team leader) you should be concerned about my summary statements and express a desire to examine them. I am glad you've been helping "different men" from "different churches" over the past two years but your priorities are amiss. You need to spend more time at "home" helping key men on your leadership team and in your close circle of friends.

May I ask on what basis, on what facts, on what evidence did you conclude I misunderstood and misrepresented Dave, Gene and Bob?¹⁴⁹ What objective research did you do? Did you carefully investigate their words and actions? Did you ask me for clarification? Did you request support for my attributions? No, you did none of these things. Obviously you based your conclusions on what they told you and you did so without an unbiased inquiry. You believed their denials. I must say, this is so painfully predictable.

And of course, you must suggest a motive for why I said the things I did. It is not enough to dismiss them. A reason, a motive, an evil heart is likely behind my distortions. That is, bitterness, but not just ordinary bitterness, it is a blinding bitterness. C.J., this too is so painfully familiar. Does it ever occur to you that my concerns might be based in fact and motivated by genuine love? I want to help you. These men need correction and accountability. Yet, you are eager to believe anything against me without examination. You are happy to assume my guilt and presume their innocence. This is a well worn path especially since August 2004.¹⁵⁰

My friend, I am not misunderstanding or misrepresenting you, Dave and Bob. I am simply quoting each of you and quoting you in context. Your meanings are clear. In Gene's case, I am effectively quoting four men. Of course, you can believe what you want but it is not rooted in truth. Let me make this point clear.

Dave Harvey – Banned from the Churches¹⁵¹

Here is what I said to you.

“Dave has forbidden me from visiting all Sovereign Grace churches until I change.... I am also reminded of Dave's words to Jenny and me that I “have not represented the values, leadership or doctrine of Sovereign Grace Ministries” during my years of service.”

Please allow a little facetiousness. I did misrepresent Dave. I presented him unfairly. I put him a light he did not deserve. How? He not only prohibited my involvement in any Sovereign Grace church, he also refused to meet with me or talk to me unless I changed my ways. If it weren't true, the claim would have me rolling in the church aisles. No lording in any of this, right? C.J., these are incontrovertible facts. They are not based on personal recollections or notes. They are based on perspicuous correspondence from Dave.

Here is some background. Dave and Gene had a conference call with eleven leaders from Grace Community Church the day after my resignation was demanded on June 3, 2009. I had no knowledge of this crucial phone meeting. Later, I was told that Dave or Gene referenced 25 years of serious concerns for me. I wanted to verify whether or not this was true. I was concerned for the effect of such an unfounded characterization. I wrote Dave and Gene for clarification.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2009 11:12 AM
To: Gene Emerson; Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential - Confess and Reconciliation
Importance: High

Did either of you reference 25 years of concerns for my character [during the June 4, 2009 phone meeting]?

Here is Dave's response. He condescendingly belittled, if I may say so, my request for clarification regarding the supposed statement as a “misguided investigation” about an

“obscure detail.” That is, what I was asking he deemed irrelevant, unimportant, and impertinent. It was also unwelcomed.

I was not permitted to ask questions or hold Dave and Gene accountable for comments that might be untruthful, inaccurate or partial. I was castigated and cut off by Dave for doing this. Before and after June 3, 2009, all kinds of evil things were being said and believed about me. There were no controls or restraints. It was open season. And Dave and Gene considered themselves above accountability in this regard.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2009 9:30 AM
To: Brent Detwiler; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Confidential - Confess and Reconciliation

Hey buddy, hope you are well.

As I have prayed about this and what may be other arbitrary calls to account based upon obscure details, it seems wise to me – for numerous reasons – to not respond to these e-mails. I see it as a lack of care for you because it encourages and enables you to maintain a misguided investigation of perceived deficiencies against you. I may be wrong here but I see that as the essence of the problem and not a part of the solution.

Should you desire to alter your approach and turn your attention to the practical steps you would need to take for involvement in an SGM church, or the practical steps necessary to re-qualify for ministry in SGM, then I would be happy to speak with you in person or via phone.

I remain grateful for you and indebted to you for the many ways you taught me as a new believer and befriended me over the years,

Dave

Dave's was not willing to be accountable for anything. He claimed it would be a “lack of care” to answer any of these vital questions. To make sure I never asked any questions again, he banned me from involvement in all Sovereign Grace churches, pronounced me unqualified (just like Bob) for ministry in Sovereign Grace Ministries and refused to meet with me or talk with me. This was undiluted lording. This kind of control is abusive.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2009 10:20 AM
To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Confidential - Confess and Reconciliation

Making a statement to the entire Grace leadership team in a phone meeting that I did not know about and Jonathan was forbidden to attend that you have been concerned for my character for over 25 years and therefore not surprised by the charges leveled against me is not an "obscure" detail. Such an "obscure" statement would have a major impact on your audience. You are not caring for me by avoiding the question. You are covering up and unwilling to walk in the light and be accountable for your words. Stop spinning things. Please be honest and answer this simple question. If not, I have no choice but to conclude it is true.

I provided an evaluation of you to the Assessment Team. They were supposed to pass it on to you and the SGM leadership team. Did you and the team receive it?

I followed up with John Schaaf who told me about the reference to 25 years.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, September 25, 2009 2:29 PM
To: John Schaaf
Subject: Dave & Gene's Denial

Both Dave and Gene deny ever saying they've be concerned for my character for over 25 years. Are they being truthful? Were you using hyperbole?

From: John Schaaf
Sent: Saturday, September 26, 2009 8:55 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Denials

Brent,

I cannot admit to hyperbole on this one. I did not record the conversation, so you will have difficulty with the prosecution of this case. As you know, e-mails get me in trouble, so I'd be glad to talk in person.

John

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, October 02, 2009 11:55 AM
To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson
Subject: Confidential - Dave & Gene's Denial

John Schaaf remembers one of you referencing 25 years. He doesn't think you are being truthful. In any case, Dave, you previously told Jenny and me the same thing in a private conversation with you. Oops, one other thing, thanks for banning me from all SG churches – that's a new one.

Using sarcasm, I chided Dave for his abuse of authority. No one has ever been excommunicated and relationally cut off for asking questions and appealing for justice. I assume he acted unilaterally and without your knowledge or support be it explicit or implicit. Is that true?¹⁵²

I also alluded to a “private conversation” with Jenny and me over dinner at Bravo's Restaurant at Northlake Mall on August 29, 2007. At one point during the conversation, Dave told me, pointedly and directly, I had not represented the values of Sovereign Grace Ministries in my preaching, leadership, and character. The clear implication was throughout my many years of service. It was a devastating comment and solicited an immediately flow of tears from my dear wife.

In the context of the conversation, he appeared to be quoting you because he was primarily presenting your assessment of me. I don't know what kind of an assignment Dave was given by you but I can't imagine him making this statement without your knowledge and support. You often sent others (like Bob) armed with your “discernment” to do this kind of work. It appeared Dave was given an assignment to provide me your critique.¹⁵³ I admit to being rather devastated myself. There were no qualifying remarks. No equivocation. No balancing statements.

The comment was categorical and covered every aspect of my ministry. My life's work was in vain according to Dave. This was completely uncharacteristic of Dave. Up until that time, Dave had never said anything like this to me. To be honest, he had said just the opposite. This marked a radical change. The next day, Jenny wrote him a lengthy letter lamenting his assessment.

Less than three months later, I voluntarily resigned from the board of directors (a.k.a. the core apostolic team) on November 20, 2007. There was no reason to continue given your opinion of me. A little later, I voluntarily resigned from leading a regional team (a.k.a. the extended apostolic team) on January 28, 2008. Given your assessment of me, I could not continue with integrity as an employee of SGM. I announced all these changes to CrossWay Community Church on February 10, 2008. I could have spoken

up and shared the contents of RRF&D and AFA but I wanted to protect you, CrossWay, Sovereign Grace Ministries and especially the gospel. Ray Mulligan e-mailed me to see how I was doing. Here is my response. I provide it to establish the historicity of Dave's comments regarding my leadership, character and preaching.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2008 3:19 PM
To: Ray Mulligan
Subject: RE: Care Groups

It has been very difficult but as I told my dear wife this morning, I was glad to make the announcement for the sake of gospel and secondarily for the well being of Sovereign Grace and CrossWay. I'd rather appear deranged than have the gospel or the reputation of SGM and CW suffer due to divisions or discord if another course was taken. I want to make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit. In so doing, I hope I have honored God while maintaining some semblance of integrity. Some have told me I do not represent SGM in my leadership, character or preaching. From a human perspective, I know this is the reason for my "early retirement." I hope the Lord has a different assessment - at least in degree. On the other hand, I believe God has repositioned me. I am grateful for his mercies. So, the process has been like a slow death but I choose to believe that it will result in life because of his grace. God means it for good.

From: Ray Mulligan
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2008 4:53 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Care Groups

I was sharing with my CG last night that the principle of John 12:24 "unless a kernel of wheat fails to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

If your character, preaching, and theology is not reflective of the movement, then the movement has changed, it can go on without me. Let us love the people God has given us, share the truth of the gospel, and glorify his name, to the best of our ability. Let us be humble and grow in our love for the savior, not for our own reputations!

I am re-reading JC Ryle's book *Holiness*, and have found it to be encouraging that this ground has been tread many times before by great men of the faith...

Let's get on with producing many seeds.

Announcement to CrossWay about the
End of Sovereign Grace Responsibilities
02/10/08

Good morning. I've been asked if I would take a few minutes and inform you about changes in Sovereign Grace and their impact on CW and myself. For our guests, CW is a part of a larger Christian organization. On March 30, CW will send out a group of people to start a new church in the Mooresville/Kannapolis region.

Over the years I have served on the leadership team of Sov. Grace Ministries. With the church planting that will be coming to an end. I am very grateful to God for the many ways I have been involved in our larger mission. Now however, I believe the Lord wants me to focus my full efforts on the starting and establishing a new church. I believe the Lord has sovereignty repositioned me for this task. I hope by grace to effectively serve in this new role for the remainder of my life.

Over the years, it has also been a great joy and privileged to have played a part in the life of CrossWay Community Church. With the church plant my involvement in CW will also be coming to an end.

My dear friend, Gene Emerson, who is the sr. pastor of the church in Richmond, has been asked to provide apostolic oversight to this church. I support this change...

Second, Sovereign Grace Ministries is currently undergoing a reorganization in order to create more manageable geographically spheres to accommodate future growth. With this in view, Gene has been asked to oversee all the Sov. Grace churches in TN, KY, WV, VA and NC. That will include CW and the church plant in Mooresville/Kannapolis. Gene and his wife are dear friends to the Connolly's and Detwiler's. Mickey and I look forward to his oversight and involvement in our respective churches.

Other changes are occurring also. Joshua Harris and Jeff Purswell will be replacing Steve Shank and me on the leadership team. This change positions younger and more gifted men to serve alongside of C.J., Dave Harvey and Pat Ennis. Except for Dave, each of them is a part of Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, MD. This is an advantage.

On the international front, Larry will begin to work with Pete Greasley instead of me with our efforts in Asia. Pete is based in Wales in the United Kingdom has been asked to head up all our international work.

Danny Jones, my dear friend and sr. pastor in Orlando, has also been asked to take on new responsibilities. He has been helping me in FL, LA and the Caribbean. Two weeks ago I turned over GA, AL, MS, and SC to him. This will enable me to focus my full attention on the church plant in region of Mooresville and Kannapolis.

It has been a great joy and privilege to serve both Sovereign Grace Ministries and CrossWay. But in this last season of life, I believe the Lord has repositioned me to start a church and return to pastoral ministry. I see this as a promotion not a demotion. I love being involved in a local church, caring for people and teaching the word of God. Our ways are not his ways and his ways are not our ways. Indeed, "How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" (12:33) Thanks for all the wonderful years we've had together.

One more thing regarding Dave. I asked him if he received the evaluation I provided Bob, Phil and Wayne regarding his conduct. Here again is what I said, "I provided an evaluation of you [Dave] to the Assessment Team. They were supposed to pass it on to you and the SGM leadership team. Did you and the team receive it?" Dave never answered the question. He never got back to me. This had become par for the course. These were the types of questions he was unwilling to answer.

To make matters worse, Bob never passed on my evaluation to Dave, you, Josh, Jeff or Pat. He forgot. During my assessment, I provided Bob all the information above and much more regarding Dave. We talked about Dave's attitudes and actions on several occasions. He was aware of my "banning," etc. Yet none of it was forwarded to anyone and none of it was put in any written reports which I also requested. Oh my, how can this be forgotten? In my experience, I tend to forget the things I consider unimportant. Dave's behavior was barely on Bob's radar screen. If I did what Dave did, most certainly, Bob would not have forgotten to pass it onto to you!

Let me add that I met with Dave at a Starbucks near Concord Mills Mall on March 1, 2009. I told him I primarily resigned because he and you didn't feel I represented Sovereign Grace or Jesus Christ (whom I specifically mentioned) in my preaching, leadership or character. I quoted Dave back to Dave but also added "Jesus Christ." He did not object. Rather, he acknowledged his awareness that this was foremost in my mind and heart as the reason for stepping down. I also told him I had no hopes of serving in Sovereign Grace Ministries in the years ahead given this dismal assessment.

I just hoped to plant a church, preach the gospel and care for a flock of God's children. I had lost too much respect for you and Dave. This wasn't self-pity. It was a matter of principle.

Gene Emerson - Counseled a Conspiracy¹⁵⁴

Here is what I said to you, "Gene counseled people to force my resignation before any evaluation."

Four friends declared me unfit for ministry with no process and demanded my immediately resignation for one reason. Gene told them this had to be done if SGM were to get involved in our local situation. Ray Mulligan, for instance, told me, Jenny and Jonathan in a meeting on July 23, 2009 with Bob Kauflin, Phil Sasser, Wayne Brooks, Eric Kircher, Roger Layman, and Jim Aldridge, that Gene counseled him to "fire" me. Eric, Roger and Jim concurred that Gene had given them this "bad counsel" as Roger put it. This is indisputable. All four men were completely convinced this action was absolutely necessary based on the direction they received from Gene. About this there is no debate. The four men repeatedly affirmed this was true.

The entire leadership team of Sovereign Grace Ministries was extremely concerned that people in the church, and outside of the church, not be told the truth about what really happened. Dave, speaking on your behalf and with your support, "recommended" no one be informed of Gene's involvement (which I didn't even know about at the time) or the sinful actions of Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim. I appealed that you be "open and honest" "less you be accused of a cover-up." Nevertheless, you counseled the concealment of everything surrounding my forced resignation. To this day, the church has never been told the truth.¹⁵⁵ Instead, you framed the issue under the guise of integrity. This entailed the gross manipulation of the leaders from Grace Community Church.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 1:33 PM

To: Ray Mulligan, Eric Kircher, Jim Aldridge, Roger Layman,

Cc: Brian Lloyd; Jonathan Detwiler; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton; Brent Detwiler; C.J. Mahaney; Jeff Purswell; Gene Emerson; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris

Subject: RE: Confidential

Gentleman, an additional point of clarification related to the public announcement to the church. We [Dave, C.J., Josh, Jeff, Pat] would not recommend that the church be informed of the request for Brent's 'resignation', but only of the request to SGM from the local team for an 'evaluation of Brent's leadership'. Since we are being informed from many parties that there is

growing speculation over these issues from within and outside the church. We believe this step will serve the church by framing the issue carefully and respectfully, quelling speculation, inviting prayer and reinforcing the desire of all parties to walk through this process with integrity.

Hope this point of clarification helps.

Dave

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 1:57 PM

To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson

Cc: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Brent Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Ray Mulligan; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton,

Subject: FW: Confidential

I'd suggest you be open and honest about what has happen less you be accused of a "cover up" and indicate that the leadership team also asked to be evaluated by SGM per the statement below which says you desire "an open and outside evaluation of us all."

This appeal for truth telling was completely ignored.¹⁵⁶ No one addressed my profound concern for honesty and transparency.¹⁵⁷ I never heard back from Dave and Gene or anyone else.¹⁵⁸

Later, I appealed to the Assessment Team and asked that this information be shared with Grace Community Church. In their final report to the church on July 29, 2009, they communicated an incomplete and watered-down overview of Eric, Ray, Jim and Roger's actions. Even worse, they never said anything to the church about Gene's crucial role. They withheld it from the church. In fact, they withheld the same information from me for nearly two months until the very end of the assessment. I found out from Ray two nights before I resigned. This was purposeful and strategic - not a mere oversight.

I was kept in the dark when I should have known about Gene from the very beginning. Oh, the duplicity! If I had known about his secret counsel to "fire" me, I would have spoken up. There was no "open and outside evaluation" of Gene. For this and other reasons, Gene should be removed from the Sovereign Grace leadership, step down as sr. pastor of KingsWay Community Church, be put on probation and required to make a public confession to the movement.¹⁵⁹

Bob Kauflin – Pronounced Unfit¹⁶⁰

Here is what I said to you, “Bob has pronounced me unfit for ministry and in need of a lengthy rehabilitation.”

On July 25, 2010, Bob read the following to all the members and regular attendees of Grace Community Church.

“This request [for Sovereign Grace involvement] came as a result of four leaders asking for, and then rescinding, Brent’s resignation.... The local leaders had concluded Brent was unfit to lead the church and moved towards asking for his resignation.... But we also believe we have gathered enough evidence to say that the original concerns of the leaders are valid.... We recommend the call for resignation from the local leaders be upheld by the board and honored by Brent, and that Brent step down as an elder and board member of Grace Community Church, effective immediately.... Therefore, we recommend that a process of reconciliation and restoration be put in place for Brent, to be determined by the Sovereign Grace leadership team, hoping that Brent might one day return to pastoral ministry.... We recommend that Brent, along with Sovereign Grace, consider what church could best provide ongoing pastoral care and potential restoration.”

Bob made it crystal clear. I was “unfit” for ministry. He hoped that “one day” I “might return to pastoral ministry.” “Potential restoration” to ministry was a possibility but only if I moved to another church for rehabilitation. This pronouncement effectively destroyed my “livelihood.” As an aside, Bob never mentioned the possibility of restoration to me during the five week assessment until I brought up its total absence to Benny Phillips, who brought it up to Bob, two days before I resigned. It was never part of our conversation until the day before I resigned. Never... As a result, the comments above about “reconciliation and restoration” were added to the report the day I resigned.

At The Summit coffee shop in Davidson, NC on July 24, Bob told me this reclamation project would be a lengthy process of 1 to 1½ years in all probability. It would take that long before I could pastor again. He also said there was no possibility of me moving back into this area where all my children lived upon completion for ministry purposes.¹⁶¹ I’d either be on staff in another city or be sent out to plant a church in another area. These are the plain facts. They made my decision to leave SGM easier since Jenny and I were not willing to leave our family. I wrote Dave regarding the same.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 2:34 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: confidential

We left [SGM] for a lot of reasons. The clincher was no possibility of returning to the area per the Assessment Team after “rehab” in other church.

C.J. Mahaney – “We Cannot Serve Together”

You also claimed I misunderstood and misrepresented you. Here’s what I said regarding you, “You have said we cannot serve together because of your disagreements with me over doctrine and practice.”

And here’s what you wrote me on January 14, 2010, “Even though I know we hold disagreements over doctrine and practice that now separate us from serving together, I don’t want there to be any separation of heart between us.” There is no misrepresentation by me. I am practically quoting you verbatim. According to you, we are separated by doctrine and practice. We cannot serve together in ministry in SGM. That is your clear meaning. To say I misunderstood and misrepresented you is an example of the “spin” I am so concerned about.¹⁶²

KingsWay Community Church¹⁶³

You recently stated you don’t know of any pastor in Sovereign Grace Ministries who is “lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.” Yet this is currently happening in Midlothian, VA. Both Gene and Dave are involved in these types of activities and this has been brought to your attention. I hope each of them confess these sins to the church. Gene should not be overseeing churches in Sovereign Grace Ministries and he should not continue as senior pastor. Last year I brought my grave concerns for Gene to Dave and Bob’s attention. They effectively dismissed them when disciplinary actions were clearly in order. It is hard to describe how abusive Gene was in his dealing with me.¹⁶⁴ I tried to help him deal with pride over the years but with little success. Here is correspondence from this week.

Example 1: Gene Emerson

On Tuesday of this week, I wrote Gene the following corrective. I copied those centrally involved in his manipulation and deceit.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 1:03 PM

To: Gene Emerson

Cc: Bob Dixon; Steve Whitman; Bud Moreland; Aaron Campbell; Matthew Williams, Doug Wilda

Subject: Issues re: Steve Whitman

Please see the attached correspondence and notes. I am praying for your time with Peacemakers. Sorry to get this out the door so last minute.

Dear Gene,

I never heard from Steve after asking you to pass on my notes with an encouragement for him to e-mail me. As a result, I called him twice the end of September but didn't make contact. I left voice messages inviting Steve to call. We finally had a good conversation this past Saturday, October 2.

I find your response below deceitful and it is of great concern to me. I am afraid this has become a pattern in your life. It affects my trust in you. Let me explain in this instance.

You intentionally withheld this information from Steve after I requested you give it to him. What was your motive for doing this? I wanted Steve to have this material so we could talk through any differences between us. You blocked my attempts to provide Steve my perspective. You also failed to convey my happy willingness for him to contact me.

When Steve and I talked on Saturday, he had no idea I was glad to connect with him back in mid-September. This came up when I asked him if he had any questions about my notes that you were to forward. Of course, he was clueless. He didn't know of any such notes. I might also add these notes should have been supplied for his consideration in preparation for the "Peacemaker" meeting this week. He should not be surprised by them.

This is wrong Gene. You need to ask Steve's forgiveness for hindering attempts at peacemaking and defrauding him of my notes which I wanted him to have in his possession. Why didn't you give them to him? Why didn't you tell him I was happy to interact?

These are questions that require accountable answers. I am copying this e-mail to the pastors at KingsWay. I trust they'll bring the correction and accountability you need. I hope they lead you to repentance by the kindness of God. I've also copied Steve, Bob, and Buddy.

I'd appreciate if you wrote me back and answered the questions above. I am eager to forgive you when you repent. If this deception is part of a local pattern then it should be acknowledged to the church.

Let me go into some detail. You first e-mailed me on August 25. I was unaware of any turmoil in KingsWay. You brought to my attention "that some of [Steve's] offenses are against you [Brent]." You were concerned that I "not be misrepresented and have an opportunity to share if [I] have a different perspective." As a result, I reviewed my notes from the past regarding Steve and sent them to you with an accompanying letter. I asked that these notes be forwarded to Steve. I wanted to talk with him about any offenses. You prohibited this from happening.

C.J., what follows is some of the e-mail history between Gene and me. I have not included all of it. The comments between e-mails are from me to Gene. I hope you can follow.

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 4:13 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Steve Whitman's Concerns

Hi Brent,

I hope you are well. I've prayed for you so often and look forward to the day we can be restored.

I wanted to ask you to weigh in to a situation we're walking through right now with Steve Whitman. He has raised concerns about how he was treated during the Roanoke situation and we have sought to address those concerns both privately and publicly. I have asked forgiveness in both contexts for pressuring him to go to Roanoke.

It won't surprise you that some of his offenses are against you, and I have asked that your name not be used at least until you have an opportunity to respond. Specifically, Steve recounts a meal with you, Steve and Donna at an Outback before he left Roanoke where you forbade him from ever discussing his version of the events leading up to and during Roanoke with anyone. He also recalls you refusing to reconsider this in years following and, at one point, saying "Nothing could have possibly been done better" from your perspective and "I guess we'll know when we get to heaven that was right."

I'm sorry to raise this, Brent, but my concern is that you not be misrepresented and have an opportunity to share if you have a different perspective. Would you let me know your thoughts ASAP?

Thanks,
Gene

I wrote you [Gene] back to ask about your recollection.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 4:52 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Steve Whitman's Concerns

Do you remember me ever saying anything like this to you? I remember the meal but have no memory of these attributions. I am glad to check my notes and file on Friday. Tomorrow I'm tied up.

Thanks
Brent

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 5:17 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Steve Whitman's concerns

No but Steve says you said it to them without anyone else present.

I responded to you at length and included my notes regarding Steve. I asked you to greet Steve and Donna with my love. You did not do this. Why? I wanted them to know that though we may have differences; I cared for them, respected them, and thanked God for them. I also reminded you of my past caution to "be careful not to pressure [Steve] or tell him what he should or shouldn't do" with regard to moving to Roanoke. You did not convey my heart to them.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, August 28, 2010 6:03 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Subject: Steve Whitman

Greetings Gene,

First, thanks for asking that my “name not be used at least until [I] have an opportunity to respond” and that I “not be misrepresented and have an opportunity to share if [I] have a different perspective.” I gather from the blogs, the Kingsway Family Meeting, and your e-mail that erroneous and uncharitable statements are being made about me. If my “name” begins to be used (or already is) would you please make my views known to the church. Would you also forward this and the notes to all the pastors.

Second, please give my love and greetings to Steve and Donna. As you can attest, I’ve always had a fond affection for them in my heart. As I think back over the years, my heart is filled with gratitude for their devoted acts of service (e.g. Children’s Ministry at Celebration) and their love of others. I’ve always thanked God for the encouragement and kindnesses they provided so many people – me included...

After writing this to you [Gene] with the accompanying notes, you said, “I want to ask him [Steve] to contact you [Brent] personally so that he hears directly from you rather than through me.” You didn’t do this. Why?

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2010 1:15 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Thanks

Thank you, Brent, for providing the information about your counsel to Steve. I want to ask him to contact you personally so that he hears directly from you rather than through me. Would it be OK if I gave him your e-mail address?

Gene

I requested that you give all my notes to Steve and that you invite him to write me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2010 3:03 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Thanks

Please give Steve everything I sent you first. After he reads it, he's welcome to e-mail me if he wants to.

You [Gene] wanted me to interact with Steve to share my perspective. Did you hope I would correct him or did you hope we'd have a profitable conversation and resolve any differences? It appears you were interested in the former and not the later. If so, it is lamentable.

This past Saturday, Steve said he approached me four consecutive years and made mild appeals to reconsider our handling of him. I remember talking to Steve but not every year for four years (2000-2004). In any case, I did not take him seriously enough. I asked his forgiveness for this on Saturday. I should have given him serious consideration since these were the very issues I was trying to help you grown in. I regret this (thanks for your forgiveness Steve).

After talking to Steve this past Saturday, I immediately e-mailed you for verification.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 02, 2010 10:02 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Subject: Steve Whitman
Importance: High

Did you give Steve everything I sent you? Did you tell Steve he is welcome to e-mail me?

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, October 03, 2010 1:26 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Steve Whitman

I would appreciate a prompt response. Today if possible.

Thanks
Brent

Your answer below is entirely irrelevant. It is an attempt at spin. You didn't respond to any of my questions. You avoided them. I wanted Steve to have the documents, feel I was accessible to him, and be assured of my love. These requests of mine had nothing to do with you and him. It was about me and him.

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Sunday, October 03, 2010 8:22 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Steve Whitman

Steve & I have been working through a number of issues unrelated to your involvement, and have agreed we need mediation. So a conciliator from Peacemakers is going to meet with us starting this week. I'm planning on bringing the documents you sent as part of the mediation process where a conciliator can study them objectively and help us both to respond appropriately. I think that will be the best way for all of us to move forward. Thanks for your patience.

I [Brent] should have been even more concerned for the pressure you [Gene] were applying to him [Steve] and the sin-centered approach you took after he returned. I'd regularly ask you how Steve was doing but I trusted your assessment too much. It sounds like you did little to help Steve get out from under the condemnation of returning to KingsWay and help the church fully accept him. He labored under great guilt for many years. I take some responsibility for this. Especially since I was bringing correction into your life regarding pride and the lack of grace in your treatment of others. As I've already said to you:

For my part however, I didn't pressure Steve to go, tell him to go, or say it would be sin not to go. You [Gene] may have done these things but this was not my approach or perspective. In fact, I cautioned you to be careful not to pressure him or tell him what he should or shouldn't do.

I also think I should have done more to protect Steve from Steve. I didn't want to prohibit him from going (lording) but maybe I should have done more to convince him to consider not going. Here's what I wrote Gary.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2010 10:25 AM
To: Gary Stergar
Subject: Steve

Hi Gary,

Thanks for the e-mails. I'm happy to try and contact Steve again. Leading up to the Roanoke decision I asked Gene not to pressure

Steve. After Steve returned I asked Gene about his welfare numerous times. I encouraged Gene to reach out to Steve. Gene assured me Steve was being cared for. I'm saddened to hear this was not the case.

Love in Christ,
Brent

For many years, I [Brent] attempted to help you [Gene] grow in humility, kindness and love. Here are some interactions from the past but all very relevant in the present. If I understand correctly, these are the same issues being raised with you now by long term friends in KingsWay. I am concerned Steve experienced a severity of condemnation from you that I was not aware of, and therefore, I did not protect him from your sin focus and lack of compassion. Your assurances of care for Steve did not guarantee care. Given your propensities, I should have been more suspicious.

From: GeneEmer@aol.com
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2000 3:33 PM
To: Brent@abundantlife-nc.org
Subject: Sin & other relevant topics

Brent,

FYI: I wanted to give you an update on some areas of concern that Steve raised with me. Steve & I have discussed these areas at length both together and including Aaron, and I think they're being addressed, but I wanted you to be aware and welcome your covering, input, and further correction.

1. I have not taken initiative in various ways of caring for and building relationally with Steve and Aaron. This includes making time to pray together and discuss personal issues. (The fall was particularly lacking in this, since office renovation, fundraising, and Randy's death consumed significant time and energy.)
2. Taking initiative with the church to confess areas of weakness & sin, especially during messages. The concern is that I am not sufficiently "walking with a limp." (I agree with his concern and am looking for opportunities to share this kind of illustration out of my life.)
3. An insufficient practice of plurality as we've made the shift from the leadership team to an eldership model. At times he's felt more

like a nuisance, especially when disagreeing with my perspective, than like a valued member of a team. (I agree with this concern as well and am seeking to draw Steve & Aaron more into all of our decision making.)

Brent, I covet your care and insight. Please feel free to follow up and share any insights you have.

We'll be taking an overnight retreat next Tuesday and Wednesday with the Whitman's and Campbell's. I'll be seeking their input there. I'll let you know what comes out of our time together.

Your friend,
Gene

Subject: Update
Date: 9/15/98 11:06:41 AM
From: Gene Emerson
To: Brent Detwiler

Brent,

Trust this note finds you well and enjoying God's grace!

I wanted to let you know that yesterday I shared "my list" with the church. Since we're in the midst of a message series on "Be Filled with the Spirit," I introduced my thoughts by reading from John 16 about the work of the Spirit in the conviction of sin and then shared about how that is being worked out in my own life. I was able to share personally with the church and share examples on each point in ways I've seen pride worked out in my life. After I spoke Steve & Bob shared ways in which they were encouraged in the process.

I've received quite a lot of positive feedback from people as well as a number of folks who have shared different ways my pride has affected them, enabling me to ask specific forgiveness. I think it went very well. A number of people shared with me how God used my sharing to bring conviction to their own hearts. I'm hopeful that we'll have a new sense of unity as a church.

Thanks for your support in this, Brent. I shared with the church how much you've meant to me through this process, in your care, in your

leadership, and in your own example. You mean so much to me. It is an honor to serve you.

With appreciation,

Gene

Subject: Update

Date: 8/18/98 11:37:54 AM

From: Steve Whitman

To: Brent Detwiler

Brent,

Greetings! I hope all is going well for you by God's grace!

We are having a leadership team retreat at the end of this week, so I wanted to give you a progress report on the issues we've been working through, and ask if it would be possible for us to speak by phone for a few minutes before that time (I certainly understand if that's not possible!).

We have seen some encouraging things happen in Gene's life as well as among the rest of the team. Particularly helpful was the article (Speaking Redemptively) you encouraged us to read. We took a morning to discuss the article, and God mercifully broke in upon us! He revealed significant areas of sin in each of our hearts, particularly among the three amigos (Gene, Bob & myself). The result was repentance and a breakthrough in our relationships that we hadn't seen before.

Also, Gene & I have met with Rick Nichols, Steve Teter and Brad Mitchell in the past number of weeks to allow Gene the opportunity to share the items of sin on his "list". The outcome of each of those meetings was very encouraging. Each of those guys expressed much gratitude to hear from Gene a more extensive description of his sins toward them. I believe these meetings resulted in far more restoration of relationships than any previous interaction had before.

As the leadership team worked through the issue that came up with Bob's tithing, more relational sins came to the surface which we worked through pretty successfully. On a slightly less encouraging

note, it came to light in discussing the tithing issue with Bob, that he indeed had tithed in 1997, and that in a number of settings Gene had called his integrity on that issue into question. I believe this might have had some impact on how you had evaluated that issue while you were with us. It might be good for us to chat about that one.

Well, that's it in a nutshell. I'd be very eager to get your thoughts on how we can continue to serve Gene, and make progress in our relationships. Thanks for being involved with us!

In Christ,

Steve

PS. If you'd like to arrange a phone chat, I'll be available anytime today and tomorrow, and until 1:30 on Thursday. Thanks!

Subject: Areas of Sin
Date: 6/9/98 2:22:48 PM
From: Gene Emerson
To: Steve Whitman
CC: Brent Detwiler

Steve,

As I have prayed and sought the mind of the Lord over the past week to clarify the issues we discussed with Brent, I believe God has graciously helped me to enlarge the list of sins I shared in the meeting and to be more specific about the root issues. I am very aware of God's conviction on each issue.

I hope this contributes to our discussions. I look forward to the input you and the other brothers can provide.

With appreciation,

Gene

Sins of Which I'm Presently Aware¹⁶⁵

1. Pride in self-righteousness.
 - a) Being large in my own eyes.
 - b) Not recognizing or communicating that I am "cut from the same cloth" as others.
 - c) Being slow to identify and confess my sins and weaknesses.
 - d) Not recognizing my need for others.
2. Pride in not honoring and respecting the men God placed around me.
 - a) Feeling superior because of position.
 - b) Not recognizing my need to be "pastored" by those around me.
 - c) Not seeking their input into my life and my family's life.
 - d) Considering my own judgment more highly.
3. Pride in a critical, legalistic attitude toward others.
 - a) Fault finding...being more aware of other's sins & faults than in their strengths.
 - b) Lacking love, affection and compassion for people.
 - c) Majoring on performance rather than motivating by grace.
 - d) Neglecting regular encouragement and affirmation.
 - e) Being an "agent of change" rather than a "means of grace" in leading and counseling.
 - f) Pressuring people to change rather than leading and entrusting them to God.
 - g) Withholding friendship or affection from people who are unresponsive or unteachable.
4. Pride in trusting in human effort to accomplish God's purposes.
 - a) Asking people to respond to my leadership rather than insisting that they respond to God.
 - b) Allowing people to respond by duty rather than by leading them into faith.
 - c) Trusting in counseling & leadership rather than in God to change people's lives.
5. Pride in placing my agenda before the interests of others (being self-serving).
 - a) Basing my relationship with others on their performance rather than on grace.
 - b) Valuing accomplishment over relationship.
 - c) Leading as a director rather than as a shepherd.

From: Gene Emerson
To: Brent Detwiler
Date: 6/4/98 6:06:08 PM
Subject: Re: Feedback

In a message dated 6/4/98 12:56:23 PM Eastern Daylight Time, Brent Detwiler writes:

"If you can E Mail me ASAP your recollections of your confession or acknowledgment of wrong doing with Steve T. and Brad M. it would be helpful. When and what did you acknowledge to them? Thanks my friend for continuing to humble yourself and grow as a result."

Brent,

Thanks for leading me so well in this endeavor. I just finished listening to your two recent tapes on pride from CLC...very, very helpful! You are a great example to me in this.

Steve checked with Rick and his recollection is of me asking how I had offended him but not confessing specific sin at the outset. Given my poor and prideful memory, I feel less certain of what I said to Steve or Brad.

I think I met with both during our last trip in to Franklin last July. My recollection is that I began by confessing the manifestations of pride that I was aware of at the time which would have included pressuring them, withdrawing my affections (friendship) if they didn't respond, valuing performance over relationship, and having a critical spirit in dealing with people. I recall both Steve & Brad sharing illustrations of how these sins had affected them and taking time with both to ask specific forgiveness. Brad gave me less feedback than Steve because I dealt with him far less. Brad did share a concern about going back to Jack at some point, which I'm planning to do.

My recollection is that both men expressed gratitude and were very gracious in forgiving me. Both Liz and I felt our time there that weekend went very well and I think Steve gave you similar feedback.

Since Rick didn't recall specific initial confession, I certainly hold out the possibility that I remember wrong. I'm looking forward to getting with Rick in the near future to address those issues. If either Steve or Brad feels I

didn't adequately cover these issues with them, I'll be glad to get with them at Celebration or when I'm in Franklin in August.

Thanks again for your covering, care, and friendship!

With appreciation,

Gene

Subject: Saturday Team meeting
Date: 5/28/98 12:29:29 PM
From: Gene Emerson
To: Brent Detwiler

Brent,

I mentioned to you earlier that it would be helpful if you could help us as a leadership team work through a few issues. I wanted to provide some more information to make you aware of the basic issues to expedite our time together.

For the past couple of years I've been sharing with you areas where God has ongoingly convicted me of pride. As I've become more and more aware of these areas, this has been a painful process and one that seems endless at times. But I am deeply grateful for the mercy God has shown me in revealing my sin and extending the gift of repentance.

I've also sought to keep you abreast of issues in which the brothers, particularly Steve [Whitman] and Bob [Dixon], have shared their concerns with me. By way of review, their concerns are as follows:

Steve: Pride as applies to idolatry of leadership and in relationships in ministry.

Bob: Lording over people's faith, arrogance, manipulation, intimidation, valuing function over relationships, using relationships as a means to an end, being condescending.

We spent some time discussing these issues at our last retreat in April. I asked their forgiveness for not valuing their input in my life. I realized, particularly in light of Benny's letter, that I had not adequately sought out their input in my personal life and in my family's. I also

recognized that I have not adequately valued their input on leadership issues. They were gracious in forgiving me and that confession formed the foundation for a good retreat together.

As we discussed the specific issues Bob & Steve have raised, they communicated that they have seen significant growth in these areas, but continue to carry two concerns:

1. Though they have seen me change over the past nine years in how I relate to people, etc., they (Bob & Steve) haven't been satisfied in my repentance because they haven't observed sufficient "brokenness" in my life in regard to past sins.
2. They (Bob & Steve) believe it is very important that I acknowledge these past sins to the church and ask their forgiveness. Doug and Claude would have a different perspective since neither have experienced this from me. Since Doug arrived the year after the church was started, he particularly questions how many people in the present membership of the church would be aware of these issues.

Brent, I am well aware that my leadership in the past (dating back to CLC and Franklin) was characterized by pressure, using people as a means to an end, etc., and have repented to the extent I am aware of these issues. I am also aware that these sinful methods of leadership were rooted in pride. To that end I am glad to ask forgiveness of people in whatever way would be most beneficial to those involved. In fact, I've already asked forgiveness of people who I particularly sinned against (including Steve Teter, Brad Mitchell, Rick Nichols, Bob D. and Steve W.). I think your input would be very valuable in knowing where to go from here.

It is so important that we be able to come to one mind as a leadership team on these issues and move on, because I think the undercurrent of disagreement prevents us from really being at peace with one another (especially between Bob, Steve & me) and in biblical harmony. There's still a lot of baggage in the three of our relationships with one another, and I'm convinced God wants us to deal with these issues biblically so we can move on with one heart together.

I trust God will use you to help us and want to open my heart to you for your observations of remaining areas of pride and other sins in my life. Should make for a fun weekend!

Thanks so much, Brent, for your counsel, care, and friendship.

With appreciation,

Gene

Subject: Pride and other sins

Date: 98-04-08 22:02:44 EDT

From: Gene Emerson

To: Brent Detwiler

CC: Liz Emerson

Brent,

I've been listening to your tapes from CLC on pride. They have been so helpful and convicting. I am grateful for the work God has done and continues to do in your life, which is both an example and an inspiration to me.

I want you to know that I was deeply convicted on some additional manifestations of pride during the Leaders & Wives Conference. Due, I'm sure, to the work of the Spirit in my life, the theme of humility seemed to run throughout the conference. But I was especially aware of the pride in my life during the time CJ was being honored. I realized that I was not small in my own eyes and that, in fact, I was very aware of my own contribution.

I was also convicted about the critical nature of my heart in majoring on evaluating people and seeking to identify and address areas of weakness, sin, and needs. My fault-finding and preoccupation with people's needs has largely precluded my awareness of evidences of grace in the lives of others, starting with Liz and the men I work with. This has had a significant detrimental effect on my effectiveness in building friendships and in extending a genuine, merciful care to others.

I shared these areas with Liz and the men on the leadership team and they have been great in helping me to clarify these issues and repent of them. But I wanted you to be aware as well and very much welcome your input on any of these areas.

Thanks again for setting the pace, Brent. I am committed to living for God's glory alone in my life...to worship Him and serve others.

I'll be in DC this coming week taking Homiletics from CJ. Then I'll see you the following Tuesday in Charlotte. Liz and I are really looking forward to being with you and Jenny and the other couples. Please let me know if there's any way we can serve you during our time together.

Your friend,
Gene

From: Gene Emerson
To: Brent Detwiler
Date: 97-07-23 10:17:56 EDT
Subject: Re: Pride

Brent,

Thanks for your note and for your interest in these issues of my life. Your covering means a lot.

The primary way I have seen evidences pride in my life has been in my relationships with others, particularly with Liz and the Leadership Team. I have noticed an excessive amount of tension and quarrels lately among the Team. In inquiring of the Lord as to the origin, saw the contribution I have made by sinful behavior such as:

- Preferring myself
- Considering my judgment more highly than others
- Being impatient in giving and receiving correction
- Withholding unconditional acceptance of others
- Placing a higher priority on communicating correction than communicating care
- Lacking love, compassion, and mercy in dealing with others
- Focusing on people's deficiencies rather than on their strengths

I am also realizing that I have not been nearly as suspicious of my own heart as I ought. Thus, I have not been faithful in recognizing and confessing my own sins. Liz has ongoingly communicated to me her desire that I live aware of my own weaknesses and confess them more freely.

The brothers on the Leadership Team agree with the issues above and have shared with me their concern that I have "lorded over people's faith" by:

1. Being more concerned about expedience than leading people into faith.

2. As a result, telling people where we are going rather than setting a direction and inviting people to come with me there.

They have pointed out that the result of this form of leadership is for people to feel unimportant in the process and that in essence this form of leadership calls people to put their trust in leaders rather than in the Lord.

I see the fruit of this issue and have become much more sensitive in calling people to focus their faith in God on issues. To whatever degree that comes through repenting of pride and embracing humility, I trust God will lead me into the good of godly leadership.

Bob also feels that I have “a need for power, control and authority.” Steve and Doug wouldn’t define these issues that way; but, based on the issues above, I can see why Bob believes that. To the best of my knowledge, I’m not motivated by a need or desire to control others.

Brent, I feel like an onion being peeled back layer after layer by the Holy Spirit only to reveal another. Though I am deeply grateful for the work of the Spirit, it is painful and, at times, discouraging to see the ugliness of my heart and the effects of my actions on others. For example, though I know they brought their own sin to the party, I’m sure I could have dealt with Jack Vogel, Roy Simmons and Bryan McCrea much better if I had shown more care for them and less concern for their sin alone.

I know that I’ve caused Steve Teter to struggle more than he should have had to. (I shared about these issues with Steve this past weekend and asked his forgiveness. He was gracious in forgiving me and sharing his encouragement about God’s work in my life...)

Brent, I’m sure you’ve noticed these areas in my life and I welcome your observations as I seek to understand and repent of them. I know my heart is deceitful and I’m sure that even now I only see a part of my offense against God. I would appreciate any thoughts or corrections you have to offer.

With gratitude,

Gene

In my opinion, these issues of character in your [Gene’s] life are the real issue and not disputes or differences with Steve. A decade later, I continue to carry these concerns for you.

C.J., you and Gene share common characteristics. Gene can be very affable, kind, encouraging and generous. He is capable in many respects. I've worked with Gene on all the issues above for over a decade but I did not know how serious they were until you placed him over me and assigned him to deal with me. I admit to being shocked. I thought he had made more progress.

Gene first confronted me with your assessment and on your behalf in March 2008. Up until then Gene had been empathetic toward me. But his disposition suddenly changed as a result of conversations with you and counsel from you.¹⁶⁶ A one time friend began to act more like a pit bull than a pastor. At the end of his first confrontation, I asked Gene if he thought I even loved Jesus, so harsh and condemning were his words.¹⁶⁷ He didn't answer the question.

Example 2: Dave Harvey¹⁶⁸

Dave's recent comments to KingsWay Community Church illustrate a number of egregious sins including manipulation and lording. He should return to the church and publicly confess and ask forgiveness.¹⁶⁹

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 1:11 PM

To: Dave Harvey

Cc: Bud Moreland; Steve Whitman; Bob Dixon; Aaron Campbell; Doug Wilda; Matthew Williams; Gene Emerson

Subject: Tyranny of the Aggrieved

Hi Dave,

I've attached some correspondence regarding your message at KingsWay on September 5, 2010. I hope you find it helpful to your soul and it results in good fruit for the church and Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Thanks

Brent

Dear Dave,

A couple of weeks ago, I was asked to listen to the message you gave at KingsWay Community Church on September 5, entitled "Peter, Polity and Us" from 1 Peter 5:1-5. There were commendable points in the message but they

were overshadowed by your final section when you talked about “the tyranny of the aggrieved.” I found these remarks extremely troubling.

As you know, three weeks earlier on August 15, Gene Emerson confessed to the church his sin against Steve Whitman. Yet in this message, you correct Steve, though not by name, and those raising legitimate concerns. This only caused more division.

Here are my questions having listened to your message. I’ve been told Bob Dixon, Steve Whitman, and Buddy Moreland were provided a copy. I assume you’ve seen them also. If not, you’ll find them below.

It is critical for you to answer these kinds of questions.¹⁷⁰ You don’t have to necessarily answer my exact questions but you must answer any questions Steve, Bob, and Buddy pose to you. I’ve also provided a transcript of your relevant comments and some of Gene’s below.

In my opinion, you need to return to KingsWay to publically ask forgiveness for violating Scripture regarding peacemaking, acting hypocritically, further dividing the church, exercising authority you weren’t given, and manipulating the saints. Please don’t attempt to avoid this kind of accountability. I trust the pastors at KingsWay will help you in this regard. I hope you’ll correct the harm you’ve done to this precious church.

Dave, my love and affection abides but you and others have continued down the slippery path of deceit, hypocrisy and spiritual abuse. Please hit the emergency brake before Sovereign Grace derails. Each day these kinds of sins go unacknowledged, the ministry suffers an increased loss of reputation which hinders the glorious gospel. I don’t want that for you and all my dear friends in Sovereign Grace Ministries.

C.J., here are Dave’s relevant comments from his message.¹⁷¹

“I count it a privilege to be here today not only because I get to be with a pastoral team that I respect, and a church that I love, but it seems to have pleased God for me to join you in a time of turmoil as a local church. As I approach, let’s see next June is 25 years of ministry I want to confess from the outset – I am not unfamiliar with turmoil in local churches. Like individual Christians, every church goes through pruning, every church goes through refining, every church goes through turmoil...

“Now for the benefit of our guests, we haven’t had an opportunity to meet yet and I appreciate that. While I do formally serve this church on behalf of SGM, I

have no authority in this church whatsoever. The elders are the final authority of this local church. The church is connected to SGM, the SG family of churches, they are there voluntarily, not by contract, not by compulsion, though I would want to say our partnership together does involve a voluntary accountability and counsel and that's something we unite for. We unite for the purpose of mission, we unite for the purpose of accountability. Well, I guess what I am trying to say is I am not assuming I have something unique or prophetic to say to you this morning or that everyone here even wants to hear what I have to say this morning. Your pastors have certainly not asked me to address this. In fact they are probably more nervous then you are right now...

"Whether it be the pastor or whether it be the people, humility means that we are looking first to our own heart. It doesn't mean we don't look out beyond our own heart but we look first and primarily to our own heart. That means that as Gene is confessing or as you are confessing in your small group or in your marriage to whatever issues might be coming up; the effect of that confession should not be to stir suspicion but to provide an opportunity for us to look to ourselves - us to examine where we too might be doing that. And then to look out and seek to serve those that are confessing. But humility means we look first to our own heart and we don't assume that our perspective on other people is infallible.

"Humility means that we avoid over deference to elders. And that we take the necessary steps to humbly share our opinions, our observations and our grievances. Let there be no excessive deference to elders that silences us from sharing the things that we need to talk about. But when we do that we do it in a biblical manner and in a way that strives for the unity of the faith always asking this question. Does my approach on this issue unite the church? That is the question God is asking. Does my approach on this issue unite us together? Does it unite people, does it unite the church?

"You see one of the things I love about this local church is that there are areas where you're ahead of most other churches in this country. There are areas where you are ahead. In other words, you agreed 4 or 5 years ago to actually define how you going to do conflict in your relational commitments. This church has relational commitments. In 2006 [you] came out with them. That was a wonderful step and it is an extraordinary step for local churches. I mean, if you called any conciliation agency or ministry, any mediation ministry and asked them how many churches in the US have those? - they'd say, "Well, not many." In fact, my counsel to your pastors, and my counsel to this church this morning is simple. Just from here follow what you agreed upon. Follow what you agreed upon.

“Because believing others, whether it’s a leader, somebody in your small group, or it is you; believing others have failed doesn’t free us from applying Scripture. It doesn’t free us from doing that. The recourse there is the same. We appeal to the sinner, we cooperate humbling with the process, if we are unable to move forward we continue to seek to preserve the unity of the faith by involving other people, involving more objective people if necessary in a mediation or reconciliation assessment process. And then if none of that works, and then our conscience is still affected, then we depart upholding the unity of the faith.

“So humility means we avoid that over deference to elders and we humbly share our opinions. Humility also means that we avoid the tyranny of the aggrieved party. We avoid the tyranny of the aggrieved party. Now, may God help us to wisely care for victims of pastoral weakness and pastoral sin. May God help us to do that even more effectively in the future. You know like every family, like every church family, Sovereign Grace is full of sinners, and those sinners include pastors, and I actually spend a portion of my job just helping leaders to shepherd better. But I just want to see God help us to do that without wrongly assigning authority to someone because of how they have been sinned against. That can be a challenge at times.

“For those of you that are here and you may have sinned against, sinned against in this process, sinned against in the past, sinned against in your marriage, sinned against last night, maybe you can relate to the challenge that I experience when I am sinned against. When I am sinned against here’s my temptation. I want to assume a higher moral ground than the person who sinned against me. I want to assume that my recollection of the past is 20/20 and absolutely crystal clear. I want to assume that my heart is pure and that my perceptions, because I have a pure heart, my perceptions are accurate and therefore authoritative. I want to assume all of those things which in effect insulates me from any questions being asked, any observations being brought, and makes my position unassailable.

“And the challenge is that for most that approach and those assumptions reflect a heart not moving toward reconciliation. I know when it happens to me it is not moving toward reconciliation at all. Most of the time it is moving toward vindication. Not reconciliation but vindication. I want a hearing. I want to be vindicated. And that is a dangerous place to be. You see, humility does it differently, humility always speaks aware of our words, always speaks aware that our words uniquely reveal our heart. Again, my temptation is there are times where I want to speak and just not have my heart evaluated and in particular the times I want to speak and not have my heart evaluated are the times when I feel sinned against. And I think I am right. And I don’t want the

hassle of considering that I might be wrong in the way that I am evaluating the situation. I just want my situation saluted by other people.

“I’ve noticed over time, in being a husband, in being a father, leading a local church, being involved in many other local churches, I’ve noticed that the true measure of my grasp of the gospel can be clearly seen in how I respond when I am being sinned against. The true measure of my grasp of the gospel, whether I get it, is best displayed in how I am responding when I am sinned against and whether I think I am accountable for my words. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Or whether I just feel I am in a heart free speech zone. We are always speaking, we are always responding before the audience of One even when we have been sinned against. So humility means we avoid the tyranny of the aggrieved party.

C.J., here are Gene’s relevant comments after Dave’s message.

“Now some of you have asked the question, what does accountability look like for an eldership. And I am so grateful that you are asking that question. It speaks of your care for us. I don’t know if you picked up on the point that Dave made at the beginning of his message when he spoke of voluntary accountability. One of the things I’ve appreciated about Sovereign Grace is our willingness, our commitment as a movement, to the reformation principal of always being reformed. So God has brought refinement in our understanding of extra local ministry. We understand that while authority resides in the local church it provides us the opportunity to voluntarily submit ourselves to Sovereign Grace Ministry for their evaluation and accountability. And Dave is serving us here this weekend as an expression of that deeply meaningful care.”

Here are the questions I sent to the leaders in KingsWay Community Church and Dave.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, September 19, 2010 6:40 PM
To: Gary
Subject: Dave Harvey

I’ve attached some thoughts for you.
Brent

Hi Gary,

I listened to Dave’s message yesterday. I transcribed some of it below along with a few of Gene remarks at the end. Here are some questions you could ask yourself, Dave and Gene. I hope you find them helpful.

1. Did Dave's message increase or decrease the turmoil in the church?

Dave: "It seems to have pleased God for me to join you in a time of turmoil as a local church.... Your pastors have certainly not asked me to address this. In fact they are probably more nervous then you are right now."

2. If it increased, should Dave ask the church's forgiveness for adding to the turmoil instead of advancing understanding and peace?
3. Did the Kingsway pastors agree with Dave's comments about the tyranny of the aggrieved and the approach he took in correcting them?

Gene: "Well I want you to know that the pastors didn't ask Dave to bring that message but are very grateful for the message he brought."

4. Did Dave preach with an authority he does not have when he corrected a segment of the church without the approval of the pastors?
5. If Dave acted on his own, did he exercise authority he said at the beginning of the message he does not have?

Dave: "While I do formally serve this church on behalf of Sovereign Grace Ministries, I have no authority in this church whatsoever."

6. Did Dave examine his own heart first and ask himself why he made these comments in this way during a Sunday morning message he did not run pass the elders?

Dave: "But humility means we look first to our own heart and we don't assume that our perspective on other people is infallible."

7. Does Dave think his assessment of the "aggrieved" who are tyrannizing the church is infallible?
8. Do the pastors agree with Dave's perspective regarding the aggrieved in the church?
9. Did Dave talk to the aggrieved tyrants in private and share his concerns for them before publically rebuking them?

10. Was Dave angry or resentful towards the aggrieved and therefore spoke out of the abundance of his heart? Was he preaching in “a heart free speech zone?”

Dave: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Or whether I just feel I am in a heart free speech zone.”

11. Did Dave sin against these people? If so, is he willing to come back and ask forgiveness of them?
12. Did the pastors talk to Dave in advance about what he would share with the church? Or were they totally in the dark as Gene seems to imply? Did they know Dave would reprove a significant number of people? Or did Dave act on his own and violate SG polity?
13. Did Dave’s comments have the effect of silencing people for fear they will be viewed as offended and tyrannical?
14. Did Dave’s comments promote greater honesty and openness from the church with the pastors? With Sovereign Grace Ministries?
15. Who does Dave think is stirring up suspicion? Did he talk to them in private? Does a comment like the one below tend to manipulate people and silence them?

“The effect of that confession should not be to stir suspicion but to provide an opportunity for us to look to ourselves.”

16. Did Dave follow the Kingsway’s relational commitments which he exhorted the church to follow or did he act hypocritically?

Dave: “In fact, my counsel to your pastors, and my counsel to this church this morning is simple. Just from here follow what you agreed upon. Follow what you agreed upon.”

17. Is Dave an aggrieved party? Did he use the pulpit to “tyrannize” those he disagrees with?

Dave: “Humility also means that we avoid the tyranny of the aggrieved party.”

18. Does Dave feel there are people in the church that should leave? Did he run this exhortation past the pastors? Do they feel the same way?

Dave: "And then if none of that works, and then our conscience is still affected, then we depart upholding the unity of the faith."

19. Does Dave assume a higher moral ground, a pure heart, that his perceptions are accurate and authoritative and his position unassailable?

Dave: "I want to assume a higher moral ground than the person who sinned against me. I want to assume that my recollection of the past is 20/20 and absolutely crystal clear. I want to assume that my heart is pure and that my perceptions, because I have a pure heart, my perceptions are accurate and therefore authoritative. I want to assume all of those things which in effect insulates me from any questions being asked, any observations being brought, and makes my position unassailable."

20. Did Dave's comments move the church toward reconciliation?

Dave: "And the challenge is that for most that approach and those assumptions reflect a heart not moving toward reconciliation."

21. Did Dave comments and approach unify the church?

"Does my approach on this issue unite the church? That is the question God is asking."

Here is the follow up correspondence between Dave and me. Enough said..

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 4:20 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Cc: Bud Moreland; Steve Whitman; Bob Dixon; Aaron Campbell; Doug Wilda; Matthew Williams; Gene Emerson

Subject: RE: Tyranny of the Aggrieved

Hey Brent, thanks for sending along your thoughts. Actually I had already received these questions, although I was not initially made aware they were from you. But I've urged Bob to forward them to the mediator and I welcome the mediator's evaluation of my motives and message in this process.¹⁷²

I think of you often my friend. Hope you are well.

Dave

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 4:26 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Bud Moreland; Steve Whitman; Bob Dixon; Aaron Campbell; Doug Wilda; Matthew Williams; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Tyranny of the Aggrieved

Have you already provided a response to the questions? I'd like to know what your self evaluation is.¹⁷³ If you did, could you send a copy? If you didn't, could you write one up? I am more interested in your perspective than that of a mediator. Did you share these questions with C.J. and the local eldership?

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 4:40 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Bud Moreland; Steve Whitman; Bob Dixon; Aaron Campbell; Doug Wilda; Matthew Williams; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Tyranny of the Aggrieved

Nope, been waiting for the mediator to get involved and I would urge you to do the same thing. CJ and the guys are all aware of the questions and I will be happy to answer any questions the mediator thinks are helpful.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 5:03 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Bud Moreland; Steve Whitman; Bob Dixon; Aaron Campbell; Doug Wilda; Matthew Williams; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Tyranny of the Aggrieved

I think you missed a great opportunity to humble yourself and be transparent by answering the questions, or similar ones, without needing an assignment from the mediator. That kind of initiate would go a long way in rebuilding trust with the church and leaders. You should examine your heart and tell the men what you see.¹⁷⁴

Final Remarks

Because God is just (Deut 32:4), he never condemns the innocent, clears the guilty, or punishes with undue severity. I love this quote from my former mentor, Dr. J. Rodman Williams.

“Justice emerges from righteousness, not as describing God in Himself (as righteousness does in part), but in His relationship to man whereby He is first of all, fair, and equitable in all His ways.” (*Renewal Theology: God, the World & Redemption*, Volume 1, p. 62)

Justice serves alongside righteousness as the “the foundation of his throne” (Psa 89:14; 97:2). Like love it rejoices when people are 1) treated fairly and 2) afforded due process. It 3) shuns hypocrisy and 4) despises partiality. It 5) plays no favorites and 6) shows no bias. It 7) holds people accountable and 8) presses for truth. Yet its 9) judgments are equitable and 10) based on evidence. It 11) does not turn a blind eye to wrong doing. It 12) hates the manipulation of others and 13) does not cover up iniquity. It 14) treats all people the same. It has 15) no double standards. It is 16) integrity in heart and 17) truth in action.¹⁷⁵

In “Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine” I said the following. It bears repeating.

“Lastly and most importantly, I write because of my deep love for you and for Sovereign Grace Ministries. My greatest concern is for the increasing presence of deceit and hypocrisy rooted in self preservation and love of reputation.¹⁷⁶ I’d be overjoyed to see you acknowledge these things to the movement, whether or not you ask my forgiveness for anything specific. Comparatively speaking, the later is unimportant. Ultimately, this isn’t about us. It is about something much bigger. Therefore, I provide the history that follows for your careful consideration.” (p. 3)

The same is true of “A Final Appeal.” There has been a degradation of justice, truth and integrity in the movement. I’ve written out of my great love and affection for you. That’s why I’m laboring for reform. A pertinent Scripture comes to mind from Micah 6:8, “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Last April at the Sovereign Grace Pastors Conference you said,

“It is stunning when anyone in any modern American institution takes honest responsibility. I want you to know it should not be stunning when pastors take responsibility. It should be the norm. And in Sovereign Grace we are not about

damage control. It would be a clear contradiction of this passage [James 3:2] and what we believe about the doctrine of sin for us to engage in damage control. We do not engage in damage control. There will be no damage control in Sovereign Grace. We will seek to walk humbly before God and when we stumble we will not seek to engage in damage control. No, instead we will humbly acknowledge with sorrow that we stumbled. No damage control."

I hope you will follow your own counsel and put an end to damage control by you and those related to you. Your strenuous assertion that damage control is not occurring, and will not occur in Sovereign Grace Ministries, is a form of damage control itself. You have knowingly lied, covered up, and concealed many times.¹⁷⁷

I've not written exhaustively – many significant illustrations remain unshared. But I have written extensively. This is to persuade, not to condemn. My heart is not filled with bitterness. I have great affection for you. I don't live with feelings of animosity. I have researched my illustrations in order to recall them. They are not my bedfellows.

I've also written in detail knowing your propensity to dismiss, distort, and forget past events and conversations. I've endeavored to only make assertions I can support with facts and evidence. I have no interest in libel.

That is one of the reasons I've asked you to respond in writing over the last 10 months – a request you have adamantly refused. I am happy to be corrected. This is my final appeal. You are welcome to provide me an objective response of a similar nature to these documents. But I must hear from you.

What I've written is an exposé in the proper sense of the word. That is, "an exposure or a revelation of something discreditable....a formal exposition of facts" (The Free Dictionary). This is not tabloid journalism. Nor have I written an invective or a jeremiad. I am not predicting doom and this is not a vendetta. I desire your good and that of Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff? Are you ready and willing to publically acknowledge your sins and explain the long process we've been through? This can be done in varying degrees depending on the audience.¹⁷⁸

I'd also like to make two suggestions. First, share these documents in private with friends who are national leaders (e.g., Powlison, Piper, Dever, Mohler, etc.)¹⁷⁹ so they can encourage you and correct you when necessary. I made this same suggestion at our

August 20 meeting in 2004. Second, you should seriously consider a substantial sabbatical in order to pursue reconciliation with a host of individuals and help others to do the same.

C.J., you read several books a week so it is a small matter for you to promptly read this manuscript. At this point, you don't need additional counsel to answer the questions above. They are the same ones I've asked over the past seven months. Thus far you've repeatedly said no to the first and steadfastly avoided the second. I hope you'll reconsider. Please provide me definitive answers to the questions in the coming week.

My friend, I remain eager to meet but cannot do so unless you agree to the conditions above.¹⁸⁰ If you do, I am glad to talk through "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal" in private. We can also discuss how, when and where you will make public acknowledgments and confessions.

Over three decades, I have patiently, privately, and protectively brought to your attention the concerns covered in these papers. Please humble yourself for the sake of gospel and respond to my appeals in a thorough going, written and public manner.¹⁸¹ If you do, it could have a tremendous impact on a large number of people, result in reform for Sovereign Grace Ministries and relational restoration in many other quarters for the glory of God.

ADDENDUM
C.J.'S TRAVEL ITINERARY
2005

Date	Event	Location
Jan 4-7	Work Retreat w Carolyn	
Jan 11-13	A-Team Retreat	Herndon, VA
Jan 30	Sovereign Grace Fellowship	Minneapolis, MN
Jan 31	CBMW Conference – Different By Design C.J. and Wayne Grudem	Minneapolis, MN
Jan 31-Feb 2	Bethlehem Pastors Conference	Minneapolis, MN
Feb 3-5	Vision New England Congress	Boston, MA
Feb 6	King of Grace Church	Boston MA
Feb 10-11	CBMW Board Meeting	Orlando, FL
Feb 17-21	Resolved Conference	Valencia, CA
Feb 27	Grace Community Church	Ashburn, VA
Feb 28-Mar 2	Meeting w/ Al Mohler, Ligon Duncan, & Mark Dever	Louisville, KY
Mar 27	Grace Community Church	Ashburn, VA
Mar 29-Apr 1	Work Retreat w/ Carolyn	
Apr 1	Sanctity of Life Ministries Banquet	Reston, VA
Apr 7-9	Desiring God Children's Ministry Conference	Minneapolis, MN
Apr 10	Capitol Hill Baptist Church	Washington, D.C.
Apr 17	Capitol Hill Baptist Church	Washington, D.C.
Apr 20-22	Sovereign Grace Leaders Conference	Hunt Valley, MD

May 8	Covenant Fellowship Church	Glen Mills, PA
May 14-16	Anniversary Trip at The Inn at Perry Cabin	Saint Michaels, MD
May 17-19	Pastors Colloquium with Dr. D.A. Carson	Trinity University Chicago, IL
May 22	Solid Rock Church	Riverdale, MD
Jun 2-5	Metro Life Church	Orlando, FL
Jun 5-12	Anniversary Trip	Orlando/Sarasota, FL
Jun 14-15	Carroll Valley Golf Retreat	Fairfield, PA
Jun 26	Grace Community Church	Ashburn, VA
Jul 4-8	Brighton Leaders Conference	Brighton, England
Jul 10-13	Christian Booksellers Association Convention	Denver, CO
Jul 17-31	Family Vacation	Knoxville, TN
Aug 7-9	CBMW Board Meeting	Little Rock, AR
Aug 18-22	Grace Community Church (John MacArthur)	Sun Valley, CA
Aug 28	Sovereign Grace Church	Fairfax, VA
Sep 4	Sovereign Grace Church	Fairfax, VA
Sep 9-11	Bible Church of Little Rock (Lance Quinn)	Little Rock, AR
Sep 18-23	Family Vacation at The Chatham Wayside Inn	Cape Cod, MD
Sep 25	Grace Community Church	Ashburn, VA
Sep 26-27	Meeting with Mohler, Dever, & Duncan	Louisville, KY
Sep 30-Oct 2	CrossWay Community Church	Charlotte, NC
Oct 3-5	Meeting with Lane Dennis & Justin Taylor	Chicago, IL

Oct 13-16	A-Team Retreat	Osprey Point, MD
Oct 23	Grace Community Church	Ashburn, VA
Oct 27-29	Small Group Leaders Conf. – East	Gaithersburg, MD
Nov 10-12	Small Group Leaders Conf. – West	Phoenix, AZ
Nov 16-18	Evangelical Theological Society	Valley Forge, PA
Nov 24-26	Family Vacation	Williamsburg, VA
Nov 27	Sovereign Grace Church	Fairfax, VA

ENDNOTES

¹ I sent you "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" on March 17, 2010 and "A Final Appeal" on October 8, 2010. You provided me your perspective on these documents on December 16, 2010 and again on March 11, 2011. In those responses, you treated lightly or passed over a lot of crucial material. As a result, I've added endnotes to highlight what you failed to address or addressed inadequately.

² You didn't address this critical point in your responses. That is, why you skipped over so many important issues and illustrations. The "unconfessed" issues were determinative.

³ These were all statements of fact. You refused to comment on how unwelcomed and unacceptable we were to you. You also refused to address any of these individual comments or actions including your own. At no point have you ever expressed any concern for Gene, Bob, or Dave.

⁴ You never provided any proof to show how I misunderstood or misrepresented the four of you. That's because there was none. These summary comments were true, accurate, and presented in proper context.

⁵ This is your default mode. Not just with me but with people in general. Concerns, criticism, or correction are typically viewed as rooted in bitterness (or pride). Therefore, they are unworthy of consideration because the person bringing them is blind. They can't see or see straight. In this case, my synopses are dismissed as unfounded implications when they are in reality, statements of fact, not perspective.

⁶ You never addressed "covering up, manipulating, lording" in your responses. You denied ever lying. These four continue to be non-issues for you. No one you know has been guilty of these sins.

⁷ In part because the blogs, Sovereign Grace Survivors and SGM Refuge, were putting tremendous pressure on you to deal with people who were speaking up about faults in Sovereign Grace Ministries.

⁸ By leaving so much unaddressed in your responses, you avoided accountability, a reliable written witness, clarity, transparency, and completeness.

⁹ You didn't address this common occurrence.

¹⁰ In your March 11, 2011 reply you denied doing the obvious.

¹¹ You didn't address this example of hypocrisy.

¹² You said nothing about Bob's bias or partiality and how he enabled you in sin.

¹³ You didn't acknowledge being resentful toward me regarding vacation days.

¹⁴ You didn't address this pattern of using others in your defense or for the correction of people on your behalf.

¹⁵ A very important point and something you didn't address or acknowledge.

¹⁶ This was mere lip service. My observations were not welcomed. If fact, you were terribly offended by my observations which were simply practical and not even personal.

¹⁷ This was a lie, spin, manipulation, cover-up, whatever...you manifestly misrepresented the truth. You skipped over this example of deception.

¹⁸ You didn't answer any of these questions either. You skipped this section on "punishment" and "self pitying" also.

¹⁹ Your humble sounding requests were intended to create a setting whereby you could correct my perspective, defend yourself, and address the bitterness in my heart you thought was motivating me. In your Dec. 16, 2010 you acknowledged sinfully reacting to me and sinfully judging me but didn't develop your meaning.

²⁰ You did not address this guise for getting Bob involved. You feigned humility as a pretense for self vindication by having Bob reprove me. That was the real reason for letting him know about my questions and concerns.

²¹ You fooled me. Here are some relevant definitions. Feint – a deceptive act or an assumed appearance, often of the nature of an artifice (trickery). Pretense – an aim, an endeavor to arrive; applies to that which is falsely or deceitfully held out as real or true. Deceit - 1. making a person believe as true something that is false; deceiving; lying; cheating 2. a dishonest trick; a lie spoken or acted 3. the quality in a person that makes him tell lies or cheat

²² You were convinced I was judging you.

²³ You didn't answer this question.

²⁴ You skipped over this. You didn't acknowledge the punishing (and detrimental) response that followed your sinful judgments. Unfortunately, this kind of sinful reaction is typical, not exceptional. Heads can roll when you are crossed. A lot of people have gone missing over the decades. You must come to grips with how you treat people when you are bitter at them. You didn't do this with me in either of your responses. In fact, you denied any ill treatment of me.

²⁵ This entire illustration points out the contrasts in how we related to each other after August 20, 2004.

²⁶ Unilaterally to suit your own desires.

²⁷ You didn't acknowledge any resentment or distrust.

²⁸ Bob was supposed to be pastoring your soul. Instead of asking you questions, he was asking me questions fueled by your judgments. By this time, Dave had stopped bringing up issues of the heart. Steve continued his pattern of not differing with you.

²⁹ I don't know about that but it was an important and significant responsibility. Pat was aware of the repercussions.

³⁰ You didn't address this sinful pattern.

³¹ You made some brief comments in your Dec. 16, 2010 reply to this 29 page illustration regarding "The Request for Chad and Vacation Days" about how you judged me, made it difficult for me to interact with you, and didn't appreciate my care, concern or encouragement. You didn't cite your specific judgments or the particular ways you made it so difficult. Your comments were general. Much more importantly, however, you didn't address the issue of sending Bob to confront me. This was not the first time and it would not be the last time. Each time constituted a serious abuse of authority.

³² Once again, you didn't address your deceitful activity in withholding information from Bob or the defiling effect of your evil report upon Bob.

³³ Bob was clueless but confidently asserted his agreement with your calculations which were seriously in error. Furthermore, his rationale was extremely flawed. He justified a custom made vacation policy for you. No one else abused the system in this way. Of course, Bob got his defense for why this was okay from you.

³⁴ You didn't say anything in your responses about the ungodly occasions when you used Bob to reprove me nor did you express any concern for Bob. This was another case of lording it over me. That is, using Bob in a heavy handed manner for your own selfish benefit at my expense.

³⁵ At this point, I must conclude you knowingly violated our vacation policy. You added 10 days of vacation because you felt entitled to them. You justified this action but it was a clear violation of our policy. You never asked for exceptions or adaptations in your case. You acted on your own without our knowledge. You said, "I'd also encourage you to contact Tommy Hill, as I have reviewed your documents with him and to date he has no concerns about this matter." If Tommy has no concerns it is because you did not provide him all the data necessary or he is unclear regarding the issues at hand. I will send him your travel itinerary for 2005 which I've added as an addendum.

³⁶ Bob judged me in many serious ways. He never got back to me to ask forgiveness. You never directed him to ask my forgiveness. Bob was supremely arrogant in his sinful assessment of me. My ten points should have resulted in his immediate contrition and repentance. Instead, he held himself above evaluation and never responded to me. This was "paradigmatic" or a predictable pattern. Like other experiences with Bob, it was also a harbinger of things to come - worse things. That is, when he headed up my assessment 20 months later in June/July 2009 and declared me unfit for ministry.

³⁷ That avoidance of accountability continues to this day.

³⁸ Bob did the same thing. This resulted in lording.

³⁹ And not simply verbal assurances but an abundance of written assurances (i.e., evidence). Facts were irrelevant to you and Bob. This practice should scare you. Please desist and get real accountability.

⁴⁰ It is hard to overemphasize how self-exalting Bob was in this declaration of sin. He was practically omniscient and someone who thinks of themselves this way is impossible to convince otherwise. Bob

helped me plant and build the church in Charlotte beginning in 1991. He was later sent out from the church to work for SGM in 1997. I am genuinely grateful for Bob and Julie's labors during those six years. I could not have done it by myself or been as effective without the Kauflins. They contributed so much good to the church and my indebtedness remains. But during those years, I came to see the extent of Bob's messianic complex. It led to his mental, emotional, and physical breakdown – something he has openly shared with the public. I respect how Bob battled this condition and recovered from the symptoms. But during those six years, I was regularly on the receiving end of Bob's anger (rooted in his self righteousness) which was not due to any provocation from me according to Bob. In the past, Bob has expressed his regret to me on several occasions for his sorrowful conduct and simultaneously expressed his gratitude for my patience, forgiveness, long suffering, and kindness toward him.

⁴¹ This kind of lording behavior should be confessed to the pastors and movement. Your "superior discernment" leads to the abuse of people. It needs to end.

⁴² There is no room for disagreement with you (and Bob) because you are always right and see deep into the inner workings of man's sinful hearts.

⁴³ That was a far cry from your answer to Pat's question on August 20 about why you wouldn't share what you were thinking. At the time, you said because you didn't want to interrupt the conviction that was taking place in your heart. You should have been honest about Dave and me at the August 20th meeting. Afterward, you had no problem putting us in a bad light with the CLC pastors and keeping that information from us.

⁴⁴ I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Bob was confronting me on what I must do to win back your confidence and trust while you were on the phone affirming his points. He had it completely backward! As is now obvious, this question should have been directed at you. I was staggered by the audacious nature with which I was being manipulated. I was cornered like an animal without an escape. I was dead meat. Not surprisingly, you didn't address this conversation in either response.

⁴⁵ Hardly...when Dave and I did not give you our approval (i.e., the worship you craved) we were figuratively thrown in the fire.

⁴⁶ From August 2004 to November 2005, Bob asked all the wrong questions.

⁴⁷ Neither did Bob.

⁴⁸ You denied lying in your Mar. 11, 2011 response. You didn't address the matter of deceit. You acknowledged no independence. Just, "Perhaps here is another example of how I sometimes led by expedience and not process."

⁴⁹ This was typical. You disagreed with all of us and remained unconvicted. You never got back to us.

⁵⁰ You totally ignored this example in your responses.

⁵¹ Something Dave rarely does in print.

⁵² That was exactly what you did. You had a tight rein on the process in order to protect yourself. You effectively controlled everything that happened. You misused your position in order to accomplish this feat.

⁵³ That was understatement.

⁵⁴ It was another example of independence and autocracy.

⁵⁵ Here we are seven years later still reaping the bad fruit that resulted from your control and manipulation of the process.

⁵⁶ This amounted to a cover-up. We couldn't penetrate the fortress you erected.

⁵⁷ You denied doing this in any fashion.

⁵⁸ At no point in your Dec. 16, 2010 and Mar. 11, 2011 responses, did you express the slightest concern for Dave, Gene or Bob. In contradistinction, you expressed concerns that I wrongly implicated them.

⁵⁹ You totally skipped over this "more than any other example" of extraordinary hypocrisy. Your word and promise were worthless. Reconciliation will never be possible until you, Dave, Bob and Gene come to grips with this flagrant hypocrisy and disregard for due process.

⁶⁰ From the beginning, because Bob was leading my evaluation, I had little hope for a just outcome. If you were remotely concerned for objectively you'd never have put Bob in charge. Of course, my request to not involve Bob in my assessment was denied.

⁶¹ This needs to be spelled out to the movement and the pastors. I've progressively shared my experience with you out of necessity given your lack of transparency and responsiveness. I've not included or researched the stories of others whose experience parallels my own. Why is this important? Because the issues I've raised have impacted large numbers of people. They are not only germane to you and me. So I've used my experience and referenced myself but it is for the good of others. As I've said before, this is not primarily about you and me. That is secondary. The issues, concerns and observations I've brought up are much broader in their relevance and applicability.

⁶² Steve is a reflection of you and your directive input.

⁶³ You didn't address this section either.

⁶⁴ Once again you used an intermediary. This time it was Dave (not Gene, Bob, Kenneth, or Jeff). What he told me was a complete surprise. You had never talked to me or expressed any concerns to me for a "lack of gifting and capacity."

⁶⁵ You've done this kind of thing so many times to so many people. You make huge decisions that adversely affect people but don't personally communicate with them or explain your actions. They are left holding the bag; confused and hurting. Furthermore, you introduce these kinds of changes by e-mail or the use of other go betweens.

⁶⁶ Dave, Steve and Bob should have required that a formal evaluation be done before changes were made in my job description. More importantly they should have challenged your heart motives and given me the opportunity to understand your perspective. But you were above accountability for your decisions and actions, and these men were unwilling to address you. The culture of accommodation had grown by this time. My trust and respect for you were further eroded. Six months later, I would voluntarily resign from the apostolic team. One of the reasons, I could no longer represent you with a clear conscience.

⁶⁷ I never heard back from Dave.

⁶⁸ This too is a common response by you and others. The bitterness card and pride card are frequently played under this type of circumstance. They silence people.

⁶⁹ One of the most shocking aspect of the last six years has been the willingness of close friends to lie, slander, and deceive in order to save face, protect their positions, or curry your favor.

⁷⁰ This was spin of the worst kind.

⁷¹ That is, honest or truthful.

⁷² This was not the first time, nor the last time, Larry wrongly accused and maligned me. He was able to get away with this because you, Dave and Steve were happy to hear and believe anything Larry told you regardless of its accuracy.

⁷³ That is, sinful judgments that translated into evil reports.

⁷⁴ Larry "sinfully...listened." True. He was looking for things that could be used against me. This is something he has always been prone to do with people. It has resulted in many offenses. Larry can be a not-so-pastoral "bull in a china shop." This was a description I used with him. It was an area I worked with Larry on for over 20 years. That is, relating to people with grace and truth not harshness and sinful judgments. In the end, looking good in your sight was more important than our friendship. I was betrayed by my long time friend on several occasions. Of course, it did not help that you encouraged this betrayal, for instance, by having Larry send you secret "sin" reports about me.

⁷⁵ "Sharing inaccurately as well as wrongly characterizing" (not only my teaching) is what I'm talking about in regard to Larry.

⁷⁶ You didn't address this example.

⁷⁷ This type of thing repeatedly happened.

⁷⁸ It became the norm to believe the worse about me without any inquiry, research or interaction.

⁷⁹ These were both horrible judgments by Mickey and Larry. Sadly, Jim, Joe and John also provided tacit support.

⁸⁰ I was confronted by Dave and Gene for something that was untrue, unfounded, and unwarranted. I brought this to their attention but they were not open to any adjustment. Their charges were based upon evil reports from Larry and Mickey. They had not listened to the message.

⁸¹ All the pastors were present when Mickey made this request on Feb. 28, 2009 (different than the occasion referenced below in Endnote 82). It was a tragic meeting. Not everyone spoke but all agreed in advance with the verdict. I was misled by Gene to believe our meeting was a time for discussion. Instead it turned out to be a tribunal conducted by the CrossWay[™] pastors with Gene's hearty approval. There was no room for dissent.

⁸² I think Larry included this statement knowing his heart and attitude had in fact changed toward me. He was extremely angry at me for supposedly recruiting and putting people on the 50 yard line. He gave vent to his anger in the lobby after the Sunday meeting while talking with John Schaaf. Two weeks later on Nov. 31, 2007, I was confronted by Mickey and Larry for recruiting and handling the church planting process in a selfish manner with little concern for the well being of CrossWay Community Church. Jim, Joe and John were also present and supported Mickey and Larry in this chastisement.

⁸³ This horrendous message per Larry was a really big deal and he used as a launching pad for his sinful judgments; all of which were readily accepted as true. His judgments were also passed onto the CW pastors and caused considerable offense and difficulty. This was a primary example of my sinful and selfish motivations.

⁸⁴ You made no mention of this example and expressed no concerns for Larry or the sinful judgments you embraced.

⁸⁵ This constituted malicious slander. The intent was to harm, damage and ruin my standing before friends who had a high regard for me and played a critical role as leaders in the church. Here is how the Bible describes what happened. Proverbs 16:28 A perverse man spreads strife, and a slanderer separates intimate friends.

⁸⁶ This is painful to recall. One feels so helpless. So dominated. So abused. Oops, now I'm playing the part of a victim! And of course, you skipped over this example in both of your responses.

⁸⁷ To a fault, I was obeying 1 Cor. 6:7 which says "Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded?"

⁸⁸ This is the other way you commonly quench disagreement. People don't want to be labeled as proud so they remain silent or withdrawal their voice after unsuccessful attempts to raise concerns. In the later case, they may leave a conversation having been corrected by you (or others) and think their concerns were crazy. Then they live with confusion regarding their observations and how to interpret their bad experiences. They tend to assume they are wrong and maybe nuts. They think, "How can C.J. be deceitful, wrong, judgmental, bitter, hypocritical, lording, unaccountable, harsh?" But often they are correct.

⁸⁹ Dave never got back to me on this example and, of course, no one was interested in "other examples [that] could be cited." Only now are you hearing about some of them.

⁹⁰ As a matter of fact, not pride, I let numerous examples of abuse go by the wayside.

⁹¹ We still haven't. You failed to address this sorrowful experience. Here's the obvious point. You, Dave, Steve and Pat sinned against me. Larry pointed this out to you but you showed no concern for your transgression or for its effects upon me. There was no follow up or accountability for your actions.

⁹² Mickey resented this statement. He told me I was sinfully motivated in wanting to plant a "real church."

⁹³ I was unexpectedly "exiled" after I turned the church over to Mickey.

⁹⁴ These were the first two, and only two, examples of independence brought to my attention. They were presented by you as major illustrations of my pride and independence. The first was completely unfounded. The second contained truth which I owned.

⁹⁵ Seriously, if the manner in which I presented the church planting proposal was such a terrible expression of pride and independence, then how should you (and the SGM Board) view the countless

examples of “expedience” in your life and ministry? Further, this example regarding the church planting proposal has been used against since 2006 to prove my independence.

⁹⁶ While meaningful, helpful, and significant, the Dec. 16, 2010 and Mar. 11, 2011 responses fell well short of this goal. You chose to leave unaddressed the majority of illustrations and the most important points.

⁹⁷ You expressed no concern for any lack of integrity, truth telling or justice in Sovereign Grace Ministries or your personal life and ministry. Therefore, you see no need for restoration or reformation. My biggest concern is of no concern to you.

⁹⁸ It is hard to overstate the importance of this statement. It has been my fervent prayer and hope that you would lead by example. I’d love see a response characterized by honesty and transparency. Where there is no obfuscation and nothing is covered up even if this sets the ministry back 2 or 3 years. Ken Sande asked me what I thought you might be fearful of in this process. That’s easy. The truth. Don’t worry about image, reputation, and looking good. Don’t fear the loss of people or income. Don’t hide the truth about yourself. Openly acknowledge it and contritely lead others to do the same.

⁹⁹ All of these men (Dave, Bob, Steve, Gene, Mickey and Larry) need to follow your example in making public confessions. Your repentance and confession should inform their repentance and confession. They are imitators of you.

¹⁰⁰ You expressed no interest and saw no need for a public confession.

¹⁰¹ You didn’t address the analogy. Regarding NCC you said in the Mar. 11, 2011 response, “I think you’re aware that I eventually perceived how poorly I handled this, and that I sought to be reconciled with Ken Roberts, met with the pastoral team, asked their forgiveness, and was graciously forgiven. If there is more you think I need to do, I would be eager to hear that.” There is more to do. You never grasped “how poorly” you and Dave handled the situation, but I address that further in Part 3: Concluding Remarks.

¹⁰² You didn’t acknowledge this illustration.

¹⁰³ You didn’t address this example.

¹⁰⁴ This was a remarkable expression of Bob’s bias and unwillingness to pursue the truth wherever it led him.

¹⁰⁵ You skipped this also.

¹⁰⁶ You said nothing about the effect of your resentment upon your wife. Her withdrawing and distancing from Jenny was a mirror image of your withdrawing and distancing from me.

¹⁰⁷ I stated this mildly. Carolyn’s bitterness toward me ended her friendship with Jenny.

¹⁰⁸ Correction – should read, “No longer touch base with Jenny ever.”

¹⁰⁹ In the responses, you agreed with the first point, but disagreed with the second and third points.

¹¹⁰ Dave did not speak or write with “unvarnished honesty.” He addressed you, Bob and Kenneth like teenagers. Note the understated or sugar coated way he interacted in the following e-mails. Dave sometimes crosses the line and is dishonest or manipulative in what he writes. He will also use flattery to attain his desired end. Job 32:20-22 (ESV) I [Elihu] must speak, that I may find relief; I must open my lips and answer. [21] I will not show partiality to any man or use flattery toward any person. [22] For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away.

¹¹¹ Here is an example of dishonest speech. This was not a paradox or apparent discrepancy. Dave knew we were dealing with hypocrisy but avoided the use of the word.

¹¹² These discrepancies were not “apparent” to Dave. They were evident to him. See pages 29-30 and 75-77 in RRF&D.

¹¹³ Honestly, this was an incredulous response from Bob and Kenneth.

¹¹⁴ You didn’t address this example of favoritism with Mickey.

¹¹⁵ I did not need to list “Larry’s observations” of you for Dave because he was familiar with them (i.e., partiality and favoritism; little to no compassionate, mercy, patience or encouragement; bitterness and anger). I copied Larry on this e-mail. We were all in agreement and shared our concerns with you.

¹¹⁶ Which included all the things mentioned above.

¹¹⁷ Meaning analogous or parallel to Larry's input for you. That is, we were all saying the same thing and expressing the same concerns.

¹¹⁸ Which you also didn't remember.

¹¹⁹ Which continues to this very day. You remain unconvinced and not convicted. Amazingly, you skipped over this entire illustration; yet, you said the following in your Mar. 11, 2011 response. "You also note that numerous individuals expressed concerns that I was resentful and bitter toward you. Brent, I am sorry but I am unaware of who these people might be. If you are comfortable, please let me know who they are—perhaps their perspective could be helpful to me. I would be eager to talk to them." Wow...you could start with Dave and Larry. Ask Dave to produce his January 2006 letter. I hope they will be integrous and not change their story.

¹²⁰ Three months later you confronted me for saying your sins were serious. Bob and Kenneth did the same thing in the ensuing months.

¹²¹ Your hypocrisy is almost as pronounced and pervasive as your pride (cf. "I [C.J.] am convinced this discipline was necessary because of the pronounced and pervasive presence of pride in my heart."). Yet, you cited only one example of hypocrisy in your responses. Otherwise, you repeatedly denied being a hypocrite of any stripes. For your own good, I hope you embrace this truth about yourself and stop suppressing what you know to be true. It will liberate you. You were very willing (and committed) to tell us about our sins but completely unwilling to tell us about your sins. You must deal with this unprecedented expression of hypocrisy.

¹²² It was also an unprecedented methodology (to put it nicely) and one I hope is never repeated again. You manipulated controlled the process and manipulated the people around you.

¹²³ You found no fault with Bob. You expressed no concerns for Bob. You acknowledged no enabling by Bob.

¹²⁴ I was trying to use some of Dave's sugar coating. Many things were unaddressed.

¹²⁵ All my observations and concerns were rejected but my conscience was clear. By God's grace I obeyed the Lord and not been silent. I found no pleasure in testifying that your deeds were evil (see John 7:7) but no one else was willing to speak up at this point. Dave just removed himself. I think he was in a triage unit. ☺

¹²⁶ You ignored these two examples and offered no comment regarding Bob's defense and twisting of the facts.

¹²⁷ True. Given your intransigence, and Bob's incompetence (among other things), we were moving on in a spirit of resignation.

¹²⁸ This was yet again other example of lording which you did not address.

¹²⁹ You were already so resentful.

¹³⁰ Bob's leadership harmed the team and reinforced your prideful resistance. If not for Bob, we might have helped you and avoided the last six years. Bob should ask forgiveness for a lot.

¹³¹ Bingo...you did acknowledge these should have been discussed and answered! But, clear the board, you did not say anything about Bob and Kenneth's sinful obstruction or your ungodly use of them to block us from getting legitimate answers.

¹³² You didn't address this entire section. You were largely unaccountable but led us to believe you were extremely accountable. This involved deceit and hypocrisy on your part.

¹³³ You skipped over this example of deceit and made no comment.

¹³⁴ Someone needs to reprove Bob and hold him accountable for his actions. He also needs biblical counseling so he can understand his sinful cravings and deceitful heart, etc.

¹³⁵ This story should be told to the movement as a way of acknowledging your deceit, hypocrisy and lack of accountability.

¹³⁶ You addressed this section by saying you will do whatever Dave, Joshua and Jeff advise.

¹³⁷ You denied any such "change in...disposition toward me."

¹³⁸ You denied this "breakdown in relationship" had any bearing on your (or others) subsequent treatment of me.

¹³⁹ You didn't say anything about the 18 month period during which you totally withdrew from me. It went unaddressed.

¹⁴⁰ You didn't address this.

¹⁴¹ Bob's total lack of concern was so foolish.

¹⁴² You continue to hold this position and perspective. No one you know has lied, covered up, manipulated or lorded it over. You maintain the same view of yourself.

¹⁴³ Nothing in either response indicates any change whatsoever on this point. You continue to hold this position and perspective. No one you know is guilty of duplicity, dishonesty, injustice, lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, partiality, deceit, sinful judging, unbiblical actions, or hypocrisy. You also maintain your own innocence in all these respects except for sinful judging and one occasion of hypocrisy.

¹⁴⁴ Your total lack of concern continues as do our differing places of residency...galaxies separated by light years.

¹⁴⁵ There is no remedy unless you come to see the seriousness of the situation.

¹⁴⁶ This continued in both your responses. You expressed no concern for any of your friends. The only concern you expressed was for me in relation to them.

¹⁴⁷ You repeated this concern in your Mar. 11, 2011 response when you said, "You also implicate numerous other individuals in the events leading up to and surrounding your departure." In stark contrast, you voiced no concern that anyone has ever wrongly implicated me.

¹⁴⁸ Each statement in this paragraph is factual and fair. You did not address any of them in your responses.

¹⁴⁹ You refused to supply any kind of an answer to these questions. You made assertions but were unwilling to supply any evidence in support of those assertions.

¹⁵⁰ You addressed none of this in either of your responses.

¹⁵¹ You addressed nothing in this crucial section! You ignored it and passed over it. Moreover, you expressed absolutely no concerns for Dave. How can this be?

¹⁵² You didn't answer the question.

¹⁵³ You provided no clarification. You need to provide clear answers.

¹⁵⁴ You also addressed nothing in this crucial section! You ignored it and passed over it. Moreover, you expressed absolutely no concerns for Gene. How can this be?

¹⁵⁵ Something you need to do as the President of Sovereign Grace Ministries. You knew about and signed off on this cover up.

¹⁵⁶ Which continues to this very hour. If you were interested in truth, this would have been addressed openly and candidly a long time ago.

¹⁵⁷ That's because the truth was being cover up.

¹⁵⁸ Which was a typical and purposeful way to evade accountability. It still is. That is one of the reasons I asked you for an open, honest, and thorough response in print to RRF&D and AFA. You chose not to provide such an accounting in preparation for face to face meetings.

¹⁵⁹ You have taken no disciplinary action with Gene but I'm afraid the Lord has. Over the last two years, 450 good people have left the church. I find no joy in this tragic development. They were dear folks and fine servants. I knew many of them. So the church has gone from 700 to 250. That means two out of three people have left. Why? They lost trust in Gene and Sovereign Grace Ministries. In large measure this was due to the patterns of sin identified in Gene's life by me and others but ignored and rebuffed by you and others. So many people have been devastated as a result.

¹⁶⁰ You addressed nothing in this crucial section! You ignored it and passed over it. Moreover, you expressed absolutely no concerns for Bob. How can this be?

¹⁶¹ Was Bob authorized by the Board of SGM to lay down this harsh requirement or did he act unilaterally and independently of you and the Board? Whatever the case, you did not address this abuse. I assume it was of no concern to you. Well, it was and is of concern to me. Since when does someone like Bob have

the authority to determine where you can and cannot live and minister? Since when can someone like Bob impose his will upon a family and separate them from each other? Holy cow!

¹⁶² I have brought this issue up again and again. You have never answered any of my questions. You just ignore this crucial subject and refuse to respond except to say I have misunderstood and misrepresented you. You have yet to give any explanation whatsoever. In this context, I was most concerned for your manipulative and deceptive about face. Of course, you didn't address this particular example of "spin."

¹⁶³ You didn't address any of the issues in this section.

¹⁶⁴ You expressed no interest in knowing more about Gene's abusive ways. Not even a single follow up question.

¹⁶⁵ Many of the sins mentioned in this section were on prominent display in Gene's dealings with me beginning in March 2008 when Jenny and me visited Richmond.

¹⁶⁶ Gene was now loaded for bear having been armed with your sinful judgments of me.

¹⁶⁷ And yet you have no concerns for Gene. This was one of the worst experiences of my life – Jenny's too. How many other people has Gene treated in the same way? I confess, I did not care for Gene adequately. I am partially to blame for his abuses. God forgive me.

¹⁶⁸ You provided no comment on this example regarding Dave.

¹⁶⁹ Something so clearly warranted but never done. As a result, many more people left the church. If Dave had humbled himself and acknowledged his fault, this could have been prevented. Instead he was the cause of division.

¹⁷⁰ To my knowledge Dave never answered any of these questions. If he did, he never provided them to me, Steve Whitman, Bob Dixon, or Buddy Moreland. Dave ducked all accountability for his sinful actions. You allowed this to happen. It should be corrected.

¹⁷¹ I wanted to make sure you were fully informed. I hoped you would take action. You took none.

¹⁷² If Dave made an evaluation, Gene never shared it with the church.

¹⁷³ Of course, Dave never provided me his "self-evaluation."

¹⁷⁴ This was never done with Steve Whitman, Bob Dixon or Buddy Moreland and to the best of my knowledge it was not done with the pastors. You and the SGM Board should insist that Dave provide written answers to these questions. Then direct him back to Kingsway Community Church in order to share those answers with the church in an accountable and transparent fashion. Otherwise, this is just another example of cover-up. The people in Richmond might not agree with Dave's answers but they'll appreciate his candor.

¹⁷⁵ This 17 part definition of justice sums up my concerns for you and some key leaders in Sovereign Grace Ministries. This may be the most important paragraph I have written in either document. But it is of no relevance to you and receives no comment from you. Why, because you have little awareness of injustice in your life or the lives of leaders you know in Sovereign Grace Ministries. How can I say this? What is the basis for such a statement? Well it's simple. At no point in your Dec. 16, 2010 and Mar. 11, 2011 responses to RRF&D and AFA, do you express the slightest degree of concern for injustice (except sinful judging by you). Should one conclude then that there is no unjust treatment or denial of due process for critics; no hypocrisy or partiality by leaders; no favoritism between leaders towards those who liked/well connected or bias against those who are disliked/less influential; no lack of accountability for senior leaders; no indifference to the truth and its application in leaders lives; no sinful judgments of people bringing correction based upon hearsay evidence; no unwillingness to correct fellow leaders for wrong doing; no spin or love of reputation; no cover up, no preferential treatment of leaders based upon position or social status; no reduction in standards for some well liked/well positioned leaders; and no lack of integrity or honesty in word or action by you and key leaders in your service? Of course, I realize you wouldn't rule out in entirety the possibility of these sins, but they are not a concern to you. As you've said before, you don't know anyone who is guilty of these sins.

¹⁷⁶ At no point did you talk about your love of reputation.

¹⁷⁷ Damage control (e.g., lying, covering up, concealing), self-preservation, and love of reputation all go together. You said nothing about them.

¹⁷⁸ You were unwilling to provide a thorough response and expressed no need for a public confession.

¹⁷⁹ As a means of grace to you, I hope this has already occurred. I wish it had occurred in 2004 as recommended. These men must be informed.

¹⁸⁰ You have not agreed to these conditions. Therefore, we have not met.

¹⁸¹ You are unwilling to do this so we've come to the end of the road!

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

JUNE 8, 2011

Proverbs 28:13

*He who conceals his sins does not prosper,
but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

Introduction

I have labored with the hope that this document, in addition to the previous two, will serve your soul, Sovereign Grace Ministries, and most of all the gospel. I remain grateful for the many years I was blessed by God to serve in your company and the company of so many people I love and respect. What follows is an expression of my love for you, my former friends, and the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ.

I've found no joy in writing a "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" (RRF&D), "A Final Appeal" (AFA), and now "Concluding Remarks" (CR). I believe the Lord led me, and enabled me to write, but it has not been a pleasant task. In particular, I have not enjoyed making my case in such detail. I wish it were unnecessary but general appeals to you for repentance have never been effectual.

In fact, it is only in the face of overwhelming evidence, godly pressure from peers, and impending consequences; that one gains your attention and then with difficulty. RRF&D and AFA followed 10 years of correction.

C.J., I am genuinely grateful to the Triune God for the fruits of pride you've acknowledged, the changes you've made and the input you received from others. But I also remain deeply concerned because you and the Board of Directors are unaffected on so many important fronts. That is alarming. So here is my last attempt to focus your attention. I hope you find it redemptive.

C.J.'s Limited Response and No Public Confession

I made my final appeal in AFA. As a wrap up, I've decided to write CR. It consists of concluding comments. I sincerely hoped this third document would be unnecessary but that is not the case having received such limited responses to RRF&D and AFA from you and the Board of Directors. While I appreciated the restatement of personal pride in your second response, the issues addressed remained narrow in scope when compared to the wide range of moral issues I brought to your attention. Furthermore, you again expressed no desire, and no need for a public confession to the movement or

the Sovereign Grace pastors. Nor did the Board of Directors affirm the need for you to do so. In RRF&D and AFA, I appealed for repentance and confession, not mediation.

Over the past 12 months, I've repeatedly laid out two simple conditions as prerequisites for meeting together, believing them necessary components of repentance. Here is what I reiterated in AFA.

"Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff?" (AFA, p. 165)

I was hoping for the earnestness, vindication, fear, longing, zeal, and avenging of wrong (2 Cor 7:11, NASU) that demonstrate godly sorrow. While not entirely absent, these virtues do not characterize your repentance on a broad scale. Just the opposite – they are noticeably absent. These expectations are biblical and in keeping with Sovereign Grace polity. They simply have not been met.

Finally, none of my most serious concerns for Sovereign Grace Ministries were addressed by you or the Board of Directors. Furthermore, there is no indication that any correction, discipline, or accountability has been introduced by you or the Board to any of the individuals referenced in RRF&D and AFA. For example, Dave and Bob have taken no initiative to ask forgiveness for the abuses cited in these documents. This does not require mediation or more information. In fact, all the people referenced in RRF&D and AFA appear approved by you for their actions except one – me. I am reproved for falsely implicating all the others.

Here again is what I said in RRF&D.

"Lastly and most importantly, I write because of my deep love for you and for Sovereign Grace Ministries. My greatest concern is for the increasing presence of deceit and hypocrisy rooted in self preservation and love of reputation. I'd be overjoyed to see you acknowledge these things to the movement, whether or not you ask my forgiveness for anything specific. Comparatively speaking, the later is unimportant. Ultimately, this isn't about us. It is about something much bigger. Therefore, I provide the history that follows for your careful consideration." (RRF&D, p. 3)

And,

"Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording,

cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically, and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect.” (RRF&D, p. 128)

It is clear from both responses to RRF&D and AFA that you still believe none of these things are in issues in your life (except for sinful judging) or the lives of anyone you know in Sovereign Grace Ministries. You have not moved away from your fixed position as stated on July 2, 2010. “Brent, I don’t think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is “lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.”

In AFA, I restated my concerns and conditions.

“Please humble yourself for the sake of gospel and respond to my appeals in a thorough going, written and public manner. If you do, it could have a tremendous impact on a large number of people, result in reform for Sovereign Grace Ministries and relational restoration in many other quarters for the glory of God.” (AFA, p. 167)

Now it is time for closure. “A Final Appeal” really was my final appeal. I hoped you would fully acknowledge your sins and then help others to repent who have imitated your example. We are far from that happening. I provided RRF&D (128 pages) on March 17, 2010 and AFA (165 pages) on October 8, 2010. You responded to them on December 16, 2010 (9 pages) and again on March 11, 2011 (10 pages). The Sovereign Grace Board of Directors responded to them on March 11, 2011 (3 pages). That means I waited an entire year for a total response of 23 pages.

In addition to these documents, we’ve traded correspondence over the past 18 months. I have included much of that extra material here in CR. It includes new material and additional comments on old material. For the most part, I present this material in chronological order.

While your first response to me in December was meaningful it was woefully incomplete. I asked for a second response hoping your repentance would be complete. As a result, I was adjusted by the Board of Directors for being “dissatisfied” with your first response and told my interaction with you had been “fruitless.” That did not anger me but it was of concern to me. I was disappointed because you did not follow through on your promise to address the array of issues I raised in RRF&D and AFA.

In this regard, your second response went no further than your first response. For example, you acknowledged no deceit, no lying, no hypocrisy (with one exception), no

resentment, no abuse, no partiality, no negative impact on others, and no need to correct anyone else. Instead you provided robust denials and justifications.

C.J., I am heartedly encouraged by the fruits of pride you have confessed. I am equally encouraged that a dozen men have now witnessed to your pride and provided illustrations from their own experience. But I remain very concerned. To my knowledge, no one has addressed you on my most serious concerns.

C.J.'s 10 Month Refusal to Write

This section chronicles your reasons for not wanting to respond in writing to RRF&D and AFA and my reasons for asking you to do so.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2010 2:26 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Letter from CJ

...I'd be open to talking to you about such [doctrinal] differences at some point in the future. But this should be a conversation not an e-mail exchange. And we've already experienced the limitations and deficiencies of e-mail my friend

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2010 9:04 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Letter from CJ

And just so there is no misunderstanding, I think our experience in ministry has shown both of us that these things are too important to be done by e-mail. If I have offended you, we need to have a personal conversation and meeting where I can hear your perspective, ask you questions, consider what you say and provide you with a personal response (not by e-mail).

RRF&D
March 17, 2009

"...I [Brent] suggest you interact with this material [RRF&D] and then write me back. Please let me know if you are convicted of anything. This is a necessary first step for me if we are to move ahead." (p. 126)

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2010 6:10 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Confidential

...Finally, I have a different perspective than you do on the effectiveness and accuracy of e-mail, particularly to resolve conflict and help produce reconciliation. I won't be putting together a written response to your document.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2010 3:59 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Confidential - Response to C.J.'s Letter

...Your response makes it clear you are unwilling to write and let me know of any ways in which you are convicted of sin and feel the need to ask forgiveness... C.J., I am eager to meet after you explore the contents of my document [RRF&D] and seek to discover any ways in which you have sinned. I have written clearly. This is a small thing to ask of you. Please reconsider. I will gladly meet but first I need some assurance you have processed what I've written by providing a meaningful response. I do not expect complete agreement...It appears our correspondence has concluded for now unless you have a change of perspective.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 19, 2010 9:49 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Request for Written Response

Dear C.J.,

Bob wrote me yesterday on your behalf. I thanked him for his note but explained that I'd like to continue corresponding with you directly.

As a next step, would you please provide me a thorough response in writing to my document, "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" (i.e., RRF&D)? After you do so, I am glad to talk about setting up a time to meet and discuss its contents including our friendship.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2010 6:36 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Reconciliation

...As for a written response I would simply want you to know that after reading your document I am aware of specific ways I have sinned against you and I desire to sincerely and specifically acknowledge those sins and ask your forgiveness.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2010 4:18 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Reconciliation

I sincerely appreciate your desire to meet and ask forgiveness. I look forward to such a meeting and I am eager to forgive you...

At the risk of being misunderstood, I must appeal again for a written response to my document that covers a plethora of important subjects. There is need for accountability. There is need for clarity. There is need for full disclosure. Therefore, I'd greatly appreciate if you were completely open and transparent about the matters I have raised with you...

In this regard, it is necessary to understand how you view the issues and concerns I've brought to your attention. This could go a long way in our pursuit of reconciliation and remedy. So while I sincerely appreciate your willingness to meet, and wish I could accommodate your request, I cannot do so until I have a written and plenary response to issues I have raised with you.

In responding to the larger document, please be perfectly honest and share your thoughts in a comprehensive manner. For instance, what aspects of my presentation troubled you, helped you, or convicted you? What points do you agree with or disagree with? Do you believe there is a need for "a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?" Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them?...

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, July 02, 2010 4:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Question

...Brent, I am not familiar with your approach requiring written communication, especially of such detail and length. It appears I have a different perspective than you (if I correctly understand your perspective) in that I think written communication on issues of this nature is less helpful and doesn't necessarily ensure accuracy... So, although I have a number of questions about what you've written, I think trying to address and resolve them in written form is unwise and would only prove unhelpful.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 4:49 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Response

...After our last exchange I am not sure how we can proceed and make progress in pursuing reconciliation. I asked the guys here for their counsel and they thought it wise to contact Ken Sande. Bob called Ken and without divulging the specifics communicated that we were attempting to work through the events of the past few years and had reached an impasse in how to proceed as you would like a written response to all you have sent and I prefer to meet personally...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 5:15 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Response

Real quick...sitting down to dinner. I asked for a written response as a precursor to meeting not as a substitute. Please reconsider. I want to meet with you in person but only after you provide me your thoughts on what I have written.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 10:21 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Reconciliation

...I very much desire to interact with you personally, but I am still not convinced that exchanging documents is wise or effective. In my experience this approach is counterproductive and results in further misunderstanding. I understand you have a different perspective and so obviously we are presently at a bit of an impasse. ...

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, October 01, 2010 2:39 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Pursuing Reconciliation

Just wanted you to know I am setting up a conversation with Ken Sande and I am hoping to benefit from his counsel on how we might proceed to pursue reconciliation. Even though I am still not convinced trying to work this out through written documents is wise or helpful, I want to ask Ken for his perspective and counsel.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, October 01, 2010 3:36 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Pursuing Reconciliation

By next week, I'll send "Part 2: A Final Appeal" which includes conditions for a just reconciliation process...I desire reconciliation but it must be done in an honest, open and accountable manner. As I've said before the issues go far beyond anything limited to you and me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, October 08, 2010 2:07 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: A Final Appeal

Hi C.J.,

Here are my final thoughts [in "A Final Appeal"]. Please provide me a response to the two questions on page 164¹ by the end of next week.

¹ "Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public

Thanks
Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 2:45 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: FW: A Final Appeal

...Again, as I've said before, it is always my preference to interact with you personally, face to face and through conversation, not by e-mail or sending lengthy documents back and forth. Besides the fact that I want to be able to talk with you personally, I'm also convinced (and those I've consulted on this agree) that doing this through e-mail utilizing long documentation, is actually a detriment to reconciliation...

For ten months you refused to respond in writing. But all of a sudden you radically changed course and agreed to respond in writing. Three days after the email above you wrote the following.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, October 15, 2010 10:48 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

...I am glad to respond further to your recent e-mail and document. I take your concerns very seriously and very much want to address them. Though it appears we are in disagreement about the wisdom and effectiveness of a written response, I will respond to your request² and attempt to provide you with a written response to the issues you have identified³...

acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff?" (AFA, p. 164)

² For a "thorough response."

³ There was no qualification. You promised to provide a written response to all of the issues identified in RRF&D and AFA. Not just some of them. You'd didn't make a "good faith" attempt.

Writing Is Detrimental & No Allowance for Potential Sins

When I received the October 15 email above I was concerned you were acting under compulsion and not voluntarily in light of what you said in your October 12 email. I was also concerned for your assessment that “it didn’t appear” I allowed for any potential sin in RRF&D and AFA. I wrote you.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 23, 2010 11:25 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: RE: A Final Appeal

I’ve excerpted a recent email from you below. Two comments raised concerns for me.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 2:45 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: FW: A Final Appeal

Besides the fact that I want to be able to talk with you personally, I’m also convinced (and those I’ve consulted on this agree) that doing this through e-mail utilizing long documentation, is actually a detriment to reconciliation⁴...

Brent, in the almost 300 pages of documentation you sent me, it doesn’t appear that you make any allowance for potential sins that may remain on your part or how your perceptions and approaches may have been flawed...

Here’s my first concern, I don’t want you responding under compulsion and without any support from Dave, Jeff, Bob, Gary, Pat, Tommy, Joshua, Kenneth, Grant or John who all agree this “is actually a detriment to reconciliation.”

⁴ This appears to be an exaggeration (or misrepresentation) intended to put pressure on me to give up the request for a written response. Responding to me in writing now went from being “unwise” and “unhelpful” to downright “detrimental.” I certainly felt pressured.

Three days later you reiterated this point but nevertheless changed your mind. You said, "Though it appears we are in disagreement about the wisdom and effectiveness of a written response, I will respond to your request and attempt to provide you with a written response."

Are you sure? It's clear you are writing under some kind of duress since you and all the men around you think it detrimental, unhelpful, and unwise.⁵ Who or what changed your mind?

Here's my second concern. Your comments above also indicate you've sinfully judged me for not inviting correction when that charge is clearly unfounded. Consider a few statements from AFA.

- "In responding to the larger document, please be perfectly honest and share your thoughts in a comprehensive manner. For instance, what aspects of my presentation troubled you, helped you, or convicted you? What points do you agree with or disagree with? Do you believe there is a need for "a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?" Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them?" (AFA, p. 5)
- "I've been open and honest with you. I've put my thoughts and concerns in print. They are open to examination and scrutiny. I've been candid and I welcome the accountability such a format secures. I've also asked for your critique and invited your correction. To these I will gladly respond in print in advance of any meeting. In addition, you are welcome to show my response to others in preparation for any such meeting." (AFA, p. 75)
- "I've also written in detail knowing your propensity to dismiss, distort, and forget past events and conversations. I've endeavored to only make assertions I can support with facts and evidence. I have no interest in libel. That is one of the reasons I've asked you to respond in writing over the last 10 months – a request you have adamantly refused. I am happy to be corrected. This is my final appeal. You are welcome to provide me an objective response of a similar nature to these documents. But I must hear from you." (AFA, p. 164)

This example of judging illustrates why it is so important to interact with you in writing. If these things were simply said in conversation, I'd have little hope

⁵ This was how you presented the men. It doesn't seem to be an accurate portrayal of their perspective on providing a written response. If that is true, I trust they will follow up with you regarding your deceit.

you'd recall them accurately or responsibly. In my experience, you'd likely dismiss this entire illustration as valid and feel no need to ask forgiveness.

I'd also point out that RRF&D was in response to your request that I share ways in which you sinned against me. That's what I did.⁶ In any case, my comments regarding input and correction above included what I wrote you in RRF&D. The invitation stands.

Dave emailed to assure me you were "not being coerced or forced."

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, October 23, 2010 1:07 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Nora Earles
Cc: Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: RE: A Final Appeal

...It is also his desire to provide you with a written response, although I think that may take a little time. But he is not being coerced or forced to respond in writing, it is his desire to do so.

Joshua wrote me on Facebook expressing gladness for your willingness to write and my willingness to produce RRF&D and AFA. I appreciated his note.

"I'm glad he's agreed to write a response to you"⁷... I want you to know I understand why you wrote them. And more than that I'm glad you wrote them because we need to deal with all this." (October 19, 2010)

You wrote back regarding my two concerns.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2010 12:35 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

⁶ But I also asked for correction regarding RRF&D on June 21. I wrote, "In responding to the larger document [RRF&D], please be perfectly honest and share your thoughts in a comprehensive manner. For instance, what aspects of my presentation troubled you, helped you, or convicted you? What points do you agree with or disagree with? Do you believe there is a need for "a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?" Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them?..."

⁷ It sure didn't sound as if Joshua was "convinced" writing me was "unwise," "unhelpful," and "detrimental." I'll leave it to him to follow up with you. Did you misrepresent him in any way?

Brent,

I understand your first concern and let me attempt to address it and I hope this helps. I still think that written correspondence is less beneficial⁸ than face-to-face conversation and has the potential to aggravate misunderstanding. But since you have refused to talk in person until I provided you a response in written form I thought it was wise to risk those misunderstandings than to have no communication whatsoever and prolong the estrangement. So this was entirely my decision and I do this in hope of one day meeting with you and pursuing reconciliation. My only regret is that I wish I had done this sooner. Given my concerns about communication of this nature in written form I was hoping to persuade you⁹ to meet with me. When I was convinced this wouldn't happen¹⁰ I wanted to do all I can to cultivate trust with you so that hopefully one day we can meet in person.

And as to your second point I think you are accurate in pointing out that I have overlooked statements you have made where you invited correction and disagreement. Please forgive me for doing so. I did not intend to judge you, but I can see why you could feel I was. My statement, "...it doesn't appear that you make any allowance for potential sins that may remain on your part..." was intended to communicate that I hadn't come to a conclusion on this, but my wording is not clear enough and left the door open for you to feel judged. I'm sorry to have inflicted another wound¹¹ on you. Of course, it's entirely possible that I'm deceiving myself and was sinfully judging as I wrote those words. I promise to continue praying for God to take off any blinders on this and similar issues, and I also commit to inviting others to help me examine my heart.¹² If God does show me I have sinfully judged you in this regard, I will get back to you¹³ and ask your forgiveness. Thank you for this correction and thank you for inviting my correction and your openness to discuss all sides of our past interactions. I appreciate this evidence of humility in your life.

⁸ "Less beneficial" – wow, that was quite a downgrade.

⁹ It didn't feel like gentle persuasion. More like pressure starting with "I won't be putting together a written response to your document on March 20 and ending with "I'm also convinced...that doing this through e-mail utilizing long documentation, is actually a detriment to reconciliation" on Oct. 12.

¹⁰ It seems you were leveraging me.

¹¹ This was a minor cut. I am accustomed to more serious lacerations. I don't mean to be harsh but you are well known for this kind of recklessness. You've left a lot of people bleeding because of your carelessness and hasty judgments. Please learn to do your homework before you pull a knife. Then use a scalpel not a splitting wedge.

¹² Did you follow up with the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors? Did the Board follow up with you? It doesn't appear that either happened. More later.

¹³ I've not heard anything. I assume Heaven is quiet.

Brent, let me conclude by thanking you for sending me these documents. I am deriving much benefit from reading them¹⁴ and reviewing them with others.¹⁵ As I read them by God's grace I am perceiving more of my sin, more clearly. I deeply regret not perceiving more of my sin years ago when you and Dave first brought this to my attention. And even though I thought I had addressed these issues sufficiently years ago and that we had resolved our differences, it's obvious to me now that I was mistaken. So I am grateful for your care expressed in and through these documents and the opportunity to attempt to address these issues again and hopefully do so more humbly and effectively. There are a number of ways I have been dull to perceive my sin due to the pride in my heart. And though I am greatly saddened by my sin and eager to acknowledge where I've sinned against you, I am hopeful that I can be forgiven by God for my many sins, one day ask your forgiveness (which I know you will graciously extend to me) and hopefully avoid duplicating these sins in the future. This morning the words of John Newton served my soul:

"The purpose of God in showing believers the evil of their own hearts is to make them prize more highly the grace and all-sufficiency of Jesus."

So thanks for sending these documents and thanks for your patience with me. I look forward to meeting with you when you are convinced I am sufficiently trustworthy to interact with in person.

Because of the Cross,
CJ

You asked my forgiveness for overlooking my requests for correction regarding personal sin. I wrote you back.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 8:09 AM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Overlooking Statements

Thanks for your note C.J. and willingness to review my documents with others. I'm not sure forgiveness is necessary for overlooking my statements but it is certainly granted. I'm glad to hear you're finding the documents of some benefit. Grace to you as you continue to seek the Lord.

¹⁴ I genuinely appreciate your gratitude so pardon the polite sarcasm. It is good to know you're experienced the "detrimental" affects of corresponding in print.

¹⁵ Another reason I put them in writing.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 5:59 PM
To: Nora Earles; Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: Overlooking Statements

As I thought about it there is no need to forgive you for simply overlooking statements. That's morally free. I think there are other questions to ask but I'll leave additional counsel in the hands of those around you.¹⁶

The Need for Discerning and Courageous Friends

It is very difficult to hold you accountable. The men around you tend to applaud you but not correct you when it is needed. They know the high value you place on affirmation and provide you constant encouragement. They also know your tendency to distance yourself from those who speak into your life with discernment and courage. As a result, they hold back their honest thoughts.¹⁷ Your friends realize you are easily condemned on the one hand and easily angered on the other hand. It is a lot more fun to commend you than confront you. No one wants to fall out of your favor so few are willing to provide the input you need. I'd also say you tend to gather social friends who laugh with you, create fun times for you, continuously affirm you, and avoid the correction of you.

Holding you to a high standard is an undesirable task. It can result in despair and anguish of soul including the loss of friendship and the accompanying alienation and isolation. It is a difficult task. It requires courage in the face of fear. It is a costly task. One's livelihood (e.g., salary increases, bonuses and promotions) often depends upon your assessment. Men don't want to give you any reason not to like them or find fault with them. Individuals are tempted to accommodate you, seek to impress you, and flatter you. Rather than "greater strictness" (James 3:1 - ESV), they show you greater leniency. They may excuse character deficiencies in light of your extensive gifting (which can be confused with godliness), enjoyable personality, or generous treatment. A few of these men are more concerned about their self-interest and self-perseveration than the glory of God and your eternal good.

As a result you've been allowed to play by a different set of rules for a long time. I am partly to blame. I am guilty of all the things mentioned above. C.J., you need people

¹⁶ I hoped the SGM Board of Directors would "take the hint" and follow up with you.

¹⁷ Which everyone has freely admitted.

around you who are fearless. Men who are willing to lose their jobs, risk their reputations, and experience your rejection if necessary. Man pleasing is a temptation for many who surround you. They crave your approval. Some of them have told me so. This does not serve you. You must have men who will relate to you with courage and impartiality. This is hard since your response to correction is often intimidating and frightening. As a result, people don't usually come back to provide more of it. They are happy to stay on the sidelines and watch (or assume) others play the game.

On those occasions when correction is supplied and you respond positively, there can be an inordinate amount of praise and a paucity of on-going accountability. As a result, little or no lasting fruit is produced. That's what happen in 2004. Men can feel relieved after correcting you but growth is not been secured by the grace of God. In fact, friends may be exhausted from their pursuit or engagement of you. They happily rejoice at any evidence of grace but do not provide the necessary follow-up.

I have a high regard for Joshua and Kenneth. I "implicated" Kenneth several times in RRF&D and AFA and I believe justly so. Nevertheless, I believe him to be one of your finest and bravest men. He can help you. So can others like Gary Ricucci and Grant Layman if inserted into your life. I believe Grant is the most discerning of your heart but I can imagine his hesitancy to speak up as your brother in law. Joshua is humble. He fights timidity in relation to you but I think his integrity and love for you is sufficient to overcome it. He has what it takes but he must make time to interact with you and address you. Here is some meaningful correspondence between us.

Joshua Harris

October 19, 2010 at 10:55 pm

Facebook

Dear Brent,

I'm spending my evening reading your document "A Final Appeal." In an odd way I feel like I've been getting a lot of time with you! So I thought I would write and say hello. And also to tell you that I am praying for you and CJ and all Sovereign Grace.

I'm learning things in reading these documents that I didn't know 6 years ago. Six years ago I dropped out of that process in an effort to keep the peace.¹⁸ This time, I want you to know that I'm not going to drop out. Out of love for all parties involved, most importantly out of a love for God's glory, I'm asking God to give me the courage to share honestly and humbly and truthfully all I've

¹⁸ I love his honesty. And it was somewhat understandable. You just turned Covenant Life Church over to him as the new sr. pastor. He was 29 years old. Joshua wasn't the only one who "dropped out of the process." That's what people do with you in general.

seen.¹⁹ I've been seeking to do this with CJ already. I'm glad he's agreed to write a response to you. And I'm hopeful that a mediator can be chosen. I've told him I think a mediator is needed and that I'll fully answer²⁰ all the questions this mediator has. Obviously I can't speak to all the matters you raise in your documents. But I want you to know I understand why you wrote them. And more than that I'm glad you wrote them²¹ because we need to deal with all this.²²

Please say hello to Jenny for me. Hope you're well.

Joshua

Brent Detwiler

October 28, 2010 at 7:49 am

Facebook

Dear Joshua,

I genuinely appreciate your willingness to be an integral part of the process working out in C.J.'s life. He needs you. I hope the men around C.J. will also take the opportunity to share courageously, honestly, humbly and truthfully. I assume you are encouraging them to do this very thing. C.J. needs to hear from many voices²³ – not just mine. My voice is shrill in his ears. Others more pleasant. I am praying for his hearing and for your collective speaking. This could prove a turning point in our friend's life. Thanks for writing me Joshua.

Brent

I also appreciated this note from Kenneth.

Kenneth Maresco

October 31, 2010 at 12:55 pm

Facebook

¹⁹ I love his integrity. People have seen a lot but they have not been willing to address it. The greatest need is for courage. The prospect of correcting you is "scary" even for the likes of Joshua and Kenneth.

²⁰ When men provide you input they hold back. It is typically partial, not complete.

²¹ I was shocked. I had just the opposite impression from all you had written me. That is, I assumed Joshua thought the use of email was detrimental. His encouragement was the first from anyone in a long time. It was meaningful to me.

²² I agree. Not just some of it but all of it. Unfortunately, you and the Board only addressed part of it in your responses to RRF&D and AFA.

²³ Three weeks later on Nov 17, twelve men convened and "shared their perspective and experience" with you. There is strength (i.e., courage) in numbers.

I too have been reading your documents. And I hope and pray as we move forward we will have the opportunity to talk further. Please pray for humility, wisdom and courage in my life.

So much of what you include [in RRF&D and AFA] related to the process we were involved in, I was unaware of (the stuff before Aug 20), or simply not catching²⁴ (the [Nov 19, 2004] notes from your conversation in Charlotte with CJ). I would like to be more specific with you, and look forward to a conversation at a future date as the Lord allows.

Your brother,

Kenneth

Here is the update I received from Jeff regarding the meeting you had with the Sovereign Grace Board, the Covenant Life Board and others on November 17, 2010. It was the first time I heard from the Board regarding the events of the past year including RRF&D and AFA.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Sunday, November 28, 2010 11:57 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Pat Ennis; Josh Harris
Subject: Information for You

Dear Brent,

I hope you are well. I think of and pray for you often.

On behalf of the Sovereign Grace Leadership Team, I wanted to inform you of a meeting which took place on Wednesday, Nov. 17. The Sovereign Grace board gathered with the Covenant Life governing board, (along with Bob Kauflin, Steve Shank and Tommy Hill), to explore with C.J. issues related to the two documents you sent to him. Over a period of seven-plus hours, the various men listened as C.J. shared where God was convicting him, asked questions about various issues and events, and shared their perspective and experience with him. The consensus of those participating was that C.J. was perceptive of many ways in which he sinned against you (and others), that he humbly confessed and was grieved over the effects of those sins, and that he welcomed, listened carefully to, and received the observations of others.

²⁴ Due in large measure to his bias which came from you. You were his "interpretive framework."

This meeting was the final one in a series of meetings initiated by C.J. over the past few months. The purpose of these meetings has been for C.J. to hear the perspectives, questions, and observations from various individuals who are either currently involved with caring for C.J., who are functionally involved with C.J., or who were participants in the main events referenced in your documents. It is also our intention that these meetings will serve C.J. in preparing his response and confession relative to your documents.

We thought you would be interested to hear of these meetings.

On behalf of the leadership team,

Jeff

C.J.'s First Response to RRF&D and AFA – Commentary Added

I assume you are perplexed as to why I find your two responses seriously deficient. Let me begin by making some introductory comments using footnotes with respect to your first response from December 16, 2010. Here you go.

From: C.J. Mahaney

Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 3:38 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; Pat Ennis; Bob Kauflin; Steve Shank; Tommy Hill; John Loftness; Gary Ricucci; Robin Boisvert; Grant Layman; Kenneth Maresco; Brian Chesemore; Corby Megorden; Carolyn Mahaney; Chad Mahaney; Ken Sande

Subject: My Response

Brent,

Attached is my written response to your documents. Thanks for your patience with this. I look forward to hearing from you and hopefully meeting with you at some point.

Because of His grace,

C.J.

Dear Brent,

Let me begin with what seems to me to be the only appropriate place to begin, by thanking you for your friendship and your desire to serve me by providing me with these two documents²⁵ that express your perspective, concerns, correction and care for me. I am deeply grateful for your friendship over the years²⁶ and this particular expression of your friendship has helped me to perceive my sin more clearly, experience conviction of sin more deeply and comprehend the effects of my sin more specifically. I deeply regret that I didn't respond humbly to your correction when you first gave it years ago. But the process of reading your documents and asking others to read them and provide me with their evaluation of my life and leadership has, I hope, made (and will continue to make) some discernable difference in my life and leadership by the grace of God. So thank you.

And I am certain I am only beginning to perceive the depth and the pervasiveness of my sin. So from the outset I want you to be aware that I have no doubt this written response is both limited and deficient. I have no doubt I do not perceive all I need to perceive, all the sin in my life that you and others no doubt do perceive. And I am deeply grateful for the patience that has been extended to me by you and all my friends in this process. It is so very kind of you men and I simply don't deserve your kindness and patience. And I regret that no doubt more patience with me will be needed as I pursue a clearer understanding of my sinfulness. My perception of my sin and progress in fighting my sin seems to be so very slow and I often wonder if I am growing at all. But I am resolved to pursue correction and fight my sin in its many forms and I am grateful for this evidence of grace in my heart for I know that apart from the grace of God this resolve would not exist. And I am grateful for your help in fighting my sin. So thank you.²⁷

One more preliminary point I'd like to make that I hope you find helpful. My written response will be brief²⁸ in comparison to your documents (e.g., I've not included e-mails, documentation, etc.) but I hope you find it sufficient to begin a dialogue.²⁹ And

²⁵ RRF&D and AFA are expressions of my love, not bitterness; of my affection, not resentment; of my concern, not sinful anger. I have written to you not others. I have appealed to you not others. During the last two years, hundreds (if not thousands) of people have wondered what happened to me and why I am not in ministry. I've told them I was found unfit for ministry due to pride and unacceptable to Sovereign Grace Ministries due to doctrine and practice. I've kept my answers general, offered little or no defense and remained respectful of Sovereign Grace. Simply put, I've not told them my side of the story or how serious my concerns are for you and others in the ministry. I've not even shared these documents with my family.

²⁶ I've only been aware of your profound displeasure since August 2004.

²⁷ You are welcome.

²⁸ Too brief to be helpful in many respects.

²⁹ I asked that our "dialogue" first occur in writing.

though there are a few different points where I don't agree³⁰ with your perspective at present, there are far more ways I agree³¹ with you and realize I have sinned. I am eager to acknowledge my sins in written form³² for you but even more important, I am eager to ask your forgiveness when we meet. And it is my desire to meet with you as soon as you are comfortable meeting with me in order to confess my sin to you, draw you out about the sin I do perceive, as well as find out what you think I may still be failing to perceive.³³

So this document is my response to your request for a written response. I hope it will begin the process of exploring my sin and the past with you and make it possible for us to meet as soon as possible. That face to face conversation and interaction will no doubt be a powerful means of my experiencing further and clearer conviction, deeper godly sorrow, and genuine repentance.³⁴ I am looking forward to going through your documents with you personally.³⁵ So in anticipation of these future helpful conversations exploring my sin and pursuing reconciliation I want to express my gratefulness in advance. So once again thank you.

I trust these introductory remarks are helpful. And now to the particulars of what I believe God is showing me of my own heart through the means of Scripture, prayer and the correction of friends.

As I consider your documents and have reviewed them with those I serve with and am accountable to, I think there are at least 3 primary issues I want to address.

The first, most important and most obvious issue is the sinful ways I engaged you in the past.

Second, not only did I not respond humbly to the correction you, Dave and Steve were voicing, I failed to address the correction and resolve these important matters after the August 20, 2004 meeting as I should have done. I thought we had resolved all this after the August 20th meeting.³⁶ I thought a plan and process was put in place after that

³⁰ A few points where you don't agree? Far more than that.

³¹ That is not true based on what you've written. Your denials and disagreements outnumber your affirmations and agreements. Cf. your March 11, 2011 response.

³² As it relates to some aspects of pride, which I genuinely appreciate, but you skipped over a wide array of material related to other aspects of pride.

³³ "Failing to perceive?" That would include all the issues and illustrations you failed to address.

³⁴ I think far more of this can result from what I've written. I'd only reiterate in person what I've written and probably with less clarity.

³⁵ I was too but only after you went through them with me in writing.

³⁶ This highlights your deception and/or deceit. Contrary to our many appeals you refused to talk with us about our relationships or your sins. There was no attempt by you to resolve anything after August 20, 2004. I don't know how you can conclude we resolved anything let alone everything. We repeatedly communicated this to you, Bob and Kenneth.

meeting that everyone was satisfied with.³⁷ And I thought I was sufficiently perceiving and confessing my sin.³⁸ Well, I was wrong.³⁹

And finally, I failed to lead us in deepening our relationships⁴⁰ with one another as a team through appropriate confession, correction and accountability overall. So from my perspective (and I am deeply grieved as I type this) the presence of pride and the absence of humility in my life were the primary reasons why this wasn't resolved and why we weren't closer and more effective as a team.

As for my sin it seems to me that PRIDE is THE sin and the primary category so much of my sin fits under (although other sins are most definitely present as well). So the following are simply headings that I hope capture what I perceive to date as my sin and as I have already stated, I am sure my perception of my sin remains limited and faulty. But I am grateful to God for the gift of sight in relation to the following sins:

- 1) I have been arrogantly confident in my perception of my own heart and my discernment in relation to others. As I look back this is a pronounced and persistent pattern of sin that I did not even begin to perceive until the end of this season of correction.⁴¹ I vividly remember the meeting with a few of the CLC pastors where I began to perceive what I know was obvious to you and others. I proudly trusted my own discernment and consistently disagreed with your correction, dismissed your correction, and, blinded by my pride, failed to inform the CLC guys about your correction in specific and appropriate ways even after assuring you men I would.⁴² And I failed to inform you of ways they were correcting me as well.⁴³ Brent, to the best of my recollection I was not

³⁷ We asked for "a plan and process" at the August 20, 2004 meeting and subsequently; but were always denied one by you or the CLC pastors. This was clearly noted in the minutes.

³⁸ You never confessed to Dave, Steve, Pat or me anything you acknowledged in writing.

³⁹ Yes but more importantly, I hope you see how deceived you've been about all three of these points. What you believed to be true was the exact opposite of what was true.

⁴⁰ It is true you did not "deepen" our relationships but you state this very positively. In reality you made no effort to maintain or rescue our relationships despite our many appeals. In fact, you continuously denied ever being "resentful, distrustful or withdrawing" when you felt "misunderstood, judged, or sinned against" by us.

⁴¹ You first confessed your pride of superior discernment to Dave, Steve and me on separate occasions during the month of July in 2003 - that was seven years earlier. You and I talked over lunch at Applebee's on July 4 at Celebration Mid South at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. It was a hopeful time. Unfortunately, your confession took no root and bore little to no fruit.

⁴² This is called lying. On numerous occasions, you deliberately withheld unfavorable information you were explicitly asked to share with others and you promised to share with others. Your promises were worthless and repeatedly broken. You never kept your word in this regard.

⁴³ Which they asked you to do. So why didn't you inform us? Did you also withhold their correction from us because you deemed it worthless? Or worse, did you promise to tell us and then deceitfully break your word to the CLC pastors also?

deliberately hiding information.⁴⁴ But because of my pride and confidence in my perception I dismissed these observations and didn't think it necessary to share them. I see now that was wrong and I should have shared them. I also now perceive that the sinful self-confidence with which I made these choices was destructive to trust, and makes your concerns of deceit and hypocrisy more than understandable.⁴⁵ Too often I have been the one to determine whether someone's correction of me was accurate or not, and therefore whether it's worthy of passing on to others. Too often I have been wise in my own eyes, and viewed others with haughty eyes. (Proverbs 12:15; 21:2; 26:12). So you and Dave were accurate in the following assessment of me:

"To correct CJ, or to challenge his own self-perception, was to experience a reaction⁴⁶ through e-mails, consistent disagreement (without seeking to sufficiently understand), a lack of sufficient follow up and occasionally, relational withdrawal. Along with this, CJ was poor in volunteering areas of sin, temptation or weakness in himself."

On page 23 of your first document you made the following comment at the August 20th meeting:

"Wonders if in his pride CJ didn't think that he needed others to figure things out."

There were too many times when this observation was true about me and my trust in my discernment.

- 2) I was not easy to entreat. The summation above references this but it deserves its own acknowledgement. When you and Dave corrected me I would often question your motives, or take exception to your wording or a particular illustration⁴⁷ you referenced. Instead I should have humbly listened and made it easy for you to express your perspective and correction, drawing you out in every way possible and learning what I could from your correction. I proudly presumed to address specks in your eyes with logs protruding from my own

⁴⁴ Would you accept this explanation from your son, Chad? I don't think you're being honest with yourself. Did you have any concern for the "incriminating" effects such information might have on others? If so, you withheld it deceitfully, not just pridefully.

⁴⁵ There remains no acknowledgment of lying, deceit or hypocrisy.

⁴⁶ This has been true over our 30 year history. How can this not be communicated to the movement? To the pastors? How can there be no discipline? Cf. 1 Tim 3:2, "An overseer, then, must be above reproach..." Cf. 1 Tim. 5:20, "Those [elders] who continue to sin, rebuke..."

⁴⁷ I must refresh your memory. You repudiated all our illustrations and never acknowledged the legitimacy of any with two exceptions. One related to Dave. The other related to Bo.

eyes.⁴⁸ This was quite obviously a serious evidence of pride. I wouldn't have perceived it then. To some degree I do now.

For example when you identified my not sharing the team's observations of me with the CLC pastors as involving an element of hypocrisy, I took exception to that label⁴⁹ instead of exploring the substance of your concern. In my pride I disputed the use of the word "hypocrisy" which prevented me from humbly listening to the correction of a friend. I can imagine the effect this would have on you⁵⁰ and Dave and it grieves me that I made correcting me such an unpleasant task.⁵¹

- 3) I often sinfully judged you.⁵² I would assume that you were offended with me or conclude that your correction was motivated by an offense⁵³ without humbly exploring this possibility with you. If my memory serves I did inform you of this on a few occasions but when you disagreed with me⁵⁴ I persisted in my sinful

⁴⁸ This was your only reference to hypocrisy, though indirectly, and it only pertained to the correction of Dave and me. This is the way you have related to many people over the years.

⁴⁹ I hope you mean "terminology" not "label." "An element of hypocrisy" with regard to one matter was hardly a label. That is the way; however, you tend to overreact to criticism.

⁵⁰ You should review the notes from our November 19, 2004 meeting in Charlotte. You took "exception" to practically everything I said on August 20, 2004. Not just my comment regarding "an element of hypocrisy." Your 21 points of correction had an adverse effect upon me but your correction in the years following was far more devastating.

⁵¹ It was unpleasant but it was also risky. Punishments could follow like relational withdrawal, harsh condemnations, and the downgrading of responsibilities.

⁵² That is true, you frequently judged me (and I appreciate the acknowledgement), but more. You conveyed those sinful judgments to others with serious consequences and ramifications. You deny this effect but how you assessed me and portrayed me to others had a broad impact. You also deny these uncharitable judgments were due to resentment, bitterness or anger. Furthermore, these judgments became hard and fast labels. For instance, "You indicated there were no evidences of grace in my life with regard to being open or transparent, identifying sin; inviting, receiving or considering correction; or asking for input for my personal, married and ministry life. These characteristics were non-existent in my life." (RRF&D, p. 68). This extreme judgment of me was passed onto others like Dave, Steve, Bob, Kenneth, Gene and Larry who treated me in like fashion. Yet you make no mention of anyone else sinfully judging, confronting or condemning me. Further, you address no issues or illustrations related to spiritual abuse or manipulation by you or others. Nor do you say anything about partiality or favoritism. That is, people favoring you and others while they judged me.

⁵³ This has been a life-long habit for you. You quickly "discern" a person is bitter and then dismiss their input. Our correction was judged as resentment born out of offense, not care. This approach to people has also been imbibed by men like Dave, Bob and Gene with terrible consequences. People are silenced as a result. Rather than listening to their concerns they are quickly corrected for being resentful and proud. They are viewed as the ones who are bitter and in need of your discernment. Not the other way around.

⁵⁴ On occasion I disagreed but not always. For instance, I asked your forgiveness for resentment regarding your comment about me not being committed to our larger mission the way other men were in the movement. You forgave me but then denied ever saying such a thing. The denial was not helpful but I was still grateful for your forgiveness.

judgment that you were offended for different reasons. And when you would make certain references in passing, rather than seeking to discover what you meant I sinfully judged you and assumed my perception was accurate. I should have explored my concerns with you and been humbly open to the possibility that you weren't offended and were not motivated by a previous offense when you were correcting me. By holding a high view of myself and failing to be adequately suspicious of my own heart, my response in the face of an evaluation I disagreed with was to be critical of the one bringing the evaluation.⁵⁵

For example when you referenced the possibility of my stepping down I sinfully judged you and assumed you were motivated by an offense against me. Clearly, you were stating that as a hypothetical and in no way were you advocating this. In fact you reiterated your support of me and expressed your desire for me to continue to the lead the team.⁵⁶ I can now better understand how my sinful judgment of you [was] so hurtful and offensive and I am grieved by the effects of my sinful judgment toward you.

- 4) My confession of sin to you men lacked specific illustrations⁵⁷ of my sin. In my pride I thought acknowledging my sins in general⁵⁸ to you and Dave was sufficient. The e-mail confessions⁵⁹ I provided on August 10 and October 13 2004 would be examples of this. Often I didn't agree with the illustrations⁶⁰ you and Dave provided because of my confidence in my own discernment. And here again I would sinfully judge you and Dave as it seemed to me you were insisting⁶¹ that if I didn't acknowledge a particular illustration of my sin that I

⁵⁵ This too is a major problem for Dave, Bob and Gene.

⁵⁶ In light of your acknowledgement now, why did you judge me then? What was going on in your heart besides pride? Why did you take such offense? Why did you distort my words? Why did you misrepresent me to others? You deny any of these things were due to bitterness, resentment or anger for the correction and accountability I was providing you but I believe Proverbs 9:7-8 provides a biblical diagnosis for what was happening. From the NASU, "He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself, and he who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you, reprove a wise man and he will love you." Dishonor, insults, and hate followed. Steve also judged me with regard to you being the team leader and passed on his sinful perspective to others (cf. RRF&D, p. 52). Like Bob, Steve enabled you in sin. This kind of judgment was not occasional but frequent as you pointed out. I was condemned for supposedly wanting you to step down as team leader when I was actually advocating for you as team leader. This type of judgment was characteristic of the last seven years.

⁵⁷ It didn't just lack illustrations, it was devoid of illustrations.

⁵⁸ Something you would never let others get away with – that is, confessing categories of sin to someone but without any specific examples.

⁵⁹ Which you would never allow as sufficient for anyone else. You told us it was wrong for any of us to limit a significant confession of sin to email. That it must be done in person or at least by phone.

⁶⁰ You mean almost never agreed with our illustrations? Not "often."

⁶¹ Not "insisting" just trying to hold you accountable.

wasn't truly confessing my sin.⁶² I should have explored your illustrations more humbly and carefully and if I didn't perceive or agree with a particular illustration I could have and should have provided you with a different one from my life that I was aware of and could acknowledge. I was proudly dismissing your illustrations and not providing you with specific illustrations of my sin. This reflected my high view of myself and my failure to adequately allow the gospel to expose my heart, and remind me of just how great a sinner I am.

- 5) I would at times sinfully withdraw from you and Dave when you corrected me. This would be yet another manifestation of pride in my life. Not only did I consistently and proudly dismiss your correction but then I would distance myself from you and withdraw my affection.⁶³ As I reflect on this I think it's an expression of self pity⁶⁴ and resentment.⁶⁵ I can see now that at times after you would correct me I would take less initiative, be less enthusiastic and less encouraging.⁶⁶ It was both proud and selfish of me to withdraw from you at any time but particularly after you had expressed your care for me through correction. So from the time you first voiced your concerns and correction I should have pursued you, drawn you out and pressed in to your correction and been grateful for this expression of friendship. I deeply regret the effect of this sin upon you and our relationship.⁶⁷
- Although I didn't perceive it at the time, my pride was particularly revealed when you would question my integrity.⁶⁸ I see that much more clearly now. So at different times (when dealing with topics like confession of sin, accountability; vacation time) I would sinfully react to your observations/concerns and sinfully judge you. Due to a high estimation of myself and my perceived integrity, I didn't carefully consider your correction/concern. This was my pride both in

⁶² We were trying to help you see the vast difference between a written confession comprised of general categories versus going to particular people to ask forgiveness for specific and actual sins.

⁶³ This is the first time you've ever acknowledged doing this to a person. Since December 2000 you have steadfastly and strenuously denied withdrawing your affection and distancing yourself from anyone. This is a great development because it goes to your treatment of people when resentful. You reject them. I hope you see this as a pattern and not an instance simply related to Dave and me in the past.

⁶⁴ Which required inordinate encouragement to keep you engaged and happy.

⁶⁵ Resentment is a major issue for you but what is it's root? I think it is due to your love of reputation and high opinion of yourself. When these are threatened or adjusted you tend to react angrily. I should also mention, this is the closest you come to acknowledging any specific resentment in your heart toward Dave or me. You always denied being bitter or angry at us. That denial continues.

⁶⁶ The three "lesses" are understatements. "Less encouraging" – sorry, you were not encouraging; but, you were critical.

⁶⁷ Thanks but what sinful effects do you have in mind? The sinful rejection of me continued long after August 20, 2004. For the next five years, I experienced the punishing effects of your purposeful withdrawal (if you consider your "separation of heart" letter from January 14, 2010 a new start). Your distancing was not passive. Functionally changes in our work relationship were also introduced.

⁶⁸ To date you have acknowledge no lack of integrity in your life and ministry.

having a high estimation of myself and in my desire that you share that estimation.⁶⁹ For example when you contacted me about how many vacation days it appeared I had taken that year, I should have been appreciative of your care for me and my schedule and thanked you for your concern about maintaining integrity in relation to vacation days. Instead I sinfully judged you and my follow up emails were motivated by a desire to demonstrate my integrity. As a result I made it difficult⁷⁰ rather than easy for you to interact with me on this topic. You were simply caring for me and trying to do your job. And I failed to acknowledge or appreciate your encouragement about my work ethic. Regretfully, my response revealed my arrogance and this was a pattern when my integrity was questioned.⁷¹ Sadly, it still can be.

- I failed to follow up on my confessions⁷² of August 10 and October 13, 2004 with you men. Although I think I was beginning to perceive certain sins within myself and that these confessions were sincere, my pride was still present in assuming these written confessions were sufficient.⁷³ I should have followed up on these confessions and elaborated on them, providing you with specific illustrations of my sin and drawing you out about my sin. Each time I submitted a written confession I should have both expressed my gratefulness for your care and correction, and invited your further observations and questions. Perhaps if I had done this, you would have been more confident of my conviction of sin and repentance, and you wouldn't have felt as if the tables were being turned on

⁶⁹ I appreciate this acknowledgement. You covet and crave agreement in keeping with your high self estimation. Unfortunately, your high opinion of your integrity has not been adjusted downward. Nevertheless I am glad you see the correlation between your love of reputation and sinfully reacting to the correction of others. This love of reputation is a prominent idol for you. It is behind much of your anger at others when corrected or judged, rightly or wrongly. It is also behind attempts at damage control and the withholding of information.

⁷⁰ It was a nightmare. You say nothing about the abusive way you involved Bob and had him confront me for my supposed sins against you. This kind of experience would deter most people from ever trying to raise ethical concern with you again. This kind of lording can easily result in a corrupt work environment due to the silencing of employees. As a result, no one speaks up until it is too late and then they have to blow the whistle because of pangs of conscience. This has been happening in Sovereign Grace Ministries at large for the past several years with increasing intensity and frequency. People are speaking up.

⁷¹ C.J., you must come to grips with the lack of honesty in your life. In both responses to me, you acknowledge no lack of integrity or love of reputation.

⁷² Not "failed." You intentionally chose not to follow up when requested. No one in the movement could get away with this.

⁷³ Assumed sufficient? When has that been the standard in Sovereign Grace Ministries? That is, writing general confessions with no personal interaction or the asking of forgiveness for sinful behavior. No, you willfully refused to interact when asked. Additionally, you previously denounced e-mail confessions as insufficient. This was a clear cut example of hypocrisy. One set of rules for others, another set of rules for you as determined by you.

you⁷⁴ when I met with you in November in Charlotte. I can understand how it seemed to you⁷⁵ like I was attempting to turn the attention away from myself during our time together in Charlotte. Brent, I did have concerns about your attitude and approach to correction (and I was encouraged by others to share those concerns), but I can see now that this was not the time for me to register those concerns. I was also concerned for what I perceived as a SovGrace approach to correcting pastors⁷⁶ that I thought it was necessary to address and adjust.⁷⁷ But again this was not the time⁷⁸ for me to explore any concern I had for you personally or SovGrace in general. To do so would be in effect to change the rules at the moment I was the object of the correction. It grieves me to recognize that my reaction to you men, in some ways, reflected the very attitude I wanted to address.⁷⁹ It is all so obvious to me now but it wasn't obvious to me then. It was not obvious to me then because of my pride.

All of the above categories of sin are described on page 10 of your first document:

1. "Can become resentful, distrustful or withdraw when he feels misunderstood, judged, or sinned against by others."
2. "Can judge or prematurely come to conclusions about others based on limited or incomplete information."
3. "When correcting or disagreeing can communicate his assessment or perspective too strongly or categorically."

⁷⁴ This was not a matter of feeling. It was a matter of fact. Your trip to Charlotte was a "table flipping" experience. It had a punishing effect. To correct you was to be corrected by you.

⁷⁵ This didn't "seem" to happen, it did happen. From August 20, 2004 until November 25, 2005, the tables were turned and the focus was entirely upon Dave and me. We gave up greatly exasperated.

⁷⁶ When errant, "The Sovereign Grace approach to correcting" was your approach to correcting. No doubt your example and counsel has had a serious impact on the movement (e.g., Steve Shank's handling of Larry Tomczak, Benny Phillips, Paul Palmer, Keith Jacob, Dave Bendinelli, etc.).

⁷⁷ That is the pot calling the kettle black. This prideful approach to people (I will elaborate later) has been principally model by you and communicated to others via the counsel you give them for pastoral or church situations. You have often been arrogant and severe in your handling of people (e.g. Larry Tomczak, Ken Roberts, etc.). I don't think you realize the extent of the problem.

⁷⁸ Expressing your concerns was not a matter of bad timing. It would have been perfectly fine to express any and all disagreements or concerns for me at the August 20, 2004 (something you were already doing before the meeting with Joshua and Steve but without Dave and my knowledge). Three months later made little difference. It was not the timing that primarily affected Dave and me. It was the substance of your correction that was of greatest concern. Most everything you shared with me was fallacious in fact and judgmental in attitude. You were anxious to address us because you were offended by the magnitude of our perceived sin. You refuted most every point and denied every illustration. You were correct about us and we were wrong about you or so you thought. We needed to be adjusted, not you.

⁷⁹ An understatement.

4. "Can lack gentleness and not perceive the unhelpful effect of his words, actions or decisions upon an individual."
5. "Can be difficult to correct and help because he often disagrees with or has a different perspective on illustrations."
6. "Infrequently makes us aware of specific sins or the correction others are bringing to him."

I agree with all of your observations.⁸⁰ This was often what you and Dave experienced when you corrected me. And if had been more humble years ago I would have perceived them at the time. I regret I wasn't and didn't.

Brent, on page 107-108 in your second document you list 4 questions that at that time remained unanswered. Well, they should have been answered⁸¹ and I have no excuse for postponing my answers and my pride is the only explanation⁸² for why they weren't answered at the time. So here at this very late date are my answers:

1. I did not initiate or inform you men of the sin I was perceiving and the correction I was receiving from the CLC guys after the Aug 20, 2004 meeting. I should have.
2. I should have talked with you about the e-mail confession of Oct 13⁸³ so you could understand how I came to perceive what I acknowledged and whether what I acknowledged had any personal bearing on you men. I should have been more explicit and biblically precise in my conviction and confession. I definitely should have asked each of you to men to describe the effect my sin had upon you. I never engaged in this exercise with you men and I deeply regret not doing this. I want to do this with you when we meet. Only a proud man wouldn't do this. Sadly that was why I didn't do this.

⁸⁰ I rejoice and this is encouraging.

⁸¹ Bob and Kenneth also resisted the answering of these vital questions in their protection of you and prosecution of us. Bob more so. We originally asked them for answers (and in so doing asked you) on March 9, 2005. Dave raised these four questions for the last time on Sept 12, 2005. Not only were we denied answers, we were told these critical questions were unhelpful and we were wrong for asking them (Bob even called my hope for answers "sinful expectations."). The tables were turned again. This was intentional. You were defying accountability and others were shielding you. Why didn't friends speak up? In the future, I have hope Joshua, Grant and Kenneth will conduct themselves differently. I am not as hopeful for Bob or Steve.

⁸² So too is deceit and manipulation of the situation.

⁸³ Once again, you say nothing about your blatant hypocrisy. And nothing about your deceit. Dave and I asked that you and the CLC pastors dialogue over the October 13 confession and then get back to us. No one ever did. In fact, according to Kenneth you told him you talked to us about the confession when you never did. I've not looked further into this example of possible lying.

3. Your concern about the pattern of withdrawal and resentment⁸⁴ was legitimate and often accurate. And I should have provided you with specific illustrations.⁸⁵
4. I should have led us in a discussion and decision⁸⁶ about the appropriate men outside of the team each of us could involve in matters related to each of us. I did not do this.

This was simply more of my arrogant and presumptuous self confidence leading to poor leadership on my part. If I had been more humble⁸⁷ in receiving correction from you and Dave and led humbly after the August 20 meeting, I am confident the issues of my sin and their effect on you men would have been resolved. I believe that if I had been more humble, easy to entreat and more specific in my confession you men would have been gracious and forgiving. You men certainly deserved better leadership than I provided and I will always regret not walking humbly.

So that would be a brief overview of what I am perceiving from your documents and in my interactions with guys in Sovereign Grace and CLC who have reviewed your documents and met with me to give me their perspective. Brent, as I stated at the outset, the only thing I am certain of is that this would be just a portion of my sin. I am eager to meet with you to acknowledge my sin and ask your forgiveness for these sins and the effect of these sins upon you. I am eager to meet with you and hopefully this time ask you questions, draw you out, humbly listen and be easy to entreat as I should have been years ago in hope that I can still benefit from your correction and insight into my sin.

Now, you have invited me to inform you where I have a different perspective than you. Thank you for inviting this. It is humble of you to do so. But it is awkward for me to transition to any specific and detailed communication of where at present I might differ from you because of the sins I have just acknowledged to you. One thing I don't want is to in any way minimize my sin or distract from my sin. So I am reluctant to discuss in this letter where I disagree with you at present. So I'm thinking that I should

⁸⁴ You've always denied resenting me. Is this an admission? If so, what specific things did you resent and why?

⁸⁵ You still can.

⁸⁶ True. I made many suggestions regarding accountability and confession at the August 20, 2004 meeting (cf. RRF&D, pp. 27-28). Joshua said "we will definitely consider those things" but no one followed up with me. I also called for specific action. For example, "For the next year, [Brent] would like one of the guys on the CLC team to fill the team in quarterly on how things are going, as part of the monthly team phone call. Would probably take an hour. If something significant occurs, positive or negative, Brent would want someone to call him. Also, as things come up with the pastoral team, they will point CJ back to the pastoral team." None of this happened. I also followed up after the August 20th meeting looking for answers and action but to no avail. The wagons had circled around you.

⁸⁷ A "little" humble would have gone a long way. "More" implies you were humble but just not enough.

postpone responding to your kind and humble invitation to voice my disagreement to another time. It would be my preference to explore my disagreements with you on a few points only after I have communicated my sins, asked forgiveness for my sins and the effect of my sins, drawn you out about these sins and anything else you think I'm not perceiving. Perhaps our first meeting (or two, or as many as it takes) could be all about my sins and then we could set up a subsequent meeting where we can explore the areas we see differently. And as you know I think it would be wise to involve a mediator (someone we both agree upon) if necessary. I would be eager to invite a mediator to dig as deeply as they want into my life in order to fully address your concerns. I trust you would be willing to allow them to help you conduct a similar kind of self-examination. So perhaps these options are worth considering. Please let me know what you think.

One of the issues you brought up was the need for me to confess my sins to a wider audience.⁸⁸ I am eager to make a specific confession⁸⁹ of my sin where necessary and appropriate.⁹⁰ That's why I am eager to meet with you, and that's why I've already met with a number of leaders I work with—these meetings have included specific confession of my sin along the lines given above. And I thank God that these men have been gracious and forgiving. I don't assume this is the end of the process and as I meet with you and understand your perspective more fully, I'm trusting that will guide me and those I am accountable to concerning what further confession might be appropriate.⁹¹ And let me assure you that any decision about where my confession is necessary and appropriate isn't my decision, but will fall to the board of Sovereign Grace. I am fully submitted to them and will do whatever they ask and confess as widely as they ask.⁹² In fact, I welcome this direction since I do not trust my own

⁸⁸ I've asked you to do this on your own initiative but to date you've seen no need and expressed no interest in doing so.

⁸⁹ I understand "specific confession" to mean "narrow confession." That is, to a limited number of individuals.

⁹⁰ I don't have confidence in the SGM Board of Directors to righteously determine what is "necessary" and "appropriate" in this regard. For example, by now you should already have confessed with specificity to all the CLC pastors, to the senior management (past and present) at SGM and to the regional men working with the churches. To the best of my knowledge none of these have transpired.

⁹¹ I say this humbly, it should be obvious to you and the Board. Actually, I believe it is evident to you. It comes down to doing what you already know is right and necessary.

⁹² The Board of Directors studied RRF&D for 12 months and AFA for 5 months. Plus, they have their own observations of you and the observations of many others (e.g. from the Nov 17, 2010 meeting with you). Yet in their March 11, 2011 response to me, they claim to "need much more information" before they can decide whether you should confess to the movement or the SGM pastors. At present, they see no need for it. Therefore, the sins you have acknowledged do not rise to the level of seriousness where public confession is required in their opinion. I believe this determination reflects their bias against the truth and their favoritism towards you though I don't assume unanimity in this regard. They do not need more information to make a decision regarding the necessity for a widespread confession. Most importantly, they should not need to ask you for a confession. Why would you even put them in that position?

evaluation about what is appropriate or necessary. It is my understanding that the Sovereign Grace board (apart from me) will be sending you their perspective on your documents and my response to your documents.

I also want to acknowledge that confessing my sin does not end the process God is calling me to pursue in response to your letters. I want my confessions to be accompanied by appropriate repentance and ongoing and specific heart and life changes. And even though I did not fully hear your observations and concerns until now, I believe I did hear at least some of what you (and others) brought to my attention six years ago, and I hope that the men I'm accountable to would observe at least a degree of change in my life since then. I believe that change has only intensified over the past nine months.⁹³ And I think a commitment to ongoing change also involves the SGM board and others who work closely with me holding me accountable⁹⁴ when I stumble or lag in this sanctification process.

Brent, I hope you will find my response an honest evaluation of my heart prompted by your concerns and informed by the correction of those I serve with. I am sure in many ways it is inadequate and insufficient and I appeal for your patience and ask for your help. And it seems to me that there is much material in your documents that will require extended conversations.⁹⁵ Many of the e-mails you reference need to be filled out by conversations⁹⁶ and can only effectively be explored when we are together.⁹⁷ And I hope we can get together soon.

One more thing. The separation between you and Sovereign Grace was for me one of the saddest days in my ministry experience. I understand this could be difficult for you

⁹³ The past nine months - basically March 17 (RRF&D) to Dec 16 (C.J.'s First Response to RRF&D and AFA)

⁹⁴ You need a clearly defined plan. Those holding you accountable must be held accountable for providing you the accountability you need.

⁹⁵ In accord with your promise, there is much more material you could easily have responded to in writing in advance of conversations.

⁹⁶ Most of my e-mails are passed over without comment. They may need to be "filled out by conversations" but they first need to be "filled in" with correspondence.

⁹⁷ A lot more progress could have been made if you were completely open, honest, candid, and forthcoming in your written responses. I've added endnotes to RRF&D and AFA to illustrate what I mean. Please review them. They are very important. Moreover, personal conversations and meetings have frequently not involved dialogue where disagreement is welcomed. They've often been punishing, judgmental, silencing, manipulative or even abusive. As a result, I've been unwilling to meet with people until I get straight answers to important questions in advance. In most cases, people have refused to answer questions and be transparent and accountable in print.

to believe.⁹⁸ It is my sincere hope that you will one day be a part of Sovereign Grace again.⁹⁹ And when you and I are together I hope I can convince you of this.¹⁰⁰

Because of the cross,

CJ

Correspondence with C.J.'s Regarding His First Response

I hoped to wait on getting back to you regarding your December 16, 2010 response until after I heard from the Board of Directors. Their response was slow in coming, so I decided to write.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2011 12:47 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: My Response

Dear C.J.,

I've written the Board of Directors on several occasions over the last five weeks but have not heard whether they plan to provide me their perspective which you referenced as forthcoming; so, I think it best to move ahead and not wait any longer in sharing my perspective on your December 16th response.

First, I am grateful to God for your acknowledgements. They represent a work of grace in your soul over the last 12 months. At the beginning of 2010, you were unaware of any ways in which you sinned against me over the past decade. When you wrote last January 10, it was in order to discover if I thought you had sinned against me, not because you were convicted of sin. In fact, the impetus for contacting me came from someone else who informed you that I "might have some offenses" with you. Therefore, after a long and hard year, I

⁹⁸ True. There was no such indication from you or anyone on the Board of Directors. If fact, all indications were just the opposite. That is, I needed to go.

⁹⁹ Recently an old friend wrote asking, "What do present and future opportunities look like for you" in Sovereign Grace Ministries. Here was my reply. "I remain unfit for ministry in SGM and outside the acceptable bounds of doctrine and practice. Being of ill repute, I've not returned to ministry. I don't know what the future holds but our heavenly Father does and I am confident it will be good – as He defines good."

¹⁰⁰ I find this humorous and ironic. I am not the one who needs convincing. You resolved I was unfit for ministry and communicated this to all the SGM pastors in July 2009. You also declared me unfit for ministry in SGM due to unacceptable doctrines and practices in January 2010. You are the one that needs to be convinced.

am grateful for the evidences of grace reflected in your recent comments. They are meaningful and helpful. I thank the Lord for your progress in grace.¹⁰¹ I look forward to a time in the future when we can meet together.

Second, I must also admit to disappointment. As I've said before, such a meeting is not possible until you provide a much fuller response and personally embrace the need for public confession. Your "brief overview" is a good start but it doesn't address my most serious concerns for you and the movement. The majority of issues and illustrations I raised with you remain unaddressed. In addition, you still see no need to inform the movement and its leaders of your longstanding patterns of sin and their impact on others. Here is what I wrote at the end of "A Final Appeal."

"Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff?" (AFA, p. 164)

To date, you've not provided the former and see no need for the later. I've attached "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal" as Word documents. If you change your mind and choose to provide a thorough response, you can easily make balloon comments (if necessary Nora can show you how to use this function under the Review tab) as you progress through the documents. That should simplify your task.

C.J., I appreciate the contents of your December 16th response but there remain a host of vital topics unaddressed. Please interact with me in writing. Please include your disagreements and correction. They are equally important to me.

Responding in writing will serve both of us. Before we meet, I must understand far more clearly how you view my assessment. For instance, in what you've written you acknowledge no lack of integrity, no deceit or hypocrisy, no concealment or cover-up, no damage control, spin or manipulation, no partiality or favoritism, no abuse of authority or lording, no need for a confession to the movement or the leaders, no wrong doing by others, no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others, etc. As such, I assume you continue to believe these are non-issues and have not changed your position since July 2 when you wrote, "Brent, I don't

¹⁰¹ After ten years of gracious appeals.

think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is 'lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.'"

I know you are willing to engage these matters in conversation; but first, I need you to engage these matters in print. This is not an unreasonable request. Nor is it an unhelpful one. Just the opposite. It will require you to honestly face and transparently respond to the charges I've brought to your attention. They are serious. I welcome your disagreement. I welcome your correction. I am simply looking for candid, frank, open, and accountable interaction on the multiplicity of issues and examples you did not address.

In closing, would you please provide me a prompt response whatever you decide? If you care not to write a thorough going response, let me know. If you decide to write, could you please clear your schedule as much as possible and make its completion a top priority? The long waits from last year, now into this year, have been exceedingly difficult for many reasons and on many fronts.

I thank God for you C.J. I am confident in the Lord Jesus that he is working all things for the good in both our lives. I am grateful for the humble steps you have taken and hope for a continued outworking of his grace in the decisions now before you.

Prayerfully and affectionately,
Brent

Here is your response to this letter. You were "sorry to disappoint me" but there was no indication you understood why I was disappointed.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:30 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

Brent,

Thanks for getting back to me. I appreciate your encouragement and I am sorry to disappoint you. I trust you know that was not my intention. Please pray for me as I desire to perceive any and all sin I have committed and I pray daily for this gift of sight.

It is my understanding that the board is going to respond to you at some point soon.¹⁰² I am not familiar with their plans or the content of their response as they have not included me in their discussions. So I am waiting for their response as well. Thanks for your patience.

Let me assure you that I am submitted to these men and accountable to them and will comply with whatever they recommend including some kind of public confession.¹⁰³ It remains my hope that you and I can meet and pursue reconciliation with each other.

In His grace,
C.J.

In this email, you did not answer my request for a “much fuller response” since your response to RRF&D and AFA didn’t “address my most serious concerns for you and the movement” or “the majority of issues and illustrations I raised.”

I pointed out “there remain a host of vital topics unaddressed” and asked you to “please interact with me” and “honestly face and transparently respond to the charges I’ve brought to your attention.”

I concluded my appeal with this summation.

“Before we meet, I must understand far more clearly how you view my assessment. For instance, in what you’ve written you acknowledge no lack of integrity, no deceit or hypocrisy, no concealment or cover-up, no damage control, spin or manipulation, no partiality or favoritism, no abuse of authority or lording, no need for a confession to the movement or the leaders, no wrong doing by others, no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others, etc.”

I was “simply looking for candid, frank, open, and accountable interaction on the multiplicity of issues and examples you did not address.”

Secondly, you expressed no need for, or interest in, a public confession unless the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors so determined.

I wrote again regarding your unwillingness to provide a “much fuller response” unless told to do so by the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors. Your “non-response” proved to be a dramatic response.

¹⁰² Which was 7 weeks later.

¹⁰³ Which they have not required.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 1:54 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Non-Response

Dear C.J.,

I take your non-response¹⁰⁴ as a “no” to my appeals unless the Board of Directors directs you otherwise. In that case, I know you’ll do what they recommend. Realistically, that’s your only option. I just wish you didn’t need to be told what to do if indeed the Board affirms my requests.¹⁰⁵ I suspect they will ask you for a public acknowledgement of limited scope but release you from any further response to me in writing. Obviously, I could be wrong.

I care deeply about you and our relationship. If you had been willing to answer my most serious charges¹⁰⁶ and saw the need for public confession and accountability,¹⁰⁷ we would have met a long time ago with reconciliation well under way, if not complete.¹⁰⁸ That is the source of my disappointment.

It is good to know we’ll be hearing from the Board in the near future. It remains my hope that things will be dealt with forthrightly.¹⁰⁹

Sincerely,
Brent

¹⁰⁴ This frequently occurs when dealing with you, the Board of Directors, and others like Gene. Accountability is avoided by giving no answer or providing an answer that doesn’t answer anything or much of anything. Hard questions are passed over or ignored. Worse, sometimes accountability type questions are followed by intimidation.

¹⁰⁵ In effect hiding behind the Board instead of doing the right thing by providing a full response and publically confessing your sins.

¹⁰⁶ I didn’t expect complete agreement but I did expect honesty and transparency. On Oct 26, 2010 you wrote, “I still think that written correspondence...has the potential to aggravate misunderstanding.” Of course, any kind of interaction has this potential including face to face meetings. But I don’t find your disagreements “aggravating” when thoughtful answers are provided. Rather, I find your evasiveness “aggravating” (i.e. troubling on many counts).

¹⁰⁷ Public confession has been one of my conditions. You see no need for it thus indicating your sins are less serious than all the men who have gone before you and made public confessions.

¹⁰⁸ You and the Board have addressed none of my most serious concerns. If you had done so, and saw the need for a public confession, reconciliation would likely be complete.

¹⁰⁹ This is the crux of the matter. You’ve been coy, not forthright.

Correspondence with the SGM Board Regarding C.J.'s First Response

I received your first response to RRF&D and AFA on December 16, 2010. That same day I wrote the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors. I wanted to hear the Board's perspective before I got back to you.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 5:29 PM
To: Joshua Harris; Jeff Purswell; Pat Ennis; Dave Harvey
Subject: Your Perspective

Hello Gentlemen,

I received C.J.'s response today. In it he said, "It is my understanding that the Sovereign Grace board (apart from me) will be sending you their perspective on your documents and my response to your documents." Thanks for doing so. I look forward to hearing them. By the way, when do you plan on sending me your perspective? I hope in the immediate future. I'll hold on attempting a response to C.J. until I hear from you. It is certain to have a bearing on what I say.

Love in Christ,
Brent

Here was Jeff's initial response. He shared the Board's perspective on you but he did not share the Board's perspective on what I'd written. He expressed the Board's unqualified joy and enthusiasm over your response. But he was uncommittal on providing me their perspective; something you said me was forthcoming.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Saturday, December 18, 2010 10:29 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Your Perspective

Dear Brent,

Thanks for your note and your question. As you mention, C.J. communicated his understanding¹¹⁰ that the board was going to be sending you its perspective

¹¹⁰ Not your understanding? Did he misrepresent the Board in his zeal to make certain you shared your hearty commendation of him with me?

on your documents and C.J.'s response. We are indeed considering this idea¹¹¹ but, given all that such a response would require,¹¹² we are not prepared to move forward with it at this time. Therefore, we aren't able to supply you with details on a delivery date. Moreover, we do not think it wise or redemptive to postpone the process of reconciliation between you and C.J.¹¹³ We are very desirous that the issues you laid out (and to which C.J. responded)¹¹⁴ be resolved, and that the long relationship between you two men be restored. That would bring us tremendous joy, and we know it would bring God much glory.

At this point we can say that we all read C.J.'s response and were greatly encouraged by it.¹¹⁵ We appreciated the thorough and deliberate process he went through prior to writing and the humility displayed in the response itself. As noted above, we will be reviewing his response together as a board sometime in the future and considering what would be the most appropriate and fruitful manner in which to follow-up.

We will be happy to inform you once the board determines how we plan on moving forward on C.J.'s letter. At this point, we are rejoicing over the work that God has done and is doing in C.J.'s heart, and we will be praying for the two of you as you pursue the process of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Yours in Christ,

Sovereign Grace Ministries Board of Directors (Dave, Jeff, Josh, and Pat)

I wrote Jeff back in order to underscore the importance of hearing the Board's "complete thoughts." By this I meant I needed to hear their thoughts completely or fully on RRF&D, AFA and C.J.'s first response. No partial answers or perspectives.

¹¹¹ This was his understanding. C.J. did not share it with me as an idea under consideration. More misrepresentation?

¹¹² This left me hopeful. Jeff seemed to indicate the Board would provide their perspective in a thorough going fashion. That proved not to be the case.

¹¹³ I knew that unless the Board substantially agreed with me on the issues and illustrations, reconciliation with you was not possible. I waited three months for their 2½ page response.

¹¹⁴ This phrase "the issues you laid out (and to which C.J. responded)" is important and revealing. The Board affirmed the sufficiency of your first response. In fact, they claimed by implication, that you responded to all the issues I laid out in RRF&D and AFA. This was far from true.

¹¹⁵ The Board was "rejoicing" and "greatly encouraged" by your confession of sins against me. That was great. I was also glad and encouraged. But the Board was one sided in its care and encouragement. Some minor acknowledgement of concern for the effect of your sins upon me would have been appropriate. I don't think that was on their radar screen.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, December 18, 2010 10:59 AM
To: Jeff Purswell
Cc: Dave Harvey; Joshua Harris; Pat Ennis
Subject: RE: Your Perspective
Importance: High

Hi Jeff,

Thanks for getting back to me on behalf of the Board. Your collective perspective on "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal" is important to me. So too are your complete thoughts on C.J.'s response to these documents. After you provide them, I'll be able to respond to C.J. in the most helpful manner. So until then, I'll withhold attempting a response. Once decided, please let me know when you plan to furnish me with your perspective.

Sincerely,
Brent

I didn't hear from Jeff so I wrote him again.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2010 2:38 PM
To: Jeff Purswell; Dave Harvey; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris
Subject: Perspective
Importance: High

Have you had time to determine when you will provide me the Board's perspective? Can you do it by Jan 15 or earlier? I want to get back to C.J. as soon as possible but not until after I hear from you. I'd be most appreciative if you'd made this a top priority.

Thanks gentlemen,
Brent

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Sunday, January 02, 2011 12:29 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Dave Harvey; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Perspective

Dear Brent,

I hope you and your family enjoyed a wonderful Christmas celebration. I wanted to get you a quick response on your question. Your note came when I had already left for Christmas, and I am just now getting settled back in from the holidays (and I assume the other guys are as well). Unfortunately, I'm having to leave town again tomorrow morning because of a family death, which is going to put me out for most of this week. Moreover, I don't believe our next meeting as a board has been scheduled yet, and so I simply can't tell you when we'll be able to pick this up. I doubt we'll be able to get everyone together by Jan 15. However, we certainly will be discussing this as a board and, as we mentioned in our last note, we'll be happy to inform you once the board decides how it will move forward with regard to C.J.'s note to you.

Thanks so much,

Jeff

It had been a long year. I encouraged the Board to get on with preparing their perspective for me.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, January 02, 2011 6:30 PM
To: Jeff Purswell; Dave Harvey; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Perspective

Jeff, I am sorry to hear about the death in your family. I hope your trip goes well this week as your feet are shod with the gospel of peace. God comfort you and give you grace, wisdom and favor with others.

Gentlemen could the four of you set up a time to talk among yourselves as soon as possible and not wait for a yet unscheduled board meeting? Second, could you also begin exchanging your thoughts via e-mail and start writing up your perspective per C.J.?

You've had RRF&D since March 17 and AFA since Oct 8. I received C.J.'s response to these documents on Dec 16. It's been a long and difficult year. So now, I'd like to get back to C.J. and move things along toward closure. Your written perspective on C.J.'s response to me is indispensable to that end. I hope you will make it a top priority and provide it as soon as possible.

Thanks
Brent

I waited three weeks but didn't hear back from Jeff. I didn't even know if the Board was willing to provide me a response so I proceeded. Here was my perspective on your first response to RRF&D and AFA from December 16, 2010. This was the first of two "fruitless" responses to you by me according to the Board. The next one coming on January 25.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2011 12:47 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: My Response

Dear C.J.,

I've written the Board of Directors on several occasions over the last five weeks but have not heard whether they plan to provide me their perspective which you referenced as forthcoming; so, I think it best to move ahead and not wait any longer in sharing my perspective on your December 16th response.

First, I am grateful to God for your acknowledgements. They represent a work of grace in your soul over the last 12 months. At the beginning of 2010, you were unaware of any ways in which you sinned against me over the past decade. When you wrote last January 10, it was in order to discover if I thought you had sinned against me, not because you were convicted of sin. In fact, the impetus for contacting me came from someone else who informed you that I "might have some offenses" with you. Therefore, after a long and hard year, I am grateful for the evidences of grace reflected in your recent comments. They are meaningful and helpful. I thank the Lord for your progress in grace.¹¹⁶ I look forward to a time in the future when we can meet together.

Second, I must also admit to disappointment. As I've said before, such a meeting is not possible until you provide a much fuller response and personally embrace the need for public confession. Your "brief overview" is a good start but it doesn't address my most serious concerns for you and the movement. The majority of issues and illustrations I raised with you remain unaddressed. In addition, you still see no need to inform the movement and its leaders of your longstanding patterns of sin and their impact on others. Here is what I wrote at the end of "A Final Appeal."

"Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public

¹¹⁶ I sincerely meant this but I could not give you unqualified approbation like the Board of Directors.

acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff?" (AFA, p. 164)

To date, you've not provided the former and see no need for the later. I've attached "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal" as Word documents. If you change your mind and choose to provide a thorough response, you can easily make balloon comments (if necessary Nora can show you how to use this function under the Review tab) as you progress through the documents. That should simplify your task.

C.J., I appreciate the contents of your December 16th response but there remain a host of vital topics unaddressed.¹¹⁷ Please interact with me in writing. Please include your disagreements and correction. They are equally important to me.

Responding in writing will serve both of us. Before we meet, I must understand far more clearly¹¹⁸ how you view my assessment. For instance, in what you've written you acknowledge no lack of integrity, no deceit or hypocrisy, no concealment or cover-up, no damage control, spin or manipulation, no partiality or favoritism, no abuse of authority or lording, no need for a confession to the movement or the leaders, no wrong doing by others, no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others, etc. As such, I assume you continue to believe these are non-issues and have not changed your position since July 2 when you wrote, "Brent, I don't think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is 'lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.'"

I know you are willing to engage these matters in conversation; but first, I need you to engage these matters in print. This is not an unreasonable request. Nor is it an unhelpful one. Just the opposite. It will require you to honestly face and transparently respond¹¹⁹ to the charges I've brought to your attention. They are serious. I welcome your disagreement. I welcome your correction. I am simply looking for candid, frank, open, and accountable interaction on the multiplicity of issues and examples you did not address.

In closing, would you please provide me a prompt response whatever you decide? If you care not to write a thorough going response, let me know. If you decide to write, could you please clear your schedule as much as possible and make its completion a top priority? The long waits from last year, now into this year, have been exceedingly difficult for many reasons and on many fronts.

¹¹⁷ This was intentional. Not a mere oversight.

¹¹⁸ For the most part your limited responses left me in a fog regarding your views on RRF&D and AFA.

¹¹⁹ This goes to the heart of the matter.

I thank God for you C.J. I am confident in the Lord Jesus that he is working all things for the good in both our lives. I am grateful for the humble steps you have taken and hope for a continued outworking of his grace in the decisions now before you.

Prayerfully and affectionately,
Brent

You wrote me back several days later but expressed no willingness to interact with me and address “a host of vital subjects.”

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:30 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

Brent,

Thanks for getting back to me. I appreciate your encouragement and I am sorry to disappoint you. I trust you know that was not my intention. Please pray for me as I desire to perceive any and all sin I have committed and I pray daily for this gift of sight.

It is my understanding that the board is going to respond to you at some point soon. I am not familiar with their plans or the content of their response as they have not included me in their discussions. So I am waiting for their response as well. Thanks for your patience.

Let me assure you that I am submitted to these men and accountable to them and will comply with whatever they recommend including some kind of public confession. It remains my hope that you and I can meet and pursue reconciliation with each other.

In His grace,
C.J.

I wrote you back regarding your unwillingness “to honestly face and transparently respond to the charges I’ve brought to your attention.” You continued to avoid the most serious issues and illustrations. Nevertheless, I was blamed by the Board for not meeting with you due to my “dissatisfaction” with your answers. This was a distortion of the truth.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 1:54 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Non-Response

Dear C.J.,

I take your non-response as a “no” to my appeals unless the Board of Directors directs you otherwise. In that case, I know you’ll do what they recommend. Realistically, that’s your only option. I just wish you didn’t need to be told what to do if indeed the Board affirms my requests. I suspect they will ask you for a public acknowledgement of limited scope but release you from any further response to me in writing. Obviously, I could be wrong.

I care deeply about you and our relationship. If you had been willing to answer my most serious charges and saw the need for public confession and accountability,¹²⁰ we would have met a long time ago with reconciliation well under way, if not complete. That is the source of my disappointment.

It is good to know we’ll be hearing from the Board in the near future. It remains my hope that things will be dealt with forthrightly.¹²¹

Sincerely,
Brent

Later I found out the Board didn’t like this second response to you either and labeled our interaction “fruitless.” As a result, they instructed you to break off all email exchanges with me. More later. I last wrote the Board of Directors on January 2. I followed up with them on January 31. I still had no answer on whether they would provide me their perspective.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2011 1:20 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; Pat Ennis
Subject: Moving Forward on C.J.’s Letter

Hello Gentlemen,

¹²⁰ I’ve not desired a public confession in order to shame you. I’ve required it for the sake of accountability. People need to be made aware of your sinful tendencies and their effect upon the leaders and the movement. This protects all concerned.

¹²¹ This was my plea and the heart of the problem. If present, I would have met immediately. If you were not honest in writing, I could not trust you in person.

On December 18 you wrote, “We will be reviewing his [C.J.’s] response together as a board sometime in the future and considering what would be the most appropriate and fruitful manner in which to follow-up. We will be happy to inform you once the board determines how we plan on moving forward on C.J.’s letter.”

I’ve not heard an answer from you and it’s been over 7 weeks. Can you tell me, are you close to making a decision on how you plan to move forward?

Thanks
Brent

I finally heard from Jeff on February 3. I found the Board’s response manipulative. Guilt was projected on to me for my “lack of satisfaction” with your response and my “continued unwillingness” to meet. More on this later.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Thursday, February 03, 2011 5:51 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; Patrick Ennis
Subject: Your Jan 21 Note

Dear Brent,

We hope you are doing well and experiencing God’s wonderful grace.

We wanted to inform you¹²² of the next step in our evaluation of your documents and C.J. We were encouraged by C.J.’s responsiveness to your documents and with the response that he sent you. However, he forwarded to us your response of Jan. 21 that expressed your lack of satisfaction¹²³ with his document, and therefore your continued unwillingness¹²⁴ to meet with him at this point. Brent, we remain convinced that a process of mediation between the two of you would be the most helpful, illuminating, and redemptive next step. We also believe that the document C.J. sent you was substantive¹²⁵ and laid a promising foundation for such a mediation process. Nevertheless, we want to

¹²² This was the second response from the Board since your response to me on Dec. 16, 2010. The first was on December 18. Like the first, it was informational, not personal. It too was full of encouragement for you.

¹²³ The Board of Directors should have understood my disappointment.

¹²⁴ My “continued unwillingness” was due to your unwillingness to supply a thorough response as promised and to agree there was a need for a public confession.

¹²⁵ It was substantial in what it addressed. But it was far from complete. It avoided more than it addressed.

do all we can to facilitate a God-glorifying resolution to this situation. Therefore, we as a board have agreed to accommodate your request¹²⁶ and have asked C.J. to provide a further response to your documents in an attempt to answer more¹²⁷ of your questions. He has willingly agreed¹²⁸ to do this and remains eager to pursue a full reconciliation between the two of you. We are encouraged by his continued responsiveness and his desire to follow the guidance of the board in this matter. Therefore, C.J. will work on a further response to your documents. Both he and the board desire that this be done expeditiously. However, since he must fit this into a number of existing commitments, it is not realistic for us immediately to set a firm deadline for this. We will contact you by Feb 12th with a specific date for when CJ will deliver you his additional thoughts on your documents.

We fully believe that God continues to be at work in all of our lives in this process, and we sincerely hope this next step will contribute to a full and meaningful reconciliation.

Yours in Christ,

Sovereign Grace Board of Directors

While not addressing the Board's projection of guilt in a direct manner, I restated the facts. You promised to address all the issues I raised with you. I was simply holding you to your word which the Board was unwilling to do.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, February 05, 2011 4:04 PM

To: Joshua Harris; Jeff Purswell; Pat Ennis; Dave Harvey

Subject: RE: Your Jan 21 Note

Thanks for the information.¹²⁹ It's good to hear C.J. will follow through on his promise to address all the issues and concerns I identified in RRF&D and AFA. You and he seem to have lost sight of that fact.

¹²⁶ This is an example of spin. The Board wasn't accommodating my request as though they were going the extra mile or taking heroic measures to appease unreasonable requests. I simply wanted them to hold you accountable to your commitment to address the issues identified in RRF&D and AFA.

¹²⁷ I wasn't just looking for "more" answers, I was looking for complete answers. You said you'd provide "a written response to the issues you have identified," not selective answers to questions you found easier to address.

¹²⁸ When asked you agreed. It wasn't something you felt was necessary to do on your own.

¹²⁹ That's about all I could say. The Board's response was merely informational. There were no expressions of care.

There are a couple questions I'd like to ask. First, do you have anything additional to say regarding your perspective on C.J.'s response to my documents? Second, do you plan on sending me your perspective on RRF&D and AFA? I'd certainly appreciate the later.

I trust C.J. will continue to benefit from further review of the documents. Providing a thorough response to my greatest concerns and illustrations could have a good result for all of us.

Grace to each of you!
Brent

In Jeff's response, he says nothing about my concern for losing "sight of the fact" that you were simply following through on your promise. There is no acknowledgment that my disappointment was understandable.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2011 5:31 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; Patrick Ennis
Subject: RE: Your Jan 21 Note

Dear Brent,

Thank you for the note. We wanted to get back to you in answer to your questions below (thanks for your patience with this; since the board has taken over leadership of this process on our end, it can sometimes be cumbersome for all of us to be able to communicate):

1. With regard to C.J.'s response to your documents, at this point we don't have anything further to add to what we've already communicated. We are encouraged about C.J.'s willingness to reply to your documents in greater detail, and therefore we wouldn't have any additional perspective until he finishes his next response. As we mentioned in our last note, our plan is to let you know by Feb 12 when you can expect to get C.J.'s next response. We do know he's out of town until this weekend, so it's possible that it might be early next week before we can provide you with a realistic time frame, but please be assured that we want to do so as soon as we can.
2. As for the documents you sent, our plan is to provide you our thoughts on them when C.J. finishes his second response.

We hope this is helpful. Again, we are confident that God is at work in all of this, and we continue to pray for a God-glorifying reconciliation as a result of this entire process.

Yours in Christ,

Sovereign Grace Board of Directors (Dave, Jeff, Josh, and Pat)

After two months, I received an answer from the Board. They would share their perspective on RRF&D and AFA by March 11. You would also send me second response with “greater detail.” I was grateful.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 9:52 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Josh Harris; Patrick Ennis
Subject: C.J.’s Next Response

Dear Brent,

We wanted to get back to you concerning the timing of C.J.’s second response to your documents. Thanks so much for your patience with this. We have all—including C.J.—wanted this to be done in as timely a way as possible, and while C.J. is putting off certain things in order to write this, there is some travel and a new sermon that simply can’t be put off. In any event, we will get you C.J.’s next response by Friday, March 11.

Brent, we realize that this process inevitably entails time delays, and that such delays can be tempting, so we very much appreciate your patience with this process.

Yours in Christ,

Dave, Jeff, Josh and Pat

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 10:04 AM
To: Jeff Purswell
Subject: RE: C.J.’s Next Response

Will you also provide me the Board’s perspective on my documents by March 11?

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 5:21 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Josh Harris; Patrick Ennis
Subject: RE: C.J.'s Next Response

Hi Brent,

Yes, our intention is to provide you our perspective on your documents along with C.J.'s response.

Thanks so much,

Jeff

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, February 18, 2011 2:33 PM
To: Jeff Purswell; C. J. Mahaney
Cc: Dave Harvey; Josh Harris; Patrick Ennis
Subject: RE: C.J.'s Next Response

I know each of you have very full schedules. Thanks C.J. for taking the time to provide a fuller response and thanks brothers for supplying your perspective on my documents. I look forward to hearing from you.

The Sovereign Grace Board Weighs in on Brent's "Dissatisfaction"

The Board was supposed to share their perspective with me on RRF&D and AFA as well as on your December 16, 2010 response. The former was not provided me. I've included my response to the Board in the footnotes.

March 11, 2011

Dear Brent,

We hope this finds you well and experiencing the joy and peace that accompanies the gospel.

As we have noted in prior communications, we as a board are happy to inform you of our perspective¹³⁰ of C.J.'s response to your documents. We appreciate your patience with this, as a number of factors have delayed our being in a position to respond. Most recently, of course, your response on January 21 communicating your dissatisfaction¹³¹ with C.J.'s initial response to your documents, along with his willingness to provide a second response,¹³² pushed this out even further. Now that he has finished a second response, we are in a position to communicate where we are at present.

First of all, we want to stress that we take very seriously the allegations¹³³ you made in your documents. By his own admission, C.J.'s sins were serious¹³⁴ expressions of pride. Given the holiness of our God, the high moral standards required of pastors in Scripture, and the effects of these sins on others,¹³⁵ we have been both sobered and grieved as these sins have been revisited in detail over the past number of months. We have wanted to walk carefully and circumspectly as we consider them. Due to the nature of your contentions¹³⁶ and the many people they involve, this has necessitated a lengthy process, numerous discussions, and much prayer. We would also add that, along with C.J., we have all been compelled to search our own hearts for unaddressed

¹³⁰ I appreciate the perspective you've supplied but I am surprised by its brevity. You've had three months to work on a response. I wrote 300 pages and you have provided me a couple paragraphs. As a result, I do not know your thoughts on scores of important issues and illustrations. They are ignored and that is not helpful.

¹³¹ I did not express "dissatisfaction." Dissatisfaction was the word you used to characterize my response. I expressed "disappointment." My disappointment was primarily in C.J., and secondarily in the Board, since C.J. broke his word and the Board did not hold him accountable for his pledge. The Board should have expressed "dissatisfaction" with C.J. not me.

¹³² C.J. was unwilling to provide a second response of his own initiative. He only did so when requested by the Board. You give him too much credit.

¹³³ I don't know what you consider unproven allegations versus well established illustrations/points based upon firm evidence. You express some agreement with me later in this email but here characterize my writings as unproven assertions. "An allegation (also called adduction) is a claim of a fact by a party in a pleading, which the party claims to be able to prove. Allegations remain assertions without proof, until they can be proved." (Wikipedia)

¹³⁴ Something that was continuously denied by C.J. and others for the last ten years and for which I was condemned and confronted by C.J. and others like Steve.

¹³⁵ I don't know what effects you have in mind. I don't know who you have in mind. For his part, C.J. has acknowledged no ill effect of his sins against me upon anyone else. I pointed out to C.J. on January 21 that there was "no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others" in his first response. Now again in his second response, he remains entirely mute on the subject. I must conclude he believes his words, actions, attitudes, counsel and judgments have had no negative impact on Carolyn Mahaney, the Sovereign Grace Board, the Covenant Life pastors, the CrossWay Community Church pastors, Gene Emerson, the Assessment Team and a host of others. This is an irresponsible denial of reality. Further, C.J. goes to some lengths in distancing himself from acknowledging the adverse effects of his sin on others in his second response which is lamentable.

¹³⁶ This harkens back to footnote 133 and the use of the word "allegations." Now my concerns and illustrations are characterized as mere "contentions."

remaining sin.¹³⁷ In addition, we have been freshly reminded of the power of the gospel and the hope it gives to all of us, including C.J. How grateful we are that Christ came to atone for sins like the ones we've been scrutinizing in C.J., and sins we've found in our own hearts.¹³⁸

Secondly, we would affirm a number of things in your documents. When the SGM board, the CLC governing board, and other involved parties met with CJ in November, he asked the 12 of us who know him best to identify in our own experience the things that you communicated in your documents.¹³⁹ All of us could see his tendencies¹⁴⁰ to withdraw when disagreed with, to make correction difficult, to be unduly confident in his own judgments (including his judgments of the motives of others), and to give insufficient attention to process¹⁴¹ in his leadership. We, too, recognized and regretted his failure to follow up¹⁴² on the August 2004 meeting and its ill effects.¹⁴³ We agreed that during the period you describe from 2003-2004, he resisted yours and Dave's¹⁴⁴ correction and failed to lead the team to work through disagreement and conflict with you and Dave. We regret his failure¹⁴⁵ to reach out to you personally after you stepped down from ministry.¹⁴⁶ Brent, this is not an

¹³⁷ What have you discovered? You give no indication. "Remaining" sins also implies initial sins. Your response leaves me clueless. For example, it would be helpful to know what you discovered in relation to C.J. (e.g., man pleasing, cowardice, compromise, etc.). And what has Dave discovered in his search for "unaddressed remaining sin" (e.g. sinful judgments, pride, lording, etc.).

¹³⁸ What you've discovered must have no bearing on me. I've heard from no one.

¹³⁹ I have prayed for many years that friends would come forward and address these issues in C.J.'s life in a firm and sustained manner. I am glad the documents served the twelve of you so you were able to share your own experiences with him. This must become a regular part of C.J.'s experience. Safeguards were not put into place subsequent to August 2004.

¹⁴⁰ You mean long standing patterns of sinful behavior?

¹⁴¹ I'm afraid this phrase "to give insufficient attention to process" is a quaint euphemism. You must help C.J. see and renounce his independence and the lack of accountability in his life and leadership of the movement. Too many senior pastors in SGM have also followed in his steps. As a result, there is little to no authentic plurality. Like C.J., the senior pastor has too much autonomy and too little accountability. It might be good to do away with "senior." Changes need to be made.

¹⁴² This was allowed by the CLC pastors (Bob, Kenneth, Joshua, Grant) despite Dave and my many appeals. They did not require accountability to the team and supported/permitted C.J.'s prosecution of Dave and me. Particularly, Bob and Kenneth.

¹⁴³ What ill effects do you have in mind? Should there be restitution? If so, what? C.J. acknowledged no ill effects on anyone except me. And in my case, he doesn't go into any detail or share anything specific.

¹⁴⁴ Steve's also.

¹⁴⁵ Why do you regret this? May I point something out for your consideration? This is the only time the Board of Directors has acknowledged any kind of impact upon me and Jenny in your correspondence. It is limited to this one little comment which is almost immaterial. You've been far more concerned for the sinner than the one sinned against. For the perpetrator than the victim.

¹⁴⁶ I was totally unsurprised that C.J. did not reach out to me after the events of June 3, 2009 (i.e., the day my resignation was deceitfully demanded) or after leaving Sovereign Grace Ministries a few months later on August 30, 2009. In fact, he and Carolyn had not reached out to us to in any manner after I stepped down from the apostolic team on November 20, 2007. This harsh reality is addressed in RRF&D on pages

exhaustive accounting of our areas of agreement¹⁴⁷ with your documents, but we hope it is sufficient¹⁴⁸ to communicate general areas of agreement and our sorrow over these sins and failures.

Thirdly, we as a board have appreciated the way in which C.J. has conducted himself in this process. We appreciated that he contacted you concerning reconciliation in the first place.¹⁴⁹ Then, after receiving your documents, we have observed him take this very seriously, and several men whom we have consulted who are experienced in mediation have agreed with our assessment. He has exercised initiative (with no prompting from us¹⁵⁰) to consider seriously your documents, to invite the observations and correction of the significant parties involved in these events, and to pursue reconciliation eagerly with you.

From our perspective, C.J. has humbly embraced the correction he has received from all those he has spoken to in numerous meetings, and we believe the first document he sent to you reflects that and the genuine work of the Holy Spirit in his heart. We believe that the second document also reflects an honest

90-92. Neither C.J. nor the Board have acknowledged or addressed this treatment. It's been ignored. By the time we left SGM we were accustomed to being shunned. There were even occasions when C.J. intentionally avoided my physical presence.

¹⁴⁷ What else do you have in mind? It would be extremely helpful to know how you view particular illustrations and points.

¹⁴⁸ I find your generalities insufficient.

¹⁴⁹ This is not true. We begged for reconciliation. Our dire appeals to meet were flatly ignored and rebuffed. For example, the letter Eric Kircher sent to C.J., Dave, Jeff, Joshua, Pat and Gene on March 24, 2009. "We request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss further what has been presented here. Both Brent and I will be at the Leadership Conference in April if you have any time left. If not we fully understand. Our goal is not to simply appease SGM but to respond by grace and in light of Scripture to any details you wish to address. We seek cooperation and unity. We love the Lord and cherish our relationship with SGM and its leaders too much to do otherwise. We are a bit fatigued by this past year but are full of faith for the future. We are also full of faith that these issues can be resolved in a manner that allows all to serve in unity but without distractions." Dave said the leadership team was too busy to meet but might respond in 6-12 months if you thought any of our concerns were worthy of comment. Another example, I asked Bob to share my perspective with the entire Board (including C.J.) in July 2009 hoping it would result in some reconciliation. In particular, C.J.'s "sin focused approach" to me "with little gospel and grace" and his "change in...disposition toward me." Here was Bob's response, "I have talked to CJ about [no] contact with you since you stepped down from the apostolic team [Nov 20, 2007] and his disposition towards you. There was nothing in his response that caused me concern." All of this is covered in detail in RRF&D and AFA.

¹⁵⁰ I am grateful for his actions but these were in response to 300 pages of documentation including his deceitfulness and lack of accountability. C.J. has no track record of initiating such actions apart from external pressures or demands. He had a lot of incentives! This may be analogous to his lack of willingness to confess his sins to the movement and churches. As it stands, he may end up doing so but it will occur because he has been asked. Unless of course, he has a change of heart by the grace of God which is my hope.

engagement with your documents¹⁵¹ and a continued pursuit of humility. On issues where his perspective differs from yours, we are encouraged that he has expressed a desire to dialogue with you and openness to having his perspective adjusted by you and other parties involved in the situations described in your documents. Finally, we are grateful for his desire for integrity and accountability by having the Sovereign Grace board oversee this process and for his submission to the board's direction and decisions in this process.

Finally, you have asked us specifically for our collective perspective on the documents you sent to C.J. and our (to use your words) complete thoughts¹⁵² on C.J.'s response. Unfortunately, we are not in a place to do that.¹⁵³ In order to arrive at a thorough perspective on these issues, there is simply much more information¹⁵⁴ we would need to have. For example, we would want to see how C.J. follows through on these matters, and particularly how he would respond in his interactions with you in a mediation process. We would also be interested in how you respond to him in such a process. Furthermore, the situations you describe in your documents are not simply personal interactions between the two of you. They involve many circumstances and many people whose perspective would be crucial in coming to a well-informed understanding.¹⁵⁵ Objectivity would require us to examine more than just your documents, which by definition represent only one perspective.¹⁵⁶ In short, we simply cannot hold C.J. accountable for something that we don't fully understand, and which is impossible to understand fully given the information

¹⁵¹ I disagree with your perspective. An "honest" engagement with my documents would be a thorough and transparent engagement. That was not the case.

¹⁵² That is, providing your thoughts completely or fully. Not partially.

¹⁵³ If willing you could provide far more feedback on numerous points and illustrations without any additional information. In many cases, you have all the information you need. For instance, Dave's conduct at Kingsway Community Church. There is no reason you cannot righteously assess his actions. Yet you give no opinion and make no comment. I don't think your primary problem is a lack of information. I think it is a lack of willingness to make righteous judgments.

¹⁵⁴ I'll provide "the much more information" you need to "fully understand" my perspective in order to help you "arrive at a final conclusion." You can get the rest of the information you need from others.

¹⁵⁵ Please tell me what information you are missing "in coming to a well-informed understanding." Seriously! If you do, I'll tell you how to get it or who to talk to about it. I am baffled! All of these people have been readily available to you. Do you mean to imply you have not talked to them (e.g., Dave, Bob, Gene) over the past 12 months?

¹⁵⁶ Only "one perspective?" Wow, I needed a good laugh. For many years, "many people" like C.J., Dave, Steve, Bob, Kenneth, Gene, Mickey, Larry, etc. have shared their perspective on me and "many circumstances." Only now are you hearing my perspective. I'd say you're adequately, if not thoroughly, informed of everyone else's perspective regarding me beginning with C.J. He's been sharing it with you for the last seven years. Do you really mean to say you're only acquainted with one (my) perspective? That's staggering. If so, I'd submit the statement is untrue and badly misleading.

we have now.¹⁵⁷ We believe C.J.'s sins were serious, especially for a man in his position. We also believe that, by the grace of God, he has responded humbly to correction and we have observed the fruit of repentance in his life. However, we are not able to arrive at a final conclusion until the above processes unfold.

We believe a significant step in that direction would be for the two of you to get together and work through these issues personally, and we think this could best be done with the help of a mediator¹⁵⁸ upon whom the two of you could agree. A mediator would facilitate healthy communication between the two of you, and he could also orchestrate the involvement of others whose perspective is vital¹⁵⁹ for us to have a well-rounded perspective¹⁶⁰ on the various issues. Moreover, the inclusion of an objective third party would be the best way for us as a board to fulfill our role of evaluating C.J. and keeping him accountable, as well as determining what would be the appropriate contexts for any confession.¹⁶¹ Of course, this process would also help us see more clearly your role in the various circumstances, along with that of others who were intimately involved. We also believe that this step would be the most biblical, transparent, and redemptive way to proceed.

Brent, we appreciate your patience as we have considered these lengthy documents and complex circumstances. We believe that C.J. has acted in good

¹⁵⁷ Here are the email addresses of the principal players. They can provide most all the information you need. I believe you know them. cjmahaney@sovgracemin.org; dh Harvey@sovgracemin.org; bkaufin@sovgracemin.org; gene@kingsway.cc

¹⁵⁸ What is needed is decisive leadership from you not mediators. You must do the work and make the decisions. This task should not be passed onto others (cf. 1 Cor 6:5).

¹⁵⁹ For the past 7 years a long list of people supplied their perspective regarding me and the events described in my documents. I don't think the Board is ignorant but please pursue any addition information you need. That is your job, not the job of mediators. You must discern right and wrong and take action starting with one another (e.g. C.J., Dave) and then in Sovereign Grace Ministries (e.g. Bob, Gene) and also with outsiders like me.

¹⁶⁰ Yes, by all means let's be fair! Guys, this makes me smile. For many years, there has been little interest in a "well-rounded perspective" pertaining to me. Hence the need for these documents. This was true of the work done by the Assessment Team led by Bob. They entertained, believed, and acted upon many sinful judgments against me without talking to me or giving me the opportunity to respond.

¹⁶¹ We've never used mediators in the past to determine if a public confession was warranted. That is your responsibility as the Board of Directors. The need for a confession is obvious. It is not a hard decision to make in terms of right and wrong. But I realize it is a hard decision knowing the negative impact it could have upon Sovereign Grace Ministries. Please don't withhold making a decision based on pragmatism or concerns for public relations. Come clean, start over, and do what's right in God's sight. Don't treat C.J. in a preferential manner. Confessing his sins may set Sovereign Grace Ministries back two or three years but it will be worth it. You may need to cut salaries, sell off some PC townhouses, etc. It's a big ship but you can turn it around with honesty and transparency. Otherwise, I fear it will continue to sink and that is not my desire.

faith¹⁶² by responding to your specific request in the form of two written documents. It would help us to know whether you are now willing to meet with C.J.¹⁶³ along with a mediator so that together you can explore unresolved issues, discuss points of disagreement, and consider the observations of others involved in the process. We earnestly hope you are, believing as we do that such a process would be both illuminating and pleasing to our Lord. After such a process of mediation, we would be in a much better position to form a conclusion as a board regarding these matters.

If you are still not willing¹⁶⁴ to meet with C.J., then we would like to offer you the opportunity to meet, apart from C.J., with other parties involved in this process, along with an impartial mediator agreeable to both you and us. This could comprise the former board of which you were a part (Dave Harvey, Steve Shank, and Pat Ennis), or, if you prefer, it could comprise the present board, along with Steve Shank. We would welcome your suggestions for a mediator, as well as the participants in such a meeting.

Brent, our sincere desire is to work with you and involve you in this process, as we hope the above options demonstrate. We long to see this entire situation be resolved for God's glory and the good of all involved. We believe that the above steps represent a positive way forward, and a way marked by objectivity and integrity. Please let us know if you are willing to participate with us in any or all of the above.¹⁶⁵ We look forward to hearing your thoughts on this.

Yours in Christ,

Dave, Jeff, Josh, and Pat

Note: As of the end of the year, Pat resigned from his position of Executive Director at Sovereign Grace Ministries to return to the marketplace. However, he agreed to remain on the board until February 28, and so he has remained engaged with this process. Although he is not currently a board member, he has reviewed this letter and is fully supportive of its contents.

¹⁶² I'd have to disagree. A "good faith" response would have been far more comprehensive and transparent. C.J. avoids countless issues and examples. He did not make a "good faith" effort to address the issues I identified.

¹⁶³ My conditions for a meeting with C.J. remain unmet and I believe them to be reasonable and necessary. The ball remains in his court.

¹⁶⁴ I've repeatedly expressed my willingness to meet with C.J. provided my conditions were fulfilled. It is not up to me.

¹⁶⁵ I am willing to consider different options but only after I receive an honest, frank, open, transparent, and thorough response to the issues and illustrations raised in RRF&D, AFA and now CR; along with a tentative outline for C.J.'s confession to the movement and pastors.

C.J.'s Second Response to RRF&D and AFA – Commentary Added

Here is your second response to RRF&D and AFA. I've added my commentary in the footnotes.

Page 1 of 10

March 11, 2011

Dear Brent,

I sincerely hope that you and your family are doing well. Carolyn sends her love to Jenny.¹⁶⁶ We have so many fond memories of our times together in the past, and I hope that we will one day soon be able to resume our friendship as couples.

I'm writing at your request for greater detail¹⁶⁷ in responding to your two documents. I write with the hope that this will lead to our getting together to dialogue about these things personally. I continue to hold out the hope that meeting together with an objective third party¹⁶⁸ will enable us to resolve the various issues that separate us and be reconciled.

I know this process has taken a long time and I appreciate your patience. Initially I was hoping that we would be able to work out our differences face-to-face rather than through the exchange of documents. The process has also been lengthy because I have involved other men¹⁶⁹ (eventually numbering twelve),

¹⁶⁶ I must be honest, this rings hollow. There has been no demonstration of love by Carolyn for over 3 years. 1 John 3:18 "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth." See pages 87-90 in AFA. I don't share this out of spite. Only to help both of you think biblically (cf. James 2:15-16) about the nature of love. Jenny has handled the rejection well. She'd prefer I make no comment.

¹⁶⁷ My second request for more detail was made necessary because you failed to honor your word and provide me a thorough response to RRF&D and AFA in your first response. Here is what you promised on October 15, 2010, "I take your concerns very seriously and very much want to address them...I will respond to your request and attempt to provide you with a written response to the issues you have identified." You did not address any of my most serious concerns in your first response which you said you "very much want" to do. Now again you fail to address the vast majority of my concerns in your second response. Your commitment remains unfulfilled.

¹⁶⁸ Leadership is needed by the Board of Directors not outside mediation. I hope they will act courageously, righteously, transparently and without favoritism in dealing with you, themselves and others. They need to require confession and restitution from you, Dave, Bob, Gene, etc. It is imperative they demonstrate a "readiness to see justice done" (2 Cor. 7: 11, NIV). They must put their own house (SGM) in order.

¹⁶⁹ I'm glad you did but it cannot not be assumed this was an expression of godly sorrow since it was done as a result RRF&D and AFA. Having illustrated your abject lack of accountability and your

along with my family, in helping me consider your documents as carefully as possible, in evaluating me and helping me examine my heart and behavior, and in counseling me about how to appropriately respond—first to the Lord, then to others. I have also reviewed your documents with Ken Sande (who has consulted with Gary Friesen) and asked for his counsel in how we can pursue reconciliation. As you can imagine, involving all these people has taken a lot of time. Again, I appreciate your patience.

Brent, I am seeking to honor your request for another written response,¹⁷⁰ but I want to make sure that you understand I don't believe that what I write here can replace the importance of a conversation where I confess my sins to you face-to-face and hear more about their effects on you. This would also allow us to explore together the events of the past and dialogue¹⁷¹ about our recollections and how we interpret the details and understand the contexts of the events you describe. All of this necessitates conversation and, I think, given where we stand today in our relationship, the assistance of an objective perspective to help us see more clearly. I do not presume that my memory is flawless or that my perspective is accurate. In addition, many if not most of the events you describe involve other people, and so I believe their perspective would be required as well for us to gain clarity and resolve these issues.¹⁷² I sincerely pray that we can enter into such a process soon in order to be reconciled in a way that pleases God and restores the relationships of all involved.

As I hope my first written response to you demonstrated, I have sought first to examine my own heart and I have benefited from this process in seeing my sin more clearly and appreciating the gospel more thoroughly. I anticipate that in meeting with you personally I will perceive yet more of my sin. I regret that

deceitful pattern of not informing others of the correction you received, it would have been catastrophic to withhold this information from the governing boards. You have demonstrated worldly sorrow in the past and unwisely been commended for it by others only to continue in your sinful patterns. This was notably the case in August 2004 and the years following (cf. 2 Cor. 7:8-13; see also *Repentance -The First Word of the Gospel* by Richard Own Roberts, especially chapter 6 entitled, "Seven Marks of Repentance and chapter 8 entitled, "Repentance and Its Accompanying Graces").

¹⁷⁰ This comment reveals a twisted view of reality. You put yourself in a good light. My request for another written response should have been unnecessary. You are simply following up on an unfulfilled promise. You should not commend yourself for writing me a second time. Instead you should be asking my forgiveness for violating your word.

¹⁷¹ Something I've been willing to do from the beginning but only after you provide me the same in writing as I have done for you.

¹⁷² This is a surprising statement. All of these people (Dave, Steve, Jeff, Joshua, Pat, Bob, Kenneth, Grant, Gene, Mickey and Larry) have been readily available to provide you their perspective on the events I described in RRF&D and AFA. These men have already provided me their perspective on these events or else they have refused my requests to do so. I welcome any additional clarification they want to provide me.

perceiving my sin seems to be a slow process and I very much need the help of others; most importantly I need God to give me the gift of sight that I might perceive my sins and their effect on others.

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As I think you are aware, in order to insure accountability for myself and integrity in this process, the Sovereign Grace board has taken responsibility for giving me direction in how I participate; I am submitted to them both in regard to my pursuit of reconciliation with you and any appropriate public confession.¹⁷³ I have already sought to confess my sins to all those involved in these circumstances and I'm very grateful for their gracious forgiveness. I am also eager to share sinful patterns¹⁷⁴ I have become much more aware of and lessons I've learned over the past few years in the appropriate public contexts. I hope that our future discussions will help inform any public communication I

¹⁷³ In this context the word "appropriate" means "suitable or fitting for a particular purpose, person, occasion." You acknowledge no need or desire to confess your sins to the movement or the pastors. By default, you have deemed it "inappropriate." May I suggest that if it is inappropriate for you to confess; then it has been inappropriate for scores of other men to have confessed under your leadership. Over the last 20 years, your sin has exceeded theirs in magnitude, duration and extremity (e.g. Keith Breault and Mark Mullery at the 2009 Pastors Conference). You've disciplined and/or removed many men from ministry for lesser transgressions. Yet you consider it inappropriate to follow their example. For this you will need to ask their forgiveness. There has never been a more appropriate occasion for confession. To date, the Board has expressed no need for you to give a public accounting. This is a biased and partial judgment. I hope they quickly change their minds.

¹⁷⁴ You share "sinful patterns" but in a fashion that can promote false humility because you don't share "sinful examples." This is something the apostolic team pointed out to you about your preaching from December 2000 to August 2004. Your recent blogs are a good example. In the ten part series, "The Pastor and Personal Criticism," you don't share any examples of actual sin with one minor exception. On the other hand, here are the sinful patterns you reference. "I regret the many times I haven't responded humbly to correction.... Often for me, when criticism arrives, my response reveals the presence of pride in my heart.... Criticism can uniquely reveal my heart, and often what I see isn't pretty.... And through dwelling on what seems to be the critic's ignorance of the pastor's service and his withholding of encouragement, the pastor's heart quickly moves towards self pity. This is pride, and I've seen it in my own heart.... I did this just yesterday [the only specific example] when someone kindly corrected me. This is pride, and I've seen it in my own heart.... And if a pastor isn't prepared for criticisms, if he doesn't prize growth in godliness, he will despise criticism rather than embrace it. Sadly I have many times...I *should be* eager to receive correction, but usually I'm not. And it's no mystery why I'm not eager to receive criticism—I'm a proud man...A wise, older pastor once said to me: 'C.J., what hurts isn't dead yet.' And that is often what criticism wounds—my still-living, still-breathing pride.... And even though I don't desire her help in confirming criticism, by doing this Carolyn has shown herself to be the suitable helper I so desperately need.... When this happens I am tempted to be offended by that attitude, and prematurely relieved, concluding that any criticism brought in such an attitude must certainly be inaccurate.... Criticism contradicts my high view of myself—so I am tempted to respond sinfully." You are eager to share sinful patterns but not sinful examples. Is it no longer appropriate, wise or necessary to share specific examples of sin? Without personal examples, I think this kind of self-effacing language can project and promote false humility.

make. I know that the board also wants us to engage in a mediation process, not only so that we can be reconciled but also so that appropriate accountability can be brought to me. Hopefully, these various steps will give you confidence in moving ahead towards a redemptive process.

Brent, you have also asked on a few occasions that I state where I disagree with your perspective in your documents. As you know, I have been hesitant to do that, and I left out such disagreements entirely from the first response and confession I provided. I did so because I wanted to examine my own heart and sins as carefully as possible, and with the help of others. I also thought it best to convey to you in my response my sins and failures and avoid giving you any impression that my differences with you somehow excuse my sins. This remains my sincere desire. However, in providing greater detail in this document, it is necessary at least to signal some places where my perspective differs from yours. Nonetheless, I remain reluctant to, and have refrained from communicating where I think your sins¹⁷⁵ might have contributed to issues and events explored in your documents. I believe those are most wisely communicated in conversation, not in written form.¹⁷⁶ Again, I do not assume that my perspective is accurate, which is why I think it's so important for us to discuss these things and involve an objective mediator so that hopefully we can be reconciled.

So on to the specifics.

In pages 5-28 of RRF&D you raise your concerns about my behavior in response to your and Dave's correction¹⁷⁷ beginning December 2000 and culminating in our August 20 meeting in 2004. You pointed out that I was often difficult to correct and easily offended when I felt I had been judged. Once again let me state clearly that I agree with that. You said I was often stubborn when I believed that my perspective or perception was accurate. I agree with you. You note that I made decisions without appreciation for their effect on others. I need to explore this further with you; you may be right, but I cannot recall specifics¹⁷⁸ so I cannot fully examine myself in this area. You also say that I led

¹⁷⁵ I don't think I am unmindful of the ways you think my sin has "contributed to the issues and events." You've provided repeated and substantial correction and input in the past. For example, your 21 points of correction on November 19, 2004. Nevertheless, I welcome additional input or a restatement.

¹⁷⁶ I provided this information for you in written form knowing it would help you to understand my perspective in advance of meeting together. That is one of the reasons, I made it a prerequisite. I didn't want to meet unless I knew your perspective of me and the issues I identified. You agreed to provide this information but have not followed through.

¹⁷⁷ Steve agreed with our principal correction and was an integral part of the process beginning in December 2000.

¹⁷⁸ I easily could but just ask all the men around you for examples. This was a commonly agreed upon point of concern for you.

the apostolic team more by expedience than by process. I think that was often true. I would be eager to explore with you specific examples so that I could examine my heart and acknowledge any sin that affected my leadership. I would love to regather the team for this evaluation so that I could also benefit from the observations of Dave, Steve, and Pat. You also note that I could be exacting and take offense if I was not corrected with the right attitude, words, or illustrations. As I said in my first response, I believe that has been true in many instances: I have taken exception to particular illustrations¹⁷⁹ that I disagreed with, and I have challenged both the wording and the motives of those

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bringing correction, while overlooking the legitimacy of the broader points being made. I remain grieved as I type this again and reflect back upon this.

You and Dave expressed a concern that I wasn't passing on your correction of me to the CLC pastors¹⁸⁰ or my primary context for fellowship. You identified that as "hypocrisy" and "managing information."¹⁸¹ As I said in my first response, my trust in my own discernment and my disagreement with your correction—in short, my pride—contributed to me not informing the CLC guys about your correction in specific and appropriate ways. I have no doubt I was being proud and was blinded by my pride. Was I being hypocritical?¹⁸² In one sense I was, given that my actions did not live up to what I believe and teach. I certainly do not want to minimize my sin, but I would add that, as far as I

¹⁷⁹ You took exception to all our illustrations (Steve's included) with only two exceptions. In one case, it took seven years of regular input before you saw the extent of your wrongdoing. I am referring to your mistreatment of a Sovereign Grace manager. The other had to do with your handling of a pastor and his son. An entire pastoral team had to weigh in with their concerns for you in order to gain your attention. The three of us shared a multitude of illustrations. Those were the only two you ever acknowledged.

¹⁸⁰ You were not passing on information to anyone. It was not simply a matter of neglecting to fill the CLC pastors in on Dave and my concerns. For instance, you never told us about any of the correction and input you received from the CLC pastors on numerous occasions (which was also true in relation to input you received from the Covenant Fellowship pastors and CrossWay pastors). You withheld all information from everyone.

¹⁸¹ This is not a phrase we used to describe your activity. Rather, this was a judgmental statement you used to describe Dave and my supposed activity. See AFA, p. 45. "You told Steve behind our backs that we were acting deceitfully and controlling and/or managing information."

¹⁸² Why is it so hard to acknowledge your hypocrisy? You did not tell the CLC pastors about our correction and you did not tell the apostolic team about their correction. This went on for many years and was not confined to events in 2004. In reality, you were accountable to no one but led us to believe you were accountable to everyone. Please review Bob's minutes from the August 20, 2004 meeting for verification. The lack of accountability was a long-standing issue. It is one of the things you must confess to the movement and the pastors. For three decades you taught on the importance of accountability but it was largely absent in your life. That is hypocrisy.

know, I was not intentionally seeking to deceive¹⁸³ you men, although I realize that factors such as my pride, my sinful judgment of you, and my disagreement with you influenced my not passing on these observations. There are other factors that contributed to what I was and was not sharing with the CLC guys, and I would love to discuss those with you when we meet.

Brent, if I might step back from the specifics of your document for a moment and look back over this difficult season for us as a team, I think there were, at least for me, four primary factors (I don't assume this is exhaustive) that contributed to how I was relating to and leading the team. First and foremost would be my pride in its various forms, which I didn't fully perceive then and I'm sure I don't fully perceive now. This was the focus of my first response to your documents. Second was my assumption that the correction I was receiving from you and Dave was in some way influenced by offenses I perceived in you men toward me because of certain decisions I made that affected your respective roles and service in Sovereign Grace. Again, as I noted in my first response, this involved sinful judgment on my part. I should have humbly explored my perspective and concerns with you both and not allowed it to continue to inform our conversations. Thirdly, prior to the August 2004 meeting – actually, soon after you began correcting me – Steve privately raised concerns¹⁸⁴ to me about your manner of correction,¹⁸⁵ your expectations of what an appropriate response¹⁸⁶ looked like, and what appeared to him to be undue

¹⁸³ C.J., you must come to grips with your deceit. It too is something that must be confessed to the movement and the pastors. On several occasions you knowingly mislead us. It does not matter you thought the input was unprofitable and errant due to your pride. That is a separate issue. You were often asked by the apostolic team (or individuals on the team) to inform the CLC pastors (or someone else) of input. The CLC pastors asked the same. You'd promise to pass on the input but never follow through all the while allowing us to believe you had. You lied, broke your word, and kept this deceitful practice from us until discovered and exposed.

¹⁸⁴ Yes, Steve acted deceitfully and behind our backs not "privately." This was a disservice to you, Dave and me. Dave and I brought this to his attention. He also slandered me to you and others (e.g., see RRF&D, p. 52). He promised to get back to Dave and I regarding his sin but never did so. Unfortunately, Steve fed your judgments of Dave and me. I have ample evidence I have not presented to substantiate this claim. You took advantage of the situation in a way that angered Steve. He confronted you but you never acknowledged any wrong doing.

¹⁸⁵ Here is what Dave said about my manner of correction at the August 20, 2004 meeting. "Brent has excelled in his care and affection for CJ. Brent is intent on making sure there is care, protection, deliberation, and caution in this whole process. He is engaging God in the process." (from Bob's official minutes)

¹⁸⁶ It is clear now that Steve's "expectations of what an appropriate response looked like" were woefully inadequate. Here is what Dave said at the time. "I would also want to make the point that I would see this as part of a historical pattern where he [Steve] has not discerned sufficiently, nor served CJ with what he does discern and also tends to grant wide latitude to CJ's sins in a way that does not serve CJ." (RRF&D, p. 61). A good example of this occurred at the August 20, 2004 meeting. If you review the minutes, you'll notice Steve barely participated and contributed next to nothing.

weight given to your concerns.¹⁸⁷ It's clear to me now that I should have quickly gathered the team together so that Steve could share his concern¹⁸⁸ and you and Dave could respond to his concern. I regret that I did not. Finally, your and Dave's correction of me was preceded by a developing concern I had with the way correction was being practiced within Sovereign Grace, particularly when pastors corrected one another. In my view, yours and Dave's correction of me fit that pattern.¹⁸⁹ I carried this concern for you in particular¹⁹⁰ and should have explored this with you separately, which I attempted to do at our meeting in November 2004.¹⁹¹ But this concern should have been explored separate from any and all correction I was receiving from the team. Brent, I do not assume that these four factors fully explain all that took place over the past number of years. Nor do I believe that the last two factors excuse my sin. But I

¹⁸⁷ It is also clear now that my "expectations of what an appropriate response looked like" were very appropriate and that I did not "assign undue weight" to those concerns. Steve was wrong in his assessment. I also think the way in which Steve conducted himself (at times with deceit) shows he was preeminently concerned for your favor, not your well-being. For example in his summary of concerns for you from April 2004, he said at the end, "I desire that all who would read this would know, my unrivaled regard for CJ as a leader and example and servant and giver and friend, and, and, and..." Of course, it was fine for Steve to express his regard for you to "all who read this" provided his motive was right.

¹⁸⁸ There was no need to do so. Once discovered (actually once exposed) Dave and I immediately met with Steve on at least two occasions to hear all his concerns. In our second meeting, we also expressed our concerns for him. Later, Dave expressed his concerns for Steve a second time.

¹⁸⁹ This was to be expected. With rare exceptions, you almost never received our input and were regularly offended by it. You judged we were ill motivated by bitterness, resentment, and pride. You thought we were hard on you. You thought we were exacting in asking for a godly response. For example, using a phrase like "an element of hypocrisy" provoked your indignation and criticism. It was extreme to you. You reacted and justified yourself. I hope you now see how long-suffering, kind, loyal, patient and forbearing we were with your sins. Your focus was always on how we did you wrong. Never on how you wronged us or others. We endured a lot. Rather than struggling with that time period, I hope you have come to appreciate our efforts and graciousness.

¹⁹⁰ From the beginning of Sovereign Grace Ministries in 1982, I was the one primarily willing to lovingly bring issues to your attention. I also served you, honored you and cared for you with great passion and joy. While others often avoided you, withheld input from you, or gave up in the process, I tried to be a faithful friend and the speak truth to you in love. I think this largely explains your particular concern for me.

¹⁹¹ You make a very important point here! You were concerned for my "manner of correction" but not for your own. Carefully compare Bob's minutes from Aug 20, 2004 with my notes from Nov 19, 2004. You provided me 4 hours of correction on Nov 19 but took great offense for my 1 hour 20 minute overview of ten years on Aug 20. There was no dialogue on Nov 19 but there was extensive dialogue on Aug 20. On Nov 19 you badly distorted the actual contents of what was said and done on Aug 20. This is apparent from the written records. On Nov 19 you repeatedly judged my (our) motives, distorted my words, corrected my perspectives, and downplayed your sins. I felt great compassion for you. It was clear...we were the bad guys and our loving correction was like water off a duck's back. Though you agreed with some observations in theory (i.e., on paper) it was difficult to see what you agreed with in reality. On Nov 19 it was apparent you agreed with very little and did not see your sins as serious. Our input offended your pride and you resorted to self justification. I was roundly condemned by you and later by Bob and Kenneth. Dave and I were relationally separated from you thereafter. For all intent and purposes, friendship and fellowship ceased as an apostolic team.

do think that they all played a significant role, at least for me, and I thought it might be helpful to lay them out. I would love to explore these issues with you and the rest of the men who were on the team during these years.

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Back to the documents, and specifically pp. 5-28. Much of the material on these pages leads up to the Aug 20, 2004 meeting. As I said in my last letter, I agree with the observations¹⁹² about my character failings that were brought to me in that meeting. I believe that I perceived some of them that day, although I perceive far more about my sin now. And let me stress again what I sought to detail in my first response to your documents: my confession of sin was sadly inadequate.¹⁹³ It lacked specific illustrations, I failed to humbly explore the illustrations you provided, and I failed to follow up my confession with specific illustrations and questions for you men about my sin and its effects on you.

Following the August meeting, you wrote, “When you disagreed with our concerns for you, you unilaterally removed me, took over the process, and stopped the evaluation.”¹⁹⁴ My understanding was that I agreed with many of your concerns¹⁹⁵ and that we as a team had decided that our respective local teams should be the primary context for accountability. As a result, I would be interacting with Bob, Kenneth, Josh, and Grant about these things. I did not think of myself as leading this process, nor was I taking steps to remove you from the process. I simply thought we had agreed that this would be primarily turned over to the local guys. Based on the documents that you copied in RRF&D, these men were giving me encouraging reports following our meeting.

¹⁹² If you now agree with the observations from August 20, how do you view the 21 points of correction that followed on November 19, 2004? Was your unfounded reproof abusive? It was certainly harmful.

¹⁹³ Inadequate? As you seem to indicate there was no confession of sin to us in person despite many appeals that you please talk to us.

¹⁹⁴ This is bizarre. You take this quote out of context and misapply it. It appears on pages 56-57 in RRF&D. Here is its meaning in context, “When you disagreed with our concerns for you [in your treatment of Bo], you unilaterally removed me [though I was asked to head up the evaluation of you and Bo], took over the process [with no forewarning or discussion], and stopped the evaluation [of you]. I used it as an analogy for when “you turned the process of evaluation to us [Dave and me] immediately after the August 20 meeting without ever having a discussion about doing so.”

¹⁹⁵ On paper in your e-mail confessions from August 10, 2004 and October 13, 2004 you expressed agreement with our concerns but you never talked to us about them, or illustrations related to them, or the effect of them upon us. You and the CLC pastors were suppose to get back to us with a plan for accountability. That never happened even though Dave and I made numerous appeals for this after August 20. We agreed your accountability should primarily be to the CLC pastors but we also said you needed to be accountable to the team in a secondary way and the team should periodically get updates from the CLC pastors on your growth in grace. None of this ever happened.

I don't recall intentionally cutting you and Dave out of any process.¹⁹⁶ But let me be clear: I should have followed up with you, Dave, and Steve after the Aug. 20 meeting. You were the ones who brought these concerns, and I should have insured that you heard not only from the local guys,¹⁹⁷ but from me as well. There is simply no excuse for my not doing so. I can understand how this tempted you, how this brought into question the previous confessions I made, and how this undermined your trust in me.

On pp. 37-51 of RRF&D you discuss our meeting in Charlotte in November 2004. I don't recall that meeting's intent,¹⁹⁸ tone,¹⁹⁹ or content²⁰⁰ the way that you do. In fact, I recall limiting my observations²⁰¹ because you appeared to disagree with them, and I was concerned that you were offended by them. You conclude this section by saying I was "resentful, bitter, and angry about many things."²⁰² I do not remember that being my attitude or the posture of my

¹⁹⁶ We repeatedly ask you to talk to us about your confessions and the input you were receiving from the CLC pastors. You refused to engage us. You also demanded to be present at any discussion concerning you. You felt it was unnecessary for the CLC pastors to join us on retreats or in conversations. Further, you began to make a case against Dave and me to Steve and Joshua even before the August 20 meeting. This occurred without our knowledge until discovered when you sent me an e-mail by mistake regarding the same. After August 20, Bob and Kenneth began to bring your perspective and correction to us.

¹⁹⁷ Which we did not except for general reports on your progress with them. Otherwise, they were afraid to interact with us and divulge the contents of their dealings with you. Quickly, Bob and Kenneth took a contrary approach to us.

¹⁹⁸ The intent was clearly communicated in advance by you and Joshua. It was to share your correction with me and your perspective on the August 20 meeting. "Kenneth, Grant and I [Joshua] met with CJ to discuss the timing of him sharing his thoughts with you men...CJ's desire is to have a whole day with each of you. The things he wants to share he wants to be able to explain in detail...He views this as an 8-10 hour process." (see RRF&D, p. 33)

¹⁹⁹ It was a cordial meeting. I made it easy for you to provide your critique. I asked questions and listened carefully. I didn't quarrel or debate or sinfully react to you.

²⁰⁰ The content was recorded in the notes I sent to you on Jan 19, 2005. You expressed no disagreement with their contents.

²⁰¹ I'm glad you did...I think I caught the gist of your concerns after 4 hours and 21 points of correction.

²⁰² Here was your critique of me (and Dave) on Nov 19. You said I used email as a "primary means of correction," we "didn't impart hope" to you, I made "repeated statements about the seriousness" of your sin, I made a "careless comparison [of you] to RB," I made a reference to "having [you] step down" as the team leader, "my explanation regarding [your] hypocrisy" was unhelpful, I wrongly compared you to BP and BC because you "were not getting the extreme nature of things," you didn't understand "why so many interactions" thereby making it [your sins] "more serious" rather than viewing them as "normal sanctification," my request for a written "confession [unnecessarily] escalated things," you felt the August 20 meeting was a "tribunal" with no statement of encouragement, there was an "alliance" between me and Dave against you, you felt Dave took up offenses for me and me for Dave against you, you felt Dave was verbally unkind to you, you didn't think it was wise to for me to make "a few hours of corrective statements" without dialogue on August 20, I seemed "irritated" at you at the August 20 meeting, you weren't sure "why a wider confession of sin was necessary" especially since you have "historically confessed your sins to others," you would walk more carefully than me in having men make public confessions, you were more restrained than me, you wondered why DH didn't make a public confession given the way TH lived during a 3 year period of time, Dave and I had gone back to Bo and

heart. If I remember correctly, I began that meeting by expressing gratefulness for the correction from you and Dave, which I think was sincere because I was perceiving at least some of it at that time. I thought our meeting ended well²⁰³ and, if my memory serves, you expressed appreciation for my coming.²⁰⁴ I'm sorry that you have such a different recollection of this meeting. I would love to discuss this.

On p. 57 you note that I sinfully judged you and Dave, saying that you were "bitter and vengeful."²⁰⁵ While I don't recall using those words and I certainly don't recall thinking you two were being vengeful, I do believe that during this period I was judging your motives, as I hope my first response to your documents made clear. I look forward to asking your forgiveness when we meet.

On pp. 62-85 you describe a process in which the tables were turned from me to you. You say I was removing myself from evaluation and placing you under evaluation. You say that this was motivated by bitterness. Brent, I'm looking forward to discussing this

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with you. I have a very different perspective on what was happening at that time and do not believe I was motivated by bitterness.²⁰⁶ If I remember

"transferred our offense" with you to him, you didn't think we were perceptive and discerning of Bo's sins, I did not make "inquiry into what took place during the 18 months" when you didn't have a Care Group, I used this illustration as part of a "damning body of evidence," you and Carolyn felt the August 20 meeting should have been postponed until after the Milestone Weekend in September [17-19], Joshua inaccurately "misrepresented [you] on having 2 services" at CLC at August 20 meeting, and I judged you at the August 20 meeting by saying you were resentful regarding our discussions about *The Cross Centered Life*. It was quite a critique! Yet arguably you were wrong on every assertion (cf. the official minutes from the August 20 meeting (RRF&D, pp. 16-28). These comments and your actions the following six years are testimony to the presence of anger, bitterness and resentment in your heart which you deny.

²⁰³ It did end well for the reasons mentioned above.

²⁰⁴ You are correct, I did express my appreciation for coming to provide me your correction.

²⁰⁵ You ascribe a quote to me on page 57 that does not appear there or anywhere else in the document. At no time did I use the word "vengeful" in RRF&D. You must exercise more care. I suspect you had in mind my comments on page 58, "In other words, you felt free to dismiss our discernment, input, and observations because you believed we were motivated out of resentment and bitterness...You believed our observations were inaccurate and motivated by a desire to get back at you." Please go back and read that section in context.

²⁰⁶ Dave, Steve and I began raising concerns for you in December 2000. For the next four years, you repudiated our input and often judged us to be sinfully motivated. This only intensified toward Dave and especially me after August 2004. And yet, you have never acknowledged being bitter, angry or resentment toward me (or Dave to my knowledge). In this regard, you have steadfastly denied the presence of these sins in your heart toward me when brought to your attention. In contrast, you've

correctly, we determined that I was to have a single meeting with you and Dave to share my perspective and concerns. I wasn't now leading an extended evaluation of you²⁰⁷ and Dave. However, in looking back I now realize that I didn't bring appropriate resolution with you and Dave regarding the issues you had been bringing to my attention. I wrongly assumed that my written confessions – which I now know were deficient – were sufficient. As I noted in my first response, I should have followed up on these confessions, elaborating on their content, supplying specific illustrations, and drawing you men out about my sin. Again, I'm deeply sorry that I did not do that, and I regret the effects of not doing so. Perhaps if I had done this, it would have placed my observations of you men in a different light.

On p. 86, you note that I withdrew from you relationally and related to you "with little gospel and grace" from 2005-2008,²⁰⁸ and that I primarily spoke to you harshly.²⁰⁹ It saddens me to read this. My recollection of that time would be different.²¹⁰ Brent, I don't remember that timeframe as a period of

confidently asserted on numerous occasions that I/we were bitter and offended at you. It is remarkable you see no relationship between your sinful actions and attitudes in 2004 and bitterness in your heart. That denial has continued to present and covers an additional 6 years. This is a longstanding area of deception for you. Not just in relation to Dave and me. Time and time again, you've rejected input on the premise that people are bitter at you. At the same time, you deny any bitterness toward them. "I...do not believe I was motivated by bitterness" is a familiar refrain.

²⁰⁷ Your correction of me was on-going from August 20, 2004 until the day I resigned as sr. pastor of Grace Community Church on July 29, 2009. Dave, Bob and Gene often served as conduits for this correction.

²⁰⁸ Your "little gospel and grace" treatment actually predates 2005. I'll provide an example later from 2002. And I've not gone into detail regarding your treatment since 2005. I may do so later. This is for the benefit of your soul. Like I said in RRF&D and AFA, there are many examples I've left unaddressed. When I wrote RRF&D, I hoped AFA would be unnecessary. When I wrote AFA, I hoped CR would be unnecessary. I've going into increasing detail only as circumstances required.

²⁰⁹ Once again you misquote me. I never said you "primarily spoke to [me] harshly." Here is what I said on page 88 (not 86). "The next three plus years were not pleasant. You related to me with little gospel and grace. During that period you made several harsh comments to me and about me." That is a true statement. There is a big difference between "you made several harsh comments" over three years and you "primarily spoke...harshly" over three years. Such distortions are common even when relating to you in writing.

²¹⁰ Your recollection is both favorable and erroneous. As history has shown, this is a pattern for you in matters like these. Let me refresh your memory a little. Here is just one example. You filled out a "Job Review Form" for me on January 11, 2005 (just 4½ months after the August 20, 2004 meeting) which was the first day of a three day apostolic team retreat in Herndon, VA. We were hoping to talk at the retreat about your e-mail confessions, the input you were receiving from the CLC pastors, and our relationships. Instead, you were focused on correcting us. It was during this retreat that you told me in no uncertain terms that you did not trust me (see RRF&D, pp. 58-59). You did not give me the harsh "Job Review Form" at the retreat but held onto it until the beginning of April when you sent it to me. There were five possible answers to each statement on the form. The five answers were: 1) Weak (i.e., not present); 2) Present but needs work (i.e., deficient); 3) Sufficient (i.e., good); 4) Excellent; 5) Uncertain. You gave me a rating of 1 in response to all of the following statements. In other words, all of the following were absent

unremitting conflict, resentment, and criticism. I remember you encouraging and affirming me²¹¹, and I remember doing the same with you²¹² during that time. It's hard for me to imagine that this entire three-year period was as you describe, but obviously my memory could be flawed and I am eager to hear your specific recollections.²¹³ You also say that during this time I was critical of your preaching.²¹⁴ I do not believe I had a unique and singular concern about your preaching.²¹⁵ Yes, I had a concern about aspects of your preaching, but I had concerns about the preaching of many Sovereign Grace pastors, including myself. So I sincerely don't believe my concerns were rooted in any unresolved offense with or bitterness toward you. However, I want to sit and listen to you describe your experience, as I could be mistaken or blind to something in my heart.

During this period, you also state that I said, "I never want anyone else to go through what I went through."²¹⁶ I did indeed say this, and this is an

in my life. "Is revealing and transparent. Values fellowship and pursues accountability. Regularly invites correction and asks for evaluation. Receives correction humbly and is easy to confront. Is willing to seriously consider all correction. Does not minimize, dismiss, or reject it. When correcting or evaluating an individual he does not communicate his assessment or perspective too strongly or categorically. Sets an example in identifying and confessing sin specifically and consistently. Invites and seeks input for personal, married and family life. Invites and seeks input for ministry effectiveness." These characteristics were not simply lacking in my life and in need of work. They were entirely missing. You send me the evaluation just after Bob and Kenneth came to correct me on March 30, in essence, for all of the above. You still have not told me whether they were sent by you. I disagreed with their assertions (see RRF&D, pp. 67-68) This became Exhibit A for my unteachableness as you so indicated to Larry Malament on April 7, 2005 (see RRF&D, pp. 68-69.). Now, six years later, all the concerns and observations I communicated to Bob and Kenneth have been acknowledged by you as true. That day in March, however, they attempted to lord it over me and arrogantly rebuked me. You in turned used this as a major example of my pride and unteachableness.

²¹¹ True, I always looked for ways to encourage and affirm you even when mistreated by you.

²¹² That would not be true but please send me any documentation or examples supporting your claim.

²¹³ I may supply them in additional writings.

²¹⁴ In the same "Job Review" mentioned above you found nothing good (i.e., sufficient) or excellent about my preaching. You indicated the following three items were entirely absence from my preaching. "1) Messages contain effective illustrations; 2) Personal humility is evident in messages; 3) Messages are the appropriate length of time." Lastly, to the statement, "Messages are characterized by biblical content and accuracy" you gave me a rating of 2. That is, my teaching was characterized by deficient biblical content and accuracy. Given this overall assessment, I understand why you removed me from the Pastors College in entirety and speaking at Sovereign Grace events for the most part.

²¹⁵ This is another example of remembering things favorably and inaccurately. Your concern for my preaching was "unique and singular" in nature. That is what hurt. Not that I didn't have plenty of room to grow or didn't need input. You said I was the only pastor in Sovereign Grace who had "not grown in preaching in the last 6-8 years." Larry Malament can confirm this for you.

²¹⁶ I hope you now see how patient and kind we were to you and how oblivious you were to what we went through. You saw us as adversaries not friends. This judgment was passed on to others who imbibed your attitude and perspective. I believe this perspective was an expression of resentment and bitterness. Not just self-pity and pride. You were focused on our perceived sins before August 20, 2004 but this focus intensified after August 20.

expression of self-pity and an evidence of pride in my life. I wouldn't have perceived that then. But by the grace of God, I do now. I should have been more concerned about my own sin and its effects upon others than I was about how I perceived I was being treated.

You also note that numerous individuals expressed concerns that I was resentful and bitter toward you.²¹⁷ Brent, I am sorry but I am unaware²¹⁸ of who these people might be. If you are comfortable, please let me know who they are – perhaps their perspective could be helpful to me. I would be eager to talk to them.

Beginning on p. 89 you make the case that a breakdown in relationship with me had significant bearing on the process that led to your stepping down from pastoral ministry.²¹⁹ As you chronicle this period – your reduction in courses at the Pastors College, your transition from the leadership team, your reduced teaching role – you seem to tie them all to a loss of relationship with me. Brent, I am grieved you are no longer in Sovereign Grace Ministries. I wish you were still in Sovereign Grace.²²⁰ I hope one day it is possible for you to return to Sovereign Grace. And if the loss of relationship with me contributed to you no longer being in Sovereign Grace, I would want to rectify this. Unfortunately,

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²¹⁷ For example, Dave Harvey, Bob Kauflin, Kenneth Maresco, Larry Malament and me. Without exception you always denied being resentful, bitter or angry at me. That continues to the present.

²¹⁸ A shocking admission!

²¹⁹ Here is my exact statement. You don't get it quite right. "In my opinion, this breakdown in relationship has had a significant bearing on the process that began in June 06" (p. 91). I resigned three years later in July 09. Your personal "correction" of me intensified at the June 06 team retreat. Then you made three visits to Charlotte and met with me on Jun 29, Aug 23, and Dec 6 in 2006. You continued your correction of me. On Dec 9, Larry Malament talked to you by phone. He pointed out your bias against me and preferential treatment of Mickey on each of the three trips. He noted how you were compassionate, merciful and patient with Mickey's sins but not with mine. He illustrated how you regularly encouraged Mickey in contrast to the absence of any encouragement of me. He shared with you his concern that you were bitter and offended at me. You disagreed with him on every point and justified yourself. For example, you felt you were in fact encouraging of me. After Larry's correction you withdrew from direct involvement with me and inserted Dave into the process of dealing with my perceived sins. Your assessment of me was harsh and largely based on sinful judgments or embellished illustrations. You concluded I was proud, independent and unteachable to an extraordinary degree. This was nothing new. As already noted, you concluded by January 2005 that I devoid of humility. Your assessment of me was later used by Dave, Gene, Bob, et al., in making a case against me. This had a major impact on my resignation in July 2009.

²²⁰ Do you realize how counter this is to everything Jenny and I have experienced and been told? For instance, I was banned from involvement in any Sovereign Grace church by Dave. Or last year, you told me doctrinal disagreements "now separate us from serving together."

however much I grieve that you are no longer a part of Sovereign Grace, I cannot agree with your perspective that our relationship was the cause of all that eventually took place,²²¹ nor that it is the reason that you are no longer with us.²²² Although I feel the need for a mediator in so many ways, I particularly feel the need of a mediator to address this and help resolve this. You also implicate numerous other individuals²²³ in the events leading up to and surrounding your departure. I think it would be unwise for me to try to respond in light of the nature of these matters and the number of people involved who should be a part of the process of resolving these matters. I'm afraid there is simply no way that just you and I can resolve something this complex that involved so many other people over so long a period of time. This is why I can only appeal to you again that we find an impartial mediator to help us see together what happened during this time. I can only imagine that this particular issue would weigh heavily on your soul.

From pp. 92-103, you give three examples of what you consider my hypocrisy. The first regards my developing a seven-year plan for my life independently from the team. You say this was a serious expression of independence and that I would have reproved others for doing far less. The plan I mentioned to Gene was not a formal proposal adjusting any of my fundamental responsibilities,²²⁴ nor did it involve any future decision affecting my leadership of Sovereign Grace, the composition of the team, etc. It was really a simple exercise:²²⁵ the

²²¹ I never said or implied that you were "the cause of all that eventually took place." I do believe you were a major contributor to a lot of what took place. But what breaks my heart is your unwillingness to acknowledge any culpability. You refuse to take any responsibility for an unjust assessment and my leaving Sovereign Grace Ministries.

²²² It was not "the" reason but it was "a" reason. Let's review. You were the one who broke off our relationship in November 2007. You (and Dave) were the ones who refused to meet with us in March 2009. You were the one who passed on many sinful judgments of me to others like Dave, Bob, Gene, and Mickey. You were the one who told me doctrinal disagreements "now separate us from serving together." And you were the one who told all the Sovereign Grace pastors that I was unfit for ministry. Have you forgotten these things so quickly? All of these had a bearing on my assessment, my resignation, and my leaving Sovereign Grace Ministries. Yet you see no such relationship between them.

²²³ By "implicate" you seem to mean I wrongly find fault with "numerous other individuals" rather than "to bring into intimate or incriminating connection" based upon sound evidence justly presented. As such, your focus is entirely on me. At no point in your December 16, 2010 or March 11, 2011 responses do you express the mildest of concerns for anyone else. This badly misses the mark. These individuals should be corrected by you, and in some cases disciplined by you. Instead you exonerate all of them and express no concerns for any of them.

²²⁴ The plan included how many books you wrote, what strategic initiatives you took, how you allotted your time, what speaking engagements you accepted, how much you traveled, who you related to - I disagree, those were fundamental responsibilities.

²²⁵ Here is what you told Gene. "We are walking through a lengthy process where they are kindly spending many hours evaluating what I am to do over the next 7 years Lord willing" with "a number of possible recommendations on the table." (RRF&D, p. 95) That doesn't sound like "a simple exercise" to me.

men I worked with on a daily basis had met with me to help me examine my calendar, the use of my time, the increasing number of invitations to speak outside of Sovereign Grace that I was receiving, the relationships I was being invited into beyond Sovereign Grace, and potential writing projects I might pursue in the future. Again, we were not making decisions that impinged upon the team's leadership of Sovereign Grace,²²⁶ and certainly not about any future transition. In retrospect I realize now that I should have informed the team that I was even discussing these things. But I truly don't think of this as hypocrisy because I didn't think I was functioning independently of the team.²²⁷ As I remember it, this was all about helping me manage my day-to-day responsibilities and opportunities.²²⁸ And in the end my initial enthusiasm came to nothing and this supposed "plan" had no enduring effect (other than me looking at speaking invitations more carefully with the help of others). Brent, when I mentioned to you in a subsequent e-mail about a future transition to Josh "when I was 60," this was just my musing about how I saw the future – it was little more than my best guess. It was not a plan discussed with these men, nor was it a settled matter in my own mind. Any significant discussion about my future or any transition would certainly have been made with the team and decided upon by the team. I could be wrong, and I welcome your perspective (and that of Dave and Steve), but I don't believe I would have begrudged you men going through a similar exercise with those you worked with on a day-to-day basis and who helped care for your soul and for your calendar. As for declining Gene's invitation, I believe they involved commitments seven months out²²⁹ and another over a year away, and as a result of my discussions about my calendar I was trying to exercise much greater caution²³⁰ in accepting speaking invitations. Again, I could be wrong here, but as I look over the e-mails you sent and reflect upon this time, I really don't think I was being hypocritical with the team or deceptive toward Gene.²³¹

²²⁶ Not true. All the things you mentioned had a bearing on the direction of Sovereign Grace Ministries and we were uninvolved.

²²⁷ You declined to speak at a regional Celebration Conference and a regional Marriage Conference based upon a seven year plan we knew nothing about. You made decisions about speaking engagements and the allocation of your time based upon this plan without including the apostolic team. So how was this not acting "independently?"

²²⁸ It was about the re-writing of your Sovereign Grace job description and your responsibilities as the team leader "including strategic initiatives" in the future. In other words, what you should do the next seven years. No small thing.

²²⁹ Yes, Gene asked you in December to take one day to speak at an important regional conference during July 6-8, 2007.

²³⁰ During July you did no traveling except for a family vacation on July 15-30 in Knoxville.

²³¹ Dave, Steve and I had been appealing to you for a long time to talk about these very matters. Instead you were talking to the CLC pastors. Recommendations were on the table. Do you think I could have talked to the CrossWay pastors about a new SGM job description for the next seven years that encompassed a "lengthy process for many hours" and then immediately began to make decisions based upon its revision and not be adjusted by the apostolic team? In addition, you don't think you were

although I do wish I had communicated these things with the team. If it would help resolve this, I welcome the perspective of Dave and Steve on this.

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Another example you cite relating to my hypocrisy is the team's approval of your statement on the sacraments in [October] 2004 and Jeff teaching something different in [April] 2007. My understanding when Jeff presented that material is that we were in agreement about the sacraments,²³² and that Jeff's teaching would not contradict our understanding. Obviously that was a wrong assumption²³³ and poor leadership on my part. I should have led us in a discussion about the specifics of Jeff's teaching and verified that we were indeed in agreement.²³⁴ I was unwise in not doing so. Perhaps I was presumptuous in not doing so. Given my pride, I don't doubt that I was. However, I am not perceiving how this would be hypocrisy on my part. It had been three years [2½ years] since we went over your outline as a team, and I frankly didn't carefully examine Jeff's outline²³⁵ to compare it with yours. I just knew we needed to strengthen our understanding of the sacraments, and my (wrong) assumption was that we were basically in agreement on this topic. As in all of the issues you raise, I welcome your perspective on this, as well as the perspective of all the guys who were on the team and a part of these discussions. I do regret my poor leadership here. As I look back over the years, I have become aware of a pattern in my leadership of assuming we've had sufficient discussion on a topic and that we're in agreement on a topic, rather than reviewing, discussing, and making sure that everyone on the team is in full agreement on the issue at hand.²³⁶ I regret that there have been many times I have not done this, and this would be one of those times. I think this would also be an example of something you mention early in your document

deceptive toward Gene but provide no explanation. The evidence seems to indicate otherwise. For example, "First, you tell Gene you can't come because of all the work being done on the seven year plan. Then, two weeks later, you tell me you have not thought about the seven year plan for a few months." See page 99 in RRF&D.

²³² This is one of those examples that is very hard to comprehend. Dave, Steve and I clearly registered our disagreement with you (and Jeff) on important points regarding the administration of the sacraments. You did not change your position but acknowledged you "wouldn't want to debate me using Scripture." As a result, we all agreed not to change our teaching or accommodate Jeff's positions on practice.

²³³ Not simply a wrong assumption. It was in violation of our agreement.

²³⁴ We already had this very discussion at the October 2004 team retreat. All the differences with Jeff were contained in my outlines. We agreed to continue teaching on water baptism as presented in that material.

²³⁵ He didn't have one. We orally compared his known positions to our positions.

²³⁶ In this case we actually discussed our differences. There was nothing nebulous about our differing positions.

concerning my leading by expedience rather than by process.²³⁷ No excuses—this was bad leadership, and as I look back on such examples I feel a genuine sorrow. However, I would need you to help me understand how this would be hypocrisy on my part. I do remember this being brought to my attention at a team meeting after the conference and learning that we were not in agreement as I had wrongly assumed. I fully agree that this was a leadership failure on my part, but I don't remember anyone at the time identifying this as hypocrisy.²³⁸ To the contrary, I remember you men being, yet again, kind, patient, and understanding. And so I'm eager to hear your perspective on this, as well as that of the other guys on the team, since obviously this was not an interaction between the two of us, but it involved all of us.

The third example you give of my hypocrisy has to do with my cautioning you about submitting a book proposal on pride during the season when you were working through issues with your local team in Charlotte. I can understand your thinking of this as hypocrisy given that I wrote a book on Humility in 2004. As I remember it, my main concern was simply that you give deference to the perspective of the local men as to the timing of your writing this book, not whether you were ultimately to write this book, and that was the substance of my counsel.²³⁹ I believe that the e-mails you cite demonstrate that this was

²³⁷ My main concern for your "leading by expedience rather than by process" was the repudiation in practice that others were necessary or desirable in making important decisions. It wasn't just "bad leadership." Our exclusion was usually due to your self-sufficiency, independence or disagreement with us. In the later case, you would bypass us. Functionally you saw no need for us when this kind of thing occurred. The phrase "leading by expedience" does not address root issues. You taught "team ministry" and "plurality of elders" since the beginning of Sovereign Grace Ministries. You were corrected for the lack of it on many occasions but it continued unabated.

²³⁸ Dave was not willing to bring this up as an example of independence. No one had the nerve to bring it up to you as an example of hypocrisy. During this same timeframe you were confronting me for being independent (more later) yet unmindful of your own independence which we had addressed for seven years. Furthermore, even if you forgot our doctrinal discussion at the Oct 04 retreat, you knew Jeff was introducing practices that differed with what had been taught for two decades throughout Sovereign Grace Ministries. Nevertheless, you unilaterally made the decision for him to teach those differences without talking to us. Later when I brought up your independence you told us you didn't need our support because you agreed with Jeff. That was hypocritical.

²³⁹ I believe the substance of your counsel concerned my qualifications for writing and not the timing of my writing. Here is what you said to me, "Do you think it's wise for you to send this in at this time with all that is transpiring at present with you and the pastoral team there?" Here is how Larry Malament understood your words. "Thanks C.J. I'll talk with Brent about this. I'm uncomfortable with him pursuing this at this time. I'd like to see him gain a more illuminated perspective on his pride... Would you like for me to keep you updated on my meetings with Brent?" You never corrected Larry's understanding of your comments. Regardless, your counsel was hypocritical. You wrote the book in 2004. Here is my question for you. "Do you think it was wise for you to write a book on humility in 2004 with all that was transpiring with you and the apostolic and pastoral teams?" What was unwise for me was wise for you. That's hypocritical. Furthermore, do you think it was right to write a book on humility without consulting the apostolic team who was addressing pride in your life for the last four years?

advice given in passing. As for my own book, it was my understanding that I had the support of the local guys²⁴⁰ here in writing the book. Josh was supportive and even wrote the foreword for it. And I think I would have been sensitive had they voiced any misgivings, since I did not want to write this book in the first place. And I tried to make clear in the book²⁴¹ that I was writing not as a humble man but as a proud man pursuing humility by the grace of God. In any event, I would be happy to revisit this to see if anyone had concerns that I was unaware of. If my

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perspective was flawed and I was inconsistent – or worse, hypocritical – then I would want to discover that and confess that.

On p. 113, you mention Gene’s comments about your teaching on pastoral authority as a primary influence on your separation from Sovereign Grace.²⁴² Brent, I don’t know if you are aware of this or not, but I was minimally involved²⁴³ in the process involving you/Mooresville – and intentionally so. I honestly don’t recall Gene’s comments playing a significant role in this, but I would encourage you to pursue mediation/reconciliation with Dave and Gene and anyone else you think misrepresented your doctrinal position.²⁴⁴ I know these men would desire to work through these issues with you and are eager to be reconciled. Given my minimal involvement, I can’t really speak to this, and given the involvement of a number of others, they would really need to speak to this.

My understanding from your second document, “A Final Appeal,” is that you believe that starting in Aug 2004 I was behind an intentional and concerted effort to have you removed from Sovereign Grace.²⁴⁵ Brent, if I’m

²⁴⁰ You probably did and that was part of the problem. They were not holding you accountable. Whether you were qualified to write a book on humility was never discussed with the apostolic team..

²⁴¹ If you wanted to make this point clear you should have referenced the long and largely unsuccessful process we walked through with you. This is no allusion to this disciplinary process in the book.

²⁴² I don’t know how you arrive at this based on what I wrote. Gene’s comments regarding my doctrine were not a “primarily influence” for leaving Sovereign Grace Ministries. In fact, they had nothing to do with my leaving.

²⁴³ I address this later.

²⁴⁴ Dave and Gene are comparatively unimportant. You are the one who singularly said we could not work together in Sovereign Grace Ministries due to differences you had with me in doctrine and practice. I sought doctrinal “reconciliation” but you steadfastly refused to reveal your disagreements in writing. To this day I can only guess what you have in mind. I am clearly beyond the bounds of Sovereign Grace orthodoxy and orthopraxy. I just don’t know why.

²⁴⁵ This is bizarre. I never made such an assertion or implication. I do believe your many sinful judgments of me had a huge impact on how others viewed me and assessed me which in turn contributed to my resignation. People took on your perspectives and attitudes. This clearly happened on

understanding this correctly, then it grieves me that this is your perspective, and I hope to be able to persuade you otherwise. But while I don't agree with your conclusions, I am very open to considering all of your charges. Given the gravity of these charges and the differences in our perspectives, I think it is essential that we involve an impartial mediator to help us sort this out. Moreover, these events unfolded over a long period of time and involved many people, all of whom would need to participate in determining whether your charges are accurate or not. I can't speak for them, nor should I. But I am eager to do all I can to facilitate and participate in a process that would include all the people necessary to explore these events thoroughly and objectively.

Let me now attempt to address some specifics in AFA that I have not already spoken to in RRF&D and are not related to your stepping down from ministry. Regarding your concerns about vacation days, I've already sought to address them in my first letter. If this isn't satisfactory,²⁴⁶ please let me know and we could certainly talk about it further. I'd also encourage you to contact Tommy Hill, as I have reviewed your documents with him and to date he has no concerns about this matter.

On p. 44 [in AFA] you mention my rejecting correction because I felt I had superior discernment. Sadly, this has too often been true. I have often been arrogantly confident in my perception of my discernment in relation to others. I hope that I specifically and faithfully addressed this in my first response to you. On the next page, you assert that my example has had a direct influence on Gene and Bob. I would hope not.²⁴⁷ But in order to determine whether I have had such an influence, we would need to discuss that with Gene and Bob.²⁴⁸ I would be eager to do so, and I would want to take responsibility for this if it turns out they share your perspective.

On pp. 46-56 you talk about the decision to end New Attitude. On p. 55 you say that I lied and sought to deceive you regarding Pat's perspective. This is in reference to Pat's email to me on p. 51. He listed a number of questions he had

many occasions. You have yet to acknowledge this sinful dynamic in the least. But I don't believe you were "behind an intentional and concerted effort to have [me] removed from Sovereign Grace." On the other hand, you were behind an intentional and concerted effort to confront me beginning in August 2004 which was based upon many sinful judgments and erroneous information that you believed as true.

²⁴⁶ It is somewhat helpful but far from satisfactory. There are so many issues you pass over in this illustration. For example, the abusive way you and Bob exercised your authority.

²⁴⁷ I have already presented illustrations (like the one above) where Bob pressed your sinful judgments upon me. They don't bear repeating since you find them of no relevance.

²⁴⁸ You are welcome to ask them and let me know what they tell you.

from our meeting but concludes the email, "I had no concerns²⁴⁹ when I left and you may have simply been

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exercising wisdom and decisiveness throughout." It's certainly possible²⁵⁰ that I did not take Pat's questions as seriously as I should have. I just don't remember. I can only assume that my focus was on the last line²⁵¹ of his email where he said he had no concerns for me. Pat did have questions but said he wasn't concerned. It appears he represented his questions somewhat differently in his email to you. But I fail to see how it was a lie to say that Pat had no concerns²⁵²; I was simply trying to represent his general perspective as I understood it²⁵³. I would, however, agree that in retrospect I should have led

²⁴⁹ Pat was hired in 2003 so he had only worked for you a year. In his April 24, 2004 clarification he said the following. "I had questions about C.J.'s heart in the situation due to some of his short responses, but not concerns, in that I have not observed any patterns of such behavior... I thought his responses were abrupt while disagreeable." (RRF&D, p. 55) Pat qualified what he meant by "no concerns." Given his short time of employment he had not yet "observed any patterns of such behavior." If your short, abrupt and disagreeable response was an observable pattern at the time he would have said he was concerned for you.

²⁵⁰ "Certainly possible?" If you had taken them at all seriously you would have forwarded them to us or told us about them. Then we would have discussed them. You kept his observations from us. Furthermore, Pat's questions were the same as Dave and my questions. The three of us were concerned for your heart. By the way, this was another occasion when Steve failed to speak up and help you. At our April 21 team meeting Pat made clear his concerns for you. This had no effect. Afterward you wrote, "Though I would have a different perspective of what took place and why [on March 18], I will consider what you guys said and pray about it and if I am convicted of sin I will definitely ask your forgiveness." You were never convicted of sin. You never asked forgiveness. Even now all you can acknowledge is, "Perhaps here is another example of how I sometimes led by expedience and not process." You see no independence, autocracy, resistance, or deceit.

²⁵¹ You are correct. You were focused on two words in one sentence rather than the body of his e-mail which asked probing questions addressed to your heart. You never shared his questions which served as his observations. No one would ask these kinds of questions, or this many questions, if they were not concerned in some significant sense. This should have been obvious to you.

²⁵² You did more than say Pat had no concerns for you. You said he disagreed with Dave and me and our concerns for your "leadership, heart and attitudes." Here is what I said in AFA, "You emphatically told me Pat had no concerns for your leadership, heart or attitudes at the March 18 meeting. You went further. You said he disagreed with Dave and me." (p. 55) In other words, Pat had absolutely no concerns for you but he did have concerns for Dave and me. In fact, he agreed with you but disagreed with us. How could you say this based upon the content of his e-mail to follow. These were self serving fabrications.

²⁵³ If that was true you would have told us about Pat's questions and observations. You wrote Pat after the March 18 meeting and asked, "Did you notice anything in attitude or approach that either concerned you or you would have an observation and recommendation concerning?" Pat responded by asking you a number of questions. Here is a summary. 1) Why weren't you [C.J.] clear with us [Dave and Brent] that you needed more time to make sure your heart was right toward us given your strong conviction that New Attitude (NA) should end? 2) Were you poised to seek further understanding of our position that NA should continue, we should be more involved, and we needed to function as a plurality in making

us to function more effectively as a team, drawing you men out fully to understand your concerns. I wish I had done so in this case. Perhaps here is another example of how I sometimes led by expedience and not process. Maybe there's something I'm not seeing here; I'd be happy to reconvene the team and review what took place. I'm sure I would benefit from the perspective of all the guys.

On pp. 76-81 [in AFA] you describe my sins against the North Coast Church pastoral team when they left Sovereign Grace. I think you're aware that I eventually perceived how poorly I handled this,²⁵⁴ and that I sought to be reconciled with Ken Roberts, met with the pastoral team, asked their forgiveness, and was graciously forgiven. If there is more you think I need to do,²⁵⁵ I would be eager to hear that. You mention others who you believe have been sinned against in similar ways. If you're aware of others who are offended with me, please have them contact me. I am eager to be reconciled with anyone²⁵⁶ I've personally offended. As you may be aware, I've spent a good part of the past two years engaging with people who have been offended with me or with Sovereign Grace pastors. Although this has been a grievous process, I'm encouraged that we have been able to reconcile with a number of people, and I have learned much in this process—especially the difference the gospel makes in effecting reconciliation.

As I said earlier, I don't think it would be wise or that it would contribute to reconciliation²⁵⁷ for me to seek to address all the issues you raise²⁵⁸ that you

significant decisions? 3) Did you assume you fully understood us on these matters without further discussion? 4) How was your heart when you made the statement that NA should end after we made some points for why it should continue? 5) Why would you unilaterally make "a big decision" to end NA "that quickly with so many passionate thoughts being communicated?" 6) Why didn't "you clearly articulate your reasons for being hesitant for the Team to have more of an imprint" on NA when we "were struggling to understand your perspective?" 7) Why didn't you explain your "differing perspectives" on plurality and decision making when we wanted to know?

²⁵⁴ I don't think you saw "how poorly" you did. Your understanding was superficial and did not address root issues of the heart.

²⁵⁵ Ken Roberts wrote Larry Tomczak a letter regarding you on May 31, 2002. Larry forwarded a copy to you. In that letter he expressed his grave concern for "a pattern of intimidation, manipulation, and attempts to control people and situations within the movement." In context, he had you specifically in mind.

²⁵⁶ You could follow Ken's advice to you back in 1999. "If you really want input and candid observations from others concerning the movement, I would recommend that you send a standardized letter to twenty to thirty leaders who have left the movement. Ask certain questions and request input on specific topics in this letter." Of course, many more men have left the movement since then. You could include them and also those who have remained in the movement but were removed from ministry.

²⁵⁷ This is the same argument you made throughout 2010 for not providing me a written response to RRF&D and AFA. Your position allows you to remain silent on many critical issues and not incriminate (or exonerate) yourself or others. It's like pleading the Fifth. You pass over them without comment because you claim it would be unwise and counterproductive to express your perspective. I strongly

believe led to your dismissal from Grace Community Church. Your questions and concerns deserve good answers. But because they involve a number of people who need to speak for themselves,²⁵⁹ I would again ask you to participate with me and these others in a process of mediation.²⁶⁰ I truly believe that this could produce much good fruit and lead to our reconciliation.

However, I do want to state something very clearly to you. I deeply regret not seeking to get with you following your transition from Sovereign Grace.²⁶¹ To my knowledge I had not withdrawn from our relationship due to anger, resentment, or bitterness toward you.²⁶² Indeed, I was deeply saddened over what took place in Mooresville and now wish I would have inserted myself into the process of what took place there. If I had, I think the outcome might have been different.²⁶³ Brent, I wasn't sure if you even wanted to meet with me afterwards, but the long history of our friendship should have overcome any hesitancy I had about getting together with you.²⁶⁴ It was a relational failure on

disagree. Have you found my openness, honesty, and transparency helpful or unhelpful, productive or unproductive? You know my thoughts. I still don't know your thoughts about many things. You have concealed them. You are welcome to defend the actions Dave, Bob, Gene, etc. al. You are welcome to express all manner of concerns for me. I am not looking for agreement. I am looking for truthful answers before we meet in person.

²⁵⁸ On Oct 15, 2010 you promised to address all the issues I raised in RRF&D and AFA including those related to my dismissal. You haven't addressed any of them except to deny you had a negative impact on the people and process.

²⁵⁹ They have already done so. You are familiar with their perspectives. Fundamentally, each has denied all wrong doing with a few minor exceptions.

²⁶⁰ I have waited for honest answers and humble responses. Within a narrow range you provided honest answers and humble responses. These are meaningful but limited in scope. Why? Because you did not acknowledge or address any of my most serious concerns. Therefore, I still don't know what you think in many important respects. From the beginning, I hoped to meet with you. That was our goal but it was predicated upon certain conditions. Those conditions remain unmet. You do not appreciate what we've experienced the last decade. If you did, you'd understand the need for frank, open, and candid responses on the wide range of topics I've raised.

²⁶¹ I resigned as sr. pastor on July 25, 2009 and left Sovereign Grace Ministries on August 30, 2009. It was totally unsurprising that you did not contact me after my "transition from Sovereign Grace." You must remember, I had not heard from you since November 20, 2007 at which time I stepped down from the apostolic team. There were more than two years of silence. By all external measures your relationship with me was purely utilitarian. How often I remember you teaching us as pastors to follow up the next day with people we correct. That was never my experience with you. Therefore, Jenny and I had no expectations of follow-up by you or Carolyn after we left.

²⁶² There has never been a time over the last ten years when you have acknowledged the slightest bitterness, resentment or anger in your heart toward me. That is not true of me. I've acknowledged such on different occasions. What is sadder, you have dismissed the presence of these sins on every occasion when brought to your attention as an observation or concern by others.

²⁶³ I would not share your confidence based upon my experiences with you. By the way, you agreed with the outcome and expressed no concerns for Bob Kauflin who led the process.

²⁶⁴ This was not the only time you did not overcome any hesitancy about getting together with me. For instance, you were greeting people as they arrived for the 2009 Pastors Conference when you saw me about to enter the CLC building and then quickly ducked away and headed the other direction. This was

my part not to reach out to you — really, a failure of love. And for that I want to sincerely ask your forgiveness²⁶⁵ when we meet. This failure is one of the deepest regrets I have as I reflect back over the past ten years. And I look forward to expressing my sorrow to you personally.

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Brent, I recognize there are places in this document where I've voiced my differences with you,²⁶⁶ which you have invited. I appreciate your invitation. It bears repeating: I intentionally didn't do that in my first letter because I wanted to examine my own heart as carefully as possible, and with the help of others. I also thought it best to convey to you in my first response my sins and failures and wanted to avoid giving any impression that my differences with you somehow excuse my sins. They do not. As for our differences, I'm open to being wrong about these things and I'm eager to get help from an impartial third party as soon as possible. I trust the same is true for you. Now that you've read my response, please let me know if you desire to pursue mediation for the purpose of reconciliation. I am hopeful that as we do, we can please God and by the grace of God resolve our differences and be reconciled.

Because of the cross,

C.J.

Brent's Return to Sovereign Grace Ministries & Pastoral Ministry

Five days later you sent this addendum about me returning to pastoral ministry. I could make no sense of it given your previous stances. You provided no explanation for your fundamental change of perspective. I went from "unfit" to "fit" and from "unacceptable" to "acceptable." Is this an admission of an unjust assessment and a sinful dismissal from ministry? Is this an acknowledgement that my doctrine and practice are okay? You give no such indication but this seems to be a legitimate inference. If true, you must openly own your erroneous judgments rather than brush them under the rug.

independently witnessed by Eric, Anna, and Jenny who described the scene in exactly the same terms. They had no doubt about your avoidance and brought it to my attention. I observed the same kind of thing on other occasions.

²⁶⁵ You are forgiven.

²⁶⁶ I am glad you voiced some differences.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2011 2:18 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Back in Pastoral Ministry

Brent,

I hope this e-mail finds you enjoying God's grace. There is one more point I would like to make in addition to the document I sent you. I didn't think this fell within the purpose of the document but I do think it's important for me to communicate—at least I want to communicate it. My heart and point is simply this, I want to see you back in pastoral ministry as soon as possible.²⁶⁷ And this would be a distinct desire apart from any possible return to SovGrace. As I have communicated different times I hope you do return to SovGrace at some point.²⁶⁸ But I realize there is much to resolve with a number of guys²⁶⁹ in order for that to be possible (although with mediation I don't think that would require a prolonged period of time). So this desire for you to return to pastoral ministry transcends my desire that you return to pastoral ministry in a SovGrace context. I believe you are called to pastoral ministry and I just wanted you to know I would want to do whatever I can to see you once again preaching the gospel and serving a church.

As I was praying for you this morning I thought about how I hadn't included this in my document so I wanted to send it so you will know my heart for you.

Because of the Cross,
C.J.

²⁶⁷ You must mean "as soon as possible" after my "lengthy rehabilitation" required by Bob in a Sovereign Grace church! ☺

²⁶⁸ How can you hope for something you expressly ruled out? You precluded the possibility of any ministry involvement with Sovereign Grace Ministries unless I changed my doctrine and practice. I guess a return to Sovereign Grace is possible but I still don't know what areas of doctrine and practice I must renounce in order to conform to your standards. Furthermore, you declared me unfit for ministry. If your desire is sincere, I need to understand how and why your heart has so radically changed. Here is what I wrote you last June, "I'd love to return to Sovereign Grace Ministries but change must occur in order to restore my trust and confidence in its integrity. Nor am I currently welcome by you or acceptable to you. Gene counseled people to force my resignation before any evaluation, Bob has pronounced me unfit for ministry and in need of a lengthy rehabilitation, Dave has forbidden me from visiting all Sovereign Grace churches until I change, and you have said we cannot serve together because of your disagreements with me over doctrine and practice. I am also reminded of Dave's words to Jenny and me that I 'have not represented the values, leadership or doctrine of Sovereign Grace Ministries' during my years of service. As a result, a sense of belonging in Sovereign Grace Ministries escapes me."

²⁶⁹ Which probably won't happen until you see the issues of lording, spiritual abuse, deceit, hypocrisy, injustice, bitterness, etc. These men have imitated and imbibed your sins against me. When you see them clearly, I am hopeful the men around you will come to repentance also.

I appreciate your sentiments but don't know how to interpret them. On July 31, 2009 you sent out a letter to all the pastors in Sovereign Grace Ministries. It was written by Dave but explicitly on your behalf. Dave was formally representing you. The purpose of the letter was to inform the pastors of my resignation and provide them an explanation for it. You wholeheartedly concurred with the conclusions of the Assessment Team led by Bob Kauflin. You appointed Bob to this post contrary to my wishes given his evident bias against me. This letter from you proved ruinous. It destroyed my reputation throughout Sovereign Grace Ministries and beyond. It destroyed my livelihood and brought great hardships upon us. Thousands of people no longer trust me. Hundreds of friendships have been destroyed. Overnight good friends stopped relating to us. Some even turned against me in hate based solely on slanderous reports without ever talking. In the letter to the pastors, you unreservedly agreed with the declaration that I was unfit for ministry. You concurred that the charges were true. Later I was forbidden from involvement in all Sovereign Grace Churches until I repented. I was effectively excommunicated. I allowed all this to transpire without publicly exposing Sovereign Grace Ministries in order to protect its reputation and the advance of the gospel. I hoped repentance and restitution would come later.

C.J., it is wrong for you to distance yourself from such realities. For example your recent statement, "Brent, I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but I was minimally involved in the process involving you/Mooresville—and intentionally so." You were plenty involved. You were regularly updated in conversation and in writing. The detailed letter to the Sovereign Grace pastors attests to this fact. You are the President of Sovereign Grace Ministries! Dave, Bob and Gene work for you! Yet you accept little to no responsibility for what has happened to us. Do you really want to do whatever you can to see me once again preaching the gospel and serving a church? Then publicly confess your sins, influence others for the good, and declare the assessment unjust. Require Dave, Bob, and Gene to do the same. Appeal to Ray and Eric in like fashion. There is little hope of a return to effective ministry without a widespread acknowledgment of wrong-doing which could then result in the restoration of my reputation. Many dear people who once trusted me are now afraid of me. They have only heard your side of the story. I've been silent.

In your July 2009 letter to the Sovereign Grace pastors you affirmed as true the following statement about me. "There is a degree of pride, especially in a pastor, that can seriously undermine his example, hinder his effectiveness, and call into question his fitness for ministry. One of the ways that is determined is when a pastor's relationships deteriorate, he is unwilling to see the sin in his own heart and is thereby unable to sustain a functioning plurality." That was your view of me. It wasn't your view of yourself? That was your pronouncement over me. It wasn't your pronouncement over yourself? Though I disagreed with this assessment, I quietly resigned and did not

defend myself. You opposed any form of discipline and defended yourself even though this statement was true of you. For 10 years we tried unsuccessfully to help you see the very things you said were true about me and necessitated my removal from ministry. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, none of your friends pointed out the brazen hypocrisy or protested the double standard in your letter to the SGM pastors. It was particularly egregious for Dave not to speak up. He even drafted the letter on your behalf. Here in the South they call that “the good old boy network.” You affirmed this paragraph as true for me but failed to see any relevance for yourself. If you did you’d have immediately stepped down from ministry with me so as not to be a hypocrite. But this standard was never applied to you by you or those around you. The slightest suggestion of discipline resulted in your immediate offense and protestation. The rules simply didn’t apply to you. They still don’t. The application of biblical truth and discipline is selectively applied to you and others in your favor.

I appreciate your sentiment to see me back in ministry and Sovereign Grace Ministries but you make no comment regarding what has transpired or the judgment Sovereign Grace has rendered. You clearly don’t understand what I’ve been through. For the most part, I’ve withheld autobiographical comments. In the past when I referenced our suffering or pain to individuals like Dave and Gene, I was corrected for viewing myself as a self-centered victim. This is the third sinful pattern (in addition to telling people they are bitter or proud) by which people are controlled, manipulated and silenced. Too often when a person tries to share what they have experienced or been through they are reproved for having a victim’s mentality.

Summary of C.J.’s Responses to RRF&D and AFA

You provided two responses to my documents. The first on December 16, 2010. The second on March 11, 2011. I want to summate the issues you affirmed and those you denied. In other words, what wrongdoing you acknowledged and what wrong doing you disavowed. I’ve sought to use excerpts from your responses in a balanced and just fashion in order to present your affirmations and denials fairly.

1. Confident in Superior Discernment

December 16, 2010

- “I have been arrogantly confident in my perception of my own heart and my discernment in relation to others.”
- “I proudly trusted my own discernment and consistently disagreed with your correction, dismissed your correction, and, blinded by my pride, failed to inform the CLC guys about your correction in specific and appropriate ways

even after assuring you men I would. And I failed to inform you of ways they were correcting me as well.... But because of my pride and confidence in my perception I dismissed these observations and didn't think it necessary to share them.... I did not initiate or inform you men of the sin I was perceiving and the correction I was receiving from the CLC guys after the Aug 20, 2004 meeting. I should have."

March 11, 2011

- "On p. 44 [in AFA] you mention my rejecting correction because I felt I had superior discernment. Sadly, this has too often been true. I have often been arrogantly confident in my perception of my discernment in relation to others. I hope that I specifically and faithfully addressed this in my first response to you."
- "You and Dave expressed a concern that I wasn't passing on your correction of me to the CLC pastors or my primary context for fellowship.... As I said in my first response, my trust in my own discernment and my disagreement with your correction – in short, my pride – contributed to me not informing the CLC guys about your correction in specific and appropriate ways. I have no doubt I was being proud and was blinded by my pride."

Summary

- No additional information, details, or examples were added under this heading in your second response.

2. Hard to Entreat & Easily Offended

December 16, 2010

- "I was not easy to entreat.... When you and Dave corrected me I would often question your motives, or take exception to your wording or a particular illustration you referenced."
- "So you and Dave were accurate in the following assessment of me: 'To correct CJ, or to challenge his own self-perception, was to experience a reaction through e-mails, consistent disagreement (without seeking to sufficiently understand), a lack of sufficient follow up and occasionally, relational withdrawal. Along with this, CJ was poor in volunteering areas of sin, temptation or weakness in himself.'"

- “For example when you identified my not sharing the team’s observations of me with the CLC pastors as involving an element of hypocrisy, I took exception to that label instead of exploring the substance of your concern. In my pride I disputed the use of the word “hypocrisy” which prevented me from humbly listening to the correction of a friend.”
- “Brent, on page 107-108 in your second document [A Final Appeal] you list 4 questions that at that time remained unanswered. Well, they should have been answered and I have no excuse for postponing my answers and my pride is the only explanation for why they weren’t answered at the time.”

March 11, 2011

- “In pages 5-28 of RRF&D you raise your concerns about my behavior in response to your and Dave’s correction beginning December 2000 and culminating in our August 20 meeting in 2004. You pointed out that I was often difficult to correct and easily offended when I felt I had been judged. Once again let me state clearly that I agree with that. You said I was often stubborn when I believed that my perspective or perception was accurate. I agree with you.”
- “You also note that I could be exacting and take offense if I was not corrected with the right attitude, words, or illustrations. As I said in my first response, I believe that has been true in many instances.”

Summary

- You gave no examples of when you were hard to correct or when you became offended. You provided no definition for “easily offended.” Did you mean easily bitter, resentful or angry? No additional information, details, or examples were added under this heading in your second response.

3. Sinfully Judged

December 16, 2010

- I often sinfully judged you.... By holding a high view of myself and failing to be adequately suspicious of my own heart, my response in the face of an evaluation I disagreed with was to be critical of the one bringing the evaluation.
- For example when you referenced the possibility of my stepping down I sinfully judged you and assumed you were motivated by an offense against me.

- “My pride was particularly revealed when you would question my integrity.... So at different times (when dealing with topics like confession of sin, accountability; vacation time) I would sinfully react to your observations/concerns and sinfully judge you. Due to a high estimation of myself and my perceived integrity, I didn’t carefully consider your correction/concern. This was my pride both in having a high estimation of myself and in my desire that you share that estimation.”
- “For example when you contacted me about how many vacation days it appeared I had taken that year, I should have been appreciative of your care for me and my schedule and thanked you for your concern about maintaining integrity in relation to vacation days. Instead I sinfully judged you and my follow up emails were motivated by a desire to demonstrate my integrity.

March 11, 2011

- “Second was my assumption that the correction I was receiving from you and Dave was in some way influenced by offenses I perceived in you men toward me because of certain decisions I made that affected your respective roles and service in Sovereign Grace. Again, as I noted in my first response, this involved sinful judgment on my part.”
- “Regarding your concerns about vacation days, I’ve already sought to address them in my first letter. If this isn’t satisfactory, please let me know and we could certainly talk about it further.”

Summary

- No additional information, details, or examples were added under this heading in your second response.
- You didn’t reveal why you believed Dave and I were sinfully motivated to correct you – that would be helpful to know.
- You also didn’t reveal the nature of your sinful judgment against me regarding my input on vacation time. That too would be helpful to know. I guess you thought I believed you were “seeking to take advantage of the rules” to use Bob’s words.

4. Confession of Sin Inadequate

December 16, 2010

- “My confession of sin to you men lacked specific illustrations of my sin. In my pride I thought acknowledging my sins in general to you and Dave was sufficient.”
- “The email confessions I provided on August 10 and October 13 2004 would be examples of this.... I should have followed up on these confessions and elaborated on them, providing you with specific illustrations of my sin and drawing you out about my sin.”
- “I should have talked with you about the e-mail confession of Oct 13 so you could understand how I came to perceive what I acknowledged and whether what I acknowledged had any personal bearing on you men. I should have been more explicit and biblically precise in my conviction and confession. I definitely should have asked each of you to men to describe the effect my sin had upon you. I never engaged in this exercise with you men and I deeply regret not doing this.”

March 11, 2011

- “And let me stress again what I sought to detail in my first response to your documents: my confession of sin was sadly inadequate. It lacked specific illustrations, I failed to humbly explore the illustrations you provided, and I failed to follow up my confession with specific illustrations and questions for you men about my sin and its effects on you.”
- “But let me be clear: I should have followed up with you, Dave, and Steve after the Aug. 20 meeting. You were the ones who brought these concerns, and I should have insured that you heard not only from the local guys, but from me as well. There is simply no excuse for my not doing so. I can understand how this tempted you, how this brought into question the previous confessions I made, and how this undermined your trust in me.”
- “However, in looking back I now realize that I didn’t bring appropriate resolution with you and Dave regarding the issues you had been bringing to my attention. I wrongly assumed that my written confessions—which I now know were deficient—were sufficient. As I noted in my first response, I should have followed up on these confessions, elaborating on their content, supplying specific illustrations, and drawing you men out about my sin.”

Summary

- No additional information, details, or examples were added under this heading in your second response.

5. Distancing Self & Withdrawal of Affection

December 16, 2010

- “I would at times sinfully withdraw from you and Dave when you corrected me.... I would distance myself from you and withdraw my affection.”
- “‘Can become resentful, distrustful or withdraw when he feels misunderstood, judged, or sinned against by others.’ I agree with...your observation.”
- “Your concern about the pattern of withdrawal and resentment was legitimate and often accurate. And I should have provided you with specific illustrations.”
- “And finally, I failed to lead us in deepening our relationships with one another as a team through appropriate confession, correction and accountability overall.”

March 11, 2011

- “However, I do want to state something very clearly to you. I deeply regret not seeking to get with you following your transition from Sovereign Grace. To my knowledge I had not withdrawn from our relationship due to anger, resentment, or bitterness toward you... It was a relational failure on my part not to reach out to you—really, a failure of love. And for that I want to sincerely ask your forgiveness when we meet.”

Summary

- Your “failure of love” acknowledgement was an additional detail under this heading in your second response.

6. Self Pity

December 16, 2011

- “Not only did I consistently and proudly dismiss your correction but then I would distance myself from you and withdraw my affection. As I reflect on this I think it’s an expression of self pity and resentment.”

March 11, 2011

- During this period, you also state that I said, “I never want anyone else to go through what I went through.” I did indeed say this, and this is an expression of self-pity and an evidence of pride in my life. I wouldn’t have perceived that then. But by the grace of God, I do now. I should have been more concerned about my own sin and its effects upon others than I was about how I perceived I was being treated.

Summary

- In the second response, you said more about self-pity and its relationship to how you felt wronged by Dave and me. You didn’t reveal whether you still feel we mistreated you. It would be helpful to know your current perception.

“Honoring” Brent’s Request for Greater Details

Your second response was suppose to “honor [my] request” for “greater detail” than that contained in the first response. Grievously almost nothing new was added pertaining to specific kinds of sins or occasions of sin by you or anyone else. In this regard, only two minor admissions were included. Otherwise, you simply restated the points from your first response. Here is what you wrote.

“I’m writing at your request for greater detail in responding to your two documents. I write with the hope that this will lead to our getting together to dialogue about these things personally.... Brent, I am seeking to honor your request for another written response.... Brent, you have also asked on a few occasions that I state where I disagree with your perspective in your documents. As you know, I have been hesitant to do that, and I left out such disagreements entirely from the first response and confession I provided.... However, in providing greater detail in this document, it is necessary at least to signal some places where my perspective differs from yours.” (March 11, 2011)

The “greater detail” amounted to next to nothing. In the second response, you said a little more about self-pity (e.g. when you felt wronged by Dave and me) and you briefly acknowledged one example of hypocrisy for not passing on our correction of you to the CLC pastors. Otherwise, you add nothing in terms of your sin.

You provided me your first response to RRF&D and AFA on December 16, 2010. I got back to you on January 21, 2011. Here are some excerpts from my email.

“I must also admit to disappointment. As I’ve said before, such a meeting is not possible until you provide a much fuller response and personally embrace the need for public confession. Your “brief overview” is a good start but it doesn’t address my most serious concerns for you and the movement. The majority of issues and illustrations I raised with you remain unaddressed.”

“Before we meet, I must understand far more clearly how you view my assessment. For instance, in what you’ve written you acknowledge no lack of integrity, no deceit or hypocrisy, no concealment or cover-up, no damage control, spin or manipulation, no partiality or favoritism, no abuse of authority or lording, no need for a confession to the movement or the leaders, no wrong doing by others, no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others, etc.”

In the paragraph above I mentioned 15 areas of concern for you and the movement. You denied any lack of integrity, deceit, or hypocrisy (with one exception) in your own life; expressed no need for a public confession, and failed to see how your sinful judgments negatively influenced anyone). You left the remaining 10 areas of concern (i.e., concealment, cover-up, damage control, spin, manipulation, partiality, favoritism, abuse of authority, lording, wrong-doing by others) entirely unaddressed.

I specifically and intentionally asked to address these 15 critical issues. Instead you ignored ten of them. You don’t even reference them. So much for the greater detail you promised to supply. In addition, you left unaddressed considerable portions of material in RRF&D and AFA. I’ve gone back to these documents and added endnotes to indicate the many critical points and illustrations you passed over without comment or insufficient comment. The moral of the story – you skipped over large amounts of material and added almost nothing as it pertained to areas or occasions of sin.

In your first response on December 16, 2010 you said the following.

“And I am certain I am only beginning to perceive the depth and the pervasiveness of my sin. So from the outset I want you to be aware that I have no doubt this written response is both limited and deficient. I have no doubt I do not perceive all I need to perceive, all the sin in my life that you and others no doubt do perceive.”

I hoped your second response on March 11, 2011 would be quantitatively different from the first. During that three month interval, I hoped you’d perceive “the depth and the pervasiveness of [your] sin” to a greater degree. That did not happen. There was no additional illumination. My request for greater detailed was not honored. So taking both responses into consideration, you remain largely silent and my desire for an open, honest and thorough response is rebuffed.

C.J.'s Numerous Denials and Rebuttals

That is not to say you didn't add a lot of material in your March 11, 2011 response. But that "greater detail" was in the form of numerous denials and rebuttals. You made this clear by saying, "However, in providing greater detail in this document, it is necessary at least to signal some places where my perspective differs from yours." I am glad you decided to share your opposing perspectives on different issues I raised. It is helpful to know your thoughts on these particular matters. It gives me a better idea of what you currently think and believe about some of my concerns for you and others. Here are the differing perspectives, denials and disagreements found in your second response.

1. No Public Confession Necessary

December 16, 2010

- "One of the issues you brought up was the need for me to confess my sins to a wider audience. I am eager to make a specific confession of my sin where necessary and appropriate."
- "I don't assume this is the end of the process and as I meet with you and understand your perspective more fully, I'm trusting that will guide me and those I am accountable to concerning what further confession might be appropriate. And let me assure you that any decision about where my confession is necessary and appropriate isn't my decision, but will fall to the board of Sovereign Grace. I am fully submitted to them and will do whatever they ask and confess as widely as they ask. In fact, I welcome this direction since I do not trust my own evaluation about what is appropriate or necessary."

March 11, 2011

- "As I think you are aware, in order to insure accountability for myself and integrity in this process, the Sovereign Grace board has taken responsibility for giving me direction in how I participate; I am submitted to them both in regard to my pursuit of reconciliation with you and any appropriate public confession. I have already sought to confess my sins to all those involved in these circumstances and I'm very grateful for their gracious forgiveness. I am also eager to share sinful patterns I have become much more aware of and lessons I've learned over the past few years in the appropriate public contexts. I hope that our future discussions will help inform any public communication I make.

Summary

- You are willing to “do whatever they [the Board] ask and confess as widely as they ask” but you have never expressed any personal interest or sense of need to inform the movement or pastors. You’ve taken no initiative with regard to a public confession and nothing I’ve written has convinced you it is necessary.

2. No Independence

March 11, 2011

- “You also say that I led the apostolic team more by expedience than by process. I think that was often true.”
- “The first regards my developing a seven-year plan for my life independently from the team. You say this was a serious expression of independence and that I would have reproved others for doing far less.... But I truly don’t think of this as hypocrisy because I didn’t think I was functioning independently of the team.”
- “I think this would also be an example [Jeff’s teaching on the sacraments] of something you mention early in your document concerning my leading by expedience rather than by process.”
- “Perhaps here is another example [canceling New Attitude] of how I sometimes led by expedience and not process. Maybe there’s something I’m not seeing here; I’d be happy to reconvene the team and review what took place. I’m sure I would benefit from the perspective of all the guys.”

Summary

- You denied acting independently of the apostolic team. For example in developing a seven year plan for your life, having Jeff teach on the sacraments, and deciding to cancel New Attitude. You viewed your actions as expedient, not independent. As morally neutral, not morally wrong.

3. Did Not Take Over or Redirect the Process

March 11, 2011

- “Following the August meeting, you wrote, ‘When you disagreed with our concerns for you, you unilaterally removed me, took over the process, and stopped the evaluation....’ I did not think of myself as leading this process, nor

was I taking steps to remove you from the process.... I don't recall intentionally cutting you and Dave out of any process."

Summary

- This is contradicted by all the facts and circumstances presented in RRF&D and AFA. For example this comment by Dave. "To what extent is it really wise for the process (and helpful to C.J. and the Apostolic Team) to allow C.J.'s concerns over us to postpone additional confessions or updates, re-direct the process and close off communication about where we are and where we are going?" (RRF&D, p. 36)

4. No Resentment, Bitterness or Anger

March 11, 2011

- "On pp. 37-51 of RRF&D you discuss our meeting in Charlotte in November 2004. I don't recall that meeting's intent, tone, or content the way that you do. In fact, I recall limiting my observations because you appeared to disagree with them, and I was concerned that you were offended by them. You conclude this section by saying I was 'resentful, bitter, and angry about many things.' I do not remember that being my attitude or the posture of my heart."
- "On pp. 62-85 you describe a process in which the tables were turned from me to you. You say I was removing myself from evaluation and placing you under evaluation. You say that this was motivated by bitterness. Brent, I'm looking forward to discussing this with you. I have a very different perspective on what was happening at that time and do not believe I was motivated by bitterness."
- "On p. 86, you note that I withdrew from you relationally and related to you 'with little gospel and grace' from 2005-2008, and that I primarily spoke to you harshly. It saddens me to read this. My recollection of that time would be different. Brent, I don't remember that timeframe as a period of unremitting conflict, resentment, and criticism."
- "You also say that during this time I was critical of your preaching. I do not believe I had a unique and singular concern about your preaching. Yes, I had a concern about aspects of your preaching, but I had concerns about the preaching of many Sovereign Grace pastors, including myself. So I sincerely don't believe my concerns were rooted in any unresolved offense with or bitterness toward you."

- “However, I do want to state something very clearly to you. I deeply regret not seeking to get with you following your transition from Sovereign Grace. To my knowledge I had not withdrawn from our relationship due to anger, resentment, or bitterness toward you.”

Summary

- These specific statements contradicted your general statements that “I was often difficult to correct and easily offended when I felt judged” and “I could be exacting and take offense if I was not corrected with the right attitude, words, or illustrations.” Or, “I would distance myself from you and withdraw my affection. As I reflect on this I think it’s an expression of self pity and resentment.... Your concern about the pattern of withdrawal and resentment was legitimate and often accurate.” You acknowledged these general patterns but saw no connection to any specific occasion of sin for which you asked forgiveness. This is reminiscent of the past ten years. You’d send us e-mail confessions regarding patterns of sin but then repudiate every example and ask our forgiveness for nothing.

5. No Hypocrisy

December 16, 2010

- “Brent, to the best of my recollection I was not deliberately hiding information [from you and the CLC pastors].... I also now perceive that the sinful self-confidence with which I made these choices was destructive to trust, and makes your concerns of deceit and hypocrisy more than understandable.”

March 11, 2011

- “The first [example of hypocrisy] regards my developing a seven-year plan for my life independently from the team. In retrospect I realize now that I should have informed the team that I was even discussing these things.... But I truly don’t think of this as hypocrisy because I didn’t think I was functioning independently of the team.... I really don’t think I was being hypocritical with the team.”
- “[A second] example you cite relating to my hypocrisy is the team’s approval of your statement on the sacraments in [October] 2004 and Jeff teaching something different in [April] 2007.... I should have led us in a discussion about the specifics of Jeff’s teaching and verified that we were indeed in agreement. I was unwise in not doing so. Perhaps I was presumptuous in not doing so. Given my pride, I don’t doubt that I was. However, I am not perceiving how this

would be hypocrisy on my part.... I think this would also be an example of something you mention early in your document concerning my leading by expedience rather than by process. No excuses – this was bad leadership, and as I look back on such examples I feel a genuine sorrow. However, I would need you to help me understand how this would be hypocrisy on my part.

- “The third example you give of my hypocrisy has to do with my cautioning you about submitting a book proposal on pride during the season when you were working through issues with your local team in Charlotte. I can understand your thinking of this as hypocrisy given that I wrote a book on Humility in 2004.... If my perspective was flawed and I was inconsistent – or worse, hypocritical – then I would want to discover that and confess that.”

Summary

- You acknowledged no hypocrisy in your first response except for the following allusion. “When you and Dave corrected me I would often question your motives, or take exception to your wording or a particular illustration you referenced.... I proudly presumed to address specks in your eyes with logs protruding from my own eyes. This was quite obviously a serious evidence of pride.”
- The same was true in your second response. You acknowledged one example in passing. “Was I being hypocritical [in not passing on your correction of me to the CLC pastors]? In one sense I was, given that my actions did not live up to what I believe and teach.” Otherwise, you denied any hypocrisy.

6. No Lying or Deceit

March 11, 2011

- “I certainly do not want to minimize my sin, but I would add that, as far as I know, I was not intentionally seeking to deceive you men [in not passing on your correction of me to the CLC pastors], although I realize that factors such as my pride, my sinful judgment of you, and my disagreement with you influenced my not passing on these observations.”
- “As for declining Gene’s invitation, I believe they involved commitments seven months out and another over a year away, and as a result of my discussions about my calendar I was trying to exercise much greater caution in accepting speaking invitations. Again, I could be wrong here, but as I look over the e-mails you sent and reflect upon this time, I really don’t think I was being

hypocritical with the team or deceptive toward Gene, although I do wish I had communicated these things with the team.”

- “On pp. 46-56 [in RRF&D] you talk about the decision to end New Attitude. On p. 55 you say that I lied and sought to deceive you regarding Pat’s perspective. This is in reference to Pat’s email to me on p. 51. He listed a number of questions he had from our meeting but concludes the email, “I had no concerns when I left and you may have simply been exercising wisdom and decisiveness throughout.” It’s certainly possible that I did not take Pat’s questions as seriously as I should have. I just don’t remember. I can only assume that my focus was on the last line of his email where he said he had no concerns for me. Pat did have questions but said he wasn’t concerned. It appears he represented his questions somewhat differently in his email to you. But I fail to see how it was a lie to say that Pat had no concerns; I was simply trying to represent his general perspective as I understood it. I would, however, agree that in retrospect I should have led us to function more effectively as a team, drawing you men out fully to understand your concerns.

Summary

- You acknowledged no lying or deceit of any kind.

7. No Harmful Impact on Others

March 11, 2011

- “Beginning on p. 89 [in RRF&D] you make the case that a breakdown in relationship with me had significant bearing on the process that led to your stepping down from pastoral ministry.... And if the loss of relationship with me contributed to you no longer being in Sovereign Grace, I would want to rectify this.”
- “Unfortunately, however much I grieve that you are no longer a part of Sovereign Grace, I cannot agree with your perspective that our relationship was the cause of all [which I never claimed] that eventually took place, nor that it is the reason [which I never claimed] that you are no longer with us.”
- “On the next page [p. 45 in AFA], you assert that my example has had a direct influence on Gene and Bob. I would hope not. But in order to determine whether I have had such an influence, we would need to discuss that with Gene and Bob. I would be eager to do so, and I would want to take responsibility for this if it turns out they share your perspective.”

- “Brent, I don’t know if you are aware of this or not, but I was minimally involved in the process involving you/Mooresville—and intentionally so.... Given my minimal involvement, I can’t really speak to this [i.e., the misrepresentation of my doctrine].”
- “You also implicate numerous other individuals in the events leading up to and surrounding your departure. I think it would be unwise for me to try to respond in light of the nature of these matters and the number of people involved who should be a part of the process of resolving these matters.”

Summary

- No where did you acknowledge being a bad influence or having a negative impact on anyone else in word, attitude, or action. Therefore, your many sinful judgments of me did not adversely affect anyone. Nor did your sinful perspectives influence or harm anyone else’s perspective of me. Furthermore, you expressed no concerns and found no fault with anyone I referenced in RRF&D and AFA. Your focus was solely on me for wrongly implicating Dave, Bob, Gene, et al.

Forgiveness Extended and a Succinct Summary

In your two responses totaling 19 pages, you acknowledged six areas of sin and asked forgiveness for nine occasions of sin. It is a great joy to sincerely and freely forgive you for each occasion! Here they are for your review.

1. Pride in your superior discernment (e.g. not passing on correction to us and CLC pastors).
2. Being hard to entreat (e.g. disputing my reference to an element of hypocrisy, not answering the four questions) and easily offended when you felt judged (no examples)
3. Sinfully judging Dave and me (e.g. I wanted you to step down; our correction was motivated by offense; my input regarding vacation days was ill motivated).
4. Providing an inadequate confession of specific sins (e.g., not talking about the e-mail confessions).
5. Distancing yourself and withdrawing affection from Dave and me (e.g., “a failure of love” in not contacting me after I left Sovereign Grace Ministries)
6. Self-pity (e.g., how you perceived being treated by Dave and me - “I never want anyone else to go through what I went through.”)

What was added were numerous denials. Here they are..

1. Saw no necessity for public confession (but will do if asked).
2. Denied acting independently (e.g., seven year plan, Jeff's teaching on the sacraments, canceling New Attitude).
3. Denied taking over or redirecting your disciplinary process.
4. Denied being resentful, bitter, or angry at me (e.g., on Nov. 19, 2004 in Charlotte; when placing me under evaluation, while relating to me with "little gospel and grace," the harsh critique of my preaching, withdrawing from me for two years).
5. Denied being hypocritical (e.g., working on the seven year plan without our knowledge, the unilateral decision for Jeff to teach divergent views on the sacraments, cautioning me against writing a book on humility)
6. Denied ever lying or deceiving. (e.g., didn't deceive or hide information from us or the CLC pastors, not deceptive in denying Gene's invitation, not deceptive in how you represented Pat regarding the New Attitude decision)
7. Acknowledged no detrimental impact or negative bearing on anyone (e.g., Gene and Bob) in relation to me.

C.J. Only Beginning to Perceive Sin?

In your responses you mention the need for gift of divine illumination in order to see your sins more clearly. No doubt this is true but I don't think it is your primary need. What is needed is obedience to God's Word. For years you've been a hearer and not a doer. A lack of illumination has not been the problem. The problem has been a lack of obedience.

For instance when you said the following.

"As I said in my first response, my trust in my own discernment and my disagreement with your correction—in short, my pride—contributed to me not informing the CLC guys about your correction in specific and appropriate ways. I have no doubt I was being proud and was blinded by my pride. (March 11, 2011)

You should not put the emphasis on spiritual blindness but on personal disobedience. You failed to humble yourself, follow counsel, and walk in the light as commanded in Scripture. You transgressed God's law knowingly and willfully.

Over the last decade you repeatedly suppressed the truth (cf. Rom 1:18) and resisted the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 7:51). You were stiff necked, not blind. That's why it took 10 years to acknowledge aspects of your pride. It was not due to a lack of illumination. The Holy Spirit was bringing illumination. That was not lacking. What was lacking was a

godly response to the conviction of heart he brought to bear upon you. Rebellion and stubbornness were the root issues.

I am concerned you use this approach as an excuse for continuing in known sin even when the Holy Spirit and your conscience have clearly convicted you. For example, I have no doubt you see the need for a public confession of sin. You know it is the right thing to do. It's a question of willingness. So too for a host of other issues like hypocrisy. I have no doubt you see the pervasiveness of this sin. You just don't want to acknowledge it. In the language of Scripture, you will "not come to the Light for fear that [your] deeds will be exposed" (John 3:19-21).

Here are two other statements by you regarding illumination. While I appreciate your prayers for "the gift of sight," I believe you've seen far more than you're willing to acknowledge.

"I appreciate your encouragement and I am sorry to disappoint you. I trust you know that was not my intention. Please pray for me as I desire to perceive any and all sin I have committed and I pray daily for this gift of sight." (January 25, 2011)

"I regret that perceiving my sin seems to be a slow process and I very much need the help of others; most importantly I need God to give me the gift of sight that I might perceive my sins and their effect on others." (March 11, 2011)

Let me illustrate another way. Back in 2004 you provided us two written confessions. You did great job making clear the patterns of sin that entangled you. They were well done and insightful. The "gift of sight" was evident. You had spent time looking in the mirror to see what kind of a man you were. You wrote it down for us at our request. It was encouraging. But then, tragically, you went away and immediately forgot what you saw in the mirror (Jam 1:23-24). As a result, nothing changed. No discussion. No asking for forgiveness. No humbling. No fruits of repentance. Things actually worsened. Illumination was not followed by obedience. Little fruit was born as a result. As I've said before, the seed fell on the rocky soil of your heart.

Here is my point. You tend to blame your disobedience on your blindness, when you should blame your blindness on your disobedience. This kind of thinking can be dangerous and an expression of license. That is, the rationale that you cannot grow or obey until God grants you "the gift of sight." I think it far better to assume our problem is a lack of doing, not a lack of seeing (Jam 1:22-25). We see clearly the man in the mirror but we are "forgetful hearers" rather than "effectual doers." Like Romans 1 teaches, the problem is not cognitive, it is volitional (1:18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 32). Your sin, like anyone's sin, is primarily due to a lack of willingness, not a lack of awareness. For us as Spirit indwelt Christians, we can't blame our disobedience on blindness. That is

not to say we don't need the help of other believers and the Holy Spirit to see our sin; but, commonly the Holy Spirit is enabling us to accept responsibility for the sin we already see (Tit 2:11-12). Deception (blindness) follows moral choices (Rom 1:24, 26, 28) contrary to the revealed will of God in nature (Psa 19:1-6), conscience (Rom 2:14-16) and Scripture (Psa 19:7-14; Heb 4:12).

For instance, you point out your need for "the gift of sight" in order to "perceive my sin and their effect on others." I do pray for an increase of conviction but I firmly believe you already "perceive" some adverse effects on other men. For instance your impact on Bob and Kenneth that led to the March 30, 2005 confrontation (RRF&D, pp. 67f.) or your impact upon Bob regarding vacation time (AFA, pp. 15ff.). These adverse effects are plain to you. I could list off many other examples.

No Follow-Up by the Board of Directors Re: Allowance for Potential Sins

I sent you AFA on October 8, 2010. Four days later you wrote me the following note.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 2:45 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: FW: A Final Appeal

Besides the fact that I want to be able to talk with you personally, I'm also convinced (and those I've consulted on this agree) that doing this through e-mail utilizing long documentation, is actually a detriment to reconciliation...

Brent, in the almost 300 pages of documentation you sent me, it doesn't appear that you make any allowance for potential sins that may remain on your part or how your perceptions and approaches may have been flawed...

This was so disheartening because I made a concerted effort over the summer and in AFA to ask for your feedback regarding "potential sins" and flaws in my "perceptions and approaches." How could you miss these repeated invitations? Questions needed to be asked of you. Moreover, the habit of sinfully judging or coming to reckless conclusions continued unabated immediately following your reading of "almost 300 pages of documentation" where this was a major point of concern.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, October 23, 2010 11:25 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: RE: A Final Appeal

...Here's my second concern. Your comments above also indicate you've sinfully judged me for not inviting correction when that charge is clearly unfounded. Consider a few statements from AFA.

- "In responding to the larger document, please be perfectly honest and share your thoughts in a comprehensive manner. For instance, what aspects of my presentation troubled you, helped you, or convicted you? What points do you agree with or disagree with? Do you believe there is a need for "a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality?" Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them?" (AFA, p. 5)
- "I've been open and honest with you. I've put my thoughts and concerns in print. They are open to examination and scrutiny. I've been candid and I welcome the accountability such a format secures. I've also asked for your critique and invited your correction. To these I will gladly respond in print in advance of any meeting. In addition, you are welcome to show my response to others in preparation for any such meeting." (AFA, p. 75)
- "I've also written in detail knowing your propensity to dismiss, distort, and forget past events and conversations. I've endeavored to only make assertions I can support with facts and evidence. I have no interest in libel. That is one of the reasons I've asked you to respond in writing over the last 10 months – a request you have adamantly refused. I am happy to be corrected. This is my final appeal. You are welcome to provide me an objective response of a similar nature to these documents. But I must hear from you." (AFA, p. 164)

This example of judging illustrates why it is so important to interact with you in writing. If these things were simply said in conversation, I'd have little hope you'd recall them accurately or responsibly. In my experience, you'd likely dismiss this entire illustration as valid and feel no need to ask forgiveness.

I'd also point out that RRF&D was in response to your request that I share ways in which you sinned against me. That's what I did. In any case, my comments regarding input and correction above included what I wrote you in RRF&D. The invitation stands.

A few days later I received this reply from you.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2010 12:35 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

Brent,

...And as to your second point I think you are accurate in pointing out that I have overlooked statements you have made where you invited correction and disagreement. Please forgive me for doing so. I did not intend to judge you, but I can see why you could feel I was. My statement, "...it doesn't appear that you make any allowance for potential sins that may remain on your part..." was intended to communicate that I hadn't come to a conclusion on this, but my wording is not clear enough and left the door open for you to feel judged. I'm sorry to have inflicted another wound on you. Of course, it's entirely possible that I'm deceiving myself and was sinfully judging as I wrote those words. I promise to continue praying for God to take off any blinders on this and similar issues, and I also commit to inviting others to help me examine my heart. If God does show me I have sinfully judged you in this regard, I will get back to you and ask your forgiveness. Thank you for this correction and thank you for inviting my correction and your openness to discuss all sides of our past interactions. I appreciate this evidence of humility in your life...

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 8:09 AM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Overlooking Statements

Thanks for your note C.J. and willingness to review my documents with others. I'm not sure forgiveness is necessary for overlooking my statements but it is certainly granted. I'm glad to hear you're finding the documents of some benefit. Grace to you as you continue to seek the Lord.

“Overlooking my statements” was a morally neutral category. But you also said, “If God does show me I have sinfully judged you in this regard, I will get back to you and ask your forgiveness.” In light of this willingness, I hoped the SGM Board would follow up with you. I wrote the following to you and ten other men believing “there are other questions to ask.”

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 5:59 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: Overlooking Statements

As I thought about it there is no need to forgive you for simply overlooking statements. That’s morally free. I think there are other questions to ask but I’ll leave additional counsel in the hands of those [ten men] around you.

I did not hear from you or anyone else after writing this email. Six months later I followed up with the SGM Board. I wanted to see if they followed up with you indicating a new willingness to hold you accountable. I wrote Jeff.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 12:11 PM
To: Jeff Purswell
Subject: Invited Correction

Hi Jeff,

The lack of accountability for C.J. by the governing boards and friends has been an outstanding concern to me. I’d like to know if the SGM board ever followed up with C.J. on the illustration [above]. That is, did you ask him additional questions about his heart? Or, did you simply accept his explanation that he “overlooked” my invitations for correction without further inquiry into his soul? Here’s why I ask. I purposely did not ask questions of C.J. though warranted and needed. I wanted to see if the Board would follow up with him on this important illustration. I assume the Board did but I’d appreciate your confirmation. If so, what concerns did you raise with him?

Thanks
Brent

Jeff was on vacation so I forwarded my request to Dave and Joshua.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 12:29 PM
To: Joshua Harris; Dave Harvey
Subject: FW: Invited Correction

I received a bounce back message that Jeff is out of town until March 22. Could one of you answer this question?

Here was Dave's reply.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2011 3:11 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris
Subject: FW: Invited Correction

Hi Brent. Jeff is out of town until Tuesday and then the Plant pre-conference stuff starts on Wednesday and goes through the week. Then I think Jeff goes to Michigan next Saturday for the week. So it will be two to three weeks before we can consult our notes together and he can get back to you. Thanks for your anticipated patience.

Dave

My questions were easy to answer. Basically, "Did you follow up with C.J.?" And, "What additional questions did you ask him?" In my response to Dave, I simplified my request and dropped the second part.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2011 10:01 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Invited Correction

I'm not following the waiting two or three weeks before you can consult your notes together. Maybe that will be necessary but do you, Dave, remember any follow up with C.J.? How about you Joshua?

Guess what happened next? Nothing. I never heard a peep from Dave, Jeff or Joshua. Add this to the already long list of questions purposely ignored and never answered. This is a form of cover-up. A promise is made, the promise is broken, and the information is withheld. No explanation is ever provided.

Brent's Implication of Numerous Individuals

Since we began corresponding in January, 2010, you have yet to express any concern whatsoever that anyone (e.g., Bob, Gene, Dave, Kenneth, Mickey, Larry, or Eric) has misunderstood, misrepresented or wrongly implicated me (let alone judged, lorded it over, or betrayed me). You have never noted the least concern that anyone was ill motivated or blinded by bitterness. In contrast you express all these concerns for me. That is perfectly fine. Seriously. I'm glad you did. It's far more helpful when you are open and honest. So, it's not what you say about me that is a concern; but what you don't say about all others.

Of course, I don't expect you to confess for them. Obviously, that is their business. But you should be willing to tell me where you think they erred or sinned against me. I asked you that very question on June 21, 2010 but you never answered it (sound familiar?). Instead, you responded by raising concerns for me (sound familiar?). I'm left to believe you don't think anyone has ever sinned against me since August 2004. If you do, you've never said so over the past 7 years. Here are some of the relevant emails on the subject.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, May 18, 2010 2:05 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Response to Your E-mail

...Thanks for your patience with the process. I don't know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your document and I'm seeking their observations, evaluation and recommendations as to how we can hopefully resolve this.

I wrote back asking for greater clarification on your meaning.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, June 21, 2010 4:18 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Reconciliation

...Do you think others have sinned against me? Or do you believe I've sinned against them? You recently wrote for example, "I don't know how to accelerate the process since a number of others are involved and implicated in your document." These are just a few questions to help you understand my appeal. I realize there will be disagreements but those disagreements are important to understand in order to pursue reconciliation.

Here is your response to my question, "Do you think others have sinned against me?"

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Friday, July 02, 2010 4:33 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Question

...From what I read in your [June 21] e-mail I think you have misunderstood and misrepresented Gene, Bob, Dave (and me) in some of these things. And I am concerned that your heart may have been blinded by bitterness.... Brent, I don't think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is "lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc."

Finally, you restated your perspective in your March 11, 2001 response that I have falsely implicated others. You said, "You also implicate numerous other individuals in the events leading up to and surrounding your departure." The moral of the story - you addressed no wrong doing by anyone in either of your responses or in any of your correspondence. You indicted me but no one else.

C.J. Referencing Himself as a Humble Example

Here is another example of hypocrisy.

In the letter Dave's wrote Steve on August 18, 2004, he highlighted many evidences of hypocrisy in your life. For instance, "All the while [C.J. is] teaching on humility, writing on it and referencing himself in regards to it when we were calling him to account."

At that very time, you were writing a chapter for the book, *Dear Timothy - Letters on Pastoral Ministry* (edited by Thomas Ascol). In it you referenced yourself as an older pastoral example of someone who pursued humility (see chapter 7 on "Pursue Humility"). Here is some of what you wrote to a young, fictitious pastor named Timothy. The "Milestone Weekend" or anniversary celebration took place on September 17-19, 2004 which was just four weeks after the August 20 meeting. I've added comments via footnotes.

"Even before your letter, Timothy, I found myself thinking about you. I suppose this is due to all the activities associated with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Covenant Life Church... (p. 115)

“Pride is an attitude of self-sufficiency and independence toward God and of self-righteousness and superiority toward others. It robs God of the honor and glory due Him. It takes many forms but has only one goal: self-glorification²⁷⁰... (p. 119)

“Many people, of course, believe the Bible. Many pastors know it extremely well. Many recognize that it is our only truly reliable guide for life and faith. But strong churches—that is, churches in which the members are growing in sanctification and increasingly glorifying God in their public and private lives—are churches in which the leaders do not merely teach sound doctrine. They also lead in and model the consistent application of biblical truth to all of life²⁷¹... (p. 120)

“So this I can say with full confidence. A decade from now, your ministry will have been fruitful only to the extent that you have both taught Scripture accurately *and* applied it consistently—to yourself, your family, your fellow elders and your church. It is not biblical truth alone that builds effective churches. It is, by God’s grace, the *application* of biblical truth... (p. 120)

“I’ve covered all this, Timothy, so that I can share with you some specific ways in which I have sought to tremble at God’s Word...I know of no better way to grow in humility than to observe some set of concrete, tangible practices. Here are the ones that, by God’s grace, have proven effective for me²⁷²... (p. 121)

“Apply the doctrine of sin. Noting that all men are sinners, Mike Renihan further observes, ‘Sinners fall into two more distinct classes: those who admit their sin and those who don’t. Those who admit themselves to be sinners fall into two more classes: those who do something about it and those who do not.’ Timothy, the humble pastor is the man who does something about it, especially through confession and the pursuit of correction²⁷³... (p. 125)

“It’s not difficult to acknowledge one’s pervasive depravity. What’s difficult is specifically to confess an area of personal depravity.²⁷⁴ Obviously, one must first confess sins to God. But we are also called to confess, as appropriate, to individuals. You know how strongly I feel that every pastor, even in the

²⁷⁰ I agree. I think “self-glorification” is at the heart of your pride. You never address this or his cousin – the love reputation.

²⁷¹ Like you were with us?

²⁷² You set forth your proven example of what it mean to tremble at God’s Word for all the young Timothy’s who read the book.

²⁷³ Which you were not doing and had not done for a long time.

²⁷⁴ This was the very point we were making to you at the very time. Yet, you refused to talk about, let alone confess, any “personal depravity.”

smallest church, must have a team of men to whom he is accountable.²⁷⁵ God will surely send you such men. Your job is to find them, enlist them to help you and be transparent before them, confessing freely and regularly²⁷⁶... (p. 125)

“Let these confessions be full and specific, not selective and partial.²⁷⁷ Confess overt acts of sin as well as present temptations, and let grace and forgiveness be yours in abundance. It’s a sad truth that whenever a pastor disqualifies himself from ministry through a failure of personal character, a long-standing lack of confession has invariable been present²⁷⁸... (pp. 125-126)

“Another vital means of applying the doctrine of sin to your own life is to invite and pursue correction in areas of character. In this regard, a pastor must be gently persistent, in public and in private. Eventually, the majority of the members in your church should feel truly welcome²⁷⁹ to point out to you any instance in which it appears you have behaved sinfully – or indeed, any area in which you could simply be doing a better job. Would your wife, your friends and those who serve with in your church say you are easy to entreat²⁸⁰...” (p. 126)

No Damage Control in Sovereign Grace Ministries!

At the April, 2009, Sovereign Grace Pastors Conference you taught a session on “Pastoral Failures” from James 3:1-2. During that session you had Mark Mullery and Keith Breault share their pastoral failures. In part this was done in order to show there was no cover up in Sovereign Grace Ministries or churches. I touched on this in AFA. Here’s what I said.

“I hope you will follow your own counsel and put an end to damage control by you and those related to you. Your strenuous assertion that damage control is not occurring, and will not occur in Sovereign Grace Ministries, is a form of damage control itself. You have knowingly lied, covered up, and concealed many times.” (AFA, pp. 163f.)

²⁷⁵ In large measure, you were accountable to no one let alone cooperating with a team of men.

²⁷⁶ On my, I cringe reading these statements. This was never our experience with you.

²⁷⁷ Ditto.

²⁷⁸ Given this standard, you were disqualified from ministry. The lack of confession by you is one of the reasons SGM is experiencing so many problems today.

²⁷⁹ No one felt that freedom.

²⁸⁰ You were extremely difficult to entreat and this was a major point we were making to you at the exact time you wrote these words by way of example to “Timothy.”

Here is a transcript of your relevant comments during the session on pastoral failures, damage control and humble confession. I've added comments via footnotes.

"I am referencing pastoral failures in relation to the appropriate exercise of authority and how we might more effectively care for those who are suffering and in particular those who have been sinned against. So it is my hope this afternoon that by drawing your attention to these two pastoral failures in particular it's my hope that we might avoid similar failures in the future.

And in just a few moments, two different senior pastors are going to really, humbly serve us, they are going to humbly serve us this afternoon, by describing two different pastoral failures, that have occurred in their midst and most importantly this afternoon, inform of what they have learned from these pastoral failures. So I thought it would serve us to hear from these men. I asked these men if they would share their stories with us.²⁸¹ I informed them that they were under no obligation whatsoever,²⁸² to do so. It was no surprise that both of these men were desirous, desirous of serving us with their story and for their humility, for their desire to serve us, these men have my deepest respect and I believe we all are going to benefit from their humility.²⁸³

But prior to hearing from these men, I think, I know, it would be wise, it would be very wise for all of us to acknowledge the harsh reality that each and every pastor present fails. Each and every pastor present fails in their service of the church and in their service of the people they love in some way each and every day. There is no one present here who flawlessly executes their pastoral responsibilities each day, each week. And in James chapter 3, just prior to addressing the main topic of the paragraph which will be the destructive potential of human speech, James addresses those who are aspiring to spiritual leadership.

It appears he is addressing and discouraging those who were sinfully desirous and ambitious for this role and responsibility and so he provides them with very specific, explicit reasons why they should be cautious about pursuing this role and responsibility. "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body." [James 3:1-2]

²⁸¹ Someday I hope the blogosphere, the churches and the pastors will hear you share your "pastoral failures in relation to the proper exercise of authority."

²⁸² True, because they are not accountable to the movement. You, on the other hand, are obligated to the movement.

²⁸³ I hope you imitate their example so we can all benefit.

So he addresses those who appear to be ambitious for this role and responsibility and he provides them with very explicit reasons why they should be cautious. His first caution would involve divine accountability and evaluation. "For you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness." The second reason he recommends caution about becoming teachers is in verse 2, because we are sinners. Because we all stumble in many ways. And then, finally he proceeds to draw their attention to his immediate concern, the tongue and makes specific application to the tongue. So for our purpose this afternoon, I just want to draw your attention to the opening words of verse 2 and their relevance to each of us as pastors for we all stumble in many ways. Yes we do. We all sin. We sin many times and we sin in many ways. The passage is clear and it is confirmed in our experience. We not only sin frequently, we sin with variety. And we all sin frequently and we all sin with variety and it's so helpful to know that James did as well and it should give us all hope. This passage applies to each and every pastor in Sovereign Grace. We are not flawless pastors. Quite the opposite. We are flawed pastors. We do not flawlessly pastor in Sovereign Grace. I wish we did. I wish I did. But I don't. You don't. We don't. Don't misunderstand, this doesn't provide us with any convenient excuse for our failures, for our sins. We are accountable to our respective pastoral teams, to our churches and most importantly to God himself for our failures. For our sins, be they sins of commission or omission or a simply lack of wisdom in caring for the flock of God. So in Sovereign Grace there is no such thing as a flawless pastor, no such thing, but in Sovereign Grace we must acknowledge our flaws! We must acknowledge our flaws and we must learn from our flaws. We must acknowledge when we have stumbled, where we have stumbled, how we have stumbled and we must learn from each and every stumble.²⁸⁴

Recently I came across an article by a well know columnist, Peggy Noonan, she was, well she wrote the following.

'[On] December 8, 2008, 11:11 a.m., and a young Marine pilot takes off from an aircraft carrier, the USS Abraham Lincoln, on a routine training flight. The carrier is maybe 90 miles southwest of San Diego. [She identifies the individual] is flying an F/A-18 Hornet. Minutes into the flight, he notices low oil pressure in one of the two engines. He shuts it down. Then the light shows low fuel for the other engine. He's talking to air traffic control and given options and suggestions on where to make an emergency landing. He can go to the naval air station at North Island, the route to which takes him over San Diego Bay, or he can go to

²⁸⁴ Will you ever tell the movement you have led since 1991 how you have stumbled? Or will those stumbles remain concealed and covered up. I was amazed you asked Mark and Keith to share their stumbles when you were unwilling to share your own stumbles which we so much greater.

the Marine air station at Miramar, with which he is more familiar, but which takes him over heavily populated land. He goes for Miramar. The second engine flames out. About three miles from the runway, the electrical system dies. [He] tries to aim the jet toward a canyon, and ejects at what all seem to agree is the last possible moment.

'The jet crashed nose down in the University City neighborhood of San Diego, hitting two homes and damaging three. Four people, all members of a Korean immigrant family, were killed — [a wife Lee, two daughters, and her mother].

'Lee's husband, a grocer...was at work. The day after he'd lost his family, he humbled and awed San Diego by publicly forgiving the pilot — "I know he did everything he could" — and speaking of his faith — "I know God is taking care of my family."

'His grace and generosity were staggering, but there was growing local anger at the military. Why was the disabled plane over land? The Marines launched an investigation — of themselves. This past Wednesday the results were announced [two Wednesdays ago].

'They could not have been tougher, or more damning. The crash, said [a particular Maj. Gen.], the assistant wing commander for the Third Marine Aircraft Wing, was "clearly avoidable," the result of "a chain of wrong decisions." Mechanics had known since July of a glitch in the jet's fuel-transfer system; the Hornet should have been removed from service and fixed, and was not. The young pilot failed to read the safety checklist. He relied on guidance from Marines at Miramar who did not have complete knowledge or understanding of his situation. He should have been ordered to land at North Island. He took an unusual approach to Miramar, taking a long left loop instead of a shorter turn to the right, which ate up time and fuel.

'Twelve Marines were disciplined; four senior officers, including the squadron commander, were removed from duty. Their military careers are, essentially, over. The pilot is grounded while a board reviews his future.

'Residents told the San Diego Union-Tribune that they were taken aback by the report. Bob Johnson, who lived behind the [family] and barely escaped the crash, said, "The Marines aren't trying to hide from it or duck it. They took it on the chin." A retired Navy pilot who lives less than a block from the crash and had formed, with neighbors, a

group to push the Marines for an investigation, and for limiting flights over University City, said after the briefing, “I think we’re out of business.” In a later story the paper quoted a retired general, [who communicated that] the report [was] “as open and frank a discussion of an accident as I’ve seen.” “It was a lot more candid than many people expected.” [Then the next line. She writes there] wasn’t damage control, it was taking honest responsibility. And as such, in any modern American institution, it was stunning.’ (Peggy Noonan, The Wall Street Journal, March 6, 2009)

Now sadly that is stunning! It is stunning when anyone in any modern American institution takes honest responsibility. I want you to know, it should not be stunning when pastors take responsibility. It should be the norm. And in Sovereign Grace we are not about damage control. It would be a complete contradiction of this passage and what we believe about the doctrine of sin for us to engage in damage control. We do not engage in damage control. There will be no damage control in Sovereign Grace. We will seek to walk humbly before God and when we stumble we will not seek to engage in damage control.²⁸⁵ No, instead we will humbly acknowledge with sorrow that we stumbled – we stumbled.²⁸⁶ No damage control. We stumbled because we all stumble in many ways.

So listen. We shouldn’t be surprised when we fail in pastoral ministry, we shouldn’t be surprised when we fail for we all stumble in many ways. And listen carefully, we should not be condemned when we fail. We shouldn’t be surprised, we shouldn’t be condemned but we must acknowledge and we must learn from our failures.

So, here is what this afternoon is about. This afternoon we are just going to acknowledge a few of the ways we have stumbled – a few of the ways we have stumbled recently. Why? So that we can learn and so that others won’t stumble.²⁸⁷ And as I mentioned earlier, we are going to be addressed by two men who I deeply respect. These men have walked through humbling seasons. Humbling season where pastoral failures in the past have become evident²⁸⁸ and they are going to address us. These again are not moral failures, they are failures to humbly and wisely and effectively and compassionately shepherd²⁸⁹

²⁸⁵ It is hard to read these words knowing how often you engaged in damage control.

²⁸⁶ I hope and pray you will follow your own exhortation and share openly and honestly with Covenant Life Church and the movement.

²⁸⁷ There was so much all the pastors and wives in the movement could have learned from you at the Conference if you had humbled yourself. Instead they remain clueless to this day.

²⁸⁸ I think a lot was evident to you also.

²⁸⁹ Right down your alley.

the flock of God. Though not moral failures they are serious failures. I think they would both appear on the short list of failures we must avoid.

And I identify with these two men, I identify because I have stumbled in similar ways²⁹⁰ and if I haven't recently stumbled in these two particular ways its only because I'm older, not because I am more mature.²⁹¹

I've also had the privilege to observe both of these men up close and personal through this entire process of evaluation. I have been deeply affected by their example of humility in private. As they became aware of critique and offense they have become the object of correction and evaluation, they have humbled themselves, they have examined their hearts, they've been suspicious of their hearts, they have welcomed the correction of others, even when that correction has not been gently or humbly communicated. They have confessed their sin to God and to the appropriate individuals.²⁹² They have felt deep sadness and they are desirous of sharing with us what they have learned so I am very grateful for their humble desire to serve us and I know you are as well.

Here are some definitions from my outlines on "The Fifty Fruits of Pride." You may find them helpful.

- Deceit - 1. making a person believe as true something that is false 2. a dishonest trick; a lie spoken or acted 3. the quality in a person that makes him tell lies or cheat. Suggests a habit of trying to fool others by covering up or twisting the truth and giving the wrong idea of things.
- Pretense - an aim, an endeavor to arrive; applies to that which is falsely or deceitfully held out as real or true. Pretension - a claim, especially a claim, asserted or tacit, true or false (to something admirable); hence, any quality or feature that invites or aims to invite admiration or attention
- Hypocrite - one who plays a part; especially one who, for the purpose of winning approbation or favor, feigns to be other and better than he is; a false pretender of virtue or piety; one who simulates virtue or piety. Hypocrisy - the feigning of beliefs, feelings, or virtues that one does not hold or possess; insincerity.

²⁹⁰ Really? In what ways have you stumbled? This was the perfect opportunity to tell people rather than make a vague and undefined confession that sounded humble.

²⁹¹ But it was hardly a confession. It was more of a boast. Your stumbles were in the past. Nothing recently...but only because you were older. Wow.

²⁹² All things you consistently failed to do. That's what you should have shared with the pastors and wives.

The Effect on Our Extended Family

One day it would be nice to see you apologize to both sides of our extended family. They have followed my “career path” with Sovereign Grace Ministries for the last three decades. They were horrified to hear I was fired. They could make no sense of it knowing the extent of my devotion and sacrifice and also the high regard I’ve had for the ministry. It was offensive to them and the work of the gospel was harmed, especially in the minds of unbelieving family members, whom we’ve witnessed to for years. Some strongly recommended I sue Sovereign Grace. I certainly understand from their perspective. That would be the normal course of action in corporate America. Well, Jenny and I found it extremely difficult to explain what happened in a manner they would serve them. In this respect, I’m glad both my parents are deceased. Here was one of my attempts to help our dear relatives.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2011 4:32 PM
To: Extended Family
Subject: Personal Update

To Extended Family,

I thought it might be helpful to drop you a line and provide a little update on my circumstances.

In 1982, I had the privilege of starting Sovereign Grace Ministries (SGM) with three other men. Over the next 28 years, I was privileged to plant, lead and oversee churches in the US and abroad; found the Pastors College (the seminary) and serve on the Board of Directors. I have many fond memories.

In 2009, I resigned as senior pastor of the church I was leading and decided to leave SGM. That was a difficult but necessary decision. Two men in the church acted with great deceit and managed to influence other key players. This led to a bogus assessment of me that was horribly unjust. In the secular or corporate world, I could have filed/won a lawsuit for defamation with compensatory damages. I chose not to take this course out of love and concern for all the good people in the church.

This past year, I began to present charges in private with Sovereign Grace Ministries. Not for money but in order to rectify unethical practices in the organization by some of the leaders. I have pressed for public disclosure and accountability. To date I’ve been unsuccessful.

I consider this the most important work related assignment of my life.²⁹³ It has been difficult and tedious. I've produce over 300 pages of commentary and documentation. This has produced some acknowledgments of wrongdoing but they are insufficient and only in private. My most important concerns have gone unaddressed so far. I am currently working on an additional 300 pages of material.

So my work continues. The next few months are critical. I hope SGM will make confessions of wrong-doing to the public and appropriate reparations to Jenny and me. This effort has been time consuming and included interaction with a number of people who share my concerns and observations. They are looking to me for leadership.

At the end of 2010, I started a new non-profit corporation called Aletheia Ministries. Aletheia is the Greek word for truth. It is designed to provide me the legal auspices to consult, write, preach and teach as a charitable organization. I can also start a church if I choose to.

Jenny is working as you know. Having used up our savings, we are pulling money from our retirement account to make due. It is a challenging time, but I am confident we are doing the right thing. Sovereign Grace Ministries is a very influential organization in American. It is also doing some great things in the states and in many nations. Nevertheless, there are some serious flaws that I am addressing. I hope to be successful in helping them to change and strengthen their ethical foundations.

We have endured a considerable degree of suffering. Thanks for your support.

Love,
Brent

What Happen to the A Team?

Back in February of this year, I like many others received an eNews from Sovereign Grace Ministries. It featured various updates but also answered the question, "What happened to the apostolic team?" It was a good question but the answer was misleading. It was an example of spin for the sake of saving face. Here is the relevant excerpt from the eNews.

²⁹³ Why? I'm trying to strengthen and preserve the ministry I helped to build throughout the course of my adult life. My relationship with Larry Tomczak began in 1978. Then with C.J. in 1979. I graduated from seminary the same year. Since then I've worked in conjunction with Sovereign Grace Ministries. It's been my whole life.

From: Sovereign Grace Ministries
On Behalf Of Sovereign Grace Ministries
Sent: Tuesday, February 01, 2011 10:03 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Discounts on books and music, church planting updates, and more

eNews

“What happened to the apostolic team?”

Two members of Sovereign Grace churches recently wrote to us asking essentially the same question: does Sovereign Grace Ministries’ apostolic team still exist?

If you’re curious as well, or just want to know more about the structure Sovereign Grace Ministries has for training leaders and planting churches, read the answer we posted in response to those questions [below].

January 18, 2011 by Andrew Mahr

David and Marie, both members of Sovereign Grace churches, recently wrote to us asking essentially the same question: does Sovereign Grace Ministries’ apostolic team still exist? Below is an expanded version of our responses to them, posted here in case others in our churches have the same question.

The apostolic team, for those of you new to Sovereign Grace Ministries, was for many years what we called the team of pastors who help us facilitate church planting, international ministry, and church care. But over time, we discovered the name confused more people than it helped, so now we’re considering alternatives. We’ve also gained a better understanding of the term “apostolic,” which makes us even more careful in how we apply it. So for now, the team is more commonly just called the regional leadership team.

I wrote my wife and son the following e-mail.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, February 01, 2011 12:19 PM
To: Jenny Detwiler; Jonathan Detwiler
Subject: What Happen to the A Team

Check out “What happened to the apostolic team?” It is not a truthful answer. The apostolic team was comprised of men we believed were called as apostles, not just pastors, in keeping with the teaching of Eph 4:11, etc. The Statement of Faith makes this clear. It reads, “The ascended Christ has given gift ministries to the church (including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) for the equipping of Christ’s body that it might mature and grow. Through the gift ministries all members of the Church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry.” Sovereign Grace no longer believes in present day apostles and I presume prophets. The five fold ministry is out. The three fold ministry is in.

What concerned me the most was the effect such an explanation would have upon discerning readers who have been a part of the movement for more than five years. It would undermine your credibility. Except for you; Dave, Steve and I all gave up our pastorates in order to fulfill our calling as apostles. We were not a team of pastors. We were a team of apostles. We were an apostolic team. Not a pastoral team.

Since then Sovereign Grace’s understanding of apostles continues to fluctuate. I’m still not sure if you believe in apostles and prophets per Ephesians 4:11, etc. If you don’t, the Statement of Faith must be changed. But this much I know, when I stepped down from the apostolic team in November 2007, none of us thought of ourselves as a pastoral team.

Sovereign Grace Ministries can change its ecclesiology and polity, but it should not misrepresent the past. Instead be honest. Just say we believed in apostles then, we don’t believe in them anymore. In the past we called it a team of apostles, now we call it a team of pastors.

In Reformed and evangelical circles it is unacceptable to refer to oneself as an apostle or prophet. Those gift ministries have ended according to their theology. But let’s not try to save face in those circles by spinning our understanding of the apostolic team in the past.

Now a days, you refer to yourself as the President and to Dave, Jeff and Joshua as Directors. In my opinion, Sovereign Grace Ministries has become a para-church organization because it no longer has a clear biblical justification for its existence. The five-fold ministry has folded.

Joshua Harris' Humility & C.J.'s Absence at CLC Members Meeting

It's been encouraging to observe Joshua's leadership approach and acknowledgment of wrong doing in contrast to your own. Here is the transcript he provided on the CLC website (www.covlife.org/meeting_notes/) from the May 22, 2011 Members Meeting. I've added underlining and comments via footnotes. Without question you should have been present to commend Joshua and to acknowledge these mistakes were primarily a reflection of you and your leadership. They happened on your watch and during your mentoring of Joshua. It's hard to believe you did not participate in the meeting and ask forgiveness of the church. This should have been a top priority for you. As I listened to Joshua's message I thought to myself, "Where's Waldo? Oh my, he's nowhere in the picture!" God bless Joshua – he took the hit and acted as your fall guy.

Introduction

It's not easy to evaluate areas where we've made mistakes, but God has been helping the pastors of Covenant Life through the constructive feedback of members identify areas where we've gotten things wrong and need to grow. At our Members Meeting Sunday night Josh shared the following message on behalf of the pastors. We're posting it here—both an audio version along with a full transcript—for the benefit of those who couldn't attend as well as former members. We hope you'll be encouraged as you see God's faithfulness to refine us and grow us.

May 22, 2011 | Joshua Harris

Welcome, everyone. Thank you so much for making this gathering a priority. If this is your first Members Meeting, we are so happy to have you with us. For those of you who have been to many of these, let me say at the outset that the format of tonight's meeting is going to be different than past times. Normally we share a number of different announcements and updates, but tonight I'm going to share some important things God has been showing the pastors about where we've gotten things wrong and where we believe we need to grow as leaders and as a church.

At the last members meeting I told you that we'd been receiving feedback from members about changes they'd seen in the church that hadn't been fully

explained. This led to the decision to hold several meetings at my house²⁹⁴ to hear the concerns and questions of members.

I am so grateful for the men and women of this church who have sat down with me and other pastors to help us evaluate our leadership. We had three meetings at my house this winter with nearly 80 people total, and we've also met with different individuals and couples one-on-one. People have shared honestly and courageously and also lovingly. I've experienced first-hand the truth of Proverbs 27:6 that says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." God has used these honest conversations²⁹⁵ to help us.

It's so important to me and all the pastors that this open dialogue continues. This can't be a limited season; it must be an ongoing way of life at Covenant Life. It's essential for the health of our church that you know you can talk to your pastors and share questions and concerns at *any time*. For many of you, coming to us with questions or concerns has been your consistent practice. And for years our Care Group leaders have helped to facilitate an awareness among the pastors of the needs, strengths, and weaknesses they or other members have perceived. I'm grateful for the way they've served. But we've never wanted any member to hesitate to approach us. Sadly, several people have told me that they haven't felt like they could do this.²⁹⁶ It grieves me that anyone has felt this way. We want that to change. Please don't hesitate to bring any concern or question. Please don't wait for an invitation or a special occasion.

One of the things that has been most encouraging about this process is that many of the points we've heard from members have lined up with and clarified things that God was already helping us see. I share this not to imply that we already had this figured out, but to highlight what I believe is a work of the Holy Spirit. This church belongs to God. 1 Peter 5:4 tells us that Jesus is the "chief Shepherd." And I see him shepherding us, growing us and refining us. And that's why, even though it's not easy to talk about our mistakes, I have a tremendous sense of faith for how God is working in our church.

So please understand that what I'm sharing tonight is not a matter of one group of people coming to the pastors with their observations. It's something bigger than that. I believe God is answering our prayer that he would revive us and refine us. Is there anything we need more than that?

²⁹⁴ These three meetings were an expression of true humility. Not just the fact they took place, but more importantly, how Joshua led the meetings and made it easy for people to share their concerns.

²⁹⁵ Something so difficult for anyone to do with you including fellow pastors.

²⁹⁶ Joshua's doesn't explain why.

I want to read something to you from Ray Ortlund's book *When God Comes to Church*. This is a book on revival, and this particular quote has both challenged me and stirred my faith greatly over the past eight months...

Commenting on Isaiah 64:1 ("Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down..."), Ray Ortlund writes:

When God rends the heavens and comes down on his people, a divine power achieves what human effort at its best fails to do. God's people thirst for the ministry of the Word and receive it with tender meltings of soul ... Reconciliation between believers is sought and granted. Spiritual things, rather than material things, capture people's hearts. A defensive, timid church is transformed into a confident army. Believers joyfully suffer for their Lord. They treasure usefulness to God over career advancement. Communion with God is avidly enjoyed. *Churches and Christian organizations reform their policies and procedures*. People who had always been indifferent to the gospel now inquire anxiously. And this type of spiritual movement draws in not just the isolated straggler here and there but large numbers of people. A wave of divine grace washes over the church and spills out into the world. That is what happens when God comes down. And that is how we should pray for the church today.

I've seen a desire for reconciliation, a willingness for self-evaluation, and a quickness to own mistakes; I believe all of these things reflect the work of the Spirit. And I see the Lord working to reform our church and grow us in ways that are needed.

As we learned in our study of Nehemiah, *God* is at work when his people rise up with faith to rebuild the walls.

When we started the Nehemiah series, I had no idea how much that study would challenge me personally and mirror what I believe God is doing in Covenant Life. Just like Nehemiah and the people of Israel, I believe God has led us into a time of honest evaluation of the condition of the walls of our church.

Friends, by God's grace, we have a strong, healthy, influential and growing church. There is so much to celebrate. I thank God that we love his Word and are seeking to center our lives on the gospel. I thank God that in so many ways we are united. I thank God that there is a real commitment to pursue holiness. I thank God for the depth of relationships and fellowship that we enjoy. I thank God that we're pushing forward in gospel mission in our local community, and

in partnership with Sovereign Grace, around the world. God has been so good to us. And we would dishonor him if we didn't recognize that and give him all the glory! I'm so grateful for all the service, leadership and sacrifice that have brought us to this point.

But gratefulness for grace doesn't mean we overlook areas of weakness. The Holy Spirit has also been helping us see places where the walls need repair. This shouldn't surprise us or overly discourage us. We're not in heaven yet. Covenant Life isn't the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God! We're flawed, sinful people whom God is changing. So we don't need to be shocked when we realize that there are still places where God wants to apply grace to grow and transform us. There are areas we need to strengthen. There are places where we need to acknowledge we've gotten things wrong. I don't think this process is negative or counter-productive. It's certainly not an indictment of our rich history. It's simply an acknowledgment of our ongoing need for gospel transformation and renewal. And I believe it is a vital part of ongoing growth and ongoing integrity for any local church.²⁹⁷

This won't be the last time we have to do this. I assure you this won't be the last time we get things wrong. In future days, by God's grace, we'll no doubt see areas of our church that need realignment and refinement, and we'll need to talk about them as a church family. This isn't a bad thing. It's a very healthy part of life together.

So let me share several key issues that I think God has been putting his finger on. I'm going to put these under three headlines that are an attempt to summarize the issues...

1. Reducing To One Practice

For several years now C.J. Mahaney, who was one of the founding pastors of Covenant Life and now serves as president of Sovereign Grace Ministries, has been leading the pastors of Sovereign Grace to recognize the difference between principle and practice.²⁹⁸ A principle is a clear teaching or imperative from God's Word. A practice is a specific action or decision that seeks to apply a principle.

²⁹⁷ Joshua is willing to do what you have been unwilling to do. That is "acknowledge we're gotten things wrong...a vital part of ongoing growth and ongoing integrity." I am glad he sees the connection between confession and integrity. I hope he presses you for the same as one member of the SGM Board of Directors.

²⁹⁸ I'm glad Joshua acknowledged the helpful role you played the last "several years" but you should have made clear to CLC that the blurring between principle and practice was primarily due to your leadership, writing and teaching.

So for example, Scripture clearly teaches that husbands should love and cherish their wives (Eph. 5).

But *how* two Christian husbands put this same principle into practice can differ. One Christian can apply this principle by taking his wife out to dinner every Wednesday. But another husband might find time to communicate with and express affection for his wife with a walk around the neighborhood each night. They're both honoring a biblical principle, but their practice is different.

One of the historic strengths of Covenant Life has been in putting principles into practice. We want to be, as James 1:22 says, not just hearers of the Word, but *doers* of the Word. May this never change! May we be a church community that takes God's Word seriously and applies it to our lives.

Having said this, a strength in application can also be a weakness if we're not careful. Here's what I mean: if we elevate a single practice and invest it with the authority of biblical principle, we can place a rule or burden on people that isn't actually commanded in God's Word. For example, it wouldn't be helpful if we said that the Bible teaches that couples need to go on a date every Wednesday. It's a fine idea, but it's not a scriptural command.

C.J. shared something with me recently that turned the light on for me. He quoted J.I. Packer who wrote that the Puritans were known for their ability to "reduce to practice" – in other words, they took biblical principles and reduced them to specific choices and decisions in their lives. This is a good thing. God's Word, handled rightly, leads to humble and skillful application.

But C.J. pointed out that there can be a problem when we "reduce to only one practice" – and give the impression that there is only one godly way to honor a given principle.

Here are a few categories²⁹⁹ that members of the church have shared with us where they felt a single practice was over-emphasized in an unhelpful way:

- Dating and courtship
- Going away to college
- Girls and college
- Women's Bible studies
- Women working outside the home³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Joshua didn't include the "Modesty Check" list developed by you and Carolyn. In my opinion, it was the most "legalistic" thing ever produced and distributed Sovereign Grace churches. I mentioned this example in RRF&D on pages 110 & 115. Why wasn't it included on this list? Don't get me wrong, I am very grateful for the wisdom contained in such materials.

In each of these areas Christians can have differing practices and yet honor biblical principles. But in various ways I think we “reduced to only one practice,” and at times that brought the unintended consequence of people feeling the pressure that there was only one truly godly way to do things.

So for example, to honor biblical principles of purity, you had to practice courtship according to ideas in my books. Or to love the local church you shouldn’t go away to college but stay local. Or to value the leadership and teaching of the pastors, you shouldn’t attend outside Bible studies. Or to practice biblical femininity, you shouldn’t pursue higher education or work outside the home.³⁰¹

If you went back and listened to past messages, I don’t think you’d find us teaching, “There’s only one godly way to do this or that.” But we could have worked harder to highlight the differing viewpoints that still honored the principle.

So for example, there were occasions where we featured testimonies of people who passed up job opportunities or the chance to attend an out-of-state college for the sake of staying involved in this local church. These testimonies were designed to highlight sacrificial choices members made for the sake of participation in the church.

But we should have also featured testimonies of people who were glorifying God by excelling in their studies and in advancement in their careers even as they prioritized involvement in any other Bible-believing church. As pastors we allowed a culture to be created where the godly way was too narrowly defined.

All this is a disservice to you for several reasons. First, because it doesn’t teach you to grapple with God’s Word for yourself. We want you to study God’s Word yourself, see the biblical principles clearly, and put them into practice based on a clear conviction, not the conviction of someone else.

³⁰⁰ The practices developed and implemented over years in these five categories occurred while you were the sr. pastor. For instance, *Feminine Appeal* was first printed in 2003.

³⁰¹ All of this was built into the church under your tenure as senior pastor and spilled over into your discipleship of Joshua after you turned the church over to him in September, 2004. Here is a quote from the transition article, “I Believe God Has Provided the Best by Ken McIntyre and Shelley Reinhart. “None of us was quite prepared for the news announced by C.J. Mahaney, the only senior pastor Covenant Life has ever known, at our Family Meeting the evening of Nov. 16, 2003! Joshua Harris, who has trained under C.J. for more than six years and served as executive pastor for the past two and a half years, will assume the role of senior pastor in September 2004. ‘I will continue to train Joshua. My job’s not done, folks.’ C.J. said, to appreciative laughter. ‘I will continue to train Josh.’”

This is also a problem because it can lead to a legalistic environment where some people are more concerned with what other people practice than with the sufficiency of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reducing to only one practice has also resulted in people feeling judged by others for not having the same practice.

One of the realizations we're coming to as pastors is that we can do a better job in teaching the principle of Christian liberty taught in passages like Romans 14 and 1 Cor. 8-9. The principle of Christian liberty is that as followers of Christ we have freedom to make decisions about matters that are not revealed or mandated in Scripture without fear of sinning against God.

We can do a better job of teaching that one person's or one pastor's practice of wisdom is not God's law and shouldn't bind another person's conscience.

We all need to wrestle with questions of wisdom. We all need to humbly seek to practice biblical principles and then discuss our differences with each other charitably and humbly. But we cannot as a church make everyone adopt the same practice. No matter how wise we think our practice might be, we can't invest it with the authority of God's Word.

We want to do a better job of teaching the principles of God's Word and encouraging you as individuals and families to apply the Word as you see fit before the Lord. We still want to encourage each other to put God's truth into practice. But we also want to emphasize the freedom we have as individuals and families to have different practices of the very same principle. We want to cultivate an even greater culture of grace even as we strive for holiness.

As a team of pastors³⁰² we are committed to growing in this area. We've spoken with people who have shared where they were negatively affected by this, and we've asked their forgiveness. If you're someone who has any experience or circumstance that you'd like to talk about with us, we would love to sit down with you, listen to you, and wherever necessary ask your forgiveness as well.

³⁰² Do you agree with the CLC pastors that they erred and needed to ask forgiveness of people? Or put another way, do you fully agree with Joshua's conclusions and comments in this transcript. I am just wondering why you have taken no responsibility for these mistakes in public.

2. Good Parents = Good Kids

This issue is closely tied to the issue of practice. In various ways, especially in the area of parenting, I think at times we have slid into the mistake of trusting practice more than God and his faithfulness.

And the basic lie we've been tempted to believe is that if you get all your practice right—if you parent right, discipline right and train right—then your kids will turn out right. In other words *good parents = good kids*.

Well, as most of us know, this just isn't true. And it's unhelpful on many levels. In fact even the label "good kids" is an unhelpful one that focuses more on outward behavior and image. Even many so-called "good kids" can be struggling with unseen spiritual struggles. The reality is that, like us, all of our kids are in process and need the power of God to save them and transform them day by day.

Now I don't think the "good parents = good kids" idea has characterized our teaching on parenting, and I don't think every pastor or leader has made this mistake. I'm grateful for the good fruit that's been born over the years from the biblical teaching on parenting here.

But I know that I have made this mistake and often carried this wrong mentality. And there are many negative results to this wrong thinking:

- Fear-driven parenting
- Pride and self-righteousness when our kids are doing well
- Condemnation and shame when our kids struggle or stray
- Judgment toward those whose kids are struggling³⁰³

Please don't misunderstand. Parenting matters. God rewards faithfulness and diligence. I'm not suggesting we should minimize the importance of instructing, training and disciplining our kids—it's clearly commanded in God's Word.

But we need to do this trusting in the Lord and recognizing that we cannot control our children's hearts or save them. We can do our best and be faithful, and our children can still choose to sin and rebel against God.

There are some of you who have felt judged by others when your kids struggled. Instead of feeling loved you felt critiqued. I'm sorry for this. I know my leadership has contributed to this.

³⁰³ What responsibility do you bear for these bad fruits?

Over the years, a number of the pastors have faced significant parenting challenges during the teenage years. In one of those cases, I can see now that I did a poor job caring for my brother.

In an attempt to care for him, I began to focus on trying to point out what he did wrong in his parenting. I was placing my hope in a parent's obedience rather than the sovereign grace of God to save the child. This was a lack of love for him. When I should have been caring for this brother, I was correcting him. I've asked for his forgiveness for my wrongly placed hope and my poor leadership, and he has graciously forgiven me. Reviewing this with him as a pastoral team has helped us to see ways that we trusted parental faithfulness more than we relied on the gospel of grace.

But I'm sure there are others of you who to differing degrees have experienced the same thing—whether from pastors or from other members of the church. Parents in the church have shared that when their child rebelled, they felt isolated and abandoned instead of cared for and surrounded. They felt labeled as “bad parents” and marginalized in their involvement. And when their child was labeled a “bad kid,” other parents withdrew from them and sought to protect their children from them.

Many times we emphasized Proverbs 13:20—“...the companion of fools will suffer harm”—but have not adequately emphasized the truth of passages like Luke 15:4 that show that Jesus goes looking for the lost sheep.

So at many times we've been more focused on protecting our so-called “good kids” from the so-called “bad kids” rather than expressing God's great love and compassion for all of our children.

We want to acknowledge that we've often done a poor job of caring for and pursuing young adults³⁰⁴ in this church who were struggling spiritually or wandering. We are seeking, with God's help, to change. We want to be like our Savior who came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). We want to obey 1 Thessalonians 5:14 that tells us to “admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.”

Please forgive us for any time we failed to care for and comfort you as you watched your child struggle. Forgive us for ways we failed to more actively pursue children that were wayward. We want you to know we are praying

³⁰⁴ Does this reflect your tendency to distance yourself and withdrawal from people? What responsibility do you accept for the “poor job of caring for and pursuing young adults” who wandered?

with you for them and want to hear if there are any steps we can take to reach out to them. And again, if you'd like to meet with a pastor to talk about your specific experience, please contact us. Wherever we can we'd want to talk with you personally.

In our church, the past 10 years have seen the first generation of kids come into adulthood. We've all learned a lot in the process. As our children have passed through their teen years, I think we have all grown in our realization that good parental training doesn't guarantee "good" kids. It's an incredible mercy if our teens don't wallow in the mire ... and even if they do, that's not the end of the story. God is mighty to save! He delights in rescuing those who have strayed! Rather than expending all our energy seeking to keep our kids from straying (and judging those who do), may God help us all learn to parent with a persevering hope in the gospel to do what we can never do in our own strength.

3. Disciplinary Consequences at Covenant Life School

Many of the concerns shared by members in the meetings we've had stemmed from their experiences with Covenant Life School. For those of you who may be unfamiliar with our school, let me provide some brief background information.

Covenant Life School opened its doors in 1979 with the goal of providing a distinctly Christian education for families in our church. It has provided an outstanding education for hundreds of students, and we couldn't be more proud of both our staff and the quality of students.

As the school grew in size and scope, it consistently expected and enforced high standards of behavior. In cases where students fell significantly short of these standards, disciplinary decisions were made by the School Board, which consisted of school administrators and pastors.

With the addition of a high school program in 1995 came bigger disciplinary issues and more serious disciplinary consequences. You probably aren't surprised to know that teens raised in strong Christian homes still struggled with temptations to sin. It was common for the Board to expel one or more students during the course of a school year.

All of the administrators and pastors involved in these decisions at the time would have felt they were being faithful to uphold biblical standards of conduct. The School Board made its decisions with the knowledge and support

of the pastoral team³⁰⁵ and sought to communicate genuine care and concern for the families involved.

But after evaluating the fruit of the school's disciplinary practices over 15 years and receiving honest and gracious input from many members, we have come to see that in some cases our disciplinary consequences were unnecessarily strong, and the effects on those we disciplined were more painful and costly than we realized.³⁰⁶

While rightly concerned about protecting the spiritual health of the school community, we as pastors could have done far more to demonstrate care for the individuals being disciplined, and for their families. Removing them and their negative influence from the school community was seen as an urgent priority; restoring them to the school and church community was not. Once they were gone, we as pastors had no clear strategy for pursuing them in love. The result is that they felt cut off from the school, and consequently from the church. As a result, very few of those students who were removed from the school ever returned. Very few are members of our church today. It sobers and saddens us deeply to know that our practices tempted students to feel cut off from the Lord and his grace.

By God's grace, we have been able to speak with many of these students and their families directly. They have been amazingly quick to forgive. Each conversation has only strengthened our commitment to practice school discipline more wisely, more patiently, and more redemptively in the future.

A number of changes have already been implemented over the past several years. We have involved parents more consistently in the process of evaluating and correcting student behavior. We have modified disciplinary consequences that were excessive. We have added several parent members to our School Board to ensure that school policies and practices benefit from their vital perspective. And we have grown significantly in expressing God's redeeming love for students before, during and after the disciplinary process. I think we are moving in the right direction.

If you're a parent or a student who would like to sit down and discuss any past issue in the school, please contact one of the pastors. We would be happy to revisit any issue and hear your perspective.

³⁰⁵ The school was an extension of pastoral care for the training of sons and daughters of church members. You were ultimately responsible for the mistakes Joshua's acknowledges.

³⁰⁶ Much of this happened on your watch and with your knowledge and/or involvement.

Our prayer is that Covenant Life School would thrive as a community of grace where our sons and daughters – all sinners like us – are supported and encouraged as they grow up into Christ. When they stumble, we want to help them regain their footing and press on toward the prize. And if some are disqualified from attendance because of their sin, we will do all in our power to assure them of our love, our commitment, and our vision for their return.

Conclusion

Those are my three categories. But let me take a moment to express my regret to you on behalf of your pastors.³⁰⁷

Where our leadership was characterized by these patterns—in ways that I’ve shared and in ways I haven’t fully seen— we want to ask you to forgive us. We’ve been wrong. Deficiencies in our leadership have been hurtful to some of you. We are very sorry. Please forgive us.³⁰⁸

There are people who have left Covenant Life over the years in part because of the very areas we’re talking about. I know many people who have grown up here whose walk with God has been significantly hindered by these issues. I want to try and get this apology out to them. We’re going to have the audio of tonight’s message available online and hope you’ll pass it along to anyone who needs to hear it.

And if you’re one of these people, and you’re listening to this sometime in the future, please hear this: we’re asking for your forgiveness, too. And we sincerely pray that our failures as pastors and our failures as a local church will not hinder you from trusting in the perfect Savior Jesus Christ. If you’re thriving in your faith in another church, we praise God. But if you’re not walking with Jesus, and in some way our practice and example has distorted your view of Jesus, please forgive us and please turn back to him.

I realize you may never love Covenant Life or come back to this church, but I hope that you will come back to Jesus if you’ve strayed. And I want you to know that we would love to have you join us again at Covenant Life as we seek to grow in grace together. By the power of the gospel of grace, we are committed to growing and changing with God’s help.

³⁰⁷ Including C.J.? Nope – you resigned in September 2004.

³⁰⁸ Unless you disagree with Joshua and the CLC pastors, you should also be publically acknowledging wrong-doing and asking for forgiveness. In many cases people’s offenses are with you. People need to hear from you regarding reducing to one practice, good parents = good kids, and disciplinary consequences at Covenant Life School. That is of course, unless you feel you’ve done nothing wrong.

For everyone here tonight and anyone listening, if you want to sit down with any of the pastors and talk about any specific circumstances from the past, please contact any of the pastors. We would love to do that.

I recognize that this apology doesn't fix anything if you've been hurt, but I pray that God will use it to bring healing and closure for you.

What This Doesn't Mean

I realize that some of what I've shared may raise questions or even concerns for some. Maybe you'd say, "I never experienced what you're describing." I'm very glad if that's the case. I think we all need to remember that in a church our size different people will have different experiences based on factors like the age of our children and the circumstances of our lives. What's most important for me to state is that the basic values of our church are not changing at all.

Let me state as clearly as possible what all this "doesn't mean."

1. It doesn't mean we're saying everything we've done in the past has been wrong. There's so much grace we can celebrate in our church!
2. It doesn't mean we're going to care less about holiness. We need to be challenged by the Word of God. But we also need to help each other cultivate conviction by studying God's Word for ourselves.
3. It doesn't mean that wisdom and godly practice don't matter. But how we relate to each other when we disagree is an important area in which we can grow. So we're going to study in the coming days what Scripture teaches about Christian freedom, how to relate to people with different standards, and how to avoid self-righteousness even as we hold up biblical standards for righteousness.
4. It doesn't mean that everything is fixed, and now we have perfect church. I wish it did! But we will continue to need to mature. We will continue to need to be refined by God's Word. We as your pastors will continue to need your input, feedback and questions. We will still make mistakes.

Where Do We Go From Here?

I'm glad to say that in many of these areas we have already been growing and changing. Part of the reason this statement tonight is important is because we need to publicly acknowledge³⁰⁹ where we're seeking to change so that we can better press ahead. This is another area where I've realized my leadership

³⁰⁹ I hope you follow their example.

needs to improve. At times we've changed our practices, but I've not clearly explained why.³¹⁰

I've not clearly stated where we realize we've gotten things wrong. I'm sorry it's taken me so long to see this and share this with you. But here we are ... better late than never!

It's a funny thing. I've never been more aware of my deficiencies as a leader. And yet I've never had more faith for the future of Covenant Life Church. I am so honored to serve as one of your pastors. I feel God humbling me, and yet I am more aware of his presence and his grace than ever.

He is with us. He is doing good to us. He is disciplining us because he loves us. And I believe he is positioning us to be more faithful and effective in the mission of reaching lost people with the gospel. All the areas that I've shared with you tonight are areas in which changing and growing will help us better welcome and disciple unbelievers.

God is not helping us see our mistakes to rub our noses in our failure—he is moving us forward in our mission. He is refining us so that we can better reflect and display the glories of the gospel. He is refining us so that we can be a church where people encounter grace and love and compassion. He is at work for his glory and our good.

Having listened to Joshua's message, I wrote to encourage and thank him.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2011 11:49 AM
To: Joshua Harris
Subject: Members' Meeting

Excellent job last night. Your honesty and humility were refreshing. I am sure people appreciated your candor and openness.

I also wrote him about some folks in the church who were struggling and added some other reflections on his leadership.

³¹⁰ So true under your leadership of Sovereign Grace Ministries. Not only changes in practices but changes in theology having repeatedly gone unexplained or been inadequately explained or been explained years after the fact. I always appealed for timely and candid explanations to the movement or pastors. I thought integrity (and wisdom) necessitated explanations. To the best of my recollection each of those appeals were denied. For instance when you changed your pneumatology and position on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, singing in the Sprit, prophecy, the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom, etc.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2011 1:25 PM
To: Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Members' Meeting

I hope you can win them or at least help them. It appears their offenses are largely with C.J. Thanks again for holding the meetings in your home and soliciting the input of critics, then processing it, then reporting on your findings in a God honoring fashion. Great leadership.

C.J.'s Blackmailing of Larry Tomczak

On May 15, 1997, Larry wrote a humble and honest confession to all the members in PDI churches (now Sovereign Grace Ministries) acknowledging his need to take step down from the apostolic team and take a leave of absence as senior pastor of City Church in Atlanta.

May 15, 1997

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord!

Charles Spurgeon, pastor and evangelist, once made this statement "Failure at a crucial moment may mar the entire outcome of a life." The truth of this statement is most real to me at this time as I want to share some significant dealings of God in my life.³¹¹

Recently, the Holy Spirit, through the gentle and consistent correction of many, has been bringing illumination to me concerning a number of sinful areas in my life. I am starting to see my blindness and sins, especially in the area of pride. Over the years, others have repeatedly sought to address these issues in my life, but sadly, I have not responded to God in humility or embraced their correction in repentance. I have not been teachable and therefore made it difficult for them. Looking back, I am sorrowful for how I have hurt God and so thankful for the forbearance that has been shown me and the mercy that has been extended to me.

³¹¹ I hope you will do the same.

By God's grace, I am beginning to see the ways the depravity and deceitfulness of sin in my heart has expressed itself in my life. This has occurred primarily through the agency of others. I have had the benefit of receiving input from my friends and fellow leaders in PDI, many of us having served together for over 20 years. I am especially grateful to C.J. Mahaney, Steve Shank, and Paul Palmer of the apostolic team and Larry Malament who serves with me in local leadership. Without their patient care and counsel, I do not believe I would be seeing many of the things God is revealing. How I need them and thank God for faithful friends!

Jonathan Edwards in his tract on "The Necessity of Self-examination" (1788) stated the following:

Consider what others may say of you. Sometimes people live in ways that are not at all appropriate, yet they are blind to it themselves. They do not see their own shortcomings though the faults are perfectly plain and evident to others. They themselves cannot see their failings yet others cannot shut their eyes or avoid seeing where they fall short.... There is no trusting our own hearts or our own eyes in such cases, so we must hear what others say of us, observe what they charge us with, heed what fault they find with us, and strictly examine whether there is some foundation for it.... We should especially listen to what our friends say to us and about us. It is foolhardy as well as un-Christian to take offense and resent it when we are thus told of our faults. 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy' (Prov. 27:6). We should rejoice that we are shown our spots.

I am grateful to God that over the past two months, he has providentially placed me in the position to be "shown my spots" (sins) in a way that is grievous to me, yet obviously orchestrated by God. "You hem me in--behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain" (Psalm 139:5-6).

What are the sins God is currently revealing in my life?³¹²

- Pride - Manifested in many ways: Serious and long-standing deficiency in conviction and confession of sin; failure to discern the motivations of my heart; and a sinful desire to be recognized by others and do things to preserve and promote my reputation.
- Selfishness - Making decisions motivated by the sinful desire to impress others and not risk losing their admiration.

³¹² While not detailed, I respect Larry for the specificity contained in these four categories.

- Deficiencies in the Family - Not effectively training my children in the Lord. Focusing more on external behavior and attitudes and missing many critical issues of the heart in their lives.
- Lying - Being deceitful and submitting to fear by concealing sins and problems areas in the family.

Because of the above, my friends and fellow leaders have rightly expressed a lack of trust and confidence in my leadership. I agree completely. As a ministry, we have always embraced biblical standards for leaders, especially that we are to be “above reproach” (1 Timothy 3:2), which I am not at this time.

Therefore, it is right and necessary for me to step down from the apostolic team and fulfill what is a mutual decision to take a leave of absence as senior pastor of City Church for six to twelve months.³¹³ This will enable me to address the areas of concern in a redemptive and concentrated manner and, Lord willing, regain trust to return to service in a manner God sees fit. Ultimately, the timing of my return will be determined by the apostolic team and the local leadership as they observe and confirm genuine change in my life.³¹⁴

For our local church in Atlanta, Larry Malament will serve as senior pastor in my absence, assisted by George Harrington and Todd Twining who are the two men currently being developed in leadership. Larry has been a faithful friend throughout this process. I am greatly indebted to him. I am also confident Larry will do an excellent job along with the other men. Furthermore, Steve Shank of the PDI apostolic team will be assuming oversight of the church. Steve’s wisdom, love, counsel, and correction have been a wonderful means of God’s grace and mercy.

It is critical that everyone actively resist any temptation to drift into speculation or suspicion. I totally agree with the course of action we are taking and view it as God’s mercy for me and my family. This leave of absence is an undeserved expression of mercy by the leaders involved in this decision.

C.J. Mahaney, who has been my dear friend for over two decades, has done a wonderful job in skillfully and compassionately steering us through this process. More than anyone, he has helped me to see the issues at hand and encouraged my heart in the Lord. I could never adequately thank him. I also want to honor all the apostolic team members for their forbearance, care and input throughout. I only wish each of you reading this letter could have

³¹³ I wish you had been as humble as Larry. You were profoundly offended at the notion of confessing to a larger group (let alone the movement like Larry) or stepping down as the team leader.

³¹⁴ Larry later regretted the inclusion of this statement. He reneged on this commitment four months later by letter on Sept 13 and in person on Sept 24 when we met in Atlanta.

personally witnessed our recent meetings firsthand to experience the character of the men involved. Without question, our Lord was pleased and His presence was evident throughout our time together.

C.J. asked me to make it clear to you in this letter that there is no immorality, marital discord, or financial impropriety on my part and no “untold story” in this matter.

My wife Doris has been right at my side throughout this time of God’s dealing. I can’t express in words what this woman of God means to me and how much I love her after 21 years of marriage. She is doing fine and has no question that this is God’s will.

In this defining moment in my life, I ask for your prayers on my behalf and for all those involved in this matter. I am regretful first to God, then to my family, and finally to all of you that I have fallen short of being the man of God I am committed to be. The men around me have been gracious to forgive me. I ask for your forgiveness.³¹⁵ My commitment is to honor God, my family, and fellow leaders as I grow through this process. I want to emerge a changed man, better able to serve God and His people and ultimately finish well for the glory of God. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Grateful for the grace and mercy of God, I am your servant,

Larry Tomczak

C.J.’s Letter to PDI Pastors Regarding Larry – May 19, 1997

Here is your cover letter to all the pastors accompanying Larry’s confession.

May 19, 1997

Dear [Pastor],

I trust this notes find you enjoying God’s grace.

This week the members of your congregation will be receiving the enclosed letter from Larry Tomczak informing them of disciplinary action that was necessary this past Sunday. I believe you will find Larry’s letter to be clear and

³¹⁵ Something you need to do also.

complete, but if you have any questions, please call the appropriate team member.

On Sunday I met with the Atlanta church for this announcement and the meeting was very effective. Afterward, a first time quest expressed to me how deeply affected he was. And a member of the church said to me, "That was the most profound demonstration of integrity³¹⁶ I've seen in 21 years of being a Christian." There seemed to be a wonderful combination of the fear of the Lord and the mercy of God both during and after the meeting.

Please pray for Larry Tomczak and his family. Pray as well for Larry Malament, George Harrington, and Todd Twinning. These three men have been exemplary in their character and their care throughout this process. Finally, pray for Steve Shank who has been involved from the beginning and has served this church so effectively throughout this time in a way I will always be grateful for.

With my respect,

C.J.

Unfortunately, Larry broke his commitment to this restorative process just four months into it. On September 13, he wrote to tell us he was leaving PDI due to "a clear change in direction and doctrinal emphasis," the negative effect our "Calvinistic/Reformed" doctrine was having upon his family, and disagreement with our "evaluation of [his] ministry and calling." You responded to him as follows.

September 18, 1997

Dear Larry,

Even though we will be meeting next week, I wanted to write and communicate how sad I am to receive your letter and hear of your desire to leave us. I will certainly do all I can to persuade you to reconsider as I do not believe this would be God's will in light of our history together and the future we have anticipated. You have articulated this commitment countless times.

Please know that if you do leave, (the thought is so grieving and almost inconceivable to me), it cannot be due to doctrinal differences. Your [September 13] letter is a serious (slanderous actually, in its present form) misrepresentation of both the attitude and doctrinal position of the team. And

³¹⁶ I agree. I just wish the same were true with you. Integrity requires a confession to the movement.

there are those within PDI who hold a similar position as yours and they see no reason to leave having only experienced the support of the team in the midst of disagreement. No, trying to walk away due to supposed doctrinal disagreements is simply not legitimate. It appears to be fabricated to avoid the real issue.

The only point on which we have serious disagreement at present is whether you are qualified to return to ministry at this time. No one on the team or any of those in leadership in City Church believes that you are and the contents of this letter would provide further confirmation of our assessment. Larry, we all want you to return to ministry and are committed to this end but we would not be obeying God or serving you by allowing this to occur before the serious sin which has been revealed in our heart and life and which you have at least acknowledge is sufficiently addressed. Not only is 4 months not sufficient time for the changes necessary but everyone involved would agree that you have not even demonstrated to date a clear perception of sin in your life much less the changes necessary to serve in ministry. To seek counsel and encouragement to leave PDI and return to ministry from those outside PDI and to refuse to inform us of this action or tell us who these individuals are is not only a clear and sinful lack of integrity on your part it would also reveal your motivation to avoid this wise, caring and necessary discipline in your life. And to attempt to describe your separation as due to doctrinal differences is simply not true. Larry, when you are ready to return to ministry cannot be your call. Given the sin revealed in your life and how imperceptive you have been, you are in no position to declare yourself mature and ready to return.³¹⁷

I am looking forward to our time together on Wednesday. I am praying for God's mercy and wisdom to be evident in our time together. I am praying that you will recognize how much we care for you as well as sin which seems to motivate you in your pursuit of separation from those who have been your friends for more than twenty years.

One of those friends,

C.J.

As a result of Larry's letter, we quickly set up a meeting in Atlanta the following week on September 24. Those present included you, me, Steve Shank, Gene Prince, Larry Malament, and George Harrington. At this meeting, we hoped Larry would listen to our appeals to remain faithful to his commitments but we had no success. We were

³¹⁷ I've included this material on Larry so you can contrast your handling of him with your lenient treatment of yourself. I've studied over 1,000 pages of material related to Larry. There is so much more that could be said. Simply put, what you required of Larry, you did not require of yourself.

shocked, troubled and dismayed that he was deceitfully leaving PDI. It was a heart breaking experience for all of us.

During this meeting, Larry told us he no longer trusted the apostolic team and local pastoral team to properly assess his character and gifting (i.e. calling). He also said, "What I couldn't say [four] months back, I can say today regarding my character. I feel qualified in God and restored to ministry." He went on to say, "I would view the sentence about the assessment of the team and local leaders as a mistake. I would not put that sentence in the confession if I had it to do over." That is, the following sentence, "Ultimately, the timing of my return will be determined by the apostolic team and the local leadership as they observe and confirm genuine change in my life." He also said, "I have seen a process unfold that is flawed."³¹⁸

This then became a source of conflict. Larry wanted to present his leaving PDI as largely due to doctrine. We believed he was fleeing a restorative process that was focused on his character. We felt Larry was using doctrinal differences as an excuse for leaving. Larry strongly disagreed. In a later letter to friends, Larry said, "It is critical that one point be abundantly clear: I am not leaving this ministry out of convenience, independence or unwillingness to deal with some character and family deficiencies identified, acknowledged and being addressed" (September 13, 1997).

Two days after our meeting, I wrote a lengthy letter to Larry. I covered a number of subjects including his misrepresentation. Here is a short excerpt representing my perspective on the issue of doctrine and calling. "Let us help you to grow in humility and integrity. Let us be able to commend you in God's time. Later we could send you out if you feel you must leave over doctrine or differences in our assessment of calling. This is about character – not calling, not doctrine."

Larry had publically acknowledged that character deficiencies in his life and home rendered him disqualified to be a pastor until rectified. Here are some his public statements regarding family (underlining is mine).

- "Deficiencies in the Family. Not effectively training my children in the Lord. Focusing more on external behavior and attitudes and missing many critical issues of the heart in their lives." (Larry's written confession to all PDI members on May 15, 1997)
- "The areas I needed to focus on were areas of character deficiencies in my own life, as well as deficiencies in my home that rendered me disqualified for Biblical leadership. During this disciplinary process, I focused on these areas and now feel

³¹⁸ For instance, the harsh and bruising treatment Larry received at the hands of Larry Malament who replaced him as the sr. pastor.

God has done a gracious and restorative work in my life as well as in the life of my family.” (Larry’s “To Whom It May Concern” letter from October 1997)

- “Larry Tomczak is back. After spending 15 years tucked away in ministry with People of Destiny International (PDI), Tomczak has left that network of churches and resurfaced as a teacher at the Brownsville Revival School of Ministry...and reconnecting with the wider body of Christ, after years of being isolated in his own charismatic denomination.... “I’m delighted to be much more connected,” Tomczak told *Charisma*.... Last fall, in a move that was painful and emotionally draining, Tomczak left PDI. “The ministry was going in some different directions, and I didn’t fit in those directions”.... Although he’s always had solid family relationships, Tomczak said God addressed “faulty foundations” in his home life.” (“Larry Tomczak Gets New Start in Ministry,” *Charisma*, July 1998)
- “Through the obstacles I faced, God revealed my own misguided passions. He jolted me as one of my children began deviating from the “straight and narrow.” He stripped me and broke me by removing all my props – security, reputation, position.” (Larry Tomczak, *Reckless Abandon*, Charisma House, 2002, p. 76)

A week after our meeting in Atlanta a group of us had a follow up conversation with Larry by phone on October 2, 1997. You led the conversation. Those participating included Steve Shank, Larry Malament, George Harrington and me.

During this conversation, you again told Larry it was wrong for him to present his leaving PDI as due to differences in doctrine. You said, “The only point that has merit is our disagreement over the assessment of your character.” You continued by saying that Larry “must confine [himself] to that point in order to leave peacefully.” In other words, you could accept Larry telling the movement he was abruptly and prematurely pulling out of the disciplinary process because he disagreed with our assessment of his character. You would not allow him to explain his departure in terms of doctrinal differences. But then you went further. You told Larry if he included doctrine as a basis for leaving “we will go into more detail regarding your sin and if necessary Justin’s sin.” This was an unauthorized comment. We had not discussed or approved such an approach. It was entirely your doing. You emphatically stated, “If you [Larry] communicate your leaving is due to doctrine in even a secondary way, in print or orally, we will go into more detail.”³¹⁹

Larry called you the next day and secretly taped the conversation. Doris was on the line but you didn’t know it until later in the conversation. A year later in December 1998, Larry sent us “An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation

³¹⁹ Needless to say, you were sinfully angry at Larry. You restated this threat to Larry and Doris the following day.

and Closure.” In that document he provided a partial transcript from the secret recording dealing with your threat to reveal details regarding the “teenager” who deviated from the “straight and narrow.” He also added a “Note” and final comment. The underlining is Larry’s not mine. Here it is.

Transcript of Phone Conversation between C.J., Doris and Larry Tomczak on October 3, 1997 [pp. 10-11]

C.J. “Doctrine is an unacceptable reason for leaving P.D.I.”

Larry “C.J., I’m not in sync with any of the T.U.L.I.P., so whether you agree or not, doctrine is one of the major reasons I believe it is God’s will to leave P.D.I. and it does need to be included in any statement put forth.”

C.J. “If you do that, then it will be necessary for us to give a more detailed explanation of your sins.”

Larry “Justin’s name has been floated out there when there’s statements like ‘revealing more details about my sin.’ What are you getting at?”

C.J. “Justin’s name isn’t just ‘floated out there’ – I’m stating it!”

Larry “C.J. how can you do that after you encouraged Justin to confess everything; get it all out. Then when he did, you reassured him – ‘You have my word, it will never leave this room. Even our wives won’t be told.’ I repeatedly reassured him: ‘C.J. is a man of his word. You needn’t worry.’ Now you’re talking of publically sharing the sins of his youth?!”

C.J. “My statement was made in the context of that evening. If I knew then what you were going to do, I would have re-evaluated what I communicated.”

Doris “C.J., are you aware that you are blackmailing Larry? You’ll make no mention of Justin’s sins, which he confessed and was forgiven of months ago, if Larry agrees with your statement, but you feel you have to warn the folks and go national with Justin’s sins if Larry pushes the doctrinal button? C.J., you are blackmailing Larry to say what you want!”

“Shame on you, C.J.! As a man of God and a father, shame on you! This will send shock waves throughout the teens in P.D.I. and make

many pastors' teens vow, 'I'll never confess my secret sins to C.J. or any of the team, seeing that they'll go public with my sins if my dad doesn't toe the line.'"

"C.J., you will reap whatever judgment you make on Justin. You have a young son coming up."

"Another reason for my personally wanting to leave P.D.I. and never come back is this ungodly tactic of resorting to blackmail and intimidation of people!"

C.J. "I can't speak for the team, but I want them to witness this. We'll arrange a conference call next week with the team."

Doris "I want Justin to be part of that call. It's his life that's at stake."

C.J. "Fine."

Note: C.J. never spoke with us [Larry and Doris] again. He was not a participant in the critical phone meetings that followed. It is still hard to fathom that after all the years, at such a crucial juncture, C.J. simply bowed out. He did speak at CLC [Covenant Life Church] in a public meeting (visitors present) in labeling me a liar and stating he'd rather be "dead then do what Larry Tomczak is doing." Local leaders at CLC were then affirmed by C.J. and after a pause, people present (knowing only what they had been told) stood and gave a standing ovation. One family, aware of more of what was going on than the bulk of the congregation, remained seated. Was this necessary... pleasing to God...the spirit of Christ?

Brethren, what you have just read truly is tragic and grievous to the God who gave His life for us and told us to walk in love with one another as His disciples. The illegality and callousness of what you just read is staggering until this day."

As a prelude to the section quoted above, Larry stated the following.

"Instead, you [C.J.] pursued a heavy-handed, unChristlike, illegal, unethical, and reprehensible approach of attempting to blackmail me! Yes, that is the legal term describing what was done. The day C.J. told Doris and me on the phone his threat concerning our son, we couldn't believe our ears! To threaten...to resort to blackmail...this cruel tactic in our most vulnerable area was obscene and it was sin. It must be acknowledged and there must be repentance. To sacrifice and exploit a young man **and his entire future** to

preserve the image of a ministry felt to be endangered if word “leaked out” that there were very real doctrinal issues involved is truly a serious abuse of spiritual authority and a gross miscarriage of justice. Are you aware of the enormity of this transgression? For those not fully informed, consider the phone call. (pp. 9-10)

I was one of those not fully informed. You described the conversation to me a year earlier but this was the first time I had an actual accounting of the conversation between you, Larry and Doris.

A little later in the document Larry continued with this comment.

“How could some of you church leaders [i.e., C.J. and Steve] give your word to a young man in the throes of teenage turmoil who shared with you [C.J. and Steve] in the strictest of confidence what you asked for, then later you [C.J.] threaten to go national with his sins in a reversal of sacred commitment if his father didn’t do things your way?” (p. 15)

In 2002, Larry released a book available to the public entitled *Reckless Abandon*. It was published by Charisma House and dedicated to nearly 50 nationally recognized leaders by name. It is still available today for purchase at Amazon.com, etc. Here is an excerpt that references your threat.

“Doris and I, along with one of our teenagers, were threatened in various ways if we did not cooperate with the ministry that we were leaving. We were encountering a spirit of control. We were shunned. A letter was circulated in an attempt to discredit me and to distort the events surrounding my departure. Our own family members were divided. We felt helpless, abandoned and for the most part, alone. Our experience was very painful. It seemed like some unbelievable nightmare.” (Larry Tomczak, *Reckless Abandon*, p. 15)

Larry was very clear about your (and Steve’s) threat to reveal details regarding their child’s sins.

“We feel such a sense of anguish in finding ourselves to be the object of outright blackmail (that was only withdrawn after we communicated to you the immorality and illegality of this threat)!” (“An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation and Closure,” December 1998, p. 12)

“From our perspective this was an unconscionable violation of our covenant fellowship over many years. We feel it is necessary that we refute what has been gross intimidation on your part, which so distressed us that we had to

consult with an attorney in this matter.” (“An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation and Closure,” December 1998, p. 13)

Four days after your phone call with Larry and Doris; Steve and Paul had a follow up call with Larry, Doris and Justin on October 7, 1997. Steve upheld your sinful approach and maintained the threat. The Tomczak’s secretly taped this conversation also.³²⁰ Here are the notes Steve sent us regarding that conversation the next day before our phone meeting.

From: Steve Shank

To: Brent Detwiler, Dave Harvey, Bo Lotinsky; Paul Palmer; C.J. Mahaney; Danny Jones; Larry Malament

Date: October 8, 1997, 9:53 AM

Subject: Atlanta Today

A few more thoughts/impressions regarding Larry and Doris that will help you prepare for time today... As [you] could predict, they see any reference on our part to disclose Justin, his sin, nationally as smearing reputation, low blow, blackmail...This point brings out the greatest hostility, anger, attacks and threats...the greatest amount of accusation [against] our integrity...

[Steve then included this quote from Justin] “You [C.J. and Steve] never told me when you were almost forcing me to confess my sin, that it would be confidential unless my dad slanders you... You said my confessions to you as my pastor would be kept in confidence... I do not give you permission to disclose any of the things I confessed to you... I don’t know how I can say it any clearer... I just want to go on record as saying that...”

The way Larry was conducting himself on different fronts was wrong and misleading. But this serves as another example of how aggressively or angrily you can respond when you feel sinned against by someone, especially if you don’t like them, which was the case with Larry. You had renounced him as a friend. This illustration also shows Steve’s willingness to follow your sinful instructions. You and Steve need to be carefully monitored so blackmail, threats and coercion are never used again by either of you.

You didn’t want Larry to misrepresent his departure and put us in a bad light. You were concerned for your reputation. These two, bitterness and love of reputation, were the cause of your rage and compromise. In that conversation on October 3, 1997, you blackmailed Larry and Doris and broke your word to Justin. For 13 years, Larry tried to

³²⁰ I never heard this second recording either.

help you see this sin against them. Finally, his prayers were answered and his perseverance rewarded. He and Doris were long suffering with you.

Here is a newspaper article that appeared in The Washington Times and was based upon an interview with Larry. It was written 2½ years ago.

Evangelist Tomczak still a force
By Julia Duin
The Washington Times
November 6, 2008

More than 30 years had passed since I last saw him, but Larry Tomczak looked like the same guy I'd seen leading a wildly successful series of youth prayer meetings in the 1970s called "Take And Give" (TAG).

Square-jawed, with black hair and a disarming smile, Mr. Tomczak, now 59, teamed up with C.J. Mahaney, a fellow young evangelist, more than three decades ago to minister to more than 3,000 young people who packed the pews every Tuesday night at Christ Church on Massachusetts Avenue.

I went there in the mid-1970s during the height of the Jesus movement.

Mr. Tomczak was especially good in explaining the Bible for the spiritually hungry crowds. His book "Clap Your Hands," about how he went from being a nominal Catholic to a born-again Christian, sold 250,000 copies -- an enormous number for someone who at the time was not known outside the Washington, D.C., area.

Those meetings morphed into a new church, now known as Covenant Life, in Gaithersburg, the mother church for a new denomination called People of Destiny International (PDI), later renamed Sovereign Grace Ministries. The big question was which of these two gifted men would end up leading the movement.

Mr. Mahaney became pastor of Covenant Life, and Mr. Tomczak took over PDI as its main church planter. Disagreements arose between them over the increasingly Calvinist direction the church was taking.

Then one of Mr. Tomczak's sons got involved in what the father terms "teenage rebellion." Mr. Tomczak's fitness as a father was called into question over his son Justin's behavior, and 12 years ago, the elder Mr. Tomczak left PDI. Church leaders later apologized to Justin, who mended his ways and went on to attend

Harvard and become the political director for the re-election campaign of Sen. Saxby Chambliss, Georgia Republican.

"There was admittance as to wrongdoing as to the way he was treated," Larry Tomczak told me. "I and my wife wait for the same thing to be admitted to us."

He and his wife, Doris, have tried to move on. He founded Christ the King Church in Acworth, Ga., a congregation he just turned over to the leadership of another son, Jason. Mr. Tomczak and his wife, Doris, moved to Nashville last year to direct the International Center for Evangelism, Church-Planting and Prayer (ICECAP) to mentor young evangelicals.

"We're praying more to be used strategically in this nation," Doris Tomczak told me. "Larry is ready to exhort, preach and help the next generation."

But that generation is asleep to spiritual realities, said the Tomczaks, who were quite unhappy about how many evangelical youths supported the Barack Obama campaign despite the candidate's liberal positions on many cultural issues. This summer, Larry rushed into print "Here's the Deal," a book to educate youth on faith and politics, abortion, gay marriage, divorce and other critical issues.

"They're not asking the hard questions," Mr. Tomczak said. "Kids don't want to study or do their homework on these issues. They have no discernment."

A lot of the "major-league" churches had avoided talking about these issues, which confuses young people "who look at these megachurches and see how they have compromised in order to be successful. And this election year, we are reaping the results," he said.

Instead, churches have focused on "non-offensive and pleasant," his wife said. "We are turning out young people who are so lukewarm in their passion for God."

Contact Julia Duin at jduin@washingtontimes.com.

A similar summary appears on Wikipedia. Here is an excerpt.

Departure from PDI

Tomczak eventually left the leadership of PDI in 1998 and has subsequently suggested that the increasingly Calvinistic theology of PDI was a major factor in this parting of the ways. Some of this period's tensions also arose because

Tomczak's fitness as a father was called into question by church leadership over what Tomczak described as the "teenage rebellion" of his son. Tomczak declared that this time "...seemed like an unbelievable nightmare" during which he, his wife Doris, and their son Justin "were threatened in various ways if we did not cooperate with the ministry that we were leaving... A letter was circulated in an attempt to discredit me and to distort the events surrounding my departure. Our own family members were divided." Tomczak claims never to have received an apology for the events of this period.

C.J.'s Letter to PDI Members Regarding Larry - October 15, 1997

Here is the discrediting letter referred to above. While you didn't reveal any detailed sins, you referred to them in this letter to all the members in the "team related churches." I signed this letter but played no role in writing it.³²¹ This was written after your threat on October 3.

October 15, 1997

Dear Friend,

I hope this notes finds you grateful for God's grace.

This is a letter we never anticipated having to write. Indeed, it represents a sad day, for it involves a departure by one of our pastors from the biblical values we have taught and practiced.³²² Recently, Larry Tomczak informed us that he will be leaving PDI and the disciplinary process he was involved in. No one is more grieved than the PDI leadership team by this unexpected development.

As you are aware, in May Larry stepped down from his position in the Atlanta church due to patterns of sinful behavior which, on the basis of Scripture, disqualified him from serving in ministry.³²³ (See the attached letter Larry distributed). This discipline was necessary and unavoidable, yet redemptive in intent, and at the time fully supported by Larry.³²⁴ It has always been our desire to work with Larry so that he might once again biblically qualify for pastoral ministry and be restored to the position of senior pastor. As you may recall, the letter Larry sent to you communicated his agreement with the disciplinary action and he wrote that, "Ultimately the timing of my return will

³²¹ I was enjoying life from a tree stand in wild and wonderful West Virginia!

³²² I hope you have a mirror in hand.

³²³ And how about you? What do you see in the mirror? Are you more qualified than Larry was at the time. No, not in any way.

³²⁴ You resisted all discipline and averted it by taking over the process.

be determined by the apostolic team and the local leadership as they observe and confirm genuine change in my life."³²⁵

After only four months Larry informed us that he considers himself qualified to return. We regret that we cannot support this assessment. Neither the three men locally responsible for Larry, nor any member of the of the PDI leadership team agree with his current assessment of himself or his decision to leave. All of us have been Larry's friends and have served with him in ministry for 15-20 years. In every way that we know how we have appealed to him to remain until the trust he violated has been restored³²⁶ and we can confirm by his patterns of behavior over time (the fruit of repentance) that genuine change has truly taken place.³²⁷ Sadly, Larry is resolute in his decision to leave PDI. Larry has asked us to entrust him to God. As always, we do entrust him to God but we do not and cannot endorse his decision to abandon the restoration process.

It has always been our desire to see Larry restored and serving according to the call upon his life. But calling alone is not sufficient. Scripture is clear that there must be character and conduct commensurate with the call to ministry (1 Tim 3:1-6; Titus 1:6-9). Scripture is also clear that there is to be no favoritism when determining or disciplining leaders (1 Tim 5:21).³²⁸ The pattern of sin revealed in Larry's life over a period of years, as well as the needs in his family, were serious and grievous. These not only disqualified Larry but also necessitated a sufficient period of time for the necessary changes to occur. As was stated in Larry's letter, a period of 6-12 months was agreed to as a minimum. Four months is an inadequate period of time to achieve the changes necessary, nor is it sufficient time to reestablish trust in light of the serious patterns of sin which Larry acknowledged as characteristic of his life.³²⁹ (Please understand that throughout this process specific details have been withheld because they involve sins that have been confessed to appropriate leaders with the Atlanta church and the PDI leadership team. It has always been our desire to be merciful, and there is presently no justifiable reasons for revealing any further details regarding these sins.)

More importantly, one's return to ministry should never be determined by the one being disciplined. Rather, re-commendation to ministry should be determined by the local pastoral team working in conjunction with the PDI

³²⁵ If effect, you were no different. You repudiated and cut off all our input into your life.

³²⁶ You did not care about our loss of trust in you.

³²⁷ You have very recently confessed to some long standing patterns of serious sin after an arduous process that lasted 10 years. I hope you and the men around you are following the advice given to Larry to observe "patterns of behavior over time...that genuine change has truly taken place."

³²⁸ I hope you are holding up the mirror and see the hypocrite in front of you.

³²⁹ But no "probationary" period is necessary in your life?

leadership team so that together they may confirm that appropriate and measurable change has occurred. This is our established and previously agreed upon practice in PDI, for a man simply cannot trust his own assessment of himself nor determine unilaterally when he returns to ministry once he has been disqualified.³³⁰ Though it is often a temptation for disciplined leaders to revise their convictions and flee from the restoration process, Larry has taught differently, believed differently and exhorted others differently.³³¹ Larry's premature departure from this redemptive means of restoration is extremely disappointing for those of us who have cared for him for and served alongside him for so many years.

Please pray for the church in Atlanta. Larry Malament³³² and George Harrington have done a heroic job serving both the church and Larry Tomczak. The character we have observed in their lives has provoked our deep respect. Their leadership will again be tested through this development, but their personal integrity and care for the flock will make all the difference during this difficult time.

And finally, as Larry himself counseled in his May 15 letter, "It is critical that everyone actively resist any temptation to drift into speculation or slander." This will necessitate refusing to participate in slander or listen to gossip. If you or anyone else have any questions or concerns, please direct these to your pastor, who is best equipped to answer your questions and prevent unnecessary division. Let's glorify God by purposing to "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit" in our respective local churches. Let us also walk humbly before God, remembering Galatians 6:1, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted."

With great sadness,

C.J. Mahaney

Brent Detwiler
Paul Palmer

Dave Harvey
Danny Jones

Steve Shank
Robert Lotinsky

³³⁰ The only thing you did trust was your own assessment of yourself. You didn't need us.

³³¹ You didn't flee the disciplinary process. You just shut it down and focused on others.

³³² Later, we found out how poorly Larry M. handled the Tomczaks.

Here is Larry's perspective on your letter.

"Instead a letter was eventually sent out nationwide (October 15, 1997) that was, I firmly believe, uncharitable, misleading and lacking in integrity."³³³

"Was it honoring to God and fair to me when in this letter sent nationwide and given by some of you to other leaders, you included phrases that "baited" people with references to "serious patterns of sin"..."specific details have been withheld because they involve sins that have been confessed [locally]"..."no justifiable reason for revealing any further details regarding these sins."³³⁴

"After C.J. told me to insert in my initial letter that "there is no untold story in this matter" (May 15, 1997), people's carnal curiosity was baited. "I wonder what they're talking about? What did he do? Could it be pornography? Theft? Drugs? Adultery? Homosexuality?"³³⁵

"One leader told me that what he read in the letter reminded him of what is done by "National Inquirer" and other tabloid publications. Deliberately or inadvertently, you employed deceptive tactics to gain ground with unsuspecting readers who were being misled."³³⁶

"The letter about me that was drawn up and distributed nationwide was in tone and content unwarranted and unredemptive."³³⁷

"The average person reading the letter gains the impression that I must be a rebellious and unrepentant renegade actively resisting correction of "grievous... serious... long-standing, serious patterns of sin" that the signers have benignly withheld from public knowledge... The reader is baited in a manner similar to that of tabloid journalists."³³⁸

"You were judgmental and self-righteous where you could have been merciful and redemptive. Portraying me as if I were some habitual deceiver and evil figure flies in the face of almost thirty years of service for Christ; a commitment to moral purity, integrity, marriage and a strong family (with some failures like yourselves along the way)."³³⁹

³³³ An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation and Closure, December 1998, p. 21.

³³⁴ Ibid, p. 22.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid, p. 46.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid, p. 47.

At this point in time, I was the least involved in the situation. Nevertheless, I should have spoken up and addressed this particular transgression - blackmail. I did not. That was a lack of love and courage on my part. Please forgive me. Only later did I try to get your attention. I was the only one to do so. But even then, it was too weak an effort. I was troubled by your actions but I never adequately spoke up.

By December, 2000, I purposed to address these kinds of sins in your life. There were just too many occasions when you acted badly. It was time to deal with you more clearly and more firmly. Here is what I said in RRF&D on page 5.

“Fast forward. During a team meeting on December 4, 2000, Dave, Steve and I began to raise issues of concern for you. For example, we pointed out you were often difficult to correct, became offended when you felt misunderstood or judge by others, quickly and hastily arrived at conclusions about people based on limited information, came to extreme conclusions about people in a presumptive and premature fashion, were stubborn when you thought God had spoken to you or you had a strong opinion about something, made decisions without adequate appreciation for the personal effect on others, and led the apostolic team more by expedience rather than by process. We also noted a lack of discussion and involvement as a team in decision making. These things didn’t happen all the time but tended to be general patterns. For the next three years, I led a process whereby we consistently tried to help you see these and other issues of character. Unfortunately, that lengthy process proved unsuccessful.” (RRF&D, p. 5)

The way you treated Larry was similar to the way you treated others when angry. Dave, Steve and I began to address character issues related to your handling of “others” but did not specifically include the matter of threatening Larry. Why? Your sinful reactions were typically accentuated toward Larry. We began with others less offensive to you.

On January 18, 2001, however, I sent you a 20 page memo to be used in preparation for an important meeting between you and Larry on January 25, 2001. This was your first meeting with Larry since he left in 1997 in an effort to make progress toward reconciliation. Here is what I wrote in my cover letter.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2001 3:37 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Cc: Bo Lotinsky; Dave Harvey; Steve Shank
Subject: Meeting with Larry

Attached are my notes. I hope you find them helpful. You will have to wrestle with the issues related to whether you need to ask forgiveness of Larry for anything. I have sought to isolate the main areas of offense he has with us and those we have with him. There are many lesser points that are left out.

I've organized the material into four sections as follows:

1. Chronology of major events and important quotes.
2. Issues of sin or wisdom for us to consider.
3. Issues of sin that Larry and Doris must confess.
4. The need for and circle of confession necessary before reconciliation can occur.

I am going to overnight a hard copy in case the document does not print well for you, etc. Let me know if I can help in any other way.

Your friend
Brent

The second section of my memo was entitled, "Issues of sin or wisdom for us to consider." I hoped we would enter into discussion regarding what "we" did wrong. I admit this was largely an editorial "we." I had you primarily in mind (and secondarily Steve) but attempted to gently word my statement. That is why I also said, "You will have to wrestle with the issues related to whether you need to ask forgiveness of Larry for anything." I was treading on thin ice. But this appeal resulted in no acknowledgment of any wrongdoing. You were very angry and bitter at Larry. Correcting you for sins towards Larry rarely went well. Nevertheless, I did not serve you adequately during this time period. I should have corrected you more clearly and more strongly.

Here were the three issues of greatest concern that I brought up to you in the following headings. First, your "'Blackmail' of Larry." Second, "C.J. Telling CLC Larry is a Liar." Third, "No Send Off from CLC."

Under the first heading, I asked with regard to blackmailing Larry, "Should C.J. have even introduced [Larry and Doris' child] into the picture during the phone conversation?"

Under the second heading, I asked with regard to telling Covenant Life Church that Larry was a liar, "In retrospect should you have communicated in such an unqualified way?"

Under the third heading, I asked with regard to not sending the Tomczak's out from Covenant Life Church to Fairfax Covenant Church, "In retrospect should some kind of 'sent off' been done for Larry and Doris?" You were adamantly opposed to giving Larry any public recognition even though he served Covenant Life Church for 13 years. Larry recalls this episode in "An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation and Closure."

"Sitting one day in a Marriot restaurant I finally asked C.J. point blank, 'Do you want me here in C.L.C.' For Doris and I it was painfully obvious that the senior pastor in the church we gave our all to establish no longer wanted us.³⁴⁰ We soon left for Fairfax, Virginia, without even a "send off" in the Sunday meeting after over thirteen years of service." (An Appeal to the PDI Leadership for Repentance, Reconciliation and Closure, December 1998, p. 18)

After your meeting with Larry you called to fill us in on your time. Here are some of the things you reported to us. You told Larry you "never meant [your comments] as a threat" and you "never intended to go into details" but could "understand how [they] could interpret your comments as a threat or blackmail."³⁴¹ You made it clear to us that you "did not acknowledge any sin" and "did not ask forgiveness for anything."³⁴² You also told Larry he "was not a friend" and communicated your concerns for him and his family.

This was sad but unsurprising. It was in keeping with your long standing perspective that you had done nothing wrong. For instance, you said the following 20 months earlier in a personal letter to Larry.

"Let me address a few other items from your last letter. First, you accuse me of blackmail. I hope at some point you can acknowledge this was a misunderstanding on your part." (Personal Letter to Larry, May 6, 1999)

Here you put the onus on Larry and corrected him for wrongly accusing you of blackmail. It was all his fault.

Larry followed up on your January 25, 2001 meeting with him in March. Here is his letter. He mentioned for the first time the possibility of involving others in his appeal for repentance.

³⁴⁰ That was very true. Something I now share in common with Larry.

³⁴¹ You were covering your tracks. This was spin and manipulation.

³⁴² You strenuously maintained your complete innocence's.

March 6, 2001

Dear C.J.,

Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus! I am grateful to God that we were able to finally sit down together and share some fellowship six weeks ago [January 25]. It was good to catch up on one another's lives and take a first step in the process of reconciliation.

I have waited and prayed these past weeks so my response to you would not be tainted by the flesh but motivated by love and the quest for an honorable solution to our situation. I must confess that I was disappointed at what appeared to be justification for past, serious sin rather than repentance.³⁴³ I would have thought upon actually hearing the tape recording of how we were threatened, you would have been quick to ask forgiveness... Also, saying there were "other ways" to view what was done and offering to converse with [our child] fell short of what I believe would have led us to deal with the injustices Biblically and redemptively. My prayer is that we can still do this (and possibly avoid widening the circle by bringing others into the process).

C.J., upon returning I spoke with my [child] who (in Doris and my opinion) has never been quite the same in [child's] relationship with God or spiritual authorities due to the abuse of spiritual authority [the child] experienced with you and the other men. Since there was no expressed intention to repent and seek forgiveness of Doris, [our child], and me; [our child] communicated no desire to simply talk with you on the phone. The "wound" (a Biblical term) runs very deep.

When we met I told you that [our child] has never been able to go back to that restaurant. Remember? Well, when I refer to what happened to our [child], I think you should realized the following. Prior to [our child] meeting with you men, [our child] was struggling to establish an intimate relationship with Jesus. [Our child] thought by coming clean of every hidden sin (as you coached), that this might be the "missing link" to turn it all around. Instead [our child] was betrayed, threatened and blackmailed which unfortunately not only shattered [our child's] trust in men of God but also spilled over to God Himself whom you men purported to represent..."

Yours sincerely
Larry

³⁴³ You were manipulating Larry not just justifying your sins.

Here is your response to Larry a couple months later.

May 4, 2001

Dear Larry,

I hope this letter finds you experiencing and enjoying God's grace.

Larry, we have once again considered all of the points in the documents you sent and regrettably find ourselves with a different perspective and understanding of what happened and how it happened.³⁴⁴ Even though I'm sure this is a disappointment to you, I hope you can at least appreciate the effort we have invested in considering your offenses and concerns. We have reviewed your material on more than ten different occasions over the years and I am sorry that we still differ.

As I look back upon the process I believe we were motivated by a deep care for you and your family. I do regret involving [your child] even briefly as we considered how to respond to inquiries about your departure. This obviously gave you the impression that we were threatening you. That was not our desire or intention, and I regret if there ever was even the impression of a threat as you perceived it.³⁴⁵ Also I wish I could heal any pain you, Doris or [your child] have experienced. Part of our challenge is that we have (it appears) different convictions about qualifications for leadership and when discipline is appropriate. I believe we were required by Scripture to exercise discipline in your situation. From the beginning this discipline was intended to be redemptive and for the purpose of restoration. It was always my hope that you would return to the Senior Pastor position of the church. However, we cannot relate to you or anyone else with favoritism.³⁴⁶

Within the last two months two different Pastors have had to step down from their positions within PDI. While their situations were similar to yours these men would have a completely different perspective on the benefits and blessings of this process. This would apply to Benny Phillips and others within PDI as well. I don't think the team has related to them any differently than we have related to you, but their response has been one of gratefulness and

³⁴⁴ You issued this denial but the truth was on Larry's side as it pertained to the charge of blackmail. You could not back up your "different perspective" with evidence. Larry had the tapes which were clear and convincing.

³⁴⁵ Again you put the blame on Larry for wrongly perceiving your comments as a threat when no threat was intended. This was pure spin.

³⁴⁶ With at least one big exception - yourself. What you required of Larry, you have not required of yourself.

support. Though we are saddened that you have interpreted this discipline as cult-like³⁴⁷ we would disagree and believe that we are simply seeking to care for Pastors, churches and honor God's word. Ultimately, we are required to submit to the authority of Scripture³⁴⁸ in these matters assured that our Lord is wise and good.

At this point I am not sure of much else that can be done. If you would send us a copy of the phone call you recorded we would be glad to review this in its entirety. Also, I would still be very desirous of talking with [your child] and hearing [your child's] perspective. I am not clear on how [your child] can justify not at least talking with me.³⁴⁹ Though we have not been able to agree on a mediator, if you choose to inform another leader the team would be willing to meet with that individual alone and describe our experience with you and evaluation of you as well as hear his perspective. We would also encourage that individual to contact the different men who have experienced a similar discipline within PDI. It may also benefit any interested party to talk with the Pastors who served under you. And as for our announcement of your departure, we simply disagree with your portrayal of the both our attitude and the content. The announcement was brief and quite merciful.

Larry, our approach continues to be different from yours. We have not repeatedly asked you to review the offenses and disagreements we have with you. We have chosen to commit you to the Lord and pray for his blessing on you, your family and your church. Though our disagreements with you in both doctrine and practice³⁵⁰ are many and are serious, we believe you love the Savior and desire to glorify him. We hope you can affirm the same about us.

In His grace,

C.J.

At the end of 2001, Larry wrote back regarding his plans to "widen the circle."

December 20, 2001

Dear C.J.,

³⁴⁷ The discipline was not, but the threat was "cult-like."

³⁴⁸ Something we failed to do with you. If Larry was disqualified from ministry and in need of discipline, so were you.

³⁴⁹ I can – the child was afraid of you. You threaten to break your word and reveal details regarding the child's "deviating from the 'straight and narrow'" in order to constrain Larry.

³⁵⁰ This sounds eerily familiar! But I am not an Arminian like Larry. Well, who knows maybe I'm worse...do you think a closet Pelagian? ☺

...As 2001 comes to a close, I complete four years of unsuccessful attempts to see reconciliation between us. I believe it is the will of God for you to acknowledge your wrongdoing to my [teenager] and ask [the teenager's] forgiveness....

The blackmail/illicit coercion was a most serious violation of Biblical, ministerial ethics (preserved on tape)...

I am asking you to address this grievous conduct...

If you choose to disregard this Biblical appeal for handling this offense, then regretfully Doris and I are left with no alternative but to "widen the circle" in line with our Lord's instructions of Matthew 18:15-17...

In the absence of this admission of sin and repentance for wrongdoing, I will proceed ahead...

Your friend and fellow laborer in His Kingdom

Larry

Here are excerpts from the letters Larry received from 7 leaders. Six of them were nationally/internationally recognized and one was a former senior pastor in PDI. Each of them listened to the October 3, 1997 taped conversation between you, Larry and Doris. I've also included Larry's cover letter to you.

July 3, 2002

Dear C.J.

...Again, more time has gone by and we still await your humble response to our Biblical appeal. The serious sins have never been addressed. I am left no choice but to do as I stated in my December 20th letter, in line with Matt. 18:15-17. I will continue to "widen the circle" until you handle this matter as God directs. Please acknowledge the sins and make restitution to honor God and repair this breach. You have a moral responsibility to do this - especially in light of the reprehensible things done to my [child] and Doris and me..."

In His service,
Larry

Leader 1: Stephen Strang of Strang Communications

"I want to let you know how alarmed I was to hear the tape that you allowed me to hear. I think that it is highly unethical for the leaders of PDI to use [the child's] vulnerability to try to bring pressure on you. I really feel that this is an injustice that needs to be corrected. I want to let you know that I am ready to help you in this matter, as the Lord leads." (January 23, 2002)

Leader 2: Rick Joyner of MorningStar Ministries

"I wanted to let you know that I have listened to the tape that you sent and I was shocked and grieved at what I heard you and your family had been subjected to. I would strongly consider that you challenge them for their actions which in my opinion are clearly in violation of authority and integrity. I believe that it reveals roots of very serious problems and it would be remiss not to challenge them." (March 20, 2002)

Leader 3: Michael L. Brown of ICN Ministries

"I listened to the taped conversation, as requested, and I was both saddened and pained, in particular with the overt threats made against [the child]. This struck me as a form of spiritual blackmail..." (May 22, 2002)

Leader 4: Che Ahn of The Call International and Harvest International Ministries

"As I listened to the tape...I literally felt grieved and sick to my stomach. I am so sorry that you, Doris and especially [your child] had to go through the unnecessary, illegal and ethically immoral threat of PDI. I pray that God will bring true conviction of sin to PDI's A-Team leaders and as a result bring about true reconciliation." (April 22, 2002)

Leader 5: Mike Bickle of International House of Prayer

"A certain phrase in the tape was used several times. It pained my heart to hear it spoken to [your child] in the context of the conversation. The phrase, "we are bound by integrity" to make known Larry's sins (and therefore, [the child's]) caused grief to me. It rang of something other than what was being stated...I sincerely ask the Lord not to judge the PDI leaders by the standard in which they have judged you." (April 15, 2002)

Leader 6: Lou Engle of The Call

“From listening to the tape, it seems to me that the leadership on the tape [a reference to you] displayed a lack of integrity by being willing to betray promised confidentiality for the purposes of protecting the ministry’s reputation.” (May 23, 2002)

Leader 7: Ken Roberts of Worldview Community Church

“I just listened to it [the tape] this morning and was absolutely disgusted...I think the phone conversation only reinforced my conviction that this is a pattern of intimidation, manipulation, and attempts to control people and situations within the movement. It would appear that is was used as blackmail, as a way to silence your real observations and communication of truth concerning your concerns with the movement... Larry, after I reviewed the tape I would have a stronger feeling/conviction that this stuff just needs to be exposed.” (May 31, 2002)

C.J.’s Letter to the Seven Leaders - July 16, 2002

Larry forwarded you copies of all their letters. You wrote them back on July 16, 2002. Here is an excerpt regarding the charge of blackmail. It was a bold repudiation of their concerns and observations. You must return to each of these men and ask their forgiveness for lying, etc.

“And finally it would be important for you to know that, regardless of what you have heard on this tape, there has been no breach of confidentiality nor will there be. Sharing the details of [the child’s] sin was never an option.³⁵¹ All we were considering was what we should share publicly as Larry left abruptly, not fulfilling the restoration process he agreed to and misrepresenting PDI. In the end we decided simply to communicate our regret at this departure, and disagreement in general with his decision, and avoid any reference to [the child]. And I have assured Larry numerous times, over the years that I have not shared with anyone, even fellow members of the PDI leadership team, what [the child] related to me about [the child’s own] sins. Nor will I as I have given [the child] my word. For Larry to portray himself as under some past or continuing threat is simply not accurate.³⁵² If I or others at PDI have said or

³⁵¹ This was a lie.

³⁵² Simply untrue. You and Steve clearly threatened him in the past.

done something to indicated otherwise, I would be eager to confess and correct the wrongness of that impression."³⁵³

Soon after you wrote this letter to the seven leaders, Larry wrote you regarding the same letter. One of the issues he raised concerned your statement that "Sharing the details of [the child's] sin was never an option." In response, Larry said "Read...your phone conversation with Doris and me AND listen to the tape to see if this is an honest statement. I submit it is not."

I agree with Larry. The statement was a lie. You and Steve indicated to Larry, Doris, their child, and us; that you intended to reveal details if Larry misrepresented his reasons for leaving PDI. You repeated this lie to Larry's child in the following letter.

C.J.'s Letter to Justin – October 16, 2002

October 16, 2002

Dear Justin

We³⁵⁴ have recently heard an audio recording of a telephone conversation that members of our leadership team [Steve and Paul] had with you in October [7th] of 1997. We have also taken a fresh look at the transcript of a conversation between your father and me that same month [October 3]. As we read and listened to our own words, we realize that we have wronged you.

During those two conversations, members [you and Steve] of our leadership team said that we might divulge information³⁵⁵ about you as we responded to questions surrounding your father's departure from PDI. Since you had previously entrusted very personal information to members of the team, in response to assurances of confidentiality, we can understand why our statements would have alarmed you and caused you great anguish. After giving our word we should never have indicated there was any other option.³⁵⁶ Our failure was not a mere mistake in judgment. We violated principles of integrity God has set forth in Scripture, so our behavior was sinful in his eyes.

³⁵³ This wasn't about wrong impressions that you and Steve gave Larry and Doris. It was about actual words and events.

³⁵⁴ The "we" included you, Dave and Steve. I never heard the tapes. I only read the partial transcript

³⁵⁵ You denied doing this very thing three months earlier to each of the seven leaders when you said, "There has been no breach of confidentiality nor will there be. Sharing the details of [the child's] sin was never an option." You were now under growing pressure to get the story right given the clear evidence and ongoing appeals from Larry and the leaders.

³⁵⁶ Here you acknowledged your willingness to violate your word which was something you already said you never intended to do. You were reversing stream and changing the story. This was deceitful.

When you asked us what we would do with the personal information you had confided to us, we did not give you the prompt reassurance we ourselves would have wanted to receive. We sinned against God, and we sinned against you...and for this we are deeply sorry and ask your forgiveness.

Please know that we have maintained our commitment and kept our promise of confidentiality we made to you that evening. The details you shared with two members of the team [you and Steve] have not been divulged to anyone else, not even to their spouses or to other members of the team. In spite of this commitment though, we [i.e., Steve following your counsel] failed to promptly give you the reassurance you requested on October 7. This was wrong of us.

Although our words on two occasions [you on October 3 and Steve on October 7] implied otherwise,³⁵⁷ it was never our intention to make public the detailed personal information you gave us.³⁵⁸ We did think we might have to respond to public statements by your father regarding his departure from PDI. Therefore, we did consider making a statement about relevant personal issues in his [your father's] life, which would have included a general statement about deficiencies in his family leadership that had been revealed by "serious problems in his [child's] life." We did not plan to be any more detailed than this with regard to you,³⁵⁹ for we knew that to do so would have violated our pastoral commitment to you.

Now that we have been able to review these two conversations we realize that we utterly failed to communicate this conviction to you in either of these conversations. Instead, by speaking in generalities and refusing to answer specifically some of the questions you posed, we left you with the impression that we might break your confidence.³⁶⁰ As best we can recall, we corrected this soon after the recorded conversation and gave assurance that we would not divulge personal information about you regardless of what your father did or said. Hopefully this removed the ongoing possibility of disclosure, but it did not cancel the fact that our earlier words had caused you a period of fear and

³⁵⁷ Your comments were explicit. Nor were they an empty threat. It had nothing to do with implications whose meaning Larry inaccurately inferred

³⁵⁸ This was extremely misleading. You did not plan to reveal all the "personal information" but you were prepared to share some of the details.

³⁵⁹ Simply not true. We were talking about how detailed to be and getting legal counsel regarding the same.

³⁶⁰ This was not simply an impression. It was a reality. This is an example of duplicity. Steve spoke in generalities and refused to answer specific questions on Oct 7 because your explicit threat from Oct 3 to reveal details was real and being seriously entertained. Soon after these two conversations, you had Steve look into our legal liability if we divulged details in the public domain. In fact, this letter from you was written right after we received legal counsel and as a result of the counsel decided not to reveal any details.

anguish.³⁶¹ We failed you, and we are deeply sorry for the affect this has had on you.

...if it would help you to hear these words in person, please let me know and I will be glad to arrange a time when we can talk. Although there are significant issues between your father and the leadership team that have yet to be resolved, we hope God will use this letter to move you and the team toward reconciliation.

In His grace,

C.J.

This letter was a clear example of obfuscation. That is “the concealment of intended meaning in communication, making communication confusing, intentionally ambiguous, and more difficult to interpret.” It involved tortuous logic and double speak. But it was worse. Your comments were untrue. You and Steve were both willing to break your commitment to the child and reveal detailed information of a confidential nature in order to prevent Larry from misrepresenting the grounds for his departure from PDI. Here are the facts and evidence in support of this charge.

Receiving Legal Counsel to Reveal No Details

On October 14, 1997, Steve sent us the following letter. Remember, your conversation with Larry and Doris occurred on October 3. Steve’s occurred on October 7. In response to your threats, Larry felt it necessary to see what legal recourse he had in stopping you.

10/14/97

Guys,

Larry informed me he has sought legal counsel in Georgia. His counsel has assured him (it was obvious he was reading from specific notes) of the criminal offense it would be if we share anything pertaining to [his child]. It would be a civil offense and each person who violated the confidentiality would be held responsible, and the consequences would be severe. In Georgia, these laws with clergy and psychiatrists are upheld across the board.

³⁶¹ Here you asked the child’s forgiveness for leaving a false impression that caused “fear and anguish.” But it was not a false impression, it was a purposeful impression. For the sake of argument, however, let’s agree it was a false impression; then, you should have asked the child’s forgiveness for manipulating and deceiving them.

Larry said he was not threatening, just informing. That from his legal counsel, they would have clear and obvious evidence of laws being broken against them, and he pleaded and warned that the laws in Georgia are very much in defense of their confidentiality. Blackmail, defamation of character, (and other things he mentioned) are serious crimes...

Larry M., George H., Todd T., Gene P., need to know in particular that nothing can be said regarding [Larry's child].

I have forwarded this to Larry Malament to forward to the above mentioned.

Steve

After writing us and later the same day, Steve talked to Chip Grange, our legal counsel, to get his perspective on the sharing of this information. Steve sent us the following notes regarding whether or not we should reveal details regarding the child's sins.

Steve's Notes Regarding Counsel from Chip Grange
10/14/97

Gentlemen, here is a bullet form synopsis of our lengthy conversation.³⁶²

3. Re: us divulging [the child's] sins if necessary. He said this is the shakiest part of our perspective. Would STRONGLY recommend we jettison the idea. Court would recognize our responsibility for Larry because he was an employee. [His child] was not an employee. Even though he was a [child] of an employee, it doesn't matter. If we divulged what was shared in confidence in a pastoral climate of counsel and confidentiality, we would be very vulnerable...
9. Regarding us disclosing [the child's] sin, there is a big red flag here. Even if we state more than Larry has said in his May 15 letter, there are major cautions. Strong recommendation we do not divulge [the child's] sins to any degree in any fashion. He was not an employee and we are not responsible for [the child] (legally) unless that has been delegated to us by [the] parents, which it wasn't. Voiced major reservations that we do this. We would be vulnerable if we did...
11. The courts would see a strong line of demarcation between divulging Larry's sins and revealing [the child's].

³⁶² I've only included the relevant points which were numbers 3, 9, 11, 13.

13. The final thoughts that came were from Chip “taking off his legal hat.” He appealed to me that I give him my permission to call Larry and appeal the process of reconciliation be reinstated. I denied, telling him at this point, C.J. needs to make that decision, and I told him why. He [Chip] cannot believe this is irreconcilable. He also feels that our playing the sins of [the child] card, was “nuclear”³⁶³ to the reconciliation process and should never have been presented. Feels this may have contributed to the process breakdown. (I tried to walk him through how all this occurred, etc.). Wonders if our using the sins of [the child] as a trading chip³⁶⁴ was detrimental to the process.

The following day, October 15, you also talked to Chip. Here is what you told me about your conversation. First, you did not agree with Chip’s assessment of you. You felt he was offended and influenced by his friendship with Larry.³⁶⁵ On the other hand, you acknowledged Chip was confronting and supporting both of you.

You told me Chip expressed concerns about your comments to Covenant Life Church the previous Sunday. For example, when you said, “Don’t let the example of Larry cause you to distrust the leaders of Covenant Life Church. You can trust their leadership. These men [the pastors] are the exact opposite of Larry.” You indicated Chip was “uncomfortable with the adulation given to men” when these comments resulted in a standing ovation. He also said you “unnecessarily elevated” yourself by saying “I would rather die than do what Larry is doing” and made a “caricature of Larry” whose actions were “so heinous and wicked you would rather die.”³⁶⁶ He felt you “exaggerated Larry’s sins” and “judged Larry’s sins harsher than your own sins.”³⁶⁷

Here is what Larry wrote us in December 1998 about this incident.

³⁶³ Of course, Chip was right. You nuked the Tomczaks.

³⁶⁴ That is why Larry always insisted that your threats consisted of blackmail. Not for money, but for silence. “Blackmail is the act of threatening to reveal substantially true information about a person to the public, a family member, or associates unless a demand is met. This information is usually of an embarrassing, socially damaging, and/or incriminating nature. As the information is substantially true, the act of revealing the information may not be criminal in its own right nor amount to a civil law defamation; it is the making of demands in exchange for withholding the information that is often considered a crime.” (Wikipedia) “Blackmail is 1) the act of attempting to obtain money by intimidation, as by threats to disclose discreditable information; or 2) the exertion of pressure or threats, especially unfairly, in an attempt to influence someone’s actions.” (World English Dictionary)

³⁶⁵ Very typical. You disagree with the assessment because the person is offended (i.e., bitter or resentful).

³⁶⁶ These were hateful and self-righteous comments. You should return to Covenant Life Church and publically ask forgiveness of all the people present that day which still numbers in the hundreds.

³⁶⁷ All true.

"C.J. unnecessarily and uncharitably spoke evil of me and slandered me publically (Slander: "Utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation.") before in excess of a thousand people in an open Sunday a.m. service (filled with longstanding friends plus impressionable youth, non-church members and guest), when he branded me a liar plus violated the Matthew 18 ethic (he never even came to me first about the matter in question.). This was done in the church I founded twenty years prior, in which I had invested fifteen years of my life, family and finances. This also constitutes an abuse of spiritual authority by portraying me as some sort of charlatan before the eyes of a captive audience who have no opportunity to hear "the rest of the story." Almost twenty years of longstanding friendship and the reputation of a man of God and his family were destroyed in a moment. This was unnecessary. This was shameful and grievous to God. It must be addressed." ("An Appeal to the PDI Leadership," pp. 69-70)

In his book, *Reckless Abandon*, Larry references Chip's involvement. "While the heat of this refining process was still very intense in my own life, Chip Grange, a friend of many years, challenged me not only to forgive, but to pray blessings on those I believed had betrayed me." (p. 18)

After your discussion with Chip, you asked me to contact Chip in order to share the team's perspective on Larry and to hear Chip's perspective on you. It was apparent you thought I would disagree with Chip. I was leaving to bow hunt in West Virginia so Dave was asked to follow up with Chip. Here is my note to Dave. I included the salient points I gathered from my conversation with you.

10/18/97

Dear Dave,

Though I attempted to, I was not able to connect with Chip Grange on Friday or Saturday. I leave today after the [Sunday] meeting for a week of hunting in Franklin. I'll be in the wild the whole time. C.J. said it would be fine if you could contact Chip instead. Mostly to let Chip give his perspective on C.J. and then succinctly give Chip your/the team's observations regarding the same.

It appears that the basic issues are Chip feels it is wrong to even consider making any mention any of [the child's] sins, that C.J. has been harsh with Larry, that he has judged Larry's sin harsher than his own sins, that he has exaggerated Larry's sins, that he [C.J.] sees everything as black and white - there are no grays in his [C.J.'s] life...

Brent

C.J. Unwilling to Ask Larry and Doris' Forgiveness

You originally threatened the Tomczak's on October 3, 1997. Five years later on October 16, 2002* you finally asked forgiveness via letter of the Tomczak's child for the "false impression" that "caused...a period of fear and anguish." Now you were talking about meeting with the child in person but you did not want Larry to participate and you did not feel it was at all necessary to ask Larry and Doris' forgiveness for anything from the past. Read along.

January 10, 2003
Larry Tomczak
5123 Sherrer Dr.
Acworth, GA 30102

Dear Larry,

As I stated in my [Oct 16, 2002] letter to [your child], I am eager to talk with [the child]. I am perplexed as to why you are trying to include yourself in this conversation. As clearly stated in my letter the conversation should involve only [the child] and me.³⁶⁸ Please don't prevent or delay this conversation from taking place by trying to include yourself. If [the child] would like to talk with me, have [the child] contact me and I will be glad to talk with [the child] as stated in my letter.

As we confessed in our letter to [the child], we realized that we had sinned against [the child] by not giving [the child] clear, direct, assurances of our commitment to keep the specifics of [the child's] confession in confidence as we dealt with our differences with you. We also realize that our sin against [the child] was committed in your presence and Doris since you were on the phone with Steve. Since you witnessed our sin against [the child], we wanted you to witness our confession as well, so we copied you on our letter to [your child]. We do not see a biblical responsibility to go further than that.³⁶⁹

As I have consulted other team members and Ken Sande, I am not aware of what else we can do at this time. From our experience with you and your letters, there appears to be a lack of humility and an unwillingness to focus attention on your own heart and sin. Although we agree that the Bible places a high priority on reconciliation, it also teaches that there is a limit to how much

³⁶⁸ You would not allow Larry to participate in your meeting with his child as the father.

³⁶⁹ Yikes! No need to say anything to Larry and Doris?

time and energy should be put into these efforts, especially when we believe that the other side is unwilling to hear correction and honestly face up to his own contribution to the problem.³⁷⁰ Frankly, having reviewed our long history with you, your letters, your continuing slander, secret taping of phone calls, threats of lawsuit etc., we haven't found you humble or trustworthy.³⁷¹

Larry, in the many letters I have sent to you over the years, I have repeatedly addressed all the issues contained in your last letter. Since our perspective and position hasn't changed, I don't think it is wise or necessary for me to address these again. Please send all future letters to Brent Detwiler and he will determine whether a response is appropriate. And be aware that Brent will not be obligated to respond to any letter you send unless future communication reveals a change in your attitude and a clear awareness of your sin.

Finally, I will be sending Ken Sande a copy of this letter and asking for his evaluation of attitude and approach.

On behalf of the team,

C.J.

Soon after your letter to Larry, you received this response from Larry.

[mid-January, 2003]

Dear C.J.

Greetings in the Name of Jesus our Lord! Thank you for your recent letter [from January 10, 2003].

I commend you for repenting and acknowledging your lack of integrity (what many would view as blackmail) to keep us from explaining the full story of why we could no longer remain in PDI as a ministry. Even though it happened years ago, it remains a painful chapter we trust God will soon conclude.

When I called [our child, the child] cried as I read your letter of repentance [from October 16, 2002]. I cried too. This has been a long journey and we are grateful to God for what He grace has accomplished.

³⁷⁰ Of course, this was precisely what you were doing with Larry regarding the charge of blackmail.

³⁷¹ The same was true of you.

Five year ago we departed PDI because of certain practices that we said were harmful to people³⁷² along with doctrinal emphases with which we disagreed. It was a costly decision but we had to obey God. I shared with you at the time that I “no longer fit” with the ministry to which I gave my life for almost twenty-five years.

Over the years I’ve watched over fifty leadership couples leave PDI for many of the same reasons and experience the same unChristlike treatment we did. Families have divided (as our did). Folks left the ministry. Reputations have been tarnished.

Your tearful repentance for what was done to Kenny Roberts and the Cleveland leaders a couple of years ago when they departed PDI was significant. Now your admittance of a violation of “principles of integrity” in dealing with our [child] and us is another important step.³⁷³ Please continue so God will be glorified and others can be healed in these days ahead.

May I offer one suggestion? Please don’t wait years to address people’s legitimate offenses. Years ago you stated publically that you wanted to be one of the “quickest people to repent” when you disobeyed the Lord.³⁷⁴

In our case, I sent you a detailed paper over four years ago citing fives issues and an appeal for dialogue. Pre-eminent in the paper was what you acknowledged in your October 16th letter of repentance.

I sent you a transcript and detailed notes of conversation.

In letter after letter I asked for mediation with men like Jack Hayford, Mike Bickle, Terry Virgo, Bryn Jones, and others. Regarding Jack Hayford you said while you “respected him, you didn’t know him,” so you declined.

I sent you over a dozen letters in which I repeatedly cited the need to address sins and offenses on both parts, in a spirit of humility and reconciliation. Please note that I said “both parts.” If you review my letters to you over the years, my emphases has been mutual.

I came to Charlotte to meet with you [on January 25, 2001]. I played the exact tape recordings, I recently sent you, highlighting the treatment we experienced.

³⁷² By January 2003, I was far more sympathetic to Larry on this point. The process of correcting you that began in December 2000 continued.

³⁷³ Though you had not acknowledged any sin against Larry and Doris.

³⁷⁴ I remember the same comment. Any repentance I’ve observed in your life has taken years of extraordinary effort and patience by others.

You had the opportunity to listen to the entire tape and acknowledge your sin almost two years ago, but after listening for only twenty minutes you said, "That's enough!"

A year ago I invited you to a meeting with respected Christian leaders Steve Strang and Rick Joyner, along with Doris and me in Orlando. After four years of making little to no progress with you, I shared that my only recourse, in line with Matthew 18, was to "widen the circle" and enlist mediation help. At the time you declined to participate. We persevered.

Finally, I further widened the circle by having six internationally known leaders get involved. In confidentiality they listened to what happened via the tape recording and sent individual letters that I sent to you in which they all concurred with your unethical conduct. In the interim, I declined to share my story with Charisma magazine and their international news service who offered to help us "move this along to reconciliation" by interviewing both sides in hopes this could finally bring us to the table for discussion and some closure.

As we drove to Boston in September 2002, we stayed overnight at your next door neighbor's house and asked if Doris, [our child] and I could take you to dinner to talk and see some closure in the matter. Your secretary phoned to say you were unable to accept our invitation.

On October 16th, 2002, exactly five years to the month that we experienced the unethical treatment your letter addressed, you finally admitted to our [child] how deeply sorry you were and asked forgiveness for your sin.

Justice appeared to be delayed but it was not denied. For this we honor God and His faithfulness. We would like to assume you included Doris and me in your thinking.³⁷⁵

I prayed each and every day for five years for God's blessing on you and each team member by name. I also prayed for God's intervention that you would come to repentance and we could see reconciliation.

This is an important step to that end.

God is pleased at your response. I immediately phoned to tell you.

I look forward to talking with you in these coming days to hopefully complete the process.³⁷⁶ May family members who are divided and have been unaware

³⁷⁵ Which you did not. You saw no need to ask their forgiveness.

of what was done over five years ago, also come to understand why we had to depart PDI and that we were telling the truth regarding what was being done to our family.

Doris and I love you and stand ready to forgive you.³⁷⁷ Your asking [our child] for forgiveness for what you men [C.J. and Steve] did to all three of us was step one. Please bring closure to this aspect of your breach by contacting Doris and me by phone or in person.

Yes, it have been a long journey but may all of us give glory to God in the end.

Yours in His grace,

Larry.

P.S. C.J., in your letter you told [our child]: “if it would help you to hear these words in person,³⁷⁸ please let me know and I will be glad to arrange a time when we can talk.” He would like you to honor this statement as the leader of the PDI team which acted in unanimity (as stated on the tape) in what was done in October of 1997. Feel free to contact me for a date and time that we can meet as outlined in your letter. Thank you and may God bless you.

Paul Palmer to be Commended

Around this same time, Paul contacted us. He wanted to clear his conscience and acknowledge his part in dealing with the Tomcaks. He should commended by you if you ever make a confession.

From: Paul Palmer
Sent: Friday, February 07, 2003 12:18 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Forgiveness

Dear CJ,

Over the last several months now I have been in prayer and communion with God in a posture of circumspection (Eph. 5:15-16) so as not to remain

³⁷⁶ That is, asked their forgiveness for blackmail, etc.

³⁷⁷ They had offense with you for legitimate reasons. The same was true of you. There were things Larry and Doris needed to acknowledge for reconciliation to occur.

³⁷⁸ This never happen which was contrary to your promise. Finally, 13 years later, you just met with the child this past December.

foolish...that which I am very capable of being! My specific purpose and plea in sanctification could be summed up in Psalm 139:1-6. The NIV footnotes are as follows:

“God, you know me perfectly, far beyond my knowledge of myself; my every action, my every undertaking, and the manner of which I pursue it; even my thoughts - my words - all fully under your scrutiny - so that I do not escape you. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me...too lofty for me to attain.”

Through this self-examination motivated and sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit and His wonderful work, I have received conviction and need to confess sin related to my participation and role in the Tomczak's situation.³⁷⁹ The sins that I have been convicted of and now confess to you are as follows:

1. Sinfully self-righteous towards the Tomczaks and their situation.
2. I lacked the spiritual maturity and wisdom to effectively serve the Tomczaks. This is something I should have admitted to the team.
3. I did not express concerns that God laid on my mind and heart regarding the process out of false humility and the fear of man.³⁸⁰
4. I also believe that some of my conversations regarding their situation were biblically unethical.³⁸¹

Knowing the sinfulness of my heart, there are probably other sins which I committed during this time. However, these are the ones that the Holy Spirit has primarily impressed on my heart.

Consequently, I am compelled to ask you and the team's forgiveness of these sins. I also need to convey my Godly sorrow and grievous sins to the Tomczaks and ask their forgiveness.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ Paul's sins were small in comparison to you and Steve. As Steve pointed out to Paul, “Relatively, your involvement was minor, compared to the ongoing conversations that the local team had as well as myself and CJ (I believe as many as 10 at one point), and thus your perspective was somewhat limited. So, your negative effect on Larry, whatever you feel that might have been would have been small.” Yet, Paul was the only one willing to confess. He should have been honored for his humility. You should have followed his example.

³⁸⁰ Primarily Paul had in mind the threats made by you and Steve. Paul did not speak out against them even though he felt they were wrong. He felt your and Steve's handling of the process was unethical.

³⁸¹ Paul participated in the phone call Steve had with the Tomczaks on October 7. During this call, Steve refused to back away from the threat you made four days earlier. While Paul did not support Steve's actions, he failed to speak up against them which implied his agreement. To have differed with, or corrected you and Steve at the time would have been costly - understandably that presented a great temptation.

³⁸² Which he did and was reconciled to them in friendship.

Please feel free to share this with the other team members who were involved in the situation related to the Tomczak.

In closing, as I read Psa. 103: 8-9, my heart is filled with a deep desire for the grace to love Him more. May He in His kindness grant this desire.

Sincerely,
Paul Palmer

Here is Steve's response to Paul.

From: Steve Shank
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2003 10:11 AM
To: Paul Palmer
Subject: Re: Forgiveness

Greetings Paul,

Thank you for your recent e mail to the team. It was good to hear from you!

In response to your e mail, may I offer a few thoughts?

1. Thank you for writing us to convey what the Lord has been showing you about your heart as you participated in the necessary discipline of Larry. Only the Lord knows where your heart was at towards him during that season. I commend you for your desire to confess your sin regarding this episode and to seek forgiveness.
2. Regarding the observations you now have of your participation, one of the benefits of team ministry is the safety it affords. Larry was not the object of your assessment singularly, but the care of a team of local and extra local men who loved him and painstakingly served him through months of counsel and help. If you feel you were harboring sinful dispositions in your heart towards him of self-righteousness, or lacked the spiritual maturity to really serve Larry with your observations, at least we can be sure that overall, by the local and extra local team of men, there were checks and balances to one another, and Larry was extended the grace and care that the situation warranted.³⁸³ However, if you feel your contribution

³⁸³ We did extend grace and care to Larry but the "checks and balances" were not sufficient when it came to the issue of threatening on Oct 3, 1997 and the demeaning of Larry at CLC soon after. I should have spoken up more strongly about these matters.

was sinfully motivated, you should seek whatever means of acknowledgment you feel the Lord is leading you to.

3. Regarding your false humility and fear of man (as well as the other things cited), I think you can also be confident that the apostolic team would have brought those things to you at that time if they were detected as you participated with helping Larry through his transition from leading the Atlanta church to, for a season, focusing on the leadership of his home.

As to the process, another safeguard Larry benefited from was the checks and balances of both the local team as well as the a-team. If you feel your contribution to the process was sinful or wrong, then I commend you for responding to that conviction. Another thought here that might assure you. Relatively, your involvement was minor, compared to the ongoing conversations that the local team had as well as myself and CJ (I believe as many as 10 at one point), and thus your perspective was somewhat limited. So, your negative effect on Larry, whatever you feel that might have been would have been small. At the moment, as well as during our review shortly after the incidents with Larry, all of those who were primarily involved, felt much mercy was extended to Larry, given the sins that were exposed. However, please know we forgive you for not expressing your concerns out of false humility and the fear of man. If you have concerns about the overall process in general, please let me know what those concerns might be.

4. Since I do not know what you mean by “your conversations regarding the situation were biblically unethical,” it is hard for me to comment. If you care to elaborate, I’d be glad to try and pen a response.

If you choose to speak with Larry, obviously it seems your comments need to be confined to your heart specifically. If you have “concerns” about the process in general, or reference the process critically, then to use your phrase, biblical ethics would direct you to convey those to us first, so we might evaluate our hearts, the process from your new perspective and so on.³⁸⁴ Please know we welcome your thoughts, if they reflect on us.

I pray for and think of you often, and hope you are experiencing God’s grace in health, family and church.

Your friends

³⁸⁴ This was Steve’s real concern. Paul agreed with Larry that you had blackmailed him.

Steve on behalf of the team

The Need for Confession Regarding Larry

Everything related to our handling of Larry occurred in a very public fashion. Thousands of people were affected. This is one of the reasons you should provide the churches of Sovereign Grace Ministries a substantial confession like you asked Larry to do.³⁸⁵ Larry is to be commended for the humility he displayed in his May 15, 1997 confession which was specific in nature. You are guilty of many of the same sins and some more serious. I hope you follow his example. Instead of writing everyone, however, I'd suggest you record a video that can be played in each Sovereign Grace church on a Sunday morning.

This past December, Larry contacted you and asked for a meeting. You agreed and met at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. Larry thought you might be more humble since he was aware of numerous problems in Sovereign Grace Ministries and the growing chorus of people raising concerns for the ministry. In this context, I contacted Larry because I knew your meetings were for the purpose of reconciliation and I had just received your first response to RRF&D and AFA. I wanted to see if those documents were benefitting your soul in the confession of sin to Larry.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2010 2:22 PM
To: Larry Tomczak
Cc: Palmer, Paul
Subject: C.J.

Dear Larry,

Greetings and love in the name of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

It has been a long time and I wanted to reconnect and ask you a question. C.J. recently told me that he met with you and had a second meeting set up with you for this week.

If you don't mind, how have those meetings gone in your opinion? Here's why I ask. Over the past year, I've been appealing to C.J. regarding the long standing and serious patterns of sin in his life with which you are familiar. He recently acknowledged the presence of pride in his relationship with me and others at SGM/CLC. It is my hope that he will do the same with you. I am

³⁸⁵ An action I agreed with and supported.

grateful for this work of grace in his life but there remains considerably more for him to see and confess.

I'd also like to know if C.J. mentioned anything to you about the reasons SGM declared me unfit for ministry. For instance, that I was not carrying out my ministerial responsibilities properly.

By the way, did you get with C.J. this week? Has he acknowledged any wrong doing and proposed any remedy?

Well, grace to you! Thanks for your help.

Brent

We set it up to talk by phone on December 30. It was a good conversation.

From: Larry Tomczak
Sent: Friday, December 24, 2010 8:21 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: C.J.

My man, good morning. We are about to depart for Atlanta for family Christmas so I must be brief. Let's talk on the phone next week at your convenience and start there ok? Tx for understanding, we can keep things confidential if you want. I love ya and am eager to chat.

Your friend,
Larry

Not Wise, Appropriate or Necessary to Confess Sins

The next day, I wrote you regarding your times with Larry. I wanted to see if fruit was being born in keeping with your recent confession to me. In particular, I wanted to know if you asked the Tomczak's forgiveness for blackmailing them. That was the central issue. I knew reconciliation was unachievable unless you did.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, December 31, 2010 9:02 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Justin

One of the illustrations I have not raised with you³⁸⁶ in what I've written concerns your (and Steve's) handling of the situation with Larry and Doris and [their child] in the past. While I agreed with you on the issues, I was concerned for your attitude and approach to them. I brought this up to you at the time. I'd like to know what you asked their forgiveness for recently. For example, blackmailing them, threatening them, etc. Those were their primarily offenses.

Here is your response to my inquiry. You refused to reveal any specifics.

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, January 08, 2011 9:13 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Justin

Brent,

It is my joy to give you a brief update on what has taken place between Larry, Doris, Justin and me. After a series of meetings where every issue was discussed and addressed, specific and appropriate confession was made and forgiveness graciously extended, we have all been reconciled to each other. It has been a humbling, redemptive and wonderful experience for us all and I am deeply grateful for and indebted to Larry, Doris and Justin for their humility, kindness, graciousness and forgiveness.

At the conclusion of the process we all agreed that it's neither wise nor appropriate for us to reveal all the specifics³⁸⁷ of our interactions with each other. We simply want to inform folks that we have addressed all pertinent issues, forgiven each other and been reconciled by the grace of God. And we hope everyone will rejoice with us in our reconciliation. I have asked Larry and Doris to be my guest at the November Pastor's Conference and they have gladly accepted my invitation. It will be a unique joy for us to welcome them back at this conference.³⁸⁸

In my last conversation with Larry he wanted me to convey to you his desire to meet with you and there is a possibility he will be in Charlotte sometime soon.

³⁸⁶ Over the past 18 months, I've sought to gradually and progressively share examples with you. Many more remain.

³⁸⁷ You have not revealed any of the specifics with me or the pastors. Actually, you have not shared any generalities. You don't even share the nature of your sin in the broadest terms. You only willing to say you've been reconciled. You claim that to say more is unwise and inappropriate – even to me.

³⁸⁸ This would be the perfect time for you to confess to all the pastors and wives not only regarding Larry but all the other issues I have raised with you.

Larry wanted me to tell you that he would love to get together. I hope you do. Please let him know if this would be your desire.

Because of the Cross,
C. J.

It was great to hear about the reconciliation.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, January 08, 2011 11:13 AM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: [Tomczak Child]

I rejoice with you in your reconciliation! Praise be to God!

Approximately three weeks after my inquiry regarding the nature of your confession, you sent out the following "Update for Pastors in Sovereign Grace Ministries." You reiterated your claim to me that it was unwise and unnecessary (not just inappropriate) to "publicly communicate the details of our interactions with others" and "simply" (i.e., only) wanted to tell people you were reconciled - nothing else. Whether in public or private, you agreed that the acknowledgement of specifics sins was neither wise, appropriate or necessary

January 19, 2011

My friends,

I do hope this e-mail finds you aware of God's grace revealed in and through the gospel of "Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2)."

I've got much to inform you about so let's get right to it and let's start with some wonderful news.

It is my joy to inform you that over the past few months Larry Tomczak and I have walked through a process of reconciliation together. After a series of meetings where all the important issues were discussed and addressed, and where appropriate, specific confession was made and forgiveness graciously extended, we have been reconciled to each other by the grace of God. It has been a humbling, redemptive and wonderful experience for me and I am deeply grateful for and indebted to Larry for his graciousness and forgiveness. At the conclusion of the process we agreed that it's neither wise nor necessary for us to publicly communicate the details of our interactions with others. We simply want to inform folks that we have addressed all the pertinent issues,

forgiven each other and been reconciled by the grace of God. And we hope everyone will rejoice with us in our reconciliation.

I have been eager to inform you of this great news. I have invited Larry and Doris to be my/our guests and attend our Pastors Conference in November. They have agreed to come and are looking forward to attending the conference. I can't wait for this conference and I look forward to publicly welcoming and privately spending time with Larry and Doris. I know you do as well.

Who Approved Keeping C.J.'s Sins Secret

My last correspondence regarding your reconciliation was on January 8. It was now March 18 and I felt the need to find out if you had approval from the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors to remain silent about your sins. I stated my purpose in the subject line.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2011 12:11 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

Hi C.J.

I received your second response³⁸⁹ and want you to know I am considering its contents and how to respond. I'll be back to you later.

In this email, I wanted to ask some questions regarding the agreement between you and Larry to remain silent about your sins (see emails below). I'd like to know if you talked to the governing boards of SGM and CLC in advance about keeping secret the sins you asked Larry to forgive? In other words, did they approve this agreement between you and Larry before you met with Larry? Or, did you and Larry make the decision to withhold details independent of their counsel and support? For example, did the Boards approve of your decision to withhold information regarding blackmail and threats of Larry? It is my hope you talked to the boards before making a decision of such consequence.

Sincerely,
Brent

I didn't hear from you so I dropped you another line.

³⁸⁹ To RRF&D and AFA on March 11, 2011

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2011 12:43 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Re: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

You must be tied up. Any chance I'll be hearing from you this week?

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 10:50 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

Brent,

Yep, I have been tied up and I appreciate your understanding. We had our first church planting conference (Plant) that Dave led very well and the conference seemed to go very well. I think you would be encouraged by all that is taking place in this regard. And this conference was preceded by a meeting with the regional guys followed by a meeting with all the pastors from the Northeast. So I am behind on all fronts as the preparation for this conference and these meetings have taken over my schedule for the last month. Again, thanks for your patience and understanding.

I remain eager to respond to questions and concerns about my reconciliation with Larry but after our last exchange, the board asked that the e-mail interaction between us no longer continue.³⁹⁰ In light of the evident fruitlessness of our e-mail exchanges, they felt we had arrived at a time where they should interact with you and play their appropriate role in this process of pursuing reconciliation. So I am deferring to these men in whom I am gladly submitted and accountable. I look forward to the day when we can sit together and I can eagerly hear your concerns and answer your questions while also conveying some questions/concerns I would like to ask you in relation to the intent and purpose³⁹¹ of what you have written about the reconciliation that has taken place with Larry. Perhaps when we meet this can be added to our list.

And just so you'll know both Dave and Jeff have obviously been tied up as well as they have been preparing for this conference and these meetings so I would

³⁹⁰ More on this action later.

³⁹¹ Did you have something malicious in mind?

assume that is why you haven't heard from them. Also, I know Jeff is away with relatives this week. So I know the board is intending to respond to you in a timely manner but they are not involving me in this process. I would anticipate you would hear from them soon and it is certainly my hope that we can meet soon and pursue reconciliation.

In His grace,

C. J.

I sought to clarify my intent in this e-mail.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 12:52 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

Dear C.J.,

I'm sure it was an excellent conference. I hope men's hearts were filled with wisdom and passion to plant gospel centered churches for the glory of God!

It breaks my heart to hear the Board of Directors has ended our interaction. I thought you were finding the e-mail exchanges fruitful, not fruitless. You last wrote me on March 11. Since then I've been praying and putting my thoughts together for you.

I am sorry I was unclear regarding my intent in asking about your and Larry's decision to remain silent about your sins and not inform others. I intended to discover whether or not you talked to the Sovereign Grace Board and the Covenant Life Board in advance of your decision. That is, whether you acted in concert with them or independently of them.³⁹² As I said, "It is my hope you talked to the boards before making a decision of such consequence." I was trying to discover the answer.

Why did I hope you had authorization? Because it was a monumental decision³⁹³ and one you should not make on your own. In your March 11, 2011 response to me you acknowledged the following.

³⁹² Acting unilaterally and independently was a major topic in RRF&D and AFA. I hoped my suspicion was wrong. I hoped you talked to both Boards before deciding to keep quiet about your sins.

³⁹³ Your sins against Larry (and Larry's against us) had a monumental impact upon the movement. Serious discussions should have preceded any decision to say nothing about them to anyone. This was not your decision to make! You might agree to say nothing about Larry's sins but you should be very

"You [Brent] also say that I led the apostolic team more by expedience than by process. I think that was often true... As I look back over the years, I have become aware of a pattern in my leadership of assuming we've had sufficient discussion on a topic and that we're in agreement on a topic, rather than reviewing, discussing, and making sure that everyone on the team is in full agreement on the issue at hand. I regret that there have been many times I have not done this...as I look back on such examples I feel a genuine sorrow. However, I would need you to help me understand how this would be hypocrisy on my part." (pp. 2, 7)

While acknowledging this tendency you appeared to be making the same mistake with Larry. I hoped not, but I needed to find out. If it was true you didn't talk to the Boards about the decision, I planned to redemptively raise it as a recent example of independence and hypocrisy in contradiction to your confession.³⁹⁴

Now it appears I've been cut off from corresponding with you because of this inquiry. It was my intent to serve you and help you as in all my writings.

Well, good bye old friend. I will always treasure the many years we had together.

Brent

willing to tell the movement and pastors about your sins. Remember your words from two years ago. "So in Sovereign Grace there is no such thing as a flawless pastor, no such thing, but in Sovereign Grace we must acknowledge our flaws! We must acknowledge our flaws and we must learn from our flaws. We must acknowledge when we have stumbled, where we have stumbled, how we have stumbled and we must learn from each and every stumble.... There will be no damage control in Sovereign Grace. We will seek to walk humbly before God and when we stumble we will not seek to engage in damage control. No, instead we will humbly acknowledge with sorrow that we stumbled – we stumbled. No damage control."

³⁹⁴ I've always attempted to discover the facts before sharing concerns. My concerns have been validated. You had no discussions and no approval from either the SGM Board or the CLC Board. You entered into an "agreement" to keep your sins secret without their knowledge or support. This is extremely serious. Why? Because it appears you were concealing the nature of your sins from everyone involved and certainly from a wider circle of leaders and the movement. I don't know why or when to talked to the Board. Was it after and because of my March 18 inquiry regarding the nature of your confession? When exactly did you tell the Board that you asked forgiveness of Tomczaks for blackmailing and threatening them? Like so many other things I've brought to your attention, no one could get away with this and not be disciplined or lose their job. It may be wise, inappropriate, and unnecessary to say anything about the Tomczaks. The same is not true of you. This is a matter of integrity and an issue of deceit. You're playing the game by a different set of rules.

Email Interaction Ended because of “Evident Fruitlessness”

You responded to my e-mail above the same day but said absolutely nothing about the “Approval to Keep Sins Secret.” You dropped the subject like a hot potato!

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 4:09 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

Brent,

My friend, I think you have misunderstood my heart and possibly the intent of the board with this step. My desire is to meet with you immediately, to restore our friendship and to resolve these issues. I will do that alone, or with a mediator. I have sent both my responses for that purpose and I am confused why you seem reluctant to meet. So please help me understand why we can't meet or pursue a mediator we can both agree on.³⁹⁵

Also, and this is important, the board is not adopting this approach because of your recent inquiry.³⁹⁶ They are simply trying to facilitate our reconciliation based upon the documents that have been created and swapped – not the production of new ones. And their request would predate³⁹⁷ your most recent inquiry. And their request is not that we no longer interact but simply that in relation to all the unresolved issues, it doesn't appear it would be wise to try and interact anymore by e-mail nor should we begin exploring whole new categories. But I'm prepared to hop a flight tomorrow if you will meet with me.

Brent, it remains my hope that we can regather as a team and review all that took place learning from all that took place and that our interaction can have a redemptive effect on us all. It is my hope that I can ask your forgiveness where necessary and appropriate and receive your forgiveness. And as I've said numerous times it is my hope that you can return to pastoral ministry where you belong my friend.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵ That is the purpose of this document, “Part 3: Concluding Remarks.”

³⁹⁶ About the “Approval to Keep Sins Secret?”

³⁹⁷ In other words, the SGM Board asked you to cut off email interaction with me before I raised this issue with you on March 18 which was only two days after I received your second response to RRF&D and AFA.

³⁹⁸ Which is in total contradiction of your prohibition. These statements are unhelpful and hurtful because they are manipulative. According to you, Dave, Bob and Gene...I belong in the Sovereign Grace sanitarium undergoing long term psychiatric evaluation and treatment! ☺ I was told to stay out of pastoral ministry until a lengthy rehabilitation was over. At best, I'm a pastoral scoundrel.

Hey, if you change your mind and want to talk my cell phone number is xxx-xxx-xxxx. I hope you call. It would be great to hear your voice.

Your friend,
C. J.

I now asked you for a clarification regarding the meaning of “evident fruitlessness.”

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 5:22 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

You give the reason for the Board’s decision “that...e-mail interaction between us no longer continue.” Here it is. “In light of the evident fruitlessness of our e-mail exchanges, they felt we had arrived at a time where they should interact with you and play their appropriate role in this process of pursuing reconciliation.” What do you and they mean by “evident fruitlessness” and what is that assessment based upon?³⁹⁹ This sounds like a sinful judgment.⁴⁰⁰ I’ve not yet responded to them or to your second response. None of you know what I am thinking. I’ve given no indication. Maybe my response will be fruitless in your/their opinion (i.e., devoid of any good fruit), but what evidence is such an assessment based upon now? What have I done that is so fruitless?⁴⁰¹ The only obvious answer is my inquiry about you and Larry. But you deny this played any part in their decision to cut off our interaction. Fruitless is strong language. It means worthless.

Jeff wrote me back the next day. He did not answer any of my questions regarding the basis for declaring fruitless my email interchanges with you. Once again accountability was avoided by providing no open and honest answers.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 3:55 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Joshua Harris; Dave Harvey
Subject: Confidential

³⁹⁹ I was genuinely confused.

⁴⁰⁰ Of course, Jeff was unwilling to answer this question in order to determine if a sinful judgment was made of me.

⁴⁰¹ I really did not know since the decision of the Board predated the expression concerns regarding the agreement with Larry.

Dear Brent,

We trust you are doing well and are aware of the grace of the gospel.

We wanted to get back to you concerning the further questions you passed on after receiving from the board our perspective on your documents and C.J.'s second response to those documents.

First, we wanted to let you know that the board is fully apprised⁴⁰² of C.J.'s interactions with Larry Tomczak and supportive of their efforts toward reconciliation. Various ones of us,⁴⁰³ along with Ken Sande, were involved in counseling⁴⁰⁴ C.J. in this process. Their agreement⁴⁰⁵ to refrain from publicizing the details⁴⁰⁶ of their conversations is in no way to withhold information,⁴⁰⁷ but

⁴⁰² Fully apprised of your recent interactions but not your long history with Larry. In preparing to write, I studied over 1,000 pages of material dealing with you and Larry. "Full apprised" must mean an in depth review of C.J. (and Steve's) sins against Larry and his family. This must include a careful review of the tape containing C.J.'s conversation with the Larry and Doris on October 3, 1997 and Steve's conversation with Larry, Doris and their child on October 7, 1997. Grave sins were committed by both men including illicit coercion. The entire SGM Board should be intimately acquainted with this interaction. Are you? Have you listened to the entire tape?

⁴⁰³ Which ones since Jeff and Joshua know comparatively little about the history between Larry and you? As a result they are of limited helpfulness. I am happy to send them my materials.

⁴⁰⁴ I hope the CLC pastors are apprised and involved in the counseling. C.J. may not being willing tell me about his confession, but as I've said before he must tell his pastors. All of them. But especially, the ones who were on staff at the time.

⁴⁰⁵ I take "their agreement," not "our agreement," to mean the Sovereign Grace Board and the Covenant Life Board were not consulted by you in advance. Please correct me if I am wrong. There is every indication you acted on your own and independently decided to "refrain from publicizing the details of their conversations" as Jeff put it. That was wrong and not your decision to make. You should have gained the approval of the Boards before entering in such an agreement with Larry. This was more "expedience" to use your word. Though you did not acknowledged it to me, I know you asked the Tomczak's forgiveness for blackmailing and threatening them. Apart from doing so, reconciliation with them was absolutely impossible and that is not an overstatement.

⁴⁰⁶ Jeff, to be clear, I've not advocated a "publicizing" of details. That is a caricature to put off my point. I do think C.J. owes the movement an accounting and confession of his sins against the Tomczaks since those sins had a huge impact upon thousands of people. C.J. was abusive and put Larry in the worse possible light. For example, he labeled Larry a "liar" before all of Covenant Life Church and told them he'd rather be "dead than do what Larry Tomczak is doing." That must be remedied. C.J. should also acknowledge his hypocrisy. If it was better to be dead than be Larry, where does that leave C.J.? Is it also true it is better to be dead than be C.J.? If so, will one of you make that announcement to CLC this Sunday? Of course, I'm being facetious in order to make a point - C.J. must see and acknowledge his hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

⁴⁰⁷ Jeff, you say C.J.'s decision to keep his confession secret was "in no way to withhold information." I wish I shared your confidence but as you know, C.J. has a long track record of deceitfully withholding information regarding his sins. It seems foolish for you to state so emphatically that his motive for keeping his sins secret was altogether altruistic and righteous. When I inquired of C.J., he was unwilling to tell me whether he asked forgiveness for blackmailing the Tomczak family. Why wouldn't C.J. be open and honest with me and just say, "Yes Brent, after all these years I've come to see that I blackmailed and

rather demonstrates a resolve to honor Scripture through a process of confession, forgiveness, and covering sin.⁴⁰⁸ We rejoice over the reconciliation that has taken place between them and trust that this process honors and pleases the Lord.

Your question led the Board to evaluate its role in C.J.'s ongoing communications with you. After reviewing the many messages that have taken place between you and C.J. over the past several months, the Board believes that CJ has made a good faith effort⁴⁰⁹ to respond in writing to your numerous questions and that further written correspondence from C.J. to you concerning details related to your documents and the history they cover would not be a wise or productive manner in which to try to resolve these issues. As we stressed in our letter to you, we would strongly support his participation in a face-to-face meeting with you to discuss your concerns more fully with the assistance of an objective mediator, but we have asked him not to engage in any further written communications with you in an attempt to probe the details of these issues further. Instead, we've requested that he forward your messages to us.⁴¹⁰ If we believe we can provide a helpful written response to a question from you, we will be glad to do so. But if we believe the issue you raise will be more profitably addressed in a face-to-face meeting with C.J. or with us, we will defer a response until such a meeting occurs.⁴¹¹

threatened Larry. I'm so glad Larry has forgiven me. I also want to ask the old apostolic team's forgiveness too for the terrible example I set. That includes you." Why did he conceal that information from me?

⁴⁰⁸ C.J. may cover Larry's sins but he should not cover-up his sins. Remember, we don't do this in Sovereign Grace Ministries. Why are C.J. sins so guarded and protected? Why the total blackout? Specific information regarding past "deficiencies" in Larry's family need not be shared in public. In that case, I agree with C.J. that "it's neither wise nor necessary for us to publicly communicate the details of our interactions with others." But is that true in general? Is it unwise and unnecessary for any details (or even general information) to be shared? I don't believe so. I think C.J. and Larry's sins against each other should be shared with the movement in general and with the pastors in more detail. Especially C.J.'s - only Larry's if he is willing. You can add mine too. If not, why not? It would be wonderful to see the most serious rupture in the history of our movement dealt with in an open and honest way. Everyone could learn so much. Besides, scores of Sovereign Grace pastors have confessed their sin in public. Why are the two apostolic team leaders granted exemption clauses? C.J. and Larry's sins were serious and had a profound impact upon the movement. If the Board neglects this you are not faithfully and impartially executing your duties. In fact, I think Larry and C.J. should acknowledge their sins at the Pastors Conference in November. It would be good for C.J. to humble himself before the pastors and let them learn from his mistakes. He could tell them about his threatening without referencing specific details pertaining to one of the Tomczak children. In fact, both of them could share their stumbles. No - should share their stumbles. Why? C.J. and Larry led the movement!

⁴⁰⁹ The facts prove otherwise.

⁴¹⁰ Of course, I'm not going to send questions I need to ask C.J. if you are going to answer them for him. Correspondence ended as a result.

⁴¹¹ As you know, I've been very willing to meet in person but first I've asked you to provide honest, complete and written answers to my questions and the issues I've brought to your attention.

As for your question to the board concerning an e-mail exchange between you and C.J.,⁴¹² at this point let us say this.⁴¹³ We were encouraged by his timely response,⁴¹⁴ to your e-mail which both gave further explanation as to his previous e-mail⁴¹⁵ and humbly expressed his desire to examine his heart further. In numerous meetings with the men in his caregroup before and since then, the issue of sinful judgment has been revisited with C.J., and we have seen sincere efforts on his part to address this sin. We believe you, too, would be encouraged by the fruit of repentance that is evident in his life.

Brent, as we communicated in our letter to you on 3/11, it is our desire to see the issues you raised in your documents, along with those raised in additional e-mails, fully resolved and to see you and C.J. reconciled. Let us also reiterate our willingness as a board to meet with you, along with a mediator, so that these issues can be explored fully and objectively. We believe that the lengthy responses that C.J. has provided, along with the process of growth and accountability he has pursued, has prepared the way for a fruitful process of reconciliation to take place. Therefore, we look forward to hearing your response to all the material that's been sent already,⁴¹⁶ and especially to the invitation to pursue reconciliation with a godly, objective mediator whom we all trust.

We remain hopeful that we can move forward together in a process that will help to resolve the various issues you have raised and that will result in a reconciliation that honors the Lord and reflects the power of the gospel. We look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours in Christ,
Jeff

I followed up with Jeff in less than an hour hoping for some answers to already asked questions.

⁴¹² This involved three emails. Jan 21 from Brent. Jan 25 from C.J. Jan 25 from Brent.

⁴¹³ Here it comes...you're about to jump out of the way to avoid getting hit by the ball. You just won't be honest and tell me on what basis you concluded my email interaction with C.J. was "fruitless." I quit. The dodge ball game is over – you win!

⁴¹⁴ Seven weeks later on March 11 – this was your second response to RRF&D and AFA.

⁴¹⁵ Dec 16, 2010 – this was your first response to RRF&D and AFA.

⁴¹⁶ CR is my response "to all the material that's been sent already."

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2011 4:43 PM
To: Jeff Purswell
Cc: Joshua Harris; Dave Harvey
Subject: RE: Confidential

Quickly and briefly while I have you.

1. Did C.J. consult with you before he made the decision to be silent about the sins he confessed to Larry or did he act independently without your authorization and that of the CLC Board?⁴¹⁷
2. Did you follow up with C.J. regarding his comment that “in the almost 300 pages of documentation you sent me, it doesn’t appear that you make any allowance for potential sins that may remain on your part or how your perceptions and approaches may have been flawed.” He “overlooked” my repeated requests for correction and input. I felt follow up was needed and so indicated. Did the Board get back to ask heart questions?⁴¹⁸ See below.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2010 5:59 PM
To: Nora Earles; Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Bob Kauflin; Gary Ricucci; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Grant Layman; John Loftness
Subject: Overlooking Statements

As I thought about it there is no need to forgive you for simply overlooking statements. That’s morally free. I think there are other questions to ask but I’ll leave additional counsel in the hands of those around you.

3. C.J. indicated that my “evident fruitlessness” was the reason for ending our e-mail interaction with each other. Would you please answer the questions below?⁴¹⁹

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 5:22 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

⁴¹⁷ I still have not received a straight forward answer to this important question.

⁴¹⁸ I still have not received a straight forward answer to this important question.

⁴¹⁹ I still have not received a straight forward answer to this important question. Three’s a charm!

You give the reason for the Board's decision "that...e-mail interaction between us no longer continue." Here it is. "In light of the evident fruitlessness of our e-mail exchanges,⁴²⁰ they felt we had arrived at a time where they should interact with you and play their appropriate role in this process of pursuing reconciliation." What do you and they mean by "evident fruitlessness" and what is that assessment based upon? This sounds like a sinful judgment. I've not yet responded to them or to your second response. None of you know what I am thinking. I've given no indication. Maybe my response will be fruitless in your/their opinion (i.e., devoid of any good fruit), but what evidence is such an assessment based upon now? What have I done that is so fruitless? The only obvious answer is my inquiry about you and Larry. But you deny this played any part in their decision to cut off our interaction. Fruitless is strong language. It means worthless.

Here is Jeff's evasive response.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2011 12:38 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris
Subject: Your Note

Dear Brent,

We have asked C.J. to pass on to the board e-mails between the two of you, and we wanted to get back to you on the one below.⁴²¹ In the e-mail you were responding to,⁴²² C.J. was just trying to explain his understanding⁴²³ of the remaining board's perspective.⁴²⁴ Of course, since then we have sent you our perspective on the best way forward.

It seems that you may have read more into C.J.'s language⁴²⁵ than he intended in that e-mail. We would want you to know that neither C.J. nor we believe that the process involving your documents has been, to use your words,

⁴²⁰ The three we exchanged from January 21 and 25.

⁴²¹ March 29 at 12:52 PM.

⁴²² From you on March 29 at 10:50 AM regarding the cessation of interaction at the direction of the Board.

⁴²³ Did he misrepresent you?

⁴²⁴ Pat Ennis no longer being included.

⁴²⁵ Did he use terminology you did not use like "fruitless?"

“worthless.”⁴²⁶ On the contrary, C.J. has benefitted from your correction and is grateful for it, as are we. We think there has been, by the grace of God, much fruit from this process. However, as we communicated earlier this week, we believe C.J. has made a good faith effort to respond to your documents in writing, and that his responses have prepared the way for honest and productive discussions. It is simply our assessment that the most profitable way to continue these interactions would be in person, with the help of a mediator who could serve everyone involved. This is the reason we as a board have sought to remove C.J. from interacting further over the substance of your documents by e-mail. Brent, we remain hopeful for a God-glorifying process of personal interaction in the days ahead.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Dave, Jeff, and Josh

Here is my e-mail to you from Tuesday, March 29 at 12:52 PM that Jeff, Dave and Steve reference above.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 12:52 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

Dear C.J.,

I’m sure it was an excellent conference. I hope men’s hearts were filled with wisdom and passion to plant gospel centered churches for the glory of God!

It breaks my heart to hear the Board of Directors has ended our interaction. I thought you were finding the e-mail exchanges fruitful, not fruitless. You last wrote me on March 11. Since then I’ve been praying and putting my thoughts together for you.

I am sorry I was unclear regarding my intent in asking about your and Larry’s decision to remain silent about your sins and not inform others. I intended to discover whether or not you talked to the Sovereign Grace Board and the Covenant Life Board in advance of your decision. That is, whether you acted in concert with them or independently of them. As I said, “It is my hope you

⁴²⁶ Your quoting me out of context. I was making the point that trees which are “fruitless” (your word) are “worthless.”

talked to the boards before making a decision of such consequence.” I was trying to discover the answer.

Why did I hope you had authorization? Because it was a monumental decision and one you should not make on your own. In your March 11 response to me you acknowledged the following.

“You [Brent] also say that I led the apostolic team more by expedience than by process. I think that was often true... As I look back over the years, I have become aware of a pattern in my leadership of assuming we’ve had sufficient discussion on a topic and that we’re in agreement on a topic, rather than reviewing, discussing, and making sure that everyone on the team is in full agreement on the issue at hand. I regret that there have been many times I have not done this...as I look back on such examples I feel a genuine sorrow. However, I would need you to help me understand how this would be hypocrisy on my part.” (pp. 2, 7)

While acknowledging this tendency you appeared to be making the same mistake with Larry. I hoped not, but I needed to find out. If it was true you didn’t talk to the Boards about the decision, I planned to redemptively raise it as a recent example of independence and hypocrisy in contradiction to your confession.

Now it appears I’ve been cut off from corresponding with you because of this inquiry. It was my intent to serve you and help you as in all my writings.

Well, good bye old friend. I will always treasure the many years we had together.

Brent

Here’s how I responded to Jeff, Dave and Joshua.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, April 02, 2011 1:48 PM
To: Jeff Purswell
Cc: Dave Harvey; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Your Note

Maybe I have read too much into C.J.’s language but you still have not answered my questions. They are not complicated. Did the Board use the word “fruitless” (or a similar word or phrase) to describe my e-mail interchanges with C.J. after his first response to RRF&D and AFA on Dec. 11?

That is how C.J. characterized your perspective. Did he misrepresent you or embellish your perspective? And doesn't fruitless mean without edible fruit and therefore worthless. What good is a fig tree if it bears no figs? Didn't Jesus curse one somewhere or another?

Anyway, what specific e-mails do you have in mind?⁴²⁷ Send them to me. Include your commentary. Tell me why they are fruitless. Seriously! Jeff, please give me straight forward answers. The Board cannot criticize and end my interaction with C.J. without telling me why. What examples did you have in mind? Maybe your judgment [that the exchange has been fruitless] is true and righteous. I want to know. Tell me, how did you come to such a conclusion. My previous questions remain unanswered (below).

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 5:22 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Approval to Keep Sins Secret?

You give the reason for the Board's decision "that...e-mail interaction between us no longer continue." Here it is. "In light of the evident fruitlessness of our e-mail exchanges, they felt we had arrived at a time where they should interact with you and play their appropriate role in this process of pursuing reconciliation." What do you and they mean by "evident fruitlessness" and what is that assessment based upon? This sounds like a sinful judgment. I've not yet responded to them or to your second response. None of you know what I am thinking. I've given no indication. Maybe my response will be fruitless in your/their opinion (i.e., devoid of any good fruit), but what evidence is such an assessment based upon now? What have I done that is so fruitless? The only obvious answer is my inquiry about you and Larry. But you deny this played any part in their decision to cut off our interaction. Fruitless is strong language. It means worthless.

Once again, I received no response whatsoever to my questions. But I was able to figure out the sole basis by which Jeff, Dave and Joshua concluded my interaction with you was fruitless. It boiled down to two e-mails from Jan 21 and Jan 25. Here they are again along with your response in between them.

⁴²⁷ It took a little time to figure out but they were one from Jan 21 and the other from Jan 25.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, January 21, 2011 12:47 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: My Response

Dear C.J.,

I've written the Board of Directors on several occasions over the last five weeks but have not heard whether they plan to provide me their perspective which you referenced as forthcoming; so, I think it best to move ahead and not wait any longer in sharing my perspective on your December 16th response.

First, I am grateful to God for your acknowledgements. They represent a work of grace in your soul over the last 12 months. At the beginning of 2010, you were unaware of any ways in which you sinned against me over the past decade. When you wrote last January 10, it was in order to discover if I thought you had sinned against me, not because you were convicted of sin. In fact, the impetus for contacting me came from someone else who informed you that I "might have some offenses" with you. Therefore, after a long and hard year, I am grateful for the evidences of grace reflected in your recent comments. They are meaningful and helpful. I thank the Lord for your progress in grace. I look forward to a time in the future when we can meet together.

Second, I must also admit to disappointment. As I've said before, such a meeting is not possible until you provide a much fuller response and personally embrace the need for public confession. Your "brief overview" is a good start but it doesn't address my most serious concerns for you and the movement. The majority of issues and illustrations I raised with you remain unaddressed. In addition, you still see no need to inform the movement and its leaders of your longstanding patterns of sin and their impact on others. Here is what I wrote at the end of "A Final Appeal."

"Two simple questions remain. First, are you willing to provide a thorough response to "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal." Second, do you see the need for a public acknowledgement to the blogosphere, a general confession to the movement, and a more detailed confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors and staff?" (AFA, p. 164)

To date, you've not provided the former and see no need for the later. I've attached "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine" and "A Final Appeal" as Word documents. If you change your mind and choose to provide a thorough response, you can easily make balloon comments (if necessary Nora

can show you how to use this function under the Review tab) as you progress through the documents. That should simplify your task.

C.J., I appreciate the contents of your December 16th response but there remain a host of vital topics unaddressed. Please interact with me in writing. Please include your disagreements and correction. They are equally important to me.

Responding in writing will serve both of us. Before we meet, I must understand far more clearly how you view my assessment. For instance, in what you've written you acknowledge no lack of integrity, no deceit or hypocrisy, no concealment or cover-up, no damage control, spin or manipulation, no partiality or favoritism, no abuse of authority or lording, no need for a confession to the movement or the leaders, no wrong doing by others, no realization of how your sinful judgments negatively influenced many others, etc. As such, I assume you continue to believe these are non-issues and have not changed your position since July 2 when you wrote, "Brent, I don't think Sovereign Grace in general or anyone I know in particular is 'lying, covering up, manipulating, lording, etc.'"

I know you are willing to engage these matters in conversation; but first, I need you to engage these matters in print. This is not an unreasonable request. Nor is it an unhelpful one. Just the opposite. It will require you to honestly face and transparently respond to the charges I've brought to your attention. They are serious. I welcome your disagreement. I welcome your correction. I am simply looking for candid, frank, open, and accountable interaction on the multiplicity of issues and examples you did not address.

In closing, would you please provide me a prompt response whatever you decide? If you care not to write a thorough going response, let me know. If you decide to write, could you please clear your schedule as much as possible and make its completion a top priority? The long waits from last year, now into this year, have been exceedingly difficult for many reasons and on many fronts.

I thank God for you C.J. I am confident in the Lord Jesus that he is working all things for the good in both our lives. I am grateful for the humble steps you have taken and hope for a continued outworking of his grace in the decisions now before you.

Prayerfully and affectionately,
Brent

From: C.J. Mahaney
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 10:30 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject:

Brent,

Thanks for getting back to me. I appreciate your encouragement and I am sorry to disappoint you. I trust you know that was not my intention. Please pray for me as I desire to perceive any and all sin I have committed and I pray daily for this gift of sight.

It is my understanding that the board is going to respond to you at some point soon. I am not familiar with their plans or the content of their response as they have not included me in their discussions. So I am waiting for their response as well. Thanks for your patience.

Let me assure you that I am submitted to these men and accountable to them and will comply with whatever they recommend including some kind of public confession. It remains my hope that you and I can meet and pursue reconciliation with each other.

In His grace,
C.J.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2011 1:54 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Non-Response

Dear C.J.,

I take your non-response as a "no" to my appeals unless the Board of Directors directs you otherwise. In that case, I know you'll do what they recommend. Realistically, that's your only option. I just wish you didn't need to be told what to do if indeed the Board affirms my requests. I suspect they will ask you for a public acknowledgement of limited scope but release you from any further response to me in writing. Obviously, I could be wrong.

I care deeply about you and our relationship. If you had been willing to answer my most serious charges and saw the need for public confession and

accountability, we would have met a long time ago with reconciliation well under way, if not complete. That is the source of my disappointment.

It is good to know we'll be hearing from the Board in the near future. It remains my hope that things will be dealt with forthrightly.

Sincerely,
Brent

Why is this important? Why does this matter? Let me explain. You first provided me feedback on RRF&D and AFA on Dec 16, 2010. I got back to you on Jan. 21. Soon after Dave, Jeff and Joshua labeled my response "fruitless" and told you to discontinue all email interaction with me.

These occasional "moments of truth" or slip ups (i.e., using the word "fruitless") often become cover ups. I tried to get to the bottom of things but was unsuccessful. It is nearly impossible to get straight answers. You need truth serum, enhanced interrogation and water boarding. That's one reason this illustration is important. Here's a second.

It appears the Board gave no humble consideration to my viewpoint or concern for all the crucial issues you left unaddressed. Instead they seemed elated by your response and offended by mine. They certainly didn't try to understand my "disappointment" in your limited response. Instead my January 21 email was labeled "fruitless." That is, worthless – pathetic, wrong, unfounded, misguided, ill-conceived, or whatever you wish to call it. Their lack of objectivity and teachability was my second concern.

Brent's Incomplete, Incorrect and Revised Narrative

If you ever produce an alternative narrative (e.g. for the SGM pastors), please let me review it before you give it out to anyone. I've afforded you that opportunity throughout this process. I've welcomed your feedback and I've included all of it in my documents. In other words, if you send out a critique of me or my concerns please let me provide an accompanying statement. That is only right.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 8:22 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Steve Shank; Joshua Harris; Jeff Purswell
Subject: Confidential

Hi Brent.

Steve and I wanted to convey some thoughts to you concerning the content of your documents. The board also thought it was important for us to do so. Our letter is attached.

Hope you are well.

Dave

April 1, 2011

Dear Brent,

We (Dave and Steve) have been praying for you, and hope you are experiencing God's grace and presence during this challenging time.

We have also reflected many times over our years of friendship and partnership in service of the Lord with you (dating back to the early 1980's). Those cherished memories have prompted thanksgiving and gratefulness in our hearts. Like you, we feel deeply concerned for the current status of your relationship with CJ (Sovereign Grace, etc.) and are praying that the Lord would be glorified by a complete reconciliation.

Since receiving and processing your two documents, we (along with many others) have attempted to serve CJ at his request in a very thorough and honest assessment centered on the content of your documents. We think it is important that you understand that we are in agreement with some of the points in your documents.⁴²⁸ In fact, we have been able to provide CJ with our own illustrations that supported and amplified certain important issues you were raising. We sense⁴²⁹ these have been important discussions for the future of SGM.

Brent, we think you might want to know about how CJ has postured himself towards your documents. First, CJ circulated them to us and invited our honest assessment of him. He made it clear that he wanted to use this as an opportunity to examine himself, not you. He also invited a number of other people to participate in this evaluation (inside and outside of SGM). We are

⁴²⁸ I sure wish you told me which points you did not agree with and why. I get the feeling I'll find out in the future.

⁴²⁹ Sense? Is there uncertainty or ambiguity?

very encouraged by the climate CJ has created where others are communicating clearly and honestly concerning areas where he needs to change.⁴³⁰

We are seeking to convey that in all of this, CJ has been leaning forward as aggressively as possible to see any areas of deficiency (as well as the fruit that can be ascribed to those deficiencies) put forth in your documents. His heart searching has often left him in tears with deep, painful regret as the Lord shows him his limitations, errors in judgment, and sins. He has also begun to make many changes that have encouraged everyone involved.⁴³¹ We would be happy to meet with you to share more specifics on what we are seeing if that would appeal to you. As you have read and pondered his confession, as well as his document with more specific interactions, our hope is that you too will be able to see God's grace at work in CJ's life. We also hope that you and Jenny will be comforted by the genuineness of the change beginning to occur.

Brent, one significant concern emerging from your documents is your depiction of certain points of history in which we were a vital part. As men who served alongside of you and under CJ for many years, it's important for us to register that our perspective would be different on a number of key points in your documents.⁴³² We're not attempting to exonerate CJ. It's just appears to us that the narrative presented in your documents (and supported through e-mail excerpts) is incomplete, in some instances incorrect and revised in some substantial ways. Of particular concern to us is how you remember and portray the loss of support for your leadership in your local church ultimately necessitating your resignation.⁴³³ Again, we are aware of the limitations of e mails, brief letters, or even lengthy documents, so we would be desirous to interact with you over the points of disagreement in person if you would allow it.

Brent, we understand your hesitancy to talk about this in person. We consider it understandable because of how CJ has handled at least some of the conflicts you describe in your documents. But we'd appeal to you to consider that your memory and record-keeping could be incomplete⁴³⁴ and ask that you be open to

⁴³⁰ I've already made this point but realistically C.J. had no other choice.

⁴³¹ That's great!

⁴³² That's perfectly fine. Tell me where but please provide hard documentation to show how my "depiction" of these "key points" is errant. No fuzzy memories as sources - I've worked exceeding hard to avoid "he said-she said" proofs where are no proofs at all. I've only included quotes that were carefully recorded. I've excluded "memories" I can't corroborate with evidence. I've arduously provided proof based upon primary source material. You must do the same.

⁴³³ You must have in mind the part where I call Bob a kangaroo. (cf. AFA, pp. 60f.)

⁴³⁴ They sure could - please fill them out for me.

hearing other perspectives about your conclusions.⁴³⁵ This is why since last year, we have urged you and CJ to get the help of a third party mediator who has no history with either of us and has a proven track record of impartiality.

It seems to us that we've all been in ministry too long to overlook the reality that "The one who states his case first seems right" (Prov 18: 17). In your documents you appeal for justice, which we think is reasonable. But your vision for justice seems to necessitate accepting your storyline as the authorized version of history.⁴³⁶ If you truly desire justice and not vindication,⁴³⁷ then we want to appeal that you take the only step that will deliver true biblical justice. Submit your perspective to an impartial, outside mediator who can closely evaluate your charges and help CJ, SGM & all of us to see the things we need to see.⁴³⁸ We would also be willing for you to engage us, Bob, Gene or anyone else you think would be helpful through such mediation, so that all of us--with impartial help--could determine where we have failed, admit our sins to one another and then forgive one another.

⁴³⁵ I am very open Please send them to me. I can only repeated myself again and again. I've asked for this kind of feedback for over a year.

⁴³⁶ I can't wait for the RKDV to come out (i.e., Revised King Dave Version). Do you have a release date? Can you send me an advanced copy? But one appeal. In making revisions please exercise care like a good textual critic. Use autographa not 3rd or 4th Century Gnostic gospels or pseudonymous epistles. And even though Jeff knows Peshitta, no manuscripts from the 5th Century either. Just primary source materials.

⁴³⁷ Vindication, properly understood, is a godly pursuit. It means clearing, exculpation, exoneration, acquittal. All Christians should desire it for the oppressed or innocent. Jesus was vindicated in the resurrection. It is a noble pursuit in the church and in society. That is why we have a justice system comprised of courts and defense lawyers. Justice includes the vindication or acquittal of those falsely charged and found guilty. Condemning the innocent, especially due to prejudice, is a serious transgression in holy Scripture. That's why I've asked C.J. to make a vigorous defense if he feels unjustly charged. The Bible condemns false witnesses. I don't want to be one. I am glad for him to point out using proofs where my charges are false. I'll repent. On the other hand, it is important for sin to be "prosecuted." Transgression must never be concealed or covered up. That is injustice also. It must be remembered that God prosecutes us (John 16:8-11) before he defends us (1 John 2:1-2). Moreover Dave, you seem to confuse vindication with being vindictive or seeking revenge. I have not sought revenge. Just the opposite, I've often chosen to be "wronged" and "cheated" (1 Cor 6:7) but now it is necessary to press for truth and address error. But you and others often resist the pursuit of justice by labeling people as proud, bitter, or vengeful. Dave you did this recently at Kingsway Community Church. Two or three hundred people were concerned, troubled or alarmed by your statements. This was a "last straw" and many left as a result. In so doing you silence and dismiss your critics. Lastly, while vindication is a good thing, that has not been a primary motive for writing. I have written for the sake of the gospel, the integrity of Sovereign Grace Ministries, and the safety of others. I could have researched the experiences of many other individuals and made my case without any reference to myself. I don't think this would have been wise or right. Instead, I've used material with which I am intimately familiar.

⁴³⁸ You are welcome to submit RRF&D, AFA and CR to any outside "mediator." Better, give them to a panel of distinguished judges trained and proven in the rules of evidence. Consider my documents the results of a deposition. They are my sworn "courtroom" testimony. Far better than any board room conversation.

Thank you for taking the time to read our letter and consider our thoughts. We nurture the hope that God will enable us to walk through all of the issues you have raised with the help of an impartial mediator, seek your forgiveness in person and restore our fellowship in a manner that honors God and you through this process.

Until then,

Your friends

Dave and Steve

PS: It seems appropriate to mention that CJ has not read this letter nor has he contributed to it in any way.⁴³⁹

I responded to Dave the same evening. Understand my meaning, I don't mind a fair fight but I hate when guys throw grenades and then run for cover. I spoke directly.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, April 01, 2011 10:15 PM
To: Dave Harvey
Cc: Steve Shank; Joshua Harris; Jeff Purswell; C. J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Confidential
Importance: High

I've repeatedly asked you men to put any and all differences in writing. I've invited your adjustment on everything I've written and everything I've done. You have been unwilling to provide me with your perspective. I've welcomed it and pursued it. I've asked for your correction. Tell me where you differ and on what basis. But it must be in print. You can dismiss many of my critical findings, as you do in the letter, but you offer no explanation or proof. The onus is on you to do so. This does not require mediation. It requires candor. It requires details. It requires facts. Don't accuse me and say "the narrative presented in your documents (and supported through e-mail excerpts) is incomplete, in some instances incorrect and revised in some substantial ways" without making a case. I've not done that with you. You must support your claims. I can't respond to your vague refutations of my depictions without any basis for your refutations provided. Until you do so, your denials [of what I've written] are baseless. No one should believe them!⁴⁴⁰ I have been open, honest

⁴³⁹ Please give him a copy. He should have one.

⁴⁴⁰ This is very important – no one should believe anything you tell them because you say so!

and transparent with you. Not in general but specifically. I've been vulnerable. I've put my thoughts out there for accountability and correction. You have done none of this! I've been accountable in print. You have not! And as a matter of fact, my resignation from Grace Community Church played a very small part in RRF&D and AFA. You are off base in this regard when you say, "It seems to us that we've all been in ministry too long to overlook the reality that 'The one who states his case first seems right' (Prov 18: 17). I have not stated my case (that would take 100 plus pages) in how my assessment was handled or resignation demanded. In fact, I've left it unstated.⁴⁴¹ You are badly exaggerating the case. Let me say again in no uncertain terms. You have not provided me a fact based, evidential response to my points or illustrations in what you now write.⁴⁴² You agreed to provide me your perspective on my documents. Two and a half pages does not constitute a response. You've had RRF&D for 12 months and AFA for 5 months. You have addressed none of my most serious concerns or attended to any of my examples. Lastly, I've continuously expressed my eagerness to meet with C.J., which also applies to you, but not until he and now you, provide a comprehensive response to my concerns and illustrations. As a second condition, I've also required that C.J. acknowledged his sins to the blogosphere; confess his sins generally to the movement and specifically to the pastors. These conditions are just and reasonable in light of Scripture and SGM polity. This should have been agreed to from the beginning.

In the days to come, I will provide my response to the Board's letter and also C.J.'s letter from March 11.

Brent

Phony Baloney

One of the reasons I've limited our interaction to written forms of communication is to avoid being manipulated and misrepresented by you and others. You can distort unrecorded conversations but it is much more difficult to successfully distort or misrepresent written correspondence. You've done this on several occasions by

⁴⁴¹ Let me add something a bit off the point. The other day I had lunch with a close friend. He asked a brave question of me on behalf of others. He wanted to know if I had accepted "hush money" from Sovereign Grace Ministries. Why? Because people find it hard to believe I've remained silent the last two years and offered no defense. They figure it must be the result of a bribe. I told my friend "no" it wasn't because of a bribe since you were unwilling to pay out my asking price of one million dollars. Just kidding.

⁴⁴² I don't say the following with arrogance or any desire to provoke a fight; but, I do not think you can provide this kind of a response because the facts and the truth are not on your side. But I am very willing to be adjusted on any point. Just document your case with actual evidence, not "group think."

misquoting me, quoting me out of context, and making charges contrary to the evidence. I've been able to correct you by resorting to the written record. I believe conversation needs to take place but only after an open and honest dialogue in print.

If you readily distort what I've written, I can't imagine how badly you'd distort what I've said. Of course, there are innumerable historical examples, some of which I included in RRF&D and AFA.

The Board of Directors is not immune to the same folly. Here's the latest example.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, June 05, 2011 8:49 AM
To: Joshua Harris; Jeff Purswell; Dave Harvey; C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Missed Deadline

I was supposed to have my response [CR] to you by June 3. Please forgive me for missing the deadline. It should be in your hands this coming week. I regret being late in getting back to you.

Brent

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Tuesday, June 07, 2011 5:18 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris
Subject: RE: Missed Deadline

Dear Brent,

Thanks for your note, but please know that in our minds there's nothing to forgive. We set no deadline for your response, and in fact the only response we asked about concerned your willingness to meet, either with C.J. and a mediator, or perhaps with the Sovereign Grace board, or with anyone you'd like in order to pursue a God-glorifying reconciliation. That remains our sincere hope and prayer.

In Christ,

Dave, Jeff, and Josh

Dave, Jeff and Joshua's errant "fact" was easily corrected by the fact of what was written.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 09, 2011 7:09 AM
To: Purswell, Jeff; Harris, Joshua; Harvey, Dave
Cc: Mahaney, C. J.
Subject: Fact Check

Dave, Jeff and Joshua,

You are mistaken about the "facts." The fact is you asked for a response to all the material you sent me. That's what I've been working on the last two months. Here's what you said on March 30

Brent, as we communicated in our letter to you on 3/11, it is our desire to see the issues you raised in your documents, along with those raised in additional e-mails, fully resolved and to see you and C.J. reconciled. Let us also reiterate our willingness as a board to meet with you, along with a mediator, so that these issues can be explored fully and objectively. We believe that the lengthy responses that C.J. has provided, along with the process of growth and accountability he has pursued, has prepared the way for a fruitful process of reconciliation to take place. Therefore, we look forward to hearing your response to all the material that's been sent already, and especially to the invitation to pursue reconciliation with a godly, objective mediator whom we all trust.

Written correspondence also protects me from being misrepresented or manipulated. It is much harder to twist what is written compared to what is spoken.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 09, 2011 8:35 AM
To: Purswell, Jeff; Harvey, Dave; Harris, Joshua
Cc: Mahaney, C. J.
Subject: Phony Baloney

I must add a comment. Your e-mail appears to be a manipulative attempt to frame the issue of my response for your strategic advantage by making it sound as though Concluding Remarks (forthcoming this week) is uncalled for and indeed contrary to "the only response" you asked me to give. That's phony baloney.

I've changed the subject line of my previous e-mail to "Fact Check."

Brent Sharing His Concerns with the Sovereign Grace Pastors

Well, we have reached the end of the road. It is now time for me to share my concerns with the Sovereign Grace pastors.⁴⁴³ For the longest time, I never entertained this course of action. It was inconceivable. But we are at a different place today. You have refused to address or acknowledge many sins of a serious nature and the Board of Directors has taken insufficient action in its correction and discipline of you. Others have gone unaddressed as well.

C.J., I rejoice in the “thirty-fold” fruit that has been born in your life as a result of this ten year process. I am glad that friends have finally spoken the truth to you in love. But the most serious issues I’ve brought to your attention have been ignored, repudiated or denied. Things like deceit, lying, covering-up, hypocrisy, lording, and favoritism. I take no delight in saying this, but you and Sovereign Grace Ministries cannot be trusted until these things are acknowledged. I do not mean to imply the ministry is corrupt or completely untrustworthy. It isn’t. There are many outstanding people of high moral integrity that work for Sovereign Grace Ministries and serve as pastors in Sovereign Grace churches. But given a certain set of temptations related to the love of reputation and self preservation, I have no confidence you, or those around you, will walk in the light, be truthful, or handle people properly. I’ve said this from the beginning.

“Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically, and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect. These things are not pervasive in their lives, your life or the movement but they are serious. I know you value integrity but when you feel judged or sinned against it is often subterfuged in your life. When you become resentful, bitter and angry – grace and integrity often get left behind. These are fueled by the idols of self-preservation and love of reputation. As the movement has grown, so has temptation and sin.” (RRF&D, p. 128)

There is no lack of illumination, only obedience and a willingness to be open and honest with the movement. I unceasingly pray you will make a thorough confession to the movement and the pastors. I want to see the reputation of Sovereign Grace Ministries

⁴⁴³ I also plan to make my thoughts available to a small group of former Sovereign Grace pastors or employees. Nine to be exact: Dave Bendenelli, George Harrington, Keith Jacob, Bo Lotinsky, Dan McIntosh, Paul Palmer, Todd Twining, Dan Walsh, Steve Whitman. I’ll ask everyone not to make hard copies for distribution or electronically forward any of my material.

restored and preserved. And I want to see you walking in the freedom that comes from a clear conscience. But mostly, I want to see the gospel protected and advanced. I leave you with this final appeal.

“The issues I’ve raised are not obscure or difficult to discern. The examples are numerous and easy to perceive. I hope RRF&D and AFA serve your soul and result in public confession. I completed RRF&D and sent it to you three weeks before the Pre-Conference Gathering at Together for the Gospel in April [2010]. I prayed you’d take the opportunity to tell the Sovereign Grace pastors about the last 10 years (or longer) and acknowledge your hypocrisy. I didn’t hope or pray for these things with a desire to humiliate or embarrass you. I simply hoped you’d follow your own teaching and the example of other men who have publically confessed sin of a much less serious nature and often at your behest. I believe you know the right thing to do but I realize there are many temptations you must resist and overcome in order to do so. Therefore, I’d encourage you again, to be open and honest with the Sovereign Grace pastors and the movement.... There is no greater service you could provide. A public confession would bring glory to God, protect the gospel, restore confidence in Sovereign Grace Ministries, bless the pastors, set an example for the next generations of leaders, and benefit your soul.” (AFA, p. 76)

You can respond to me in many different ways – some injurious. Instead, I hope you’ll respond to God’s Word.

Proverbs 28:13

*He who conceals his sins does not prosper,
but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

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THE UNTOLD STORY
INCOMPLETE VERSION
JUNE 25, 2011

Proverbs 18:17
The one who states his case first seems right,
until the other comes and examines him.

Introduction

For the last two years, people have been stating their case against me while I've remained silent. I've withheld comment for two reasons. First, I wanted to give all my friends from Grace Community Church more than sufficient time to transition to other churches without having to sort out the circumstances surrounding my resignation if I spoke openly. Second, I hoped men like C.J., Dave, Bob and Gene would come to repentance and set the record straight thereby rendering unnecessary any explanation from me. In particular I hoped C.J. would acknowledge his wrong doing and thereby have a godly impact upon the other leaders.

I have chronicled my concerns for C.J. and other leaders in Sovereign Grace Ministries in three major documents written over the last 18 months..

The Demand for My Resignation – Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Eric Kircher and I met regularly for personal fellowship and conversation about the church. On this particular day, we had lunch at Toast Café in Davidson, NC. Eric was serving part time as a pastoral assistant in the church. More importantly, Eric and his wife, Anna, had become dear friends or so we thought. What happened next during our lunch has no comparison in my 32 years of full time Christian service. I was about to be betrayed in a manner I've never observed elsewhere.

With little introduction, Eric presented me a letter demanding my immediately resignation as senior pastor of Grace Community Church (GCC) because I was "no longer qualified to preside as Pastor." The letter was signed by him, Ray Mulligan, Roger Layman and Jim Aldridge. Later, I discovered that Mike Lukavsky and Kenny Cook were also recruited and agreed to my immediate firing. All these men were dear friends. The letter read,

"It is with genuine remorse and regret that those who have signed below, members of the Board and Advisory Board of Grace Community Church request and require the willing resignation of Brent Detwiler from the Board of

Directors of Grace Community Church effective immediately. This request is based upon our uniform agreement that Brent Detwiler is no longer qualified to preside as Pastor due to historical and current issues regarding pride in the form of independence and a resistance to receiving and acting upon the concerns and observation brought by those [Ray & Eric] closely involved in his pastoral care.”

These men had come to a firm conclusion even though none of them had talked to me about being disqualified from ministry as a group or as individuals. In fact all of these men spoke highly of me for many years. Now, these men had determined I must be fired and forced out immediately. I was uniformly declared unfit for ministry. They were dead serious in their demand.

At the end of Eric’s presentation at our lunch, he firmly reiterated the absolutely necessity of me giving him an answer to their demand. He said I had 72 hours to sign the resignation document. I must return it to him by 12 noon on Saturday. He was not playing around. He was not faking it. This was not a hoax or a ploy. These men were demanding my resignation for real. The last line in the letter read, “I, Brent Detwiler do willingly resign as Pastor of Grace Community Church and President of the Board of Directors effective immediately, June ____, 2009.” Two months later, I found out Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim were following the directives of Gene Emerson in taking this course of action.

I had no idea any of this was in the works. I cannot begin to explain how utterly unexpected it was. The Kircher’s never even alluded to the need for such action – nor had anyone else. It came without warning and it came contrary to everything Eric and Anna were communicating to us, to everyone else in the church and to Sovereign Grace Ministries. Never have I experienced such betrayal or felt such pain. Eric and Anna had repeatedly spoken so highly of me in public and in private.

During his presentation, Eric expressed no concern for the impact of this action upon me and Jenny. There was no care, appreciation, empathy or offers of assistance; just the demand to resign. I was being forced out with no process, no appeals and no mention of restoration. Just a harsh, “I want an answer by Saturday.” In a few days, I was looking at no job and no income. Most significantly, I was looking at no church which I loved and deeply cared about. And most painful of all, six of my friends conspired against me without ever talking to me. More on this later.

Time and again, Eric and Anna told us “You can be honest with us. We are loyal. We understand. We’ve behind you 100%. We’ve got your back.” Now, in an act of betrayal we were left with nothing but broken hearts.

Seeing Things in a Very Different Light?

Just two months earlier Eric was in a completely different place. On March 24, 2009, he wrote a 9 page letter to Gene Emerson and the leadership team of Sovereign Grace Ministries including C.J. Mahaney and Dave Harvey. This action resulted from a three hour conversation he and Anna had with Gene a couple of weeks earlier. Eric and Anna were profoundly troubled by Gene's biased and judgmental attitudes toward me. This first-hand experience prompted Eric to write the letter. Here is an abridged quotation that summarizes the essence of his concerns for Gene and Sovereign Grace Ministries.

"SGM has become uncharitable and impatient in its approach and response to concerns with Brent and GCC [Grace Community Church]. This is evidenced by SGM listening and acting primarily upon the claims and accusation of offended parties without soliciting and patiently hearing the perspective of Brent or the leadership of GCC.... Brent has not asked me to write this letter. It was not his idea and he did not proof read it.... His progress in some areas has been remarkable. Other areas have progressed more slowly than some may have wished. Overall Brent has responded with incredible humility while shepherding his flock during a most difficult season.... I am asking that SGM be as entreatable as they are asking Brent to be. The examples and concerns I have brought, and this is only a sampling, are not issues of practicality. They are issues concerning the glory of God in the church.... We request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss further what has been presented here. Both Brent and I will be at the Leadership Conference in April if you have any time left. If not we fully understand."

The treatment by SGM and in particular Gene was so bad, we were thinking about the possibility of departing the movement. Here is an email from Anna representing her thoughts about leaving SGM just before Eric sent his letter to Gene and the Sovereign Grace leadership team.

From: Anna Kircher
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2009 10:36 AM
To: Eric Kircher; Jenny Detwiler; Brent Detwiler
Subject: Some Thoughts for Your Consideration

Out of respect for SGM and the leadership God has put in place, it doesn't seem appropriate to leave SGM without first going to that leadership and presenting the hugely erroneous, biased and slanderous way in which all the events of this past year have occurred. Eric, Ray and John [Schaaf] can request a meeting with Gene and Dave. They can present their concerns in detail – the way in which this whole thing has been handled, the facts about all the people deeply

concerned about CrossWay and how Mickey and Larry handled the plant, the slanderous build up of false information that fueled an already biased, bitter group, the complete lack of seeking truth on both sides not just one, the misrepresentation of how Brent handled all the situations (e.g., Rob Shedore, Andy & Lani George, Stephen Detwiler).

Will they listen – who knows? Will they care? – who knows? But... that really doesn't matter.

Could God move on Dave's heart and cause great concern and alarm that this has been terribly mishandled? Yes - but that won't be an expectation.

However, we will all know that the truth has been presented in a way that honors God. We are not responsible for the outcome.

I believe that if the above can be accomplished, all involved in choosing to part ways with SGM (Detwilers, Kirchers, Mulligans and Schaafs) can do so knowing that we did all we can to walk through the necessary steps with integrity, with a commitment to truth, with humble hearts, and with as pure motives as possible.

Jonathan also provided his perspective to Eric and Anna, Ray and Jenny, and me on Sovereign Grace Ministries. Anna appreciated his counsel.

From: Jonathan Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 8:32 PM

To: Jonathan M. Detwiler

Cc: Brent Detwiler; Ray Mulligan; Jenny Mulligan; Eric Kircher; Anna Kircher

Subject: Re: Recommendation

Here are my thoughts on the matter...

I'd say that if Sovereign Grace holds its current positions and approaches we'd need to leave Sovereign Grace and that there'd have to be a fairly significant change.

With that said, I think it is important that we don't hold them to coming back with instant repentance and a fully positive response. As I would say they have been in a pattern of sin, it is not typical, as with any of us to see it quickly based off a limited discussion. Even if they said, "well we don't really see what you are talking about but are willing to meet," I think that'd be a step worth taking. We need to patiently but clearly portray our perspectives and seek to bring them along. We want to be postured to forgive and demonstrate patience and

grace as Christ has shown us. However, it is reasonable to expect that if we did meet with them that we'd begin to see a progressive work in them and an increased willingness to listen. Their acceptable response should not be simply based on treating us "well" from this point forward, but that there would have to be some seeing of past sins and repentance...otherwise we are still setup for the same issues.

From: Anna Kircher

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 10:01 PM

To: Jonathan M. Detwiler

Cc: Brent Detwiler; Ray Mulligan; Jenny Mulligan; Eric Kircher, Anna Kircher

Subject: Re: Recommendation

If I may add my comments... Jonathan - I think there is a lot of wisdom in your comments. We would want to respond to them with the same grace and mercy we want others to respond to us.

Thank you for this perspective!!

Less than five months after writing his letter to the SGM leadership team, Eric recanted all he said and drastically reversed course. On August 13, he wrote Grace Community Church and said, "Subsequent to writing the letter in March, I began to see things in a very different light. I realized I had many misconceptions about the entire situation." This gives the impression that Eric's opinion of me began to change for the worse, while his opinion of SGM changed for the better, immediately after March 24. That was not the case. This was a misleading statement by Eric. Two questions must be asked. When did Eric begin to see things differently? And, what changed his perspective? Keep in mind, I was told to resign on June 3. He wrote SGM the nine page letter on March 24.

From March 24 to May 20, Eric and Anna continued to commend me and express very serious concerns for SGM regarding "the hugely erroneous, biased and slanderous way in which all the events of this past year have occurred." Here is a response to Susie DiGiacomo and Jessica Diehl about the possibility of leaving SGM. It was written on April 1.

From: Eric Kircher

Date: April 1, 2009 11:36:09 PM EDT

To: Susie DiGiacomo; Jessie Diehl

Cc: Anna Kircher

Subject: Re: Checking In

Dear Susie and Jessica,

Thanks for getting back to us so soon. My heart goes out to you as you walk through this. It is extremely disheartening to see this unfold before our eyes. I guess I sort of thought that this could never happen in SG. How could the men we have put our trust in for so long be influenced by something, somehow to the point where it gets like this? I guess I felt so safe from all this stuff. It's just so ugly! It's [SGM] disgusting and deplorable. It seems incomprehensible. It's so sad.

Anna and I have had a significant head start on processing this stuff. It's my desire to share the following thoughts cautiously and with care as much as possible by email. I do not expect you guys to see it our way. We all must be Bereans (Acts 17:11) and go to the Lord and the Scriptures for ourselves when at a crossroads like this. I just thought I could share what we've learned so far on our journey through this issue.

The Lord has already patiently been pointing out things or structures I have misplaced my trust in. Much more trust than I ever imagined. Too often my security and Christian identity have been found in an organization as opposed to His church. I have also attributed to myself the positive qualities I've come to love about SGM. I felt like I was part of a big club that was safe somehow from the very stuff we're facing. The Lord's also pointing out subtle areas of pride that I harbored in my heart as I have favorably compared SG with other organizations and attributed myself to be informed and insightful for being here in SG for so long. No doubt, it has been great and we have enjoyed it so much, but our spiritual growth doesn't have to hinge on membership in SG. That sounds obvious, but that's not what came out of my heart when the actuality of this possibility started to become real.

It's also been a bit startling to see the humanity of these guys I've called my 'leaders'. I'm asking myself, "Why?" They are just as human as I am. They are just men. I don't say this to be cynical, but my perspective is being adjusted. I still have great affection, respect and esteem for the guys involved, I just see that they have the proverbial "plank" in the eye. That plank doesn't have to ruin how I see myself woven into Christ's Bride. It may be too soon to say this, but my day to day life won't change a bit. I'll still have great relationships in my church, great SG and other publishers of worship, great SG, CCEF and other conferences. We'll be in relationship with churches, with men who have known Brent for 25 years, most of whom are in SG. We'll also have a lot more visiting pastors.

Your question about the "stand-alone" thing was the first thing on my radar too. Four months after Anna and I were married the precious church we were

in crashed and folded just like yours. I told Brent this is the first rule of church membership for me, "Don't fly solo." "Don't follow a man." I asked him these things before I sent the letter to SG. He said to me that affiliation and relationship is what he's after. Objective, loving, supportive affiliation and relationship with men of like mind and hearts are things we all want. I believe Brent when he says he would pursue this (It does take time) if SGM doesn't work out.

I also know what I have seen being on the inside of this whole thing. Brent has conducted himself with amazing integrity. He has not been perfection. However, he has displayed his warts before all others. He has subjected himself to humiliating scrutiny and challenges of his character. He has sought forgiveness from all as his conscience and Scripture has directed him while only some have granted it. He has opened his life to Anna and I and others whom have known him for 25 years (I'm referring to guys in Florida). After all this I must say, and this is just a part of our story, I have faith to trust him and follow him should the relationship with SG is concluded. None of this stuff is disqualifying in the least. Practically, in my head, it's not like the guy's going to go off the deep end. He's in his mid-fifties. His doctrine, the doctrine I've come to so love, is not going to change. It's not like it's going to be the "Brent Show!" He doesn't do that. And, like you, I love all the people of this great church of ours. Sure it's been hard getting out of the gate to start GCC, but at least we now know why it's been so hard. I want to start reaching out!

Should our relationship with SGM go south, Anna and I have decided to move forward and stay in the church. The Lord moved us up here for this church and He has not ever, not even in the toughest of times and there have been some doozies, He has not ever given us even an inkling of leaving and returning to Florida. In the big picture it's just like you know in your heart; God alone has all the answers. When the heat gets really intense and the *adversary* is working overtime to get me fearing and anxious and angry, I have to look upward and outward. You're in the heat now. Anna and I love you and Jess and want to stand with you in any way we can. We'd love to get together and talk this stuff out, no strings attached. All we can do though is speak from our hearts. It's much harder for many people than or us because we don't have any connection to CrossWay. We also know the guys Brent is talking with in Florida. You don't. Big difference, but the Lord will guide you. (Phil 2:13).

So thanks. We'll keep dialoguing. We are going out of town on Monday with Brent and Jenny to Gaithersburg for the Pastors Conference. Should be great. However I know the Lord will be speaking to us up there too. He is good! See ya'll Saturday. Oops! Hey Susie, please come to the [1st anniversary] picnic. Almost no one knows what you know. Please, let's stick together through this.

Besides there's gonna be lots of BBQ and fun in the sun! Think it over and let us know. God bless ya'll, E & A

This email will self-destruct in 10 seconds, so delete it first!

I provided Eric's e-mail response to Susie and Jessica to the Assessment Team. Here is what I said to Bob Kauflin, Phil Sasser and Wayne Brooks.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2009 10:36 AM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Commendation to Susie

Would you mind reading this? I know Eric has changed his perspective but this is another example of his commendation [of me]. That continued up to June 3. That's why June 3 [demanding my resignation] was such a shock.

Eric also wrote me about their perspective on the slander occurring at CrossWay Community Church.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Wednesday, April 01, 2009 10:14 AM
To: Brent Detwiler; Jenny Detwiler; Anna Kircher
Subject: Thoughts on the Susie Issue and Our Response

Hey Brent,

Maybe it's time to stand up to all the slander and gossip going on at CrossWay. It has been and continues to be destructive to our church and to the members of our church. When it gets to this level where people are approaching GC [Grace Community] members and saying directly or intimating "Brent has character issues", "Brent is on the 'outs' with SGM", "Grace Church is leaving SGM", "Grace Church is being asked to leave SGM", something needs to be done! Many appeals have been made to stop the slander but nothing has been done.

Why don't you send an email to Mickey (cc - Gene and Dave) and ask Mickey to address the church publicly to stop the slander and gossip? Whether they do it or not we have no control over. At least they will be aware it is occurring, and that you know.

It is unacceptable! Time to fight (says Anna!) :)!!!

Eric

Two weeks later on April 14 at our monthly meeting with all the Grace Community Church leaders and wives (a group of 25 people), Anna said they were “fully supportive of me without any reservations.” She compared what I was walking through with Dave Harvey and Gene Emerson to the Salem Witch trials. Her children were studying the trials in school. She was referencing the way innocents were found guilty of witchcraft and put to death. While not an appropriate analogy, she and Eric felt strongly about how badly I was being treated.

That same evening, Eric and Anna told everyone they knew a SGM pastor (this was a reference to Wayne Brooks – more later), who was a friend, who said it was inappropriate for Eric to be sharing concerns and asking questions about his personal life and the church. In contrast, Eric said “but Brent has been totally open about his life and welcomed any questions or concerns I’ve shared.” This included input for the church but especially input for my life. Eric meant I was humble and teachable, open and honest. In fact, he told all the leaders and wives that night, I was the most teachable pastor they’d ever known next to Danny Jones.

A week later on April 22, Eric wrote Dave Harvey. Eric affirmed my godly character and growth in grace on behalf of Ray, Jonathan, and himself; expressed his lack of confidence in Gene, addressed Dave’s total lack of response to his March 24 letter, and pointed out everyone’s lack of willingness to hear and understand our perspective.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2009 11:18 AM
To: Dave Harvey
Subject: Follow up

Dave,

Thanks for getting back to me about my [March 24] letter to the SG leadership team. I wanted to wait until after the Pastors Conference to respond to you as I knew our time at Covenant Life would be an encouragement and update me about SGM’s perspective on many relevant issues.

First, thanks for rejoicing in our affirmation of Brent’s character and expressing the benefit of leaving to us his care and growth in grace.

Secondly, in my letter to you, I raised the concerns I have for Gene’s handling of things and why, even with charitable judgments, it has undermined my confidence in him. However, you didn’t respond to these concerns in any way. I wondered why? Because of C.J.’s message at the [Pastors] conference [on April 6-8] on how SGM is responding to “stumbles” and “offended parties,”

I have trust we'll sit down and discuss these issues face-to-face in a reasonable time frame or in 6 to 12 months.

One other thing. In your email to Brent dated April 11th you said, "Eric suggested in a recent letter that we [SGM] are not being patient with you and that this omission may say more about us [SGM]." I think you misunderstood my point. This has been a long process and it has required endurance by everyone. I/ we are grateful for your perseverance. In my letter, however, this was not my meaning. What I was saying was that we do not feel anyone has at any time sought to patiently hear and understand our perspective on the details of the last twelve months. None the less, I am confident we will have that opportunity with you.

I look forward to hearing from when you get a chance.

Sincerely,

Eric

Three weeks later on May 18, Eric was supposed to have a phone call with Gene Emerson about his March 24 letter to SGM. Eric did not want to talk with Gene. This was his rough draft response to Gene. Eric sent it to me for feedback (cf. "Subject: Follow up w Gene / How's this?"). I didn't change anything. He sent it as is. In addition to the stated reasons, Eric was so upset with and distrustful of Gene from previous experiences and conversations, he would not talk to him alone on the phone. Eric's concerns were not limited to Gene however. He continued to struggle with SGM in a major way. This letter to Gene was written on May 13. In his e-mail to Gene, he retracts nothing and asks again for the opportunity to discuss his March 24 letter and concerns.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2009 7:27 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Follow up w Gene / How's this?

Dear Gene,

First I want to apologize for my response to you taking so long. I've had a death and cancer diagnosis in my family and extended family that required me to travel to Philadelphia and Florida where I am now. Thanks for your patience.

I'd like to postpone talking about my [March 24] letter and related matters until scheduling permits Dave to join you and me, Brent and Jonathan, and possibly our wives, in a face to face meeting. We think it is most important to discuss our concerns as a group and in person. That is why I requested a meeting with you and Dave in my letter. Because the issues are not specific or limited to you and me, a phone call between us is not the most suitable way to proceed.

Again, as we work together to move forward, personal, face to face dialogue with you and Dave to discuss my [March 24] letter and our concerns is the most beneficial and relational way to proceed. For this reason we are happy to wait until Dave's schedule allows for this time together.

Thanks again Gene for your understanding and patience in receiving this email.

-Eric

Eric's Newfound Anger at Me

On Saturday morning, May 16, Jenny and I went over and spent time with Eric and Anna in their home. We were casually hanging out and getting caught up on the latest. Eric had previously asked me if the church could pay for his health insurance on the group policy. I graciously explained that wasn't possible by law for part time employees. That led to talk about the Kircher's budget.

In that context, Eric brought up some issues with Anna. He proceeded to make four very harsh and categorical comments about her. They were all unkind and of a personal nature. I won't repeat them. It caused Anna to cry and she responded with "understandable" anger. At that point, I intervened. I gently corrected Eric and appealed he not make such broad accusations in such a belittling manner. He did not take kindly to this and became angry at me. He asked Anna's "forgiveness" for making her cry but didn't address the real issues in his heart. Things "cooled down" but Eric was not pleased with Anna or me.

Four days later on Wednesday, May 20, Jenny and I had dinner with the Kirchers at 131 Main, a restaurant in Cornelius. At the beginning of our conversation, Eric mentioned the idea of Anna teaching a course on hospitality. Then he talked about the need for more "adult education" in the church. He continued his course and made several harsh, categorical and sweeping statements about me and the church just like he did with Anna days before.

First he said "No one in the church feels connected to you [Brent]." By no one, he seriously meant that not a single person felt any sense of relational connectedness with

me. He went on to say that the church was “not doing any outreach” and “all we do is have Care Groups and Sunday morning.” He also claimed Jenny and I had “pulled back from them relationally.”

This was a repeat of four days earlier with Anna. With tears in her eyes, Jenny interrupted him and challenged his assertion that no one in the church felt connected to me (which was contrary to all the times Eric commended me for my care of people). At that point, Eric’s anger intensified as did Jenny’s in response. I tried to intervene and told Eric I was glad to hear his critique.

I also gently appealed that he avoid using such sweeping generalizations in conversations like these. I referenced a few of the things we just did to give him perspective (e.g. the recent 1st Anniversary picnic at the Schaaf’s, the Easter Sunday outreach, and the Women’s Retreat at Camp Caraway) and reminded him that all the Care Group leaders were supposed to be doing a May evangelistic outreach. He immediately got very angry at me and said “now you are turning it back on me” and told me “it is stupid to do Care Group outreaches.” He was not open to my mild correction. I was gracious, calm and careful in my response. I finished the conversation by reiterating my interest in all his observations. I told him I’d like to hear more and draw him out further. I asked for his patience because I was behind in my work due to major surgery I had on my shoulder a week earlier.

Here is what Jenny wrote them two days after the conflict which was the first and only conflict in our history with the Kirchers.

From: Jenny Detwiler
Sent: Friday, May 22, 2009 12:41 PM
To: Eric Kircher, Anna Kircher
Subject: Checking In!

Dear Eric and Anna,

I do want to also do this in person but I did want to ask your forgiveness for interrupting you and Eric as you were bringing your thoughts at dinner the other night. I should have just listened. I know you were only seeking to serve the church and serve Brent by bringing your ideas and perceptions. I understand how I could have made you feel like I didn’t want to hear your thoughts and I regret that. Please forgive me.

I don’t want you to feel like you have to bring your thoughts perfectly, but I do have to say that it does matter and affects me how you bring them. Maybe the ultimate, ideal mature Christian should be able to receive anything, from anyone at any time but I’m not there. I do see friendship as a context for two-

way honest discussion but I also would see it as an opportunity to serve and love each other with thoughtful communication. I was stumbled and pained by how you shared some of your thoughts and where you went with the conversation after that [i.e., accusing Brent of turning it back on Eric]. I reacted by pressing for clarity. It wasn't that I didn't want to hear what you had to say. I did. I wanted to hear it all but I wanted to try to clear away the point of stumbling before moving forward. I want us to be able to talk about things fruitfully and in a way that brings faith and encourages our friendship. I know you want that as well. I want to seek by God's grace to handle things differently in the future.

Thanks for your friendship and grace,
Jenny

Two days later I met with Eric on Friday, May 22. At the time, he told me he "felt the conversation was fine" at the restaurant. In other words, he didn't think anyone had sinned. But clearly the conflict involved sinful anger. He also said he was concerned for Jenny "trying to figure out how she sinned" because "the gospel is bigger than all of that." This was in reference to our conversation with the Kirchers in their driveway when we dropped them off from the restaurant. Jenny told Eric and Anna in the car that she knew she sinned against them but needed a little time to examine her heart before asking forgiveness.

The Friday meeting between Eric and me was different than all previous meetings over many months. He was pressing and aggravated and made some strange remarks about Jenny. He was not pleased with her. For instance, he corrected me for times when Jenny supposedly "walked out of the Sunday morning meeting" in recent months and "went home on four occasions" and told me "people were watching her." That was bizarre. Jenny often excused herself before the end of the meeting to use the ladies room. She never went home. She stayed in back of the room so as not to disturb anyone. Eric was grasping at straws. He appeared to be looking for things to confront in us. Here is what I wrote them.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, May 24, 2009 8:06 AM
To: Eric Kircher; Kircher, Anna
Subject: Wine / Meeting

FYI - I asked Jenny about leaving the meeting. She's never left the Sunday meeting. Maybe you could clear [this] up with the persons who [were] concerned. She will get up and use the ladies room...then remain in back of gym so as not to be a distraction.

Thanks
Brent

At our Friday meeting, we also talked a little more about Eric's statement that no one in the church felt any relational connection to me and the effect it had upon Jenny. In that context, Eric again angrily interrupted me and said I "should fly to Philadelphia and acknowledge how much more [of my pride] I've seen and say to Dave [Harvey] I've been reduced to a pile of dust." He went on to say, "I don't think C.J. is being the mastermind behind it all." I had confidentially, but only limitedly, shared with Eric the difficulties with C.J. (cf. "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine," "A Final Appeal," and "Concluding Remarks"). I never referred to C.J. as "the mastermind." These comments were the very first indication that Eric's perspective on me was changing.

The next day, Saturday, May 23, I stopped by the Kirchers. I wanted to reach out to them and thank Anna for all her help on the recent ladies retreat. I gave her a copy of *The God I Love* by Joni Eareckson Tada. It was a pleasant time of casual interaction with one humorous note. We were talking about caffeine when Eric blurted out that Anna "drank 20 cokes a day when we first met." Anna was embarrassed and immediately protested the exaggeration as absurd. Eric held his ground and insisted it was true. We all laughed. A conflict did not ensue but it was another example of how entrenched and extreme Eric can be in his criticisms. In that context, Anna referred to Eric's moods and how he just gets "ugly" with her and others.

Four days later on Wednesday, May 27, I met with Eric again. His perspective had deteriorated. Whereas he had said no one sinned at the dinner, now he said in no uncertain terms that I sinned against him. He said I should not have "adjusted [his] perspective and tone" during the conflict at 131 Main. He said "I took it personally" and became angry. I asked him how he came to that conclusion. He said "based upon [my] body language and appearance" not anything I said or did. He told me he "should not need to parse words and include encouragement." In other words, Eric justified his conflict with Jenny and his sinful response to me. He was clearly resentful for the mild, but necessary, correction I brought him. Nor was I quick to address him. I waited at the dinner as long as possible. That is until the conflict became intense and had to be addressed.

He also said "I should say to headquarters [Sovereign Grace Ministries] how badly I respond to people" (like him in this situation) and stop "resisting Gene." This was a massive turnabout. I reminded Eric that two weeks earlier, he insisted Gene be replaced (we were trying to get Danny Jones and Wayne Brooks involved with Grace Community Church) and emphatically stated "we cannot move ahead with Sovereign Grace and work with Gene."

He went on to say “we have a fundamental difference now” about leaving Sovereign Grace Ministries, meaning he no longer wanted to leave while claiming I did. This wasn’t the case. I was doing all I could to remain with Sovereign Grace. I told Eric I didn’t want to leave either. Lastly he said “we must subjugate our concerns and set them aside” including his 9 page letter from March 24.

Two days later on Friday, May 29, we met again with Eric and Anna in the afternoon. Jenny wanted to ask for their forgiveness in person and not simply by e-mail. She confessed to being “offended and angry and allowing her emotions to rule.” She said she “should not have pressed Eric and been contentious” and “though struggling should have exercised self-control and humbly asked questions.” She went on to say “she was the one responsible for the conflict not Brent. Brent was trying to help us. Please don’t judge him. He did not respond the way I did.” Anna expressed her agreement with Jenny’s comments about me. I so respected the humility my dear wife modeled for all of us. I assumed Eric would follow her example with a similar confession. Regrettably, he acknowledged no wrong doing.

More on the “Resignation” Lunch with Eric

This brings us back to my resignation lunch with Eric which occurred five days later on a Wednesday, June 3. He started by saying he was “grateful for Jenny’s confession” but “discouraged I did not confess also.” He said “I was also very upset [angry] at him at 131 Main” and reiterated that I took his “input personally,” “immediately turned it around on him” and made him “the focus of attention.” He told me I should have said, “You know what Eric, you’re right!” At this point he told me he “can’t accept responsibility for your personal care any longer.” I was saddened and disheartened to hear this because we loved Eric and Anna. With sincerity, I expressed my appreciation for the ways they had cared for us and served us.

I was also fearful. Without Eric’s support, I didn’t know what the future held. Seconds later I found out when Eric demanded I resign within 72 hours and presented me the letter. In part it said, “Those who have signed below...request and require the willing resignation of Brent Detwiler...effective immediately. This request is based upon our uniform agreement that Brent Detwiler is no longer qualified to preside as Pastor.”

In addition to the four signatories (i.e., Eric, Ray, Roger, Jim), Eric forcefully impressed upon me how all the leaders in the church, which included John Schaaf, Jonathan Paul, Brian Lloyd, Kenny Cook and Mike Lukavsky, were fully aware of this action and in complete agreement with the need to fire me. He mentioned the only two exceptions – Andy Elseman and John Sutton – both of whom he tried to contact but unsuccessfully.

He also told me he “had been meeting with people every day and all day for last 4 days” and that “Ray, Roger, and Jim’s concerns for me skyrocketed after talking to him” having “told them all about things.” He then accused me of excluding him from leadership decisions by “acting independently,” “flying solo” and sinfully “controlling the flow of information.” This was an irrational assertion. It was the only statement I gently contested. I affectionately reminded Eric that I had always shared everything with him, involved him in every decision and there was nothing he did not know about. Time and again, Eric had commended me for these very things. I appealed to his integrity and self-knowledge but Eric was not in his right mind. Clearly, his anger, bitterness and resentment from 131 Main played a huge part in his betrayal of me. He denied this to the Assessment Team but it was his stated reason at our lunch for why I was no longer fit to be a pastor. It was also his main point during our last meeting on Wednesday, May 27. Eric was bitter for the correction he received and that bitterness poisoned his heart and mind.

Sometime after the Friday, May 29 meeting as couples, Eric went to Ray and then, they went to Roger and Jim. At some point in this process, Ray talked to Gene Emerson to get his counsel. Gene told Ray the only way Sovereign Grace Ministries could get involved and help the leaders and the church, was if they first “fired me” (Ray’s exact description of Gene’s counsel). The four men chose to follow Gene’s directive in order to get Sovereign Grace Ministries involved. I was totally unaware any of this was going on behind my back.

My son, Jonathan, called Eric almost immediately after my lunch with him on June 3 and then wrote all the leaders.

From: Jonathan Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2009 5:00 PM
To: Jonathan M. Detwiler
Subject:

Dear Everyone,

I just got off the phone with Eric and found out that he has been meeting with some of the Care Group leaders, has contacted you all, and has asked Dad to step down as pastor. This news comes as a shock to me, and I am very disappointed and troubled to hear this news! I believe it is important that I write you this brief note.

First, I am saddened that this has never been discussed in any fashion with mom or dad or with myself as a member of the leadership team. It is very disappointing because something like this should not be decided “behind closed doors” but should minimally be a progressive discussion first with mom

and dad, then amongst the leadership team, and then if needed the care group leaders. This has come quickly and without any warning and is a quick turnaround from what was being said [i.e., Eric's many commendations of me].

Additionally, from what I know of the various "issues" mentioned, and I need to have more conversations, I have very serious concerns with the interpretation of things being presented. I believe that they are in many ways inaccurate and come from clouded perspectives. E-mail is not a good medium to go into the details of my concerns, but I would certainly ask that you be careful of processing without the proper information.

I am sorry that you all have to wade through all of this, as I know these are not pleasant things to deal with. I know that God is at work and will sovereignly be working out his good plan.

Jonathan

Jonathan also wrote Danny Jones and Wayne Brooks the following note.

From: Jonathan M. Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 1:51 AM
To: Danny Jones, Wayne Brooks
Subject: FW:

Gentlemen,

I hope you are well tonight!

As I am guessing you have probably now heard, Eric Kircher working in conjunction with Ray Mulligan (after having apparently already informed the care group leaders) and talking to some other guys, totally out of the blue asked Dad step down as pastor of the church today. As you have been somewhat kept abreast of the various developments here, and are guys that are friends, I wanted to briefly update you.

From my perspective, this has not been walked out in any sort of a biblical manner. It is also perplexing and concerning because just the other week Eric was praising Dad for his unbelievable humility and then after a few disagreements (about which I think some serious questions should be raised to Eric) he has spun around to this. Much could be said, but at the moment just wanted to give you a brief update. Glad to talk more if you have any desire or questions.

Either way, if you would be praying for the situation both for Dad and for the sake of the people in the church. It is our desire that God would be glorified and things would be walked out by everyone in a manner that would please him. Also, I'm sure Dad would appreciate hearing from you, even if you weren't trying to help arbitrate the situation.

FYI, below is an email [the one included above], I sent to the care group leaders (who according to Eric had already all been contacted...and Sovereign Grace notified, before he ever talked to me).

God bless,
Jonathan

The morning after my "resignation" lunch with Eric, I wrote all the leaders and their wives the following letter.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 10:30 AM

To: Aldridge, Jim; Cook, Kenny; Detwiler, Brent; Detwiler, Jonathan; Elseman, Andy; Kircher, Eric; Layman, Roger; Lloyd, Brian; Lukavsky, Mike; Mulligan, Ray; Mulligan, Ray; Paul, Jonathan; Schaaf, John; Sutton, John; Cook, Sherri; Detwiler, Jenny; Elseman, Chasity; Kircher, Anna; Layman, Rhonda; Lloyd, Mary Beth; Lukavsky, Julie; Mulligan, Jenny; Schaaf, Amy; Sutton, Kim

Subject: Resignation

Hello Everyone,

Yesterday Eric gave me a letter signed by himself, Ray, Roger and Jim requiring me to step down as sr. pastor within three days. It was firmly and cordially presented as an ultimatum. Eric stated his reasons. I asked a few questions. There was no conversation regarding the impact on Jenny and me, our friendships, my livelihood, or the church.

Eric also said all of you had been contacted and fully agreed with this action implemented in this way (except for John Sutton and Andy since they had not been contacted yet). Jenny and I don't assume this report about each of you is true [and it turned out it was not true].

I am reminded of Margie Stroup's prophetic reading of Scripture at the end of the message on Sunday about sinful judging (Matt 7:1-2) and how to treat others.

Matt 7:12 "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

This action came as a complete surprise - no hint or warning. I realize a case for this action is being made to each of you. Jenny and I are glad to talk to you in private and answer any questions. Proverbs 18:17 says, "The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him."

At this point, we are praying for God to guide and help us. We love you all. He will direct each of our paths.

Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to you in Christ Jesus!

Brent & Jenny

Jonathan Paul wrote me that morning saying he was misrepresented by Eric and did not agree with the action taken.

From: Jonathan Paul
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 6:50 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: from JP

Brent,

I was not aware that Eric was going to ask you to step down yesterday. I knew that Eric, Jim and Roger were going to confront you on certain issues. I didn't ask what those issues were but I did give them my support to confront you. If my name was used yesterday in this I want to be clear what my understanding was. I am sure this is devastating to you and I am concerned for you. If you would like to get together on Saturday to talk, please let me know. I appreciate your humility in walking through this tough time and so appreciate your service to God's people.

JP

At the "resignation" lunch, Eric told me John Schaaf, Jonathan Paul, and Brian Lloyd were fully informed and in complete agreement with firing me. That was a lie. The first of many. All three men told me they knew nothing about the plan to fire me. Eric purposely misrepresented them in order to put added pressure on me to resign. Later, Eric tried to cover his tracks and told the Assessment Team (i.e., Bob Kauflin, Phil Sasser, Wayne Brooks) that he unintentionally misrepresented them due to "miscommunications" between the parties. This was a fallacious explanation.

Eric's statement that he met "with people every day and all day for the last 4 days" (i.e., Saturday-Tuesday) was likewise intended to pressure me. It also proved to be a lie. This came to light on July 23 at a meeting between me, Jenny, Jonathan, Eric, Ray, Roger, Jim and the Assessment Team. I brought the statement up to the Assessment Team to show the extent to which Eric attempted to turn people against me. Roger disagreed with my statement and laid out a corrected chronology. Jim and Ray contributed also. It turned out nothing about Eric's statement was true. He met with people but not "every day and all day for the last 4 days." At that point, Eric acknowledged his "categorical statement" but no wrong doing and he did not ask forgiveness. This sinful exaggeration was also intentional and purposeful to pressure my resignation.

Lastly, I felt Eric's pressuring to resign at the lunch when he said "Roger, Ray and Jim's concerns skyrocketed after talking to [him]." He was sending me a message that Roger and Jim were solidly in his court. I didn't know if it was true, but I felt the intended effect.

Jenny's Response to Anna (Eric, Roger and Jim)

On Wednesday evening, Anna wrote Jenny the following. "I want you to know that I love you and Brent deeply. You are my friend and I am committed to that friendship. This has been a very difficult decision and I cannot begin to imagine the struggle you both are experiencing." Jenny responded to Anna a few days later after a fuller picture of things had emerged. It was strongly worded and appropriately so. She copied Roger and Jim's wives.

From: Jenny Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 06, 2009 8:30 PM
To: Anna Kircher
Cc: Rhonda Layman; Tracie Aldridge
Subject: Reply

Anna,

I can't reconcile going behind our backs and seeking to turn our friends against us with friendship as an expression of love. You have not been honest with us and others. You have not dealt with us with integrity or loyalty. There is nothing about this that even remotely resembles a biblical response to conflict or concerns. I'm deeply saddened by how all of this has been handled.

When the four of us sat together in our living room the other day [May 29] and I asked forgiveness again for my sin against you and Eric at the 131 Main dinner, I expressed that I wouldn't want my sin to be held against Brent. I communicated that I knew Brent was not [sinfully] struggling with how you communicated and that if I hadn't started to ask questions he would have been content to hear all you said and probably would have agreed with it [I did want to hear Eric's concerns and there were some things I partially agreed with.] (Which is what he communicated to me after the dinner.) I confessed that he was trying to get me to stop and that his concern in what he said was to help Eric and I resolve the conflict. You completely agreed and said that you did not feel Brent was where I was and that he was always open to hear your perspective. You said you were not concerned for his part in the conversation.

Brent went on to tell both of you that he would love to hear any remaining thoughts you hadn't been able to express that evening the next time we or he and Eric were together. I had also already communicated to you even at dinner, I wanted to hear your perspectives as I have many, many times before but that I was stumbled by how you were communicating and I was trying to work through that before we moved on. On the other hand, I was surprised that neither you nor Eric asked my forgiveness for your responses at the dinner. I don't think I was the only one sinning. I would submit for your consideration that you both were angry. I felt attacked for struggling with your words rather than a loving concern for how they affected me. All of a sudden it didn't seem like we were 4 friends honestly communicating through a conflict but that we were being charged with an unwillingness to hear. Eric appeared extremely offended that Brent asked him to consider the categorical way he was speaking. That afternoon [May 29] at our house you gave no indication that this conflict wasn't resolved or that you had remaining concerns. We feel blind-sided.

And now I hear that you are communicating your grave concerns for Brent in part due to the dinner. It seems from the things we are hearing that you are twisting all of this and many other things to manipulate others to your new perspective. While you and Eric have spent hours and hours with people promoting your side we have not been given even one opportunity to respond. How can this be right or honor the Lord?

Brent and I have bared our souls to you and Eric over the last many months. We have been completely vulnerable to you. We have trusted you. You even said that we have allowed you over and over to ask any question and bring any concerns and that we have responded humbly and honestly. We drew you close. We opened everything about our lives to you. How can you treat us like this? How can you suddenly be making such charges and coming to these conclusions. You guys have been involved in everything! Every decision -

every move. You know how hard it's been. You know how Brent and I have sought to honor the Lord. You know how often Brent has suffered his reputation to protect others. You know how he allowed Ray [Mulligan] to sin against him [without correcting him] - time and time again in an effort to be open and humble. I know of no other man who would have let himself be treated like that. You know how we have been seeking to apprehend grace to move forward. Putting together a new leadership team - working to get Wayne involved - putting together a strategy to move forward as a church. We were right there - right on the edge of seeing it happen. We felt new faith budding in our hearts...

I am heartbroken that after all these months and all the time we have spent together that you have turned your back on us. How many times have you said to us "we've got your back" and "you don't ever have to have any concern, Eric is a loyal man and Brent is one of the most humble pastors you have ever related too?"

I can't believe that you have re-involved Ray in all of this knowing where is at. Even though in love for Ray and Jenny we protected their reputation you know very well where Ray has been at spiritually. You know of the grave concerns Wayne expressed for his soul - for his bitterness toward God and his lack of humility and hardness. How can I not think that in your offense toward us you went to recruit the man you knew would join with you. Just a few weeks ago you and Eric were expressing your ongoing concerns to the point of questioning the genuineness of Ray's spiritual experience [i.e., whether he was a true Christian] and now you have placed him back in the middle of this? ...and you're saying that his previous involvement qualifies for Matthew 18?

I wonder if you and Eric have been tempted over the last month or so and rather than believing the best and asking questions - you've come to critical judgments and that on top of your offense from the dinner the other night propelled you to put all of this into motion. If you had remaining questions or other concerns why didn't you simply ask us to meet with Roger or with Roger and Jim and you two? We would have been so happy and willing to do that. Were you afraid that if they heard the truth of Brent's motives, perspectives and decisions they would not concur with you?

It's easy for others to say that the process doesn't matter [e.g., Gene Emerson] but it does. We were close friends and I feel you have betrayed us. You have demonstrated the opposite of love - especially to someone who has trusted you and so deeply shared their lives with you.

I so wish these past few weeks could be erased. I so want the church to be built and people to enjoy the grace of God and each other. I long for our friendship to be restored and fellowship we shared to resume. I am so sorry for any way I have provoked you or tempted you or added to this situation.

May the Lord have mercy on us all, Anna.
Jenny

P.S. Rhonda and Tracie, I have copied you in hope that you would consider and somewhat understand my limited perspective.

Conference Call with Dave and Gene - Thursday, June 4, 2009

The following evening on Thursday, June 4, all the leaders from Grace Community Church had a conference call with Dave Harvey and Gene Emerson. I was not invited to participate in the call or even told about it. My son, Jonathan, knew about the phone call and asked to participate since he was a board of director and on the leadership team. He was forbidden by Dave to do so. It was a closed door session for Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray to tell all the leaders about my "sins" and "answer questions." A case was effectively made against me. My guilt was only confirmed in the minds of Jim, Roger, Mike and Kenny by Dave and Gene.

Here is what Eric and Ray said two days later in their June 6 letter to Sovereign Grace Ministries. "We do not assume that our findings or even our process for delivering them to Brent were flawless. Given the extent of the concerns but also an awareness of our own fallenness, we discussed these issues with the Care Group leaders, who unanimously agreed to invite Sovereign Grace Ministries in - to evaluate our findings."

Here's the point, Ray and Eric never shared their "findings" and "extent of concerns" with me, but they were happy to discuss them with all the leaders from Grace. Over the previous six months, I only had one conversation in March when Ray shared any concerns with me. Eric only shared concerns with me very recently. In violation of Scripture, I did not know what Ray and Eric were saying about me and I was not present to share my perspective if I differed.

In a vacuous nod to humility, they allowed for the possibility that their "findings" and the "process for delivering them" may not have been "flawless" or perfect. Eric and Ray also wrote, "Given the extent of the concerns but also an awareness of our own fallenness, we discussed these issues with the Care Group leaders." This is misleading in two ways. First, they had already discussed their concerns with Roger, Jim, Mike and Kenny. Days earlier these four men had been convinced I should be fired. They didn't share with them out of a concern for their "fallenness." They shared to make a

case against me. Second, Eric and Ray claimed to have discussed their “findings” with Andy Elseman, John Sutton, Jonathan Paul, John Schaaf, and Brian Lloyd for the same reason. That is, a concern for their sinfulness. I find that doubtful.

Having heard the “extent of concerns” for me, and before a decision was made to involve SGM, I wish someone had requested a meeting so I could share the “extent of [my] concerns” for Eric and Ray. This never happened. There was no regard for biblical justice and fair mindedness throughout the process. Actually, if Eric and Ray were equitable and really believed their findings might be flawed and their conduct fallen, they could have set up a “closed door” meeting between me and the leaders from Grace without them or Dave and Gene in attendance. Of course, that was not about to happen.

Needless to say, it was important to find out what Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray covered at this closed meeting so I wrote Dave and Gene asking for their notes.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2009 6:50 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson
Subject: Notes
Importance: High

Would you please send me as soon as possible your unedited/unabridged notes from the Thursday night phone meeting with the leaders from Grace Community Church.

Thank you
Brent

Here is Dave’s initial response.

From: Dave Harvey
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2009 9:44 AM
To: Brent Detwiler; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Notes

Brent,

Hope you are well. I’ve been praying for you. I did not take notes since most of the time was spent with Gene and I simply answering questions the men had about you and about how they should proceed.

I suppose you could contact the men that were present to see who took notes, but you should carefully consider how that will appear before you take that step.

Why is it important to get the notes?

Dave

I don't know if it is true that Dave and Gene "were simply answering questions" "most of the time." I guess it doesn't matter since they used the questions to make a case against me.

Dave went on to say I could contact the men who took notes but "should carefully consider how that will appear before you take that step." That was an ominous note. It deterred me from making contact with the men. I felt manipulated.

Lastly, Dave asked "Why is it important to get the notes?" The answer was obvious. I felt demeaned and manipulated by his answer. Dave should have said, "Brent, I understand how important it is for you to know what we covered. I don't want to keep any of that information from you. I want full disclosure. In the interest of justice, I'd be glad to ask the men to provide their notes for you. And Gene and I would be glad to write down our recollections from the meeting for you. Once that is completed, I want you to meet with all the men to share your perspective and answer any questions they might have. It is only right for them to ask you the same questions they were asking us about you."

Here is a second request to Gene. He also claimed to have no notes from the meeting. I took the occasion to explain the obvious and copied Dave.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2009 8:02 PM
To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson
Subject: RE: Notes

Would you [Gene] please send me your notes since Dave has no recorded minutes or talking points from the phone meeting?

I was not made aware of this critical meeting nor was I asked if I'd like to participate. Since my future and livelihood are at stake, I think it is reasonable to request the unedited/unabridged notes. Otherwise, I have no have no idea what is being said or covered in reference to me.

Thanks for your kind consideration of this request.

Brent

I sent all the e-mails above to the Assessment Team with the following note.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, July 20, 2009 3:57 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: FW: Phone Mtg. with Gene and Dave

I am sure you noticed, but Dave's comment that "I suppose you could contact the men that were present to see who took notes, but you should carefully consider how that will appear before you take that step." That statement put a real chill or fear in me about contacting them or even talking to them.

The Assessment Team never talked to me about this intimidating example and never got back to me on the appropriateness of Dave's response. So far as I know, they never raised any of these issues with Dave either.

The only snippets of information on the closed meeting came from John Schaaf when I met with him the next day. Here is what John said according to my notes.

- "That the four men [Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray] made a very convincing case against [you]."
- That "no one else has seen it except them." Meaning none of the other leaders saw in my life the things I was accused of by the four men.
- That "the Sovereign Grace polity document says the only way to get help from Sovereign Grace was to take this drastic step [i.e., firing me] and that's what led up to this drastic action" [i.e., calling for my immediate resignation].
- That Eric said the "church is floundering" which Jonathan Paul protested.
- That Ray claimed "they had followed Matthew 18" when asked by John Schaaf. John asked this question because it did not line up with Ray's commendation of me in April and especially Eric's unqualified endorsement of me at the April 14 leaders and wives meeting.
- That I "didn't sign the Sovereign Grace membership agreement because I intended to leave" the movement. This was completely untrue.
- John told me he saw "no way out" and that "any defense" by me would be viewed by Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray as "proof of my guilt" that I am proud and unteachable.
- That a few men like "Brian Lloyd were angry [profoundly troubled] with Ray and Eric."
- That Brian said he was "only receiving 'code' from Ray and 'pieces' from Eric." By this he meant he had no idea they would fire me even though Eric told me Brian was fully informed and totally supportive of this action. He was not.

Reversing Course - Rescinding the Resignation

After the Thursday evening conference call with Dave and Gene; Jonathan Paul wrote me the following e-mail late that night.

From: Jonathan Paul
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 10:21 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Roger Layman
Subject: from JP

Brent,

We had a very productive meeting tonight. [John Schaaf] and I have been assigned to meet with you and discuss the content of the meeting and the thoughts of the rest of the leaders. We would like to rescind the resignation letter at this time. We need you to give your planned [home school] graduation talk [on Saturday] and to preach this Sunday. Let's carve out time on Saturday to meet.

In Christ

JP

John Schaaf also wrote me that night about withdrawing the demand for my resignation. The Grace leaders would withdrawal the demand for my resignation if I agreed to an evaluation by Sovereign Grace Ministries.

From: John Schaaf
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 10:56 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Tonight's meeting

Brent,

As we concluded the meeting the guys asked Jonathan Paul and me to communicate the group's plan to you. I called ahead, and we came by the house to talk in person, but at 10 PM all the lights were out so we did not knock...

The conclusion after a long conference with Dave and Gene is as follows. The leaders here would like to withdraw the request for your immediate resignation if you agree to allow the Sovereign Grace guys to come alongside us to evaluate

you, the leadership team, and the situation.... They are willing to do this in a quick enough fashion to be humane to all involved. We would request your continued leadership of the church, please, until the conclusion of the review process (including preaching this Sunday and your Guest Speakership at the home school graduation!)...

I am at the clinic tomorrow and very available to talk through about noon. Then I will be swamped until 6, then at your service if needed.

I love you, and so does everyone else,

John

The next day, Gene told me I must continue leading the church. Though I didn't know it at the time, several days earlier he instructed Ray to make me resign if they wanted any help from Sovereign Grace Ministries. Now, forty eight hours after my resignation was required because I didn't qualify to be a pastor, Gene was telling me I must lead the church. It wasn't a request. It was an assignment. I admit to feeling used and abused. Gene signed off "with care" but that certainly was not the case.

From: Gene Emerson

Sent: Friday, June 05, 2009 10:25 AM

To: Brent Detwiler

Cc: Dave Harvey

Subject: Moving Forward

Hi Brent,

I understand that Jonathan Paul and John Schaaf met with you last night to explain that the formal request from the leaders that SGM assemble a team of men to evaluate your qualification for leadership. Part of this agreement is that a public statement will be made in the next week or two (on Sunday morning or at a family meeting) acknowledging that this process will be moving forward in the next few weeks. We will attempt to expedite this review for everyone's benefit so that it will be concluded within 4 to 6 weeks.

In the meantime, you will need to continue to provide leadership for the church. I know this is a challenging season, Brent, and I'll be glad to serve you in any way I can. I am praying for you, Jenny, and all those involved.

With care,
Gene

Sovereign Grace Ministries Covers Up the Forced Resignation

Dave Harvey was concerned for Gene's reckless counsel and the public relations nightmare on his hands. Rightly so. I could have refused to speak at the home school graduation and the Sunday meeting and then told everyone in the church what happen on Wednesday with Eric. Or, I could have spoken on both occasions and removed Grace Community Church from Sovereign Grace Ministries for what they instigated and condoned. Instead, I decided to serve the many dear people in the church and not force a split or expose Eric and others. I hoped good would come out of this travesty.

Very quickly, however, Sovereign Grace Ministries was being "informed from many parties that there is growing speculation over these issues from within and outside the church." That included the SGM Refuge blog. Therefore C.J., Dave, Jeff, Pat, and Joshua "recommended" the church not be told anything about the demand (not a simple "request" as Dave implies) for me to resign, let alone be told about the events preceding and following my June 3 lunch with Eric.

Dave said "this step will serve the church by framing...and reinforcing the desire of all parties to walk through this process with integrity." This was double speak. You cannot conceal vital information and then claim to be framing the process with integrity. This did not serve the church. I believe this action deceived the church. I communicated this concern to everyone. Here is Dave's e-mail to all the leaders in the church and on the Sovereign Grace Ministries leadership team.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 1:33 PM

To: Ray Mulligan, Eric Kircher, Jim Aldridge, Roger Layman,

Cc: Brian Lloyd; Jonathan Detwiler; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton; Brent Detwiler; C.J. Mahaney; Jeff Purswell; Gene Emerson; Pat Ennis; Joshua Harris

Subject: RE: Confidential

Gentleman, an additional point of clarification related to the public announcement to the church. We would not recommend that the church be informed of the request for Brent's 'resignation', but only of the request to SGM from the local team for an 'evaluation of Brent's leadership'. Since we are being informed from many parties that there is growing speculation over these issues from within and outside the church. We believe this step will serve the church by framing the issue carefully and respectfully, quelling speculation, inviting prayer and reinforcing the desire of all parties to walk through this process with integrity.

Hope this point of clarification helps.

Dave

I wrote Dave immediately and appealed that he be “open and honest” with the church. That he not withhold this information from everyone and be accused of a cover up later. I never heard back from Dave. A non-response was typical of Dave whenever I asked questions that involved answers for which he could be held accountable. He didn’t want to leave a paper trail. I copied all the leaders.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 1:57 PM

To: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson

Cc: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Brent Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Ray Mulligan; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton,

Subject: FW: Confidential

I’d suggest you be open and honest about what has happen less you be accused of a “cover up” and indicate that the leadership team also asked to be evaluated by SGM per the statement below which says you desire “an open and outside evaluation of us all.”

The next day, Friday, Dave wrote the following to all the Grace Community Church and SGM leaders.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Friday, June 12, 2009 6:06 PM

Cc: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Brent Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Ray Mulligan; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton,

Cc: CJ Mahaney; Jeff Purswell; Gene Emerson

Subject: Confidential

Guys,

Hope you are enjoying God’s grace today.

I want to alert you to an unfortunate development. While we have not yet been able to verify the details (although we are aggressively attempting to do so), it appears as if there is a direct link regarding the details of this situation to one of the anti-SGM blogs [SGM Refuge]. The information has not yet been posted, but we have been informed that it may soon appear.

Needless to say, the circulation of this private information [that Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim demanded my immediate resignation without any process] could ultimately hinder, if not entirely undermine the important process in which we are engaged. Blogging over local church matters is an unhelpful and unbiblical way to stir uninformed critique without the benefit of context or accurate information. It sows suspicion into everyone's heart so that we are unable to maintain the unity of the Spirit and hopefully resolve this matter.

If you happen to know who might be doing this, please contact them immediately and appeal that they stop circulating the information. You can also assure them that there are a number of trustworthy men involved in this assessment and that no information will be inappropriately withheld from the church at the conclusion of this evaluation process.

Also, while I have your attention, I just want to clarify that the role of Sovereign Grace in this matter is merely advisory. This means that the recommendations - resulting from the evaluation of Brent, the local leaders and Gene - are not binding. I mention this because there may have been some confusion on whether Brent needed to agree 'up front' to submit to the recommendations as a pre-condition in moving forward. We would not require that...and we would not recommend you do that either.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. And thanks for your patience in this important process.

Dave was extremely concerned "the circulation of this private information" might "ultimately hinder, if not entirely undermine the important process" by "sowing suspicion into everyone's heart." First, this was not private information. The church deserved to know what was happening to their senior pastor. Second, Dave and Gene were not acting in "trustworthy" manner. Third, withholding this "private information" until the conclusion of the evaluation process did the church no good. As a result, people were kept in the dark and couldn't comment on what was happening from the beginning. They had no voice. Fourth, Dave said information could be withheld from the church if deemed "inappropriate." Indeed, a lot of information was deemed inappropriate and withheld from the church. Thereby, the need for this paper and the previous ones to C.J. This was all part of a cover-up.

The Signatories Never Wanted Me to Resign

Soon after the resignation was “rescinded,” Eric began telling people that he (and Ray, Roger, Jim) never intended for me to resign in the first place. For example, here is what he told my son, Bryan, on June 14 at the “Concert on the Lawn” in Davidson. He also told Jonathan the same thing.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2009 6:43 AM
To: Bryan Detwiler
Subject: Resignation

Hey Bryan,

I need to be sure Eric really told you [on June 14] he never really wanted me to resign or expected me to resign. I need to be able to quote you on this.

Thanks for your help.
Dad

From: Bryan Detwiler
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2009 8:40 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Resignation

Yes, that is what he said.

Now that the resignation was rescinded, Eric began to distance himself and cover his tracks. He told others that it was never his intention for me to resign. In other words, the resignation letter requiring my signature, all the secret meetings, the signatures from Ray, Roger and Jim, the pressuring, the embellishing was just a hoax or ploy. If true, as I told the Assessment Team, it was crueler and more wicked to fake the demand for my resignation than to sincerely require it.

But there was no kidding in Eric’s ultimatum to me on June 3. It was real. He was lying again and in the most blatant way possible. That is, telling people he never intended for me to resign. That was pure deception. Eric would have been extremely angry if I said, “Come on Eric. You’re just kidding. No, I am not going to resign. Get over it. Stop joking around.” Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim were all serious and determined in demanding my actual resignation.

I brought this matter up to Roger and Jim for clarification. In other words, I tried to ascertain from them, whether or not their demand to resign was sincere or whether it was a sham. Their answers were elusive and confusing but clear enough – they genuinely intended for me to resign.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 12:47 PM
To: Roger Layman; Jim Aldridge
Subject: Resignation - True or False
Importance: High

Eric has told different people he never wanted me to resign or expected me to resign even though he demanded my resignation within 72 hours on June 3 at Toast Café.

When you signed the letter stating “those who have signed below...request and require the willing resignation of Brent Detwiler based upon our uniform agreement that [he] is no longer qualified to preside as Pastor” did you think the request was for real? Were you really asking for my resignation in 72 hours? Or were you, like Eric has claimed, just acting pretentiously?

Here is Roger’s response to my “Resignation – True or False” e-mail.

From: Roger Layman
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 6:25 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Rhonda Layman; Jim & Tracie Aldridge
Subject: RE: Resignation - True or False

Not sure what happened to the first email. I did get this one.

As I explained on Sunday, I felt we had no other option in how we could ask for SGM to get involved.

Roger didn’t answer my question so I asked again.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 9:35 PM
To: Roger Layman
Cc: Jim Aldridge; Rhonda Layman
Subject: RE: Resignation - True or False

That does not really answer my question. Was it a pretense or a feigned request? Or did you really intend for me to resign?

After sending this to Roger, I began to wonder if they were instructed to demand my resignation. I wrote Roger again and copied the Assessment Team.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 9:37 PM
To: Roger Layman; Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Cc: Rhonda Layman; Jim Aldridge
Subject: RE: Resignation - True or False

Were you counseled to do this by Gene or someone?

Roger did not respond to this question nor did anyone on the Assessment Team. After sending this question, Jim wrote me the following. He didn't answer the question either.

From: Jim Aldridge
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 9:55 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks; Roger Layman; Bob Kauflin
Subject: RE: Resignation - True or False

Brent,

Signing the letter requesting your resignation was what I understood to be the necessary course of action in order for Sovereign Grace to step in and provide assistance. I was not acting pretentiously.

I realized everyone was being evasive and eluding my questions. I didn't know why however.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 1:43 PM
To: Roger Layman; Jim Aldridge
Cc: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: RE: Resignation - True or False

I don't understand but certainly want to understand. I look forward to hearing more of your perspective [tomorrow night].

Thanks

Brent

The next night, Jenny, Jonathan and I met with Eric, Ray, Roger, Jim, and the Assessment Team (i.e., Bob, Phil, Wayne). Finally, seven weeks after the “resignation lunch” on June 3, and two days before I resigned at the Family Meeting on July 25, I had my answer. As I probed, Ray told me that Gene Emerson was the one who had instructed them to require my resignation if Sovereign Grace was “to step in and provide assistance.” I was floored and felt so deceived.

This information was covered up for over seven weeks. Dave knew about it but never divulged it. The Assessment Team knew about it but never told me. Roger and Jim knew about it but failed to be honest when I questioned them. This is one of many deceitful actions.

To this day, I don’t think the remaining leaders: Andy Elseman, Jonathan Paul, John Schaaf, Brian Lloyd, or John Sutton, have ever been told about Gene’s counsel. This information was deep-sixed. The church was certainly never told. And to this day, people are still being told that Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim didn’t want me to resign. They were simply doing what was necessary for Sovereign Grace Ministries to get involved. All this is untrue.

After this came to the surface at the July 23 meeting, Ray also said, “No one’s told me what I did was wrong [i.e., firing me]. I guess I’ll be hearing from someone.” I guess not. The Assessment Team said nothing about Gene’s counsel being immoral and heavy handed. Nor was there ever any follow up with Gene that I was told about. Neither were Gene’s actions recorded in any written reports, either to the church or the letter sent to SGM pastors. The Assessment Team acted in a biased fashion. They were not equitable. Finally, Gene has never responded to me about his deplorable actions though I have brought them to his attention.

Roger was the only one who made a moral distinction at the meeting. He said Gene’s counsel was “bad counsel” but he still felt obligated to follow it. True, Gene’s directives were bad in many respects, let me highlight two. The rationale Gene used for demanding my immediate resignation was abhorrent. First of all, Sovereign Grace polity nowhere requires a sr. pastor be removed before they will come in to assist or do an evaluation. That assertion was absurd. Sovereign Grace has always done just the opposite.

Second, I would have asked Sovereign Grace to get involved if that was necessary. Gene should have counseled Eric and Ray to talk to me. Something they never did. If we made no progress, we could have involved others like Roger and Jim and Jonathan D. If that didn’t result in resolution, I or they, could have asked Sovereign Grace or others to help us out.

Deceitful Claim to Have Followed Matthew 18:15-17

During the conference call on June 4 with Dave and Gene, Ray Mulligan, when questioned by John Schaaf, told all the local leaders that he and Eric had follow the teaching of Matthew 18. He also told my son, Bryan, when questioned by him, the same thing on June 14 at the Concert on the Lawn (in addition he told Bryan he had “no choice” but to fire me based on Gene’s counsel).

This too was bogus. What Eric and Ray did had no parallel to the principles of that passage. They did not follow Matthew 18 in any regard. Let me explain. On January 2, 2009; Ray, Eric, Jonathan Detwiler, and I met with Dave and Gene. During that meeting, Ray repeatedly commended my character to them. Ray told me he resigned from the Grace Community Church leadership team the day before the meeting because he was fed up with Gene and SGM, Mickey Connolly and CrossWay Community Church not because he thought I was unfit to be a pastor. He also told me he was stepping down because he did not have the gifts or character to care for Jenny and me. In a moment of vulnerability, Ray told me he had been “a terrible friend.” I don’t enjoy saying so, but that was true. More on this later. Here is what I wrote Eric regarding Ray’s reasons for stepping down.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, January 27, 2009 12:23 PM
To: Eric Kircher
Subject: Change with Ray

Here are the reasons Ray has given me for not continuing to provide care for us.

1. Demands of work – not able to do so
2. Needs to give attention to wife and family
3. Not called and gifted – feels has done a poor job caring for us
4. Feels Eric and Anna are more effective
5. Disillusionment with Dave and Gene

Thanks
Brent

The next time I talked with Ray about issues related to me was a couple months later in March. He called me by phone. By this time, however, Ray had become even more angry at everyone including SGM, CrossWay and me. All of us were extremely concerned for him. It was not well with his soul. More on this later.

During the call, Ray wanted me to know, contrary to what he told everyone previously, that he did not resign on January 1 because of SGM and CrossWay alone. His story had dramatically changed. He was extremely agitated and made it clear he also resigned because of concerns for me. With no exaggeration, Ray was yelling at me so loudly over the phone that Jenny could hear him in the next room. He was angry, demanding, condemning and categorical throughout the call. This was not because I provoked him. When I got off the phone, Jenny asked me how I could allow Ray to act that way without addressing him. She claims, I said "it was a great opportunity to just listen and be humble." This is the only action Ray can point to as a fulfillment of step 1 in Matthew 18. There was, however, no mention of me being unfit for pastoral ministry or that this was the beginning of a disciplinary process.

The next time I talked to Ray about issues related to SGM, CrossWay or me was in April. Ray had filled Susie DiGiacomo and Jessica Diehl in on the things with SGM in a very unhelpful way. I got back to Ray and he acknowledged he handle things poorly. He got back to Susie. When I followed up with Susie she was doing much better because Ray told her "he had no concerns for my doctrine or character." Around the same time, at the monthly leaders meeting on April 14, he also told everyone he had no serious or substantial concerns for me or the possibility of us leaving SGM. It was not a ringing endorsement like Eric and Anna's, but there was no note of alarm.

At no point in time did Eric and Ray ever approach me together to raise serious concerns for my character as directed in the second step of Matthew 18. That does not mean we hadn't talked about issues over the past year related to my sanctification. We did since that's what fellowship, plurality and friendship are about.

When Ray stepped down from the leadership team in January, he adamantly requested all parties cease having any contact with him regarding SGM, CrossWay, or Grace Community Church. He removed himself and was out of the loop. I regularly reached out to Ray but never to involve him in matters related to these things. I simply sought to encourage him, take an interest in him, and love him. Though he was difficult, he was my friend. I had benefited from his gifts and service, and I determined not to avoid him or walk away from him. For instance the following e-mail from Ray after I called him.

From: Ray Mulligan
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2009 8:54 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Tonight's Call

Thank you so much for the call tonight, it was very meaningful to me, and encouraged my heart. My desire is to be able to serve alongside of you to serve the saints and reach the people that God had called to the church, without all of

the distraction that we have had to deal with over the past months. Jenny and I continue to pray that God's work be done and the focus be on bringing joy to others through the wonderful truth of the gospel.

Thank you again,

Ray and Jenny

On March 25, Jenny and I had Ray and Jenny, Eric and Anna over to our house for dinner. Here is a follow up e-mail I sent him two days later.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 1:37 PM
To: Ray Mulligan
Subject: Care Group Ldr.

Hey Ray,

Good afternoon my friend. I tried to reach you this morning but got your voice mail. I'm sure you're slammed with back to back meetings. After you left on Wednesday night, my heart was moved with compassion and concern for you. I hate to see you doing so poorly. I want to position you to recoup and receive help. I've been reconsidering your request to be relieved of Care Group leadership. I think it is a good idea. So does Eric. Now is a good time to make the change with the reconfiguration and all that is going on with your work.

This afternoon, I let Jonathan Paul know he'd be leading the Care Group again (I saw him for my shoulder). He thought it was a good development. He has such a heart to help you. This change is not an attempt to side line you but to serve you. This will at least allow you to walk in openness and honesty with friends about your weariness, exhaustion, and need to focus on your marriage relationship and walk with the Lord.

If I remember correctly, you're in San Francisco next week. Maybe you should send out an email and let the group know before Wednesday. What do you think? I'll probably head over to the Care Group on Wednesday and express my heart of support for you, commend Jonathan P. and encourage the group.

Love you my friend,
Brent

When Ray, Eric and Jonathan D. served together on the leadership team for five months (Sep 08-Dec 08), no disqualifying sins were ever brought to my attention. Over the nine

months (Sep 08-May 09) that Eric served on the leadership team he repeatedly told me and others he had no serious concerns for me. In fact, he communicated just the opposite – he always spoke highly of me. In April, Eric wrote Susie and Jessica saying, “None of this stuff is disqualifying in the least.” The same month, Ray told them he “had no concerns for my character or doctrine.”

You can imagine my shock then, when given the resignation letter saying I was “unfit to be a pastor.” First, Ray and Eric never said anything to me about not qualifying as a pastor. They never came to me as individuals in private (the first step) to make their case. Second, they never came together to meet with me (the second step) and restate their case. Assuming my sins were of a disqualifying nature, I was given no opportunity to repent. Instead of following Matthew 18, they disobeyed Matthew 18 and sinfully recruited others and turned them against me.

Third, they demanded my resignation (comparable to the fourth step) before following the third step (getting others involved to appeal). In this regard they should have talked to Wayne Brooks (senior pastor in Winter Gardens, FL) and Benny Phillips (executive pastor in Orlando). Both of these men were involved with us and aware of all that was going on with SGM/CrossWay. They had also provided us personal counsel. Wayne, for instance, spent time counseling Ray and Jenny in April. Instead of turning to these men, who would have stopped them, Ray and Eric turned to men they could potentially manipulate. Every step of Matthew 18 was disregarded and transgressed. Matthew 18 is redemptive, progressive and kind. This was not. Matthew 18 appeals. It is not a license to intimidate and coerce a resignation.

Ray, Eric, Roger, Jim, Kenny and Mike are all responsible for their actions. They know what the Bible teaches about peacemaking. They can’t blame others for their disobedience to Scripture. But having said that, Gene was a tremendous stone of stumbling to them. Ray and Eric should have rejected Gene’s evil counsel (see James 3:15-18). Here is what Bryan said about the situation. Of course, he did not know at the time that Gene was the one advising Ray and Eric to remove me.

From: Bryan Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, June 06, 2009 11:24 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: RE: Brent

Of course Gene is oblivious to the fact that their very method undercuts the “issues” that they are citing. If Eric had been raising these concerns for the past 6 months, referencing your resignation as a possible outcome if you didn’t change, and then now, decided with the input of others that things just weren’t working out, that would be one thing; but the fact that his tune has changed so dramatically in the past two weeks renders nearly all observations of his null

and void. He comes across, and is, a man who has been offended, a man who has hastened into rash judgments that have little to no basis.

Here is what the Assessment Team wrote and read to the church at the Family Meeting on July 29, 2009 when I step down.

“We found that the original request [the demand to resign] for Brent’s resignation lacked the consideration and care that should be part of any request as significant as this. Prior to asking for his resignation, the leaders should have gone to Brent and communicated that their ongoing concerns had reached the point that they had lost faith in his leadership.... We also commend Ray, Eric, Jim Aldridge, and Roger Layman for making the bold, though ill-informed, decision to do what they thought was necessary to best serve Grace Community Church.”

I’d submit this statement is woefully inadequate and represents the bias of the Assessment Team, especially Bob who headed up the team under C.J. and Dave’s oversight. The hearer or reader has no idea what actually transpired and what is met by “original request.” The church was never told. This was deceitful. One is left to think there was simply a lack of consideration and care when in fact there was no consideration or care. The only criticism noted was “the leaders should have gone to Brent.” Otherwise they are commended for their “bold, though ill-informed [a vague reference to Gene], decision” to pressure and demand my immediate resignation. It should also be noted that Roger, Jim, Kenny, and Mike had no concerns for my character or qualifications based upon their own personal experiences or observations. They concluded I was disqualified for ministry based solely on what they were told by Eric and Ray. They never talked to me. More on this later.

I make much of this in regard to Gene and the other men for a reason. It goes to motive and not just wisdom. Ray and Eric deceptively claimed to have followed Matthew 18 while they intentionally disregarded it. This was not due to inexperience or a lack of knowledge. It was purposeful. Ray and Eric never asked forgiveness for telling others they followed Matthew 18. Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim never asked forgiveness for demanding my resignation in the underhanded way they did. These men were never corrected for violating the clear teaching of Scripture except for this minor adjustment by the Assessment Team - “the leaders should have gone to Brent.”

At the beginning of my assessment on June 21, Bob asked me what was necessary to remedy the events of the last three weeks and move the church forward. I said it would be necessary for Eric and Ray to openly and truthfully tell the church about their actions and ask forgiveness. This was the not only thing I said to Bob and Phil but it was important. No public (or private) acknowledgement of wrong doing for these deceitful actions has ever occurred.

Brent Defiant and Resistant – Saturday, June 6, 2009

Eric continued to lie and intentional misrepresent the truth. Gene was all too happy to believe everything Eric told him with no verification. Three days after the “resignation lunch,” Gene wrote this scathing indictment of me to all the leaders in Grace Community Church on Saturday morning.

From: Gene Emerson

Date: Saturday, June 6, 2009 7:42 AM

To: Eric Kircher

Cc: John Schaaf, Kenny Cook, Andy Elseman, Jonathan Paul, Jim Aldridge, Ray Mulligan, Mike Lukavsky, John Sutton, Brian Lloyd

Subject: Re: Brent

Gentlemen,

You – particularly those of you [Roger, Eric, Jim, Mike, Andy] on the [newly appointed] leadership [advisory] team--are responsible before God for Grace Church. You have asked for Brent’s resignation and, because of his resistance, have requested SGM assemble a team to provide an objective evaluation of the concerns and charges you have brought. Brent’s refusal on both counts simply underscores the issues you raised: “pride in the form of independence and a resistance to receiving and acting upon the concerns and observations of [two] board members [Ray and Eric].” It is unacceptable for Brent to refuse to submit to you on these matters.

I’m not sure it’s fruitful for you to continue to debate the methodology with Brent. Our attention should not be on how these issues were raised but whether your observations are correct. My recommendation is that you sign and send the agreement [the request for SGM involvement] from Friday night today and allow us to begin a formal process so that the issue does not remain “you against Brent.” You men have been courageous and gracious, but I don’t want you to carry this burden alone.

If there’s anything else I can do, please let me know.

With care,

Gene

First, Gene accused me of resisting the call to resign. He said this was why it was necessary to do an “objective evaluation.” Therefore, he “recommends” they

immediately “sign and send the agreement from Friday night, today [Saturday], and allow us to begin a formal process.” The leaders from Grace Community Church must have felt considerable pressure from Gene to proceed.

The truth is I did not resist Eric’s ultimatum in any way, shape or form. Gene assertion was entirely untrue. In reality, I told Eric at the resignation lunch that I would seriously consider his demand and give him an answer within 72 hours as requested. I communicated absolutely nothing that would give him the impression I was going to resist or defy his ultimatum. Gene characterized my supposed defiance as “you against Brent.” In other words, I was fighting against all the leaders. That was manifestly not the case. I was not fighting against anyone. In fact, Jenny and I were composing a resignation letter in case we decided I should just step down. It was a serious consideration to do so.

Second, Gene referred to “Brent’s refusal on both counts.” The second count was my supposed resistance to an “objective evaluation.” This too was entirely untrue. From the outset, I told Jonathan Paul and John Schaaf, I was willing to be evaluated. My only request was to be evaluated by persons who would in fact be “objective.” This was not resistance. This was an appeal for biblical justice.

Third, Gene emphatically declared, “It is unacceptable for Brent to refuse to submit to you on these matters.” This kind of statement was typical of Gene’s heavy handedness in dealing with me. He recklessly cited both counts “as pride in the form of independence and a resistance to receiving and acting upon the concerns and observations.” These were terribly sinful judgments.

Fourth, Gene charged me with continuing to debate the leaders regarding methodology. This too was absurd. The only people I had spoken to were Jonathan Paul and John Schaaf. They approached me at the request of all the leaders. Amazingly, Gene refers to all the events of previous seven days as simple “methodology.” Methodologies can be diverse. They are neither right nor wrong. Gene used a morally neutral word to describe all the sinful things he and others had done.

Then he told all the leaders that “Our attention should not be on how these issues were raised but whether your observations are correct.” He categorically dismissed the need to evaluate anything that transpired including his “bad counsel” to demand my resignation. This amounted to a cover up in my opinion. Gene was unwilling to be held accountable. He demeaned the very possibility. He was sending a clear message to all the leaders not to raise concerns about “how these issues were raised.”

Fifth, he told the men they “have been courageous and gracious.” I beg to differ. Eric, Ray, Roger and Jim acted in a cowardly fashion. If they were “courageous” they would

have come to me rather than conspire behind my back. Nor were they gracious. They showed no care or consideration in how they went about things.

I forwarded Gene's e-mail to my family. Here is my son-in-law's appeal to all the Grace leaders who were his friends. Seth copied Dave Harvey because Dave incredulously wanted Gene to be on the Assessment Team.

From: Seth Honea

Sent: Saturday, June 06, 2009 11:50 PM

To: Jonathan M. Detwiler; Roger Layman; Andy Elseman; Ray Mulligan; Brent Detwiler; Kenny Cook; Jim Aldridge; John Sutton; Jonathan Paul; Eric Kircher; Brian Lloyd; John Schaaf; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Detwiler

Cc: Dave Harvey

Subject: RE: Brent

Good evening men,

I am compelled out of conscience to respond to Gene's e-mail below. I have been silent for too long on this matter. As a servant of Grace Community Church, a worship leader and a longtime member of Sovereign Grace, I too am responsible for our family's well-being and the integrity of the facts. I deeply care about the well-being of this church. I think it is very important that you hear another brother's perspective as well as my firsthand account of my observations of Brent hours after he received the resignation letter.

I am disturbed by this e-mail from Gene. I heartily second John's [Schaaf] motion below that this group [the Assessment Team] be made up of people who are not an offended party and/or have not already formed their own conclusions about Brent. Out of fairness and objectivity, this group should be comprised of people who have the trust of everyone involved. Gene is not a viable third party.

To make my point clear, here are a few examples of what I am talking about.

Gene states, "You have asked Brent's resignation and, because of his resistance, have requested SGM assemble a team to provide an objective evaluation of the concerns and charges you have brought."

I was with Brent shortly after he received the letter. He was not resistant nor was he defiant. He was broken hearted. He was shocked, hurt and dismayed because this letter came with no warning, no due process and very little concern expressed for him or his family's well-being. He was given three days to respond to the letter. He needed time to absorb what happened before he

responded to Eric. He was not given the time or opportunity to be resistant since the letter was rescinded the next day. He was praying and seeking counsel. It should be clearly evident that Gene has either been told slanderous, false information about Brent or he is making uncharitable judgments and then passing it on to you.

Another example:

“Brent’s refusal on both counts simply underscores the issues you raised: ‘pride in the form of independence and a resistance to receiving and acting upon the concerns and observations of board members.’ It is unacceptable for Brent to refuse to submit to you on these matters.”

Gene is miss-judging Brent in this statement. Brent never refused to resign or participate in a review and yet Gene ties an untrue statement (Brent’s refusal) as evidence of Brent’s sin issues. It seems as though Gene is trying to sway your opinion and affect the lens through which you evaluate Brent. Does that sound like an objective third party speaking to you? Furthermore, if Brent at this time does not completely agree with the charges brought against him, then how is he supposed to explain himself without people further chalking it up as proof of these issues?

Final example

“I’m not sure it’s fruitful for you to continue to debate the methodology with Brent. Our attention should not be on how these issues were raised but whether your observations are correct.”

From my perspective, the reason the way these issues were raised IS relevant because, as far as I know, most of the leaders here have not specifically discussed these issues with Brent beforehand. The request of his resignation did not follow the Matthew 18 pattern of speaking to him first privately before gathering others. The way this was conducted lacked both discernment and care for Brent, which naturally would cause him (and me) to be concerned about the way he will be evaluated going forward. It is understandable that Brent would want to have confidence in the process that will shape his livelihood and future.

Guys, I challenge you to be on your guard as you evaluate information from Gene or anyone else. Please be sure to gather all the facts as you weigh information from different sources. Ask Brent directly for his version of things and the reason why he did/did not do the things he is accused of. Please be on guard that both what you are hearing, and what you are interpreting, are based

upon facts and not uncharitable judgments of everything Brent has ever done through a lens that has already convicted him of pride or independence. Please think about your own life, and what kind of judgments could be made of your actions if someone had already concluded you were proud and then interpreted everything you did based on that assumption.

Please keep in mind the positive impact Brent has had on so many lives for so many years as he has relentlessly served the Church. Of course he's not perfect, and some of these areas in his life may need growth, but I have yet to see anything that calls for drastic action as I have witnessed his life up close. Thank you for being willing to serve Brent by caring for his soul in a humble, Gospel centered way as you help him grow in Godliness.

Gene, I call upon you to contact Brent immediately and ask for his forgiveness for your uncharitable judgments, as well as from all who have read your e-mail. Your e-mail has not the tone of a Gospel centered leader who has been entrusted with loving, serving and looking out for the soul of our senior pastor with all hope of seeing him restored with respect and honor. Instead, it comes across as one who is eager to convict him as charged without regard for caring for him through the process.

Sincerely,
Seth Honea

Gene never got back to me to ask forgiveness. He never responded to Seth. Dave Harvey never corrected Gene. So far as I know the Assessment Team never corrected Dave or Gene even though all this information was provided to them. Nor did anyone ever follow up with me on this matter. It was all passed over and brushed under the rug. On a personal note, it is hard to describe the sense of horror I felt when reading Gene's unfounded and brutal condemnation of me to all the leaders. Similarly, I could not believe Dave pronounced Gene "qualified" to graciously, justly and objectively assess me. In light of the facts, Dave's commendation of Gene showed the extent to which Dave was willing to "stack the deck" against me. It was shameful.

After reading Gene's e-mail, I decided to respond to the second count. That is, resisting an evaluation. I tried to be humble and gracious but also present my viewpoint. I realized every little thing I did was being interpreted through the "lens" of being "proud," "unteachable," "independent" and "refusing to submit."

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Sunday, June 07, 2009 9:59 PM

To: Gene Emerson; Dave Harvey

Cc: Aldridge, Jim; Cook, Kenny; Detwiler, Brent; Detwiler, Jonathan; Elseman, Andy; Kircher, Eric; Layman, Roger; Lloyd, Brian; Lukavsky, Mike; Mulligan, Ray; Paul, Jonathan; Schaaf, John; Sutton, John

Subject: Moving Forward

Hi Gene,

Greetings and love in the name of our Lord Jesus!

I can understand your added concern for my leadership based upon what I've heard Eric has conveyed to you.

I want to assure you that I am willing to be evaluated by a group of impartial peers that are mutually agreed upon by us. I have to appeal that this panel not include yourself or Mickey since there are unresolved issues between us. Instead, it would be comprised of men who have not been influenced or biased in their opinion of me [this excluded Bob, Mickey and Gene]. For example, I'd like to ask that the following mature senior pastors be seriously considered: Al Pino (Miami, FL), Phil Sasser (Apex, NC), Keith Collins (New Orleans, LA), and Wayne Brooks (Winter Garden, FL).

I would also appeal that this group of men address the outstanding issues between you/SGM and me and Mickey/CW and me. See Eric's attached [9 page] letter [from March 24] as representative of those issues.

On a personal note, I hope you can understand how important it is to me to be assessed by men I (we) trust in this current environment.

Thanks for your kind consideration.

Love in Christ,
Brent

Two days after I sent this to Gene and copied it to Dave Harvey, Dave wrote Seth back regarding Seth's e-mail appeal to all the Grace leaders regarding his critique of Gene. Astonishingly, Dave did not address any of Seth's points or express any concerns for Gene. He invited Seth to contact C.J. (who was not unbiased himself and Dave was presumably following his counsel) but expressed no agreement with Seth. He should have been alarmed by Seth's e-mail and immediately offered to look into the matter. Instead, Dave gave Gene a complete pass and commended him as qualified to be on the

Assessment Team. Dave's endorsement of Gene showed the extent of Dave's bias and prejudice which was not limited to this one example. Dave was not concerned about objectivity.

From: Dave Harvey
To: Seth Honea; Gene Emerson
Cc: Carolyn Honea; CJ Mahaney
Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2009 10:16 AM
Subject: RE: Confidential: Please Respond

Seth,

Thanks for taking the time to pass along your thoughts. I want to do all we can to wisely care for the Detwiler's, even while we are seeking to advise the local leaders in some of the decisions they are making.

Seth, I do not believe that Gene is unqualified to serve on the panel being assembled to consider the assumptions behind the call for Brent's resignation. However we are carefully looking at each team member being recommended for who might serve most effectively.

Please feel free to contact CJ and invite his evaluation of how I am seeking to serve in this situation. I want the best for your church and I welcome that evaluation. I will 'cc' him on my response toward that end.

Please pray that God would give us wisdom as we seek to serve the Detwiler's and the local leaders in this delicate process.

On behalf of Gene as well,

Dave

I provided all this information to the Assessment Team. I don't know if they ever followed up with Gene. They should have followed up on Eric's lies and Gene's sinful judgments. Maybe they did, I don't know. They never got back to me to provide their perspective. Eric never contacted me, neither did Gene. Here is what I wrote the Assessment Team.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, July 24, 2009 1:42 PM
To: Bob Kauflin; Phil Sasser; Wayne Brooks
Subject: Eric's Misrepresentation about Resignation & Evaluation

I don't think I've sent this to you yet. It is Gene's answer to my question about resisting and refusing to submit.

Only Eric would know if I resisted the resignation on June 3 which I certainly did not do. My family would confirm this. Likewise I embraced the evaluation. I only asked that it be done by impartial men and not include, Mickey, Jim and Gene. [I left out reference to Bob since he had already been appointed by Sovereign Grace Ministries to lead the assessment contrary to my request for impartiality.]

I asked Gene, Ray and Eric what sources Gene based his diatribe on. Not surprisingly, it was based on Eric's fabrications. Of course, I never heard back from Eric (or Ray).

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 5:50 PM
To: Gene Emerson
Cc: Ray Mulligan; Eric Kircher
Subject: Re: Refusal to Submit

Gene,

How did you conclude that I resisted and refused to submit to both resigning and being evaluated? Did you come to that conclusion on your own? Or did Ray or Eric or someone else tell you I refused?

Thanks
Brent

P.S. Ray and Eric - please help me out on this one.

From: Gene Emerson
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 5:50 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Refusal to Submit

I based my assessment on reports from Eric who had been in contact with some of the men you met with following your lunch with him. If I remember correctly, that included John Schaaf and Jonathan Paul. Hope that's helpful.

Gene

I wrote Jonathan Paul and John Schaaf to find out what they communicated to Eric.

From: Brent Detwiler
To: John Schaaf; Jonathan Paul
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 7:37 am
Subject: RE: Refusal to Submit

I don't assume so in the least but did either of you indicate to Eric that I resisted and refused to submit? See below [I included Gene's e-mail].

Here is what Jonathan said. John agreed with him.

From: Jonathan Paul
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 4:04 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: John Schaaf
Subject: Re: Refusal to Submit

I don't remember communicating that to Eric...Regarding refusing to submit to resigning, the letter of request for resignation was rescinded so quickly, I am not sure where that charge is coming from. Also the way that the letter was impetuously presented necessitated a resistance. Regarding resisting being evaluated I did communicate your concerns about Gene, Bob [Kauflin] and Mickey [Connolly] being a part of the proposed evaluation team...

Both men affirmed I did not resist the resignation. Regarding the evaluation, Jonathan told Eric that I was concerned for Bob, Gene and Mickey's objectivity and did not think they should be on the Assessment Team. That was true. This, however, was presented to Gene by Eric as resisting an evaluation. It was not resistance. It was an appeal for impartiality. During my meetings with Jonathan and John, I clearly communicated my willingness to be evaluated by an impartial group of peers. Eric twisted their words. Gene eagerly believed Eric's evil report and then made his hateful statements to all the Grace leaders.

Eric's Deceitful Charges Continue

Eric continued to make bogus charges against me behind my back. I sought to humbly address them as they came to my attention. I brought all of these examples to the attention of Dave, Gene and, later on, the Assessment Team. None of these men took any action that I am aware of, to address Eric for his lying and scheming. No one ever got back to me on the following three examples.

Example 1: Telling Dave that Roger and Jim had Observations of Pride

I talked to Dave Harvey the day after my resignation was demanded. My wife, Jenny was by my side. This occurred on Thursday, June 4. Earlier in the day, Dave talked to Eric. During that conversation, Eric told Dave that Roger and Jim both had personal examples of me being proud and unteachable in relation to them. In other words, both Roger and Jim felt I had arrogantly sinned against them in the past and they had examples of the same.

During my phone call with Dave, he confidently asserted this false accusation as true. He said it was just more evidence against me and that Roger and Jim's experience with me was the same as Eric and Ray's. Dave fully believed everything Eric told him. I "sheepishly" responded (out of fear) to Dave by saying that neither of men had ever brought any concerns to my attention. In fact, I pointed out they had often commended me. At this point and I do not exaggerate in the least, Dave, in a scolding voice, interrupted me and said, "Brent, I fear for you!" In other words, I was so proud and arrogant in making a "defense" that I should fear what God will do to me in the future. This was spiritual abuse at its worse. Jenny heard the entire the conversation and would corroborate its accuracy. These kinds of encounters were not uncommon. Attempts to address lies or injustices were quickly labeled as evidences of pride, bitterness and self-pity. I asked the Assessment Team to follow up with Dave and include my observations of him in their written reports. They forgot to do so. More on this later.

Example 2: Flying Solo and Controlling the Flow of Information

I've already mentioned that Eric accused me at our "resignation lunch" of excluding him from leadership decisions by "acting independently," "flying solo" and sinfully "controlling the flow of information." I gently challenged these indictments at the time. I asked him for any examples. He shared none with me. The next day, however, I became aware of two things he was telling Dave, Gene, and the leaders from Grace Community Church. First, he told them I was independently putting together an expanded leadership team without his knowledge or involvement. Second, he told them I secretly withheld sending in the Sovereign Grace "Membership Agreement" because I already decided, on my own, to leave Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Here is what really happened. Soon after Ray resigned from the leadership team in January, I began talking with Eric and Jonathan D. about how and when to expand the leadership team or whether to put an advisory team together from which we could benefit as the leadership team. We were uncertain on how to proceed.

Finally, with Eric and Jonathan's knowledge and support, I began to make plans. Initially, I thought of adding two to four men to the leadership team. Later, I decided to add more men and make it less of a leadership team and more of an advisory team. That would give me exposure to larger group of men so I could observe their giftings. Under this arrangement, Eric and Jonathan would still have a prominent role and comprise the leadership team. It was my stated intention, however, to add men to the leadership team in six to 12 months but first I wanted to see who was most gifted by observing their contributions and also how they interacted in a team context.

Here is the e-mail I sent to Andy Elseman on May 7. I sent this identical e-mail to other men also.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, May 07, 2009 9:19 AM

To: Elseman, Andy

Subject: Leadership Team

I plan to add two to four men to the leadership team presently comprised of Jonathan, Eric and myself. We would meet once a month for 2-3 hours. Possibly on a week night or on a Saturday morning. I'd like to include men who are heading up areas of responsibility. That's one of the reasons I'd like for you to join us. During our times together, I'd gather ideas and feedback from the team. We'd talk about everything from children's ministry to follow up to youth to outreach to Care Group ministry, etc. We'd evaluate different aspects of the church and exchange ideas. I'd also run my strategic plans past the team and invite comment. I'd look forward to our meetings for the fellowship and benefit to be derived. I hope you can be a part. Please let me know your thoughts. Please keep this invitation confidential.

Thanks

Brent

It turned out that Eric used the last sentence as evidence of me "acting independently," "flying solo" and sinfully "controlling the flow of information." Nothing could have been further from the truth.

I stated my concerns to all the Grace leaders and wives in a "low keyed" fashion. I couldn't allow these lies to be propagated but I was being rebuked and judged by Dave and Gene for raising any objections. I was walking on "thin ice".

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, June 06, 2009 5:29 PM

To: Aldridge, Jim; Cook, Kenny; Detwiler, Brent; Detwiler, Jonathan; Elseman, Andy; Kircher, Eric; Layman, Roger; Lloyd, Brian; Lukavsky, Mike; Mulligan, Ray; Mulligan, Ray; Paul, Jonathan; Schaaf, John; Sutton, John; Cook, Sherri; Detwiler, Jenny; Elseman, Chasity; Kircher, Anna; Layman, Rhonda; Lloyd, Mary Beth; Lukavsky, Julie; Mulligan, Jenny; Schaaf, Amy; Sutton, Kim

Subject: Charitable Judgments – Clarification

I don't know if it is true [which it proved to be] but I've been told that the last statement in my invitation to be on the leadership team, "Please keep this initiation confidential" is being interpreted in an unfavorable light. I requested this because I did not want someone going to another person and saying "I've been invited to be on the leadership team, how about you?" leaving that person to struggle with why they were not invited. I wanted to see who responded to my invitation and then planned to convey it to all in a way that was gracious. At the time of the e-mail, I was also considering whether to expand the size of the team. There was no ulterior motivation behind this request except love.

I've also heard that independence may have been the reason I did not fill out the membership agreement Gene sent me on April 19th. That is not at all the case. We have been abiding with the contents of the agreement since the beginning of the church. Not sending it in was a mere oversight. No one brought it to my attention. But when Gene wrote in April we were in the midst of asking Dave Harvey for clarification on whether we were going to be removed from Sovereign Grace which we were hearing from several sources. Obviously, it was superfluous to fill out a membership agreement if we were about to be remove any day.

Example 3 – Independently Deciding to Leave Sovereign Grace Ministries

Eric knew the real reason (above) for withholding the Membership Agreement. Nevertheless he perverted the truth in order to further his case against me. Here is an accurate perspective. At my last meeting with Eric on May 27, he told me "we have a fundamental difference now." That is, he wanted to stay in SGM but I wanted to leave SGM. That was not the case, however, and I made it clear to Eric that I did not want to leave SGM and that I had made no decision to that end. My motivation for not sending in the Membership Agreement had nothing to do with a decision and determination on my part to leave SGM and be independent. This was another lie by Eric. I will say more about the "Membership Agreement" later in this paper.

Formally Asking for Involvement by Sovereign Grace Ministries
Saturday, June 6, 2009

Three days after the resignation lunch, Eric wrote Gene saying “the leaders of Grace Community Church formally request the involvement of Sovereign Grace Ministries” “desiring an open and outside evaluation of us all.” Of course, SGM was already involved and there was nothing “open” (i.e., transparent) or “outside” (i.e., impartial) about their involvement. Dave and Gene were not “fair and balanced” in their prosecution of me. I don’t believe Sovereign Grace Ministries was capable of providing an “outside evaluation” given their obvious bias and repudiation of due of process. To be honest, Sovereign Grace Ministries was the one in need of an evaluation.

This zealous and secretive prosecution by Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray provided me no opportunity to know what was being said about me. It also provided no opportunity to answer various charges being made against me. Understandably this affected the rest of my friends in leadership. Here is what Brian Lloyd wrote me.

From: Brian Lloyd
Sent: Monday, June 08, 2009 6:14 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Resignation

Hey Brent,

I’ve tried calling you a few times to no avail. I wasn’t aware of all these concerns until most recently, and have been having a hard time wrapping my head around all of this. I want you to know that at this time I am your friend and praying for you during this process. Mary Beth and I would like the opportunity to discuss with you and Jenny some of this.

With love and respect,
Brian

Here then is the official letter from Eric to Gene.

From: Eric Kircher
To: Gene Emerson
Cc: Kenny Cook; Andy Elseman; Jonathan Paul’ Jim Aldridge; Ray Mulligan; Mike Lukavsky; John Sutton; Brian Lloyd
Subject: Letter
Date: Saturday, June 6, 2009 2:41 PM

Over the past few months, a number of serious issues relating to Brent's leadership of Grace Community Church have become clear, which led two members of the board and two members of the Advisory Team to request and require Brent's resignation.

Brent has expressed disagreement with these issues and the means by which the leadership team arrived at this conclusion.

Believing that the evidence nevertheless raises questions and concerns about Brent's qualifications and desiring an open and outside evaluation of us all, the leaders of Grace Community Church formally request the involvement of Sovereign Grace Ministries in evaluating these issues and making recommendation for the appropriate way to move forward.

A public announcement will be made in the next week or two acknowledging that the local leaders have asked SGM to evaluate Brent.

Later when the Assessment Team was involved, I sent the following critique to Bob, Phil and Wayne addressing various misrepresentations by Eric in his letter above.

- No serious issues have been brought to my attention by these four men over the past few months.
- Eric and Anna have repeatedly stated in private and public that they don't have any serious concerns for my character. Just the opposite, they have repeatedly commended my character. This is a very new development.
- Roger and Jim (the two advisory team members referenced) have never expressed any concerns to me. From what I understand, they don't have any concerns based on personal observations. Their concerns were based on what they heard about me from Ray and Eric.
- The last time I had any interaction with Ray was on January 2 at the meeting with Dave and Gene when he spoke encouragingly of my character and responsiveness to input.
- I have not expressed disagreement with Eric's recent observations. In fact, I expressed an eagerness to hear his perspective on my leadership and also diligently sought to hear his recent thoughts on character.
- I expressed concerns to Jonathan Paul and John Schaaf on June 9 about how Eric and Ray and others have gone about things regarding the forced resignation.

I think it would be helpful to understand the leadership structure. There are three entities.

- The Board of Directors. This is comprised of Jonathan, Ray and me. [Ray wasn't legally removed when he resigned in January.] Eric was never added to this board. Our names are duly recorded in the articles of incorporation. The bylaws state the legal authority of the board as follows. "The government of the Church is vested in its Board of Directors, who shall provide oversight in the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church. The Board of Directors shall exercise all such powers of the Corporation and do all such lawful acts and things that are not prohibited by statute, the Articles of Incorporation, or by these Bylaws."
- The Leadership Team. This is comprised of Jonathan, Eric and me. Ray resigned from this group.
- The Advisory Team (as you are labeling it) – Jim Aldridge, Mike Lukavsky, John Schaaf, Andy Elseman, Roger Laymen, John Sutton (I also invited Jonathan Paul and Brian Lloyd but haven't heard back from them yet).

Telling the Church about My Sins – Sunday, June 14, 2009

Ray and Eric wrote the original version of the announcement and passed it on to the other leaders for comment. I believe the "our" below refers to Dave, Gene, Eric and Ray. Here is what Ray said to the leaders.

From: Ray Mulligan

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 1:09 PM

To: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Jonathan Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton

Cc: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson; Brent Detwiler

Subject: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

Our thought would be that this [the 1st edition below] would be read by me, after the announcements, release of the kids and the offering. I will then introduce Benny [Phillips]. I will read it as written. Let me know your thoughts.

I've included the original and final editions in parallel columns for comparison. The final (or 3rd) version, which was read to the church, came about as a result of my

appeals for honesty and accuracy. I comment on this later. I've underlined the most important changes below.

1 st Edition	3 rd Edition
<p>We as a church family believe strongly that a plurality of leadership is critical in order to bring about accountability and transparency for the leadership team. These safeguards serve both our leaders and the church by agreeing with the principles in scripture that we are all sinners and involving others helps us see ourselves more accurately. I would like to bring you up-to-date about how <u>we as a leadership team</u>, are pursuing working out this principle at Grace Community Church.</p>	<p>We as a church family believe strongly that a plurality of leadership is critical in order to bring about accountability and transparency for the leadership team. These safeguards serve both our leaders and the church by agreeing with the principles in scripture that we are all sinners and involving others help us see ourselves more accurately. I would like to bring you to up-to-date about how <u>we</u> are pursuing working out this principle at Grace Community Church.</p>
<p>Over the past months <u>some of the leadership team and care group leaders</u> have had observations and interactions with Brent that would cause us concern about Brent's commitment to listening and responding humbly to those that God has placed around him. While there is not total agreement on all areas, we became convinced that these concerns warranted further evaluation.</p>	<p>Over the past months, <u>Eric Kircher and I</u>, who had both been asked by Brent and Sovereign Grace Ministries to provide pastoral care for Brent, have had observations and interactions with Brent that would cause us concern about Brent's commitment to listening and responding humbly to those that God has placed around him. While there is not total agreement on all areas, we became convinced that these concerns warranted further evaluation.</p>
<p>We do not assume that our findings or even our process for delivering concerns to Brent was flawless. However, given the extent of the concerns and with an awareness of our own fallenness, Ray, Eric and the Care Group leaders unanimously elected to invite SGM into evaluate our findings.</p>	<p>We do not assume that our findings or even our process for delivering them to Brent were flawless. <u>Given the extent of the concerns</u> but also an awareness of our own fallenness, <u>we discussed these issues with the Care Group leaders</u>, who unanimously agreed to invite Sovereign Grace Ministries in - to evaluate our findings.</p>

<p>SGM graciously responded to our appeal for help and determined that the evaluation should focus on the issues identified, but also include the actions of the local leaders – their conclusions and their course of action – as well as the quality of the extra-local care provided by Gene Emerson. In cooperation with the local leaders, SGM has appointed three men who have a history of friendship and care with the Detwilers, Grace Community Church and Gene. These are Bob Kauflin, Jim Britt, and Wayne Brooks.</p> <p>During this four to six week process, the CGLs, Brent and Gene will provide a list of people for the team to contact. We understand that the team will endeavor to speak to as many as possible, but may not be able to get to everyone during this limited timeframe. This process will result in recommendations that will be shared with Brent and the leadership team.</p> <p>[There is not an indication from Brent on the sabbatical idea yet, so it might be omitted] In an effort to care for Brent, Sovereign Grace recommends that Brent be offered a sabbatical during this evaluation for a time of prayer, reflection, rest and study. We will be asking a number of guest speakers to serve us during these weeks. Your care group leaders will be providing primary care for each of you during this time.</p> <p>We are grateful for our partnership with Sovereign Grace Ministries and in particular the assessment team for their willingness to lay aside other responsibilities to serve us in such a</p>	<p>Sovereign Grace Ministries graciously responded to our appeal for help and determined that the evaluation should focus on the issues identified, but also include the actions of the local leaders – our conclusions and our course of action – as well as the quality of the extra-local care provided by Gene Emerson. In cooperation with the local leaders, Sovereign Grace Ministries has appointed three men who have a history of friendship and care with the Detwilers, Grace Community Church and Gene. These are Bob Kauflin, Phil Sasser, and Wayne Brooks.</p> <p>During this four to six week process, we will be providing a list of people for the team to contact, understanding that the team will endeavor to speak to as many as possible, but may not be able to get to everyone during this limited timeframe. This process will result in recommendations that will be shared with Brent and the leadership team.</p> <p>We are grateful to our partnership with Sovereign Grace Ministries and in particular the assessment team for their willingness to lay aside other responsibilities to serve us in such a</p>
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<p>sacrificial manner. We trust that God is at work during this process and in these men, to provide recommendations, care, and evaluation of our hearts.</p> <p>We believe that God will meet each of us during this process and provide comfort for our souls. By God's grace we should all use this time for prayer and humble assessment, applying what we've learned about gossip and idle speculation, and trust that God is at work in both the process and the outcome. We all are seeking God's help to put into practice what we have been taught and believe.</p>	<p>sacrificial manner. We trust that God is at work during this process, through these men, to provide recommendations, care, and evaluation of our hearts.</p> <p>We believe that God will meet each of us during this process and provide comfort for our souls. By God's grace, each of us can use this time for prayer and humble assessment, applying what we've learned about gossip and idle speculation, trusting that God is at work in both the process and the outcome. Let us ask God to help us apply what we have been taught and believe.</p>
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Here are some questions that were important to ask and consider in reading this statement to the church on June 14.

1. Should the announcement have made during the Sunday morning meeting or should it have been made after the Sunday meeting with just members or at a separate Family Meeting with just members?

Andy Elseman was the first to respond to Ray and raise questions about the appropriateness or rightness of making this announcement during the Sunday morning meeting out of concern for the negative impact upon unbelievers and non-members. His concerns were overruled by Dave Harvey contrary to Sovereign Grace polity.

From: Andy Elseman

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 2:45 PM

To: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Jonathan Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton; Ray Mulligan

Cc: Dave Harvey; Brent Detwiler; Gene Emerson

Subject: Re: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

Men,

Should this be announced during a separate family meeting, or possibly after the service when the visitors are dismissed? I simply want to protect those who may be coming through the doors for the first time who may not

know the gospel and may be negatively influenced by this announcement. Then again, we do not want to “cover up” any of this, but bring it all to the light. Of course, if there happen to be no visitors, I think it would be appropriate to continue with the plan below. What are your thoughts? May our Lord be lifted up on high through this whole process.

His,
Andy

To the best of my knowledge, never before in its history had Sovereign Grace Ministries made an announcement like this on a Sunday morning with guests, unbelievers, non-members, and young adults (age 12 and up) in the meeting. That wise practice should have been upheld. Instead it was set aside and ignored.

2. What should have been said to the church? Should my specific “sins” and the charges against me been announced to everyone present before an “objective” evaluation was commenced?

Evaluations in SGM have always been done privately with no indicting announcement to the church in advance. This protects the person’s reputation, helps secure an unbiased process, and upholds the person’s innocence. Making a specific and indicting announcement about my supposed sins before the evaluation even began was unprecedented in the history of Sovereign Grace Ministries.

After the Sunday morning meeting was over, four different families approached me. All were deeply troubled by the announcement. Three of them were long time members in SGM churches where private evaluations of staff were sometimes necessary. They had all been in “Family Meetings” where private evaluations were discreetly shared with the church. Therefore, they immediately took note of the discrepancies and wanted to know why an announcement was made on a Sunday morning and why the details of the evaluation were shared before the evaluation began. One person said it appeared that SGM was on a witch hunt.

Jonathan McCollum, who was not a long time member of a SGM church, was also concerned. I appreciated his note below and agreed with his perspective. I served SGM for 27 years and always had the largest number of pastors and churches to care for and oversee. I did many private evaluations which sometimes resulted in public statements regarding changes in staff. In nearly three decades, I never revealed a man’s supposed sins to the church before an “objective” evaluation was commenced.

Early on in the evaluation process, and with considerable apprehension, I provided the perspective of these four families to the Assessment Team. I did not hear back

from them and we never discussed whether it was right for Dave to advocate this approach. That was typical.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2009 1:48 PM

To: Bob Kauflin; Wayne Brooks; Benny Phillips; Phil Sasser

Subject: FW: Word of Encouragement

Importance: High

Not sure whether I should send this but might be helpful so you have a feel for things. We have received three other responses like this from people. Of course, none of these folks know about the resignation request [i.e., the conspiracy to force my resignation], etc. This particular one is the strongest...

From: Jonathan McCollum

Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2009 5:28 PM

To: Brent Detwiler

Subject: Word of Encouragement

Importance: High

Dear Brent and Jenny,

We recently learned of the "announcement" made last Sunday and the evaluation process that is taking place across the church. I wanted to write you all and offer words of comfort and encouragement during this very difficult time in the life of Grace Community Church and your role as pastor. Regardless of the validity of the issues stated, Elena and I were deeply saddened and disturbed that these things would be discussed in a public Sunday service and further that your character would be the center of these comments and gossip within the church. This would certainly not demonstrate the "agape" love to a fellow brother and sister in Christ and is not grace-filled either.

We are very sorry that this is happening to you and your family. No pastor deserves to be treated this way. If you are ever interested in our perspective and feedback we would be happy to discuss.

Sincerely,

Jonathan and Elena

3. Should Dave have included my charges against Eric and Ray in the announcement since they were being evaluated also?

If Dave had acted justly, he would have included my charges against Eric and Ray in the announcement to the church (e.g. coercion, spiritual collusion, betrayal, lying). These too should have been read to the church. Instead, Eric and Ray's actions were concealed and covered up. If Dave believed the church needed to be told what I was being evaluated for, then the church needed to be told what Eric and Ray were being evaluated for. This is simple justice and evenhandedness.

4. Who should have made the announcement? Ray? Me? Someone else? Should the announcement have been general or specific in nature?

I thought it was best for me to make the announcement and recommended it not be so specific and prejudicial. There would have been no harm in me making the announcement. But I was also happy to see someone do it who was not part of the deceitful scheming. For instance, Bryan Lloyd, Andy Elseman, John Sutton, John Schaaf or Jonathan Paul.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 8:59 PM

To: Eric Kircher; Ray Mulligan; Benny Phillips

Subject: Announcement

I think it would be best for me to make the announcement and generalize it.

Basically, say Eric and Ray have raised concerns, I would not share their perspective, but am I willing to have a group of men come in and evaluate all of us.

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 9:15 PM

To: Benny Phillips; Ray Mulligan; Eric Kircher

Cc: Brent Detwiler

Subject: Announcements

Importance: High

Here is the general idea I have in mind:

"Ray and Eric recently have asked questions about whether or not I am adequately benefitting from the input of others. While we have

different perspectives on this matter, we have asked a group of men to come in and help us and provide us their perspective. Over the next 4-6 weeks, Bob K., Phil S., and Wayne B. will be visiting to help us work through this matter and make some suggestions. I'll be taking a break from preaching during this time but maintaining the leadership of the church during this time frame."

A few minutes before I wrote the e-mail above, Jonathan Detwiler wrote the following e-mail to all the Grace Community Church leaders. He addressed several issues.

From: Jonathan Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 9:11 PM
To: Jim Aldridge; Kenny Cook; Jonathan Detwiler; Andy Elseman; Eric Kircher; Roger Layman; Brian Lloyd; Mike Lukavsky; Jonathan Paul; John Schaaf; John Sutton; Ray Mulligan
Cc: Dave Harvey; Brent Detwiler; Gene Emerson
Subject: Re: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

Hi all,

This will have to be short as it is on my blackberry...however I would second Andy's thought of doing it at a family meeting...or even better just allowing Dad to make a short statement on the matter on a Sunday morning. Basically saying that some concerns have been raised as to if he is functioning with enough plurality of leadership...and that therefore he is glad to submit to a review of the things in question and that Sovereign Grace has been glad to help out by providing three Sovereign Grace pastors to come in and help evaluate and provide feedback.

I think Dad making the statement and keeping it shorter than what was written doesn't make it seem so alarming and scary to people while still being honest.

If something long needs to be shared, then for the good of the church, I would suggest a family meeting. There are several new folks that are not really church members that I think the news would have an even greater effect on and that they don't really need to know as right now it is a "family matter."

Within fifteen minutes, Eric wrote me the following. It was apparent Dave was the driving force behind the nature of the announcement and having Ray make the announcement.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 9:30 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Jonathan Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Gene Emerson
Subject: Re: Announcement

Brent – the last encouragement we had from Dave was for us to make the announcement (we’re trying to be sensitive to your requests), and that that announcement will be followed with a statement from you. Unless we hear from Dave on this we’d like to stick to the original plan.

If you would like to appeal to Dave that is fine.

Forty-three minutes later at 10:13 PM, I received the following curt directive from Eric. The prospect of an appeal to Dave was cut off at the knees. I don’t know how the decision was made (or how much input the other leaders from Grace were providing Dave) but the deal was sealed. This much was clear...Dave’s “recommendation” was final! Ray and Eric were following in lock step. End of discussion.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 10:13 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Announcement

We believe the announcement is necessary. Ray will read the announcement. Please be prepared to follow it. Thanks.

Six minutes after Eric’s e-mail, Dave weighed in. Dave had no interactions with me over whether or not the announcement “Ray was asked to read, is accurate, fair, and carefully articulated.” He believed it to be inerrant based solely upon the testimony of Eric and Ray. He never talked to me about it but confidently commended it. Such a pronouncement must have carried a lot of weight with the Grace leaders. It certainly made it difficult for anyone to say they thought the announcement was inaccurate, unjust, and written with obvious bias.

Dave also called upon me to “submit” my “preferences to the wisdom of the local men that serve and love [Brent].” Let’s just say, I wasn’t feeling served or

loved by Eric, Ray, Roger or Jim. Dave makes no mention of the fact that he was advising and directing Ray and Eric throughout this process. He makes it appear as though they were in charge. Eric and Ray were committed to do what Dave counseled/told them to do.

Why did Dave advocate this unprecedented, and I believe unbiblical, approach? What were his reasons and his motivations? Here again is what he said.

“Guys, the speculation concerning what’s going on in the church is circulating both inside and outside. It is my opinion that the statement will serve the church (and anyone else) by honestly acknowledging that we are in the middle of an important process that is seeking to define and resolve important issues. I could be wrong but it seems to me that saying nothing creates more problems than making the statement.”

Here are some questions that Dave needed to be asked. What “speculation” was being circulating? I was never told. Jonathan, my son was never told. Was anybody told? Dave knew but did he fully inform all the leaders from Grace?

Who was circulating this information “inside and outside the church?” That’s a big circle. Dave knew. Did he tell the leaders who these people were? Did Dave make any attempts to approach these people in private and try to help them?

How did these people know something of this magnitude was going on? Who leaked the information to them? Obviously, it did not come from me or my family. It had to come from someone in the know. Dave or Gene? Eric or Ray? Someone else?

Why was this confidential information spread? To put me in a bad light? To begin “stacking the deck against me?” Or was this “speculation” damaging to Sovereign Grace Ministries? Obviously, Dave was very concerned about something. What was it?

Did people find out about Gene’s counsel to fire me? Did people hear about Eric and Ray’s recruitment and betrayal. Did people know about Eric’s lies? Or did people know about my serious concerns for C.J. and SGM? Did people think SGM was about to put me out of the movement for addressing issues of concern? Did Dave feel he had to publicize charges against me in order to protect SGM, undermine my credibility and invalid my concerns? I don’t know

the answers to these questions but someone should have been asking them. They still need to be answered honestly. I was never given answers.

Eric and Ray had already made their decision by 10:13 pm for Ray to read the announcement as Dave had directed them. It doesn't appear the other leaders from Grace knew about Eric and Ray's determined resolve. It appears Eric and Ray were operating independently in concert with Dave. After this at 10:19 pm., Dave wrote Jonathan and me. He didn't include any of the other leaders from Grace. Dave makes it an issue of submission to "the wisdom of the local men" though it appeared to be an issue of submission to Eric and Ray which was really submission to Dave. I'm sure any lack of submission on my part would have been viewed as another evidence of pride.

From: Dave Harvey

Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 10:19 PM

To: Brent Detwiler; Eric Kircher; Jonathan Detwiler; Mulligan, Ray; Benny Phillips

Cc: Gene Emerson

Subject: RE: Announcement

Guys, a few thoughts.

First, I know this is difficult on everyone and I appreciate the care you're employing in seeking to please God and serve the church.

Secondly, I believe the majority of the leadership team and the majority of the Care Group leaders are in agreement that the statement, as articulated in the [1st] edition that Ray was asked to read, is accurate, fair, and carefully articulated.

Thirdly, I believe we are all endeavoring to serve Brent's desires in the process [This was spin on Dave's part - putting himself, Ray and Eric in the best possible light. The first draft was deceitful. I was simply appealing for truth telling.] I believe this has been appropriate and a way to express genuine care for him. I believe this issue (the reading of the statement by Ray) provides an opportunity for Brent to submit his preferences to the wisdom of the local men that serve him and love him.

Guys, the speculation concerning what's going on in the church is circulating both inside and outside. It is my opinion that the statement will serve the church (and anyone else) by honestly acknowledging that we are in the middle of an important process that is seeking to define

and resolve important issues. I could be wrong but it seems to me that saying nothing creates more problems than making the statement.

So, that's my thoughts and I hope they are of service to you men. I will pray God gives you wisdom and blesses you in the process of resolving this.

Dave

Of course, there was middle ground between saying "nothing" or reading the announcement as written. No one recommended nothing be said. This was a straw man argument.

Evidently, Brian Lloyd had no idea things were already set in cement. He wrote the following at 10:25 pm.

From: Brian Lloyd
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 10:25 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: FW: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

Brent,

Will you be at church tomorrow? Would you be willing to make this announcement?

In Christ,
Brian

I responded to Brian.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 11:08 PM
To: Brian Lloyd
Subject: RE: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

I will. I would be willing to make the announcement but Eric and Ray have decided Ray should make it.

Of course, the decision to read the statement had already been decided on by Dave, Ray and Eric.

5. Was Ray qualified to make the announcement or did he act hypocritically?

Ray should not have made the announcement for several reasons. First, he resigned, and was about to be removed, from the leadership team six months earlier. He was also relieved of his Care Group leadership responsibilities three months earlier. He had no leadership responsibilities in the church.

Second, Ray acted with hypocrisy. He was the most unaccountable leader and the most difficult leader to work with in the church. He was also concealing sin and not asking for any help. He was guilty of the things he so ardently claimed to affirm in the announcement. This was extremely misleading and hypocritical. More on this later.

Third, since Ray was being evaluated also, should he be the one to announce the evaluation of me. Should the man making the charge be allowed to cite the charge even though he is also being evaluated?

It was hard listening to Ray present himself as one who strongly believed in accountability and pursued accountability. That was abject hypocrisy.

6. Was the original version written by Ray and Eric, and commended by Dave, true and accurate?

The simple answer is no. Ray and Eric intended to mislead the church by embellishing their claim and state that others had concerns for me. Only Ray and Eric had concerns. None of the other leaders had concerns based upon "observations and interactions with Brent." This was not an oversight on Ray and Eric's part. It was a deceitful exaggeration. It was also misleading to say that "some of the leadership team" had concerns. Only Eric had concerns since Jonathan D. and I were the other members of the leadership team. This was a misrepresentation of the facts also.

In the 1st edition, Ray planned to tell people he was still on the leadership team. In fact, he resigned on January 1, which was more than 5 months earlier. The announcement should have said that "one member of the leadership team had concerns" (i.e. Eric).

Here is how I sought to address these concerns. Changes were made to the announcement but no admissions of deception were ever acknowledged.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 3:09 PM
To: Ray Mulligan; Eric Kircher
Cc: Benny Phillips
Subject: RE: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

I'd like to suggest the following as a way to serve all involved.

"Over the past months some of the leadership team and care group leaders have had observations and interactions with Brent that would cause us concern..." I would request it be defined more precisely [i.e., honestly]. Only Eric and Ray have expressed concerns to me [Ray one time in March]. Eric has only expressed concerns in the past few weeks [not over the months].

I also think we need to define who is on the leadership team. Currently it is Eric, Jonathan and me. Ray asked to be off the team in January and has not been involved for the past five months.

Eric wrote me back and said he appreciated my suggestion – nothing more. I was hardly in a position to confront him more clearly or forcefully.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 3:44 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Ray Mulligan
Subject: Re: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

I appreciate your suggestion. We'll amend it to say "Over the past months Eric and Ray, who were approved by SGM and Brent to provide primary care in the form of personal accountability, have had significant concerns regarding issues of character and leadership in Brent."

At the end of the third paragraph we'll also add that "Ray, Eric and the Care Group Leaders unanimously elected to invite SGM in to evaluate our finding."

This still was embellished and untruthful. I wrote Eric and Ray again.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 3:57 PM
To: Eric Kircher
Cc: Ray Mulligan
Subject: RE: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

I appreciate the amendment but I think it needs further clarification since you have told Jenny and me on numerous occasions you've had no "significant concerns" and in fact quite the opposite. Even in our most recent conversations you have not presented your observations in a fashion that expressed anywhere near this level of concern.

Eric avoided the issues of deceit I raised with him. He knew what I was saying was true. He had no defense except to lie which he continued to do.

From: Eric Kircher
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 4:01 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Re: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

Please provide what you would like to have communicated.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2009 4:21 PM
To: Eric Kircher
Cc: Ray Mulligan
Subject: RE: Proposed Announcement for Tomorrow

I don't want to write it for you but ask that you please carefully choose your words as accurately as you can so they reflect what has happened. In other words, it would not be accurate to say you've had "significant concerns".

Here are the different editions.

1st Edition

Over the past months some of the leadership team and care group leaders have had observations and interactions with Brent that would cause us concern about Brent's commitment to listening and responding humbly to those that God has placed around him.

2nd Edition

“Over the past months, Eric and Ray, who were approved by SGM and Brent to provide primary care in the form of personal accountability, have had significant concerns regarding issues of character and leadership in Brent.”

3rd Edition

Over the past months, Eric Kircher and I, who had both been asked by Brent and Sovereign Grace Ministries to provide pastoral care for Brent, have had observations and interactions with Brent that would cause us concern about Brent’s commitment to listening and responding humbly to those that God has placed around him.

7. Was it true that “SGM graciously responded to our appeal for help” or was it a misleading statement that effectively covered up what actually transpired and was already guaranteed by Gene?

It was terribly misleading. It makes it sound like the initiative came from the Grace leaders when Gene had already promised Ray, Eric, Roger, Jim, Kenny and Mike that SGM would get involved but not until after they removed me and declared me unfit for ministry.

Jonathan’s Long Letter – June 9

This is a lengthy letter composed by my oldest son less than a week after the resignation lunch for all the leaders in the church. He sent it to Jenny and me to read. We agreed with everything he wrote but I suggested it might be too direct under the circumstances. As a result, Jonathan withheld the letter and never sent it to the leaders. In retrospect, I wish he had done so. Too bad he listen to me. Everyone needed to hear the truth in the midst of so many lies.

From: Jonathan M. Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2009 9:31 PM
To: Brent Detwiler; Jenny Detwiler
Subject: Letter to Grace Leaders

Men,

As I have considered this situation, I believe it is important I take a moment to write this note. This is something that I was not asked to write, but after hearing some of the slander and completely dishonest communication that is

being spread, it is something that I am compelled to write out of a desire to see the truth come to light and to serve all of you as you try to seek God.

One of my greatest concerns with this situation is that nothing in how this has been walked through resembles biblical relationships or even Matthew 18 for situations where someone needs to be confronted. In fact, it has been quite the opposite in many ways. Does it raise alarms in your mind that a biblical process has not been followed? I would suggest that there should be serious questions in your mind about how this is being carried out, and therefore what the motivations are behind it.

Let me lay out something that I believe would have represented a biblical framework. If Eric had some concerns for Dad, though I realize he may have had question about my relationship with Dad, as a member of the Board of Directors and church leadership team, he should have come to me and sought to involve me. I would have been glad to consider his thoughts and if necessary bring input to dad. This is part of the purpose of the leadership team. If I didn't share Eric's perspective, after sufficiently talking it through, we could have agreed to involve another guy with my dad's knowledge. Either way, if these concerns, after being thoroughly and humbly discussed with dad over a period of time (allowing for grace to work in his heart), were met with continued resistance/blindness to what seemed to be a significant and concerning level, then it would have been appropriate to pull in a few of the leaders in the church in as well. This would be in keeping with Matthew 18.

This larger group of men would meet with Dad, ask wise, godly, probing questions and then try to serve him with appropriate counsel and where necessary reproof. This larger group, particularly if not met with defiance from dad but some level of cooperation would continue to exercise patience until growth occurred or they felt that he was just resisting and not changing. This would likely take time. We are all sinners and none of us are typically quick to see things nor to change immediately. It takes the Holy Spirit bringing illumination to our hearts, and grace from God to change. And even after illumination, it still requires day by day taking one step at a time to put to death sin and to put on righteousness. Change is gradual. Then, if after this process has been walked through if progress wasn't being made, then it would be appropriate to begin saying that "if this level of pride/resistance doesn't change that we feel we cannot follow your leadership." If this still does not work, then it is appropriate to ask him to resign.

As all of you have observed this is completely the opposite of how this has taken place. This was not a process that has been walked through in a biblical manner and involved a group of guys speaking with dad. In fact, just the other

month at our care group leaders meeting on April 14, Eric and Anna were saying how unbelievably humble dad has been. They stated how graciously he has dealt with unjust attacks. They have raved that they have never had a pastor respond as humbly as Dad and be as open or willing to receive input or thoughts. At the Sovereign Grace Pastors Conference (April 7-9) they highly praised Dad to several other pastors they had meals with and even went up to CJ to plead with him to please get involved and to ask Dave and Gene to please follow the very teaching that CJ had just preached and to get back to us on the concerns that Eric had written in his nine page letter.

This kind of commendation was shared with the Brooks when they visited us last month [April] and it continued up until a conflict two weeks ago. Shortly after that they began having secret meetings and then this past Wednesday, two weeks later, Dad's resignation was requested within 72 hours. What happened? How is it that they have so rapidly changed their perspective? No major events happened since then...no immediately disqualifying sins like adultery had been committed, and the church is in many ways strengthening and beginning to grow...and yet out of the blue Eric is trying to kick Dad out of leadership? Something is very fishy. Eric did not present anything as a serious level of concern to Dad, and nothing was mentioned to me. And even if Eric had concerns that he sought to bring to Dad that were ignored, why was a small group of the church leaders not involved in walking through a process with Dad? Not only is this the right thing to do, but Dad has always welcomed everyone's thoughts and expressed a desire for input.

Instead Eric began meeting in secret with Ray, Jim, and Roger planning and discussing things and decided to force Dad into resigning, and give him only three days to do so. It is sad that Eric would form such a group without talking to Dad and there are some serious things to be concerned about it:

1. First, and I realize this will come as a surprise statement to many of you all...and I only share it because it is necessary information...but Ray is not someone who should be consulted or listened to in regards to any of this situation. Due to serious issues of sin that came to the surface in his life during his time on the leadership team, including severe anger/bitterness, being prideful and demanding, serious marital issues, and a seeming lack of a walk with the Lord; Dad, Eric and I realized that Ray was disqualified from participating on the leadership team. Furthermore, Eric repeatedly questioned whether Ray was even walking with the Lord and had a relationship with him. This concern for Ray was continued as recently as Wayne Brook's visit last month, and Wayne shared the same concern. If Ray had not voluntarily stepped down from the leadership team, we would have removed Ray from the leadership team (with the full support and

recommendation of Eric). These issues of bitterness and anger in Ray's life have corrupted his discernment and attitude towards Sovereign Grace, Dad, and others and therefore clouded his perspective with sin. Additionally since Ray stepped down off the leadership team several months ago he has not been meaningfully involved and would not have any recent experiences.

2. I realize that this is a surprise to most...this is because of Dad's humility and love for Ray and therefore because of Dad's great desire to not reveal unnecessary details about his dear friend who had served in so many ways. Thus when they announced Ray stepping down at the leadership team meeting, Dad simply and genuinely thanked Ray for all the hard work and serving he had done.
3. It is hard to understand how Eric could go back and pull in a man he knows has judgment clouded by bitterness and rage and team up with him to convince Jim and Roger of serious issues. Does this sound like an action that reveals a desire for seeking to serve Dad or instead to build a team against him?
4. Second, neither Roger, nor Jim has ever been involved in sharing any concerns or serious observations with Dad in the past. Furthermore, when I spoke with Jim he told me that he had not had any personal experience of any of the things being shared, but that he trusted Eric and Ray. I don't know if Roger had his own concerns, but if he did, he certainly didn't share them. And yet, even though they hadn't interacted with Dad in sharing any personal concerns, hadn't gone to him to ask about the things that Ray and Eric had shared, and hadn't sought to be an instrument of change for anything, they listened to what Ray and Eric shared, and then willingly followed to sign the document to try and force Dad out of leadership. This is wrong. If there ever comes a time to remove someone from pastoral leadership, a position that God has called them to, not to mention their livelihood, you have got to be absolutely sure what you are signing and you cannot go based off of the gossip and slander of others, regardless of how much you like/respect them. This is a matter of integrity and conscience.
5. Thirdly, I am concerned that four guys, with no real pastoral experience, and having not been taught how to evaluate whether a pastor is qualified, take it upon themselves to determine this, and then act so swiftly, quickly, and confidently. Certainly they should have the agreement of the other leaders in the church, and yet it is my understanding that several of you never even knew what was about to take place. And yet Eric lied to both

Dad and me when he talked to us and said that he had talked to every single care group leader with the exception of John Sutton and Andy (who he hadn't been able to get in touch with) and that all of you were in agreement with their actions. This lying is consistent with the deceit and spin that I am now becoming aware Eric has placed on many things in his communication with you all.

Since that time Eric has continued meeting with you all and spreading his one-sided viewpoints and seeking to get you all to join with him without giving Dad a chance and opportunity to share; but instead, seemingly seeking to build a coalition to support himself. I have now heard several things shared that are extremely concerning and inaccurate...some that were completely dishonest. To then bring in the guys in Sovereign Grace who Eric himself has said have been extremely one sided in the dealings with Dad that he has observed, who have listened to gossip and slander, believed it, and acted upon it without asking questions and hearing us out seems contradictory. Further to allow Sovereign Grace to pour out their list of issues without Dad being present and me being banned from attending is extremely wrong and concerning. Any argument portrayed by one side, particularly if they involve several people will sound convincing when not countered with balanced perspective. That is why gossip and slander are so wicked and evil. It plants all these thoughts in the minds of the hearers and then, if not countered with the truth, will blossom into nasty weeds of inaccurate beliefs and perspectives.

Do the issues that have been mentioned matter? Absolutely. It is extremely important that someone that is in leadership not be characterized by pride and independence. It is important that he be willing to listen to feedback and observations. Will the leader do it perfectly?...no (who does...and in fact this is typically a challenge for any leader because often the characteristics that make pride a temptation also are what makes one a successful leader). Will the leader follow all suggestions or agree with all the observations?...no, particularly if they are bad ones. Someone in leadership must seek to be humble and listen, but in the end they must also follow their conscience and fulfill their God given calling to lead.

If there were consistent issues of pride in Dad's life and an unwillingness to hear others thoughts and to sincerely consider them that would be an issue of concern. However, most of the time I have observed, this would be the farthest thing from the truth. In fact, sometimes I have even thought that Dad sought too hard to seek feedback and get consensus when he just needed to make a decision. Are there ways for Dad to grow in humility? Yes and he fully admits it but please think of all the humble leadership he has provided and how in the midst of oppression from several folks (people that have left the church, some

in Sov. Grace, Ray...). Think of how he has been so careful to speak well of them and to not defend himself when it would have been understandable and in some cases probably a good thing. That is humility.

If I had observed Dad relating in a manner characterized by a lack of humility it would have frightened me, and I would be the first to seek to initiate a biblical process of correction and if necessary involve other men. This would be serious and concerning. However this has not been the case at all. I have been involved in many discussions from the very beginning and have consistently observed a wonderful level of humility. And even in conversations that I have not been present for, I have been filled in on and had the opportunity to observe Dad's attitude about the discussions and how he was processing them. Though not perfect, my observations have consistently been that his attitude and posturing have been one of humility...humility that exceed that which I've have observed anywhere else.

Lastly, I think it is extremely instructive to look at the absolute lack of care and love that has been portrayed in how Eric and the others have carried out this process. I know Eric has expressed to others his love for Dad and desire to see him restored. But do the facts line up with this declaration? When demanding his resignation there was no mention of restoration. Has he walked through things in a loving, gracious, and patient manner as the Bible describes? No, he has acted ruthlessly, behind closed doors, and with lightning speed. Does a friend just walk in one day without ever having had serious conversations about the topic and force someone to resign? Does someone who cares for the soul and well-being of a man simply walk in and essentially tell a man he is fired, and not at a minimum, express very deep and profound appreciation for all the service that has taken place, and a sincere care for the man's well-being in the future?

This was not done at all when Dad was given the resignation letter. This is a man who has lived his whole life since college wholeheartedly serving the Lord and devoting essentially every waking moment towards God's purposes and caring for and reaching out to others. It is the only thing he has known, it is his profession, and his passion. And yet four guys make the decision over a series of a few meetings and decide to strip that away and don't even address it when his resignation is demanded. It was just "you're proud, you have three days to resign." Leaving dad to wonder how he is even going to make a living in the future, how he is going to find a job when all he has done is pastor, and all sorts of things along those lines. These are not the actions of men that are seeking to care and love.

These are all very concerning aspects with how this whole process has been carried out. I think each of these things should raise serious questions as to why these men have acted in this manner. So much slander and dishonest speech has now been spread to support these claims. It is shameful. And as we read in Scripture this morning, such talk flows from people who are angry and have not handled situations properly.

In addition to issues with the process, I have had increasing concerns with Eric's humility and also for his own personal submission to authority. It is my observation that Eric has increasingly applied pressure upon Dad for "Eric's vision" of how things should be and that he has not done so in a humble manner. His thoughts have often seemed to be demands or suggestions made in a very strong categorical and confident manner that did not welcome a different perspective and did not leave room for differences of thought and for personal consideration or discussion. Even in these times when I observed Eric unhelpfully bringing his thoughts, Dad has almost without exception listened humbly, thanked Eric for his thoughts, encouraged him for positive aspects of the thoughts, and seriously consider the things presented (not that he always did them).

Another concern is that though Eric certainly sought to encourage on many, many occasions, when he did bring correction it was often very blunt, direct, and authoritative sounding. It appeared that Eric was supremely confident in his ability to discern what was going on and sometimes not careful in how he presented things. These issues are of concern first of all because they seem to indicate a lack of humility...a valuing of his own thoughts, ideas, and discernment. They are also of concern because from what I have observed they seem to be at the root of his actions. It appears that Eric resented not having all his ideas acted upon, and in his timeframe, resented a perceived decrease in prominence in the church, and then also took offense at some feedback that was provided to him and therefore responded in anger. Based upon on all his actions these past two weeks, it is difficult to see how his actions could be one of a humble man that lacked anger and offense.

I realize that none of you desire to be pulled into situations like this and that because of the uncomfortableness and complicatedness that it is much easier to just sit back and get reports from a few. However, as leaders in the church, friends of Mom and Dad, partners in ministry, and folks that have been pulled into this situation, I believe there is not the luxury of being disengaged. Instead, you have a Christian obligation to individually explore what is being said so that you can, in an informed way, personally consider, weigh, and discuss these matters. I strongly implore everyone to make it a priority to no

longer stand by and remain silent but to stand up, and be willing to come talk to Mom and Dad and to hear the other side of the story.

It seems that you are all content to sit back and simply let Sovereign Grace judge Dad. First of all, Sovereign Grace Ministries and Gene in particular, has sinned against Grace Community Church in listening to gossip and slander in their biased, one sided approach to things pertaining to the church and Dad. These issues have been brought to their attention by Dad, Ray, Eric, and myself; and yet Sovereign Grace has not repented, expressed any hint of possible wrong doing, nor any real aggressiveness to draw us out about our thoughts and concerns that they may humbly benefit (as CJ taught was important at the Pastors Conference). They are not relationally reconciled because of their lack of repentance and are not trustworthy to come in and provide what is supposed to be unbiased counsel. Certainly the issues being raised need to be addressed because you need to have confidence in the person leading the church and in his humility. This can be done without formally involving Sovereign Grace. First of all, I propose that everyone should meet with Mom and Dad to discuss any questions and concerns. Then, with any outstanding concerns, we could involve one of the unbiased and godly pastors in Sovereign Grace to assist in asking questions and making sure that concerns are addressed.

In the meantime, regardless of any ongoing discussion of the issues about Dad, I would suggest that you ought to be confronting Eric and Ray for their role in leading this. It would be appropriate as well to confront Jim and Roger for blindly going along with such an evil and unbiblical approach without ever talking to Dad. Also, I'd rather not go into what I suspect may be going on in Eric's heart, but looking at the fruit of his actions (which reveal the condition of the heart), I believe it requires folks to actively challenge him, dig into his motives, and lovingly bring correction and adjustment. Finally, many slanderous and lying statements have been made to you and so as you become aware of them please seek to deal with them in a biblical manner and to ask Dad/Mom any question you have about them.

I am so sorry that this situation has turned into such a mess! I would so love to be able to be simply focused on joyfully serving the Lord together, and reaching the community around us. I know this is so tough to wade through relationally as you care for everyone involved.

Please respond to me with your thoughts.

God bless,
Jonathan

IN NEED OF A CORPORATE REBUKE –
AN APPEAL TO THE COVENANT LIFE ELDERS
JUNE 17, 2011

1 Timothy 5:19-21

[19] Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. [20] Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. [21] I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

Introduction¹

Over the past 18 months I have written three major documents for C.J. and the remaining Board of Directors – Joshua, Jeff and Dave. You will find them attached. They are “Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine” (March 17, 2010), “A Final Appeal” (October 8, 2010) and “Concluding Remarks” (June 8, 2011).

I provide them because you are the ruling elders (1 Tim 5:17) of Covenant Life Church. C.J., Jeff, and Joshua are under your oversight (1 Pet 5:2). As members of the church, they are accountable to you as their pastors (1 Pet 5:3). These men are in submission to you, not you to them (1 Thess 5:12). According to Sovereign Grace polity, C.J., Dave, Joshua and Jeff have no authority over you as church elders. But that is not true of you. You are responsible for them in the Lord (Acts 20:28). This does not mean you are responsible to run Sovereign Grace Ministries. It means you are mandated to watch over their souls as those who will give an account (Heb 13:17).

All four of these men are in need of your shepherding care and accountability. Specifically, I believe Dave, Jeff and Joshua have been biased and partial in their application of 1 Timothy 5:19-21 and Sovereign Grace Polity as it pertains to C.J. They have not required of him what has been required of all other men under like circumstances. This is also true in relation to the actions of Dave Harvey, Bob Kauflin and Gene Emerson. All of these men need biblical counseling and close accountability going forward so the same abuses are not repeated.

Each of you are ruling elders. Each of you have a role in caring for the entire church. You all have the same authority from God if you’re an ordained pastor. You’re a pastoral team – a plurality of elders. Therefore, you must all be informed. That includes C.J.’s blackmailing of Larry Tomczak in the past. I’m afraid you have been kept in the dark far too long.

¹ I now know who posted my documents (Parts 1-4) on Scribd. I’ve asked this person to post Part 5, “In Need of a Public Rebuke” and Part 6, “Tell It to the Church.” At this point, people will be helped, not hurt, by having this material. I sent this document to the CLC elders on June 17 – over three weeks ago.

You know me as a friend. I've been one of C.J.'s biggest and most loyal fans. Obviously, you and he may feel completely different – especially now. But there is no lack of affection in my heart for C.J. I am not his opponent. I am his friend and I hope to be a faithful servant of the gospel by remaining true to Scripture.

Scripture requires the action I am taking when a leader continues in sin and I am under its authority. I wish it were not necessary but I trust in the wisdom of God. It is for C.J.'s good, the good of the movement, and the good of the gospel. I have avoided any public admonition of C.J. among all the elders of Sovereign Grace Ministries over the past 10 years. I have painstakingly sought to protect his reputation and cover his sin. But further action is required now. As an intermediate step I am appealing to you, the Covenant Life Church elders. C.J. and the Board are in need of your admonition which may lead them to repentance. You should also require C.J. to acknowledge his sins publically. Anything less is pure favoritism.

I know I'll be viewed as proud, independent, blinded by bitterness, and irreconcilable. I know much of what I've written will be dismissed as incomplete, inaccurate and revisionist. All of that is fine and to be expected. But my friends, there still remains a mountain of material that cannot be written off. It cannot be ignored. Don't bury your heads in the sand. You must speak up, probe deeply, and take action quickly. You are each elders and you each have a voice to be heard. Don't cower. Don't be silent.

In the text above, Paul gives Timothy a solemn charge to be unbiased and impartial in his assessment and discipline of elders. There were to be no favorites. No exceptions for nationally recognized leaders who lead large ministries. No exception for friends we love and respect. Over the years, both the apostolic team and the CLC eldership failed to conduct themselves in the manner Paul requires. This has been a grave disservice to C.J.. Please forgive me C.J. I've not faithfully served you in this regard. I mean it.

I am grateful for the action taken by some of C.J.'s friends as reported here by Jeff. More of this is needed.

“When the SGM board, the CLC governing board, and other involved parties met with CJ in November, he asked the 12 of us who know him best to identify in our own experience the things that you communicated in your documents. All of us could see his tendencies to withdraw when disagreed with, to make correction difficult, to be unduly confident in his own judgments (including his judgments of the motives of others), and to give insufficient attention to process in his leadership.” (Jeff Purswell, March 11, 2011)

But these descriptions are inadequate and leave unaddressed many serious sins. For example, C.J. has demonstrated no remorse for his lording, deceit, hypocrisy, independence, and manipulation. He must be rebuked. In addition, the Board has required no public contrition and confession as taught by C.J. and practiced by Sovereign Grace Ministries throughout its history. Remember, the circle of your sin is the circle of your confession. C.J.'s sins have affected the entire movement.

Formal Accusations Are True & Just

C.J., when I sent you RRF&D last March, I hoped you'd make a public confession to the Sovereign Grace pastors at the Pre-Conference Gathering before Together for the Gospel in April 2010. I wanted the men to learn from your example and hold you in high esteem. The same was true after AFA and now CR. I've never desired that any of the CLC pastors learn of your sins from my documents. But confessions to them, Covenant Life Church, the movement and the SGM pastors has not been forthcoming; therefore an appeal to your elders is required. My motive is not to ridicule or mock you. I pray the pastors will redemptively learn from your sins "so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning." That is one of the reasons for reproofing "in the presence of all." Not just the Governing Board of CLC but among all of the elders.

I have worked exceedingly hard to make sure my formal accusations are true and just. In my writings, I avoid hearsay testimony and only draw conclusions when I believe they are supported by ample evidence. The issues I've raised are not contrived and the illustrations I've used not embellished. They are real. I don't share speculations or opinions as facts because I have no interest in false accusations or bogus charges. I've worked extremely hard to present accurate renditions in their historical context as supported by the facts. That's why I've always welcomed disagreement. I've wanted my record corrected where faulty.

I'm sure I fall short in my aspirations and I realize my writings are fallible. They contain error unbeknown to me. But this does not negate their fundamental accuracy. Some things may be dismissed as errant but a large body of credible material remains. The majority of which remains unaddressed. Therefore, I hope you will read charitably and sympathetically. I also hope you require action and take action in the immediate future with absolutely no favoritism, bias or partiality.

Larry and Doris Tomczak made some relevant comments in this regard. Consider their words.

“For years I made little concessions and compromised to stay in the good graces of certain leaders [in Sovereign Grace Ministries] and to avoid forfeiting privilege, promotion, provision or personal speaking opportunities.” (Larry Tomczak, *Reckless Abandon*, p. 135)

“I looked at my husband’s paycheck and that ministry as my source. We became fearful about speaking the truth about some different things because after 15-20 years and seeing how things went we realized that if we spoke and took certain courses of action we’d be out. And that eventually did happen.” (Doris Tomczak, Testimony, August 19, 2000)

Lastly, C.J. is a generous man but don’t be guilty of seeking his favor or friendship by compromising the truth.

Prov 19:6 Many will seek the favor of a generous man, and every man is a friend to him who gives gifts.

Faithful Stewards of the Good

What I’ve covered in my documents are some the worst parts of our history as Sovereign Grace Ministries. The untold story. I am aware there are many evidences of grace in our past and in the present. But it’s important to have a complete history (not a sanitized one) like Chronicles, Kings and Acts that record both evidences of grace and evidences of sin. We learn from both. From my perspective, things have deteriorated as the ministry has grown. Now it is more corporate and less personal. More denominational and less apostolic and prophetic. The sense of family has dissipated among the churches. The commitment to the larger mission has waned. The experience of the charismata has diminished. And there is a growing concern for reputation and acceptance by other men and ministries. Something of our radical edge has been lost. But my greatest concern is for a growing lack of integrity.

You may find my call for a public rebuke of C.J. among his peers completely fallacious. You may reject my appeal for a public confession as unfounded. But please be faithful stewards of whatever good you find in these documents. Benefit from them. Study them. Take notes and learn from them. Avoid the same mistakes and help others to do the same. The documents are tedious to read because of length and detail but still worth your diligent attention.

I leave you with a few recent emails that further explain the reasons for my current actions.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2011 10:48 AM
To: Ken Sande
Cc: Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris; C.J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey
Subject: Coming Threats from SGM
Importance: High

I disagree with your perspective. I have been personally and profoundly engaged with C.J. and the Board for the past 18 months. What I have written is precisely what I would have shared in private. The truth be told, they are the ones unwilling to pursue “personal engagement” by writing out their thoughts in an open, honest and accountable fashion.

In keeping with the teaching of holy Scripture, C.J. should have been publically rebuked a long time ago. The witnesses against him number into the hundreds. Not just two or three as required by Matt 18:16 and 1 Tim 5:19. And “if he refuses to listen to them [the two or three, let alone the 100’s] tell it to the church.” C.J. has refused to listen to anyone’s correction for three decades.² The church should be told.

Furthermore, his sins continue as do those of others. He has not repented of lording, hypocrisy, deceit, etc. Here is what Paul the apostle commanded be done. “Those [elders] who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest will also will be fearful of sinning” (1 Tim 5:20). The only reason this has not happened is due to the disobedience of the SGM Board (which once included me) and the CLC pastors (though many of them have been kept in the dark). These groups of men have been extraordinary biased and partial in applying the disciplinary principles for elders. Hear God’s word, “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosed angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partially.” These fellow elders are in clear violation of God’s word. They have covered-up his sin...not covered his sin. I do not fear legal threats or lawsuits from the SGM Board. They are welcome to bankrupt me, force foreclosure on my house, further discredit me, excommunicate me, etc. It does not matter. God’s word is clear and must be obeyed.

Ken, you too have a biblical responsibility to publically rebuke C.J. and SGM. Last October, C.J. sought to involve you as a mediator. I was not in favor, nevertheless, you have been involved since then. Here is what I said to C.J.

² By “listen” I mean humbly listen to reproof without offense. There is some hyperbole in this statement. A better rendering would be, “C.J. has refused to listen to just about everyone’s correction for three decades.”

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, October 01, 2010 3:36 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: RE: Pursuing Reconciliation

By next week, I'll send "Part 2: A Final Appeal" which includes conditions for a just reconciliation process. It won't involve Ken, not because I don't respect him, but because I can't consider him a neutral party. The two of you are friends and Sovereign Grace Ministries has contributed thousands of dollars to his ministry. I am not implying anything about Ken's character. Ken may also need to publically expose abuses in Sovereign Grace Ministries and I don't want to put him in that position. I admire him greatly but mediation, if necessary, must come from people who have little, to no knowledge, of you or Sovereign Grace Ministries in order to assure objectivity. I desire reconciliation but it must be done in an honest, open and accountable manner. As I've said before the issues go far beyond anything limited to you and me.

In 32 years of ministry I have never seen God's word fail. If we had been faithful to discipline C.J. in accordance with Scripture we would not be in this position. We were cowardly. Instead we allowed him to manipulate us and orchestrate a cover up.

Here is the recent proposal for outside mediation from the SGM Board and my response to them.

From: Jeff Purswell
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2011 10:58 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Cc: Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Josh Harris
Subject: Your Last Document

Dear Brent,

We (the Sovereign Grace board) wanted to follow up on your last e-mail to let you know what direction we're planning to take in seeking a full resolution on the issues you've raised. Since you are at present still not willing to meet with an independent mediator, and because we nonetheless want to make sure that your concerns are thoroughly investigated, we are initiating a completely independent review of all the allegations you've raised concerning C.J. and the Sovereign Grace board's response to those allegations. Our goal in this is to

ensure the most thorough and objective process possible, and so we will seek to engage an independent panel of mediators who are spiritually mature, trained professionals who have no connection to Sovereign Grace. This panel will be able to review all of the written communications concerning this matter and interview any person, including yourself, whom they deem to have relevant information. The goal will be for them to provide an objective and detailed critique of C.J.'s and Sovereign Grace's actions, as well as any appropriate evaluation of others involved in these various events. They will also provide specific recommendations for what remedial steps C.J. and Sovereign Grace should take in the future.

Although our desire remains that you and C.J. could meet together personally with a mediator, we hope this step will be encouraging to you that your allegations and perspectives will receive a fair and impartial hearing. After much discussion and prayer, we feel that, absent a personal process of mediation and reconciliation, this is the best way to bring a God-glorifying resolution to these circumstances.

Yours in Christ,

Dave, Jeff, and Josh

From: Brent Detwiler

Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2011 9:46 AM

To: Joshua Harris; Dave Harvey; C.J. Mahaney; Jeff Purswell

Subject: Crucial Comments

Jeff,

I need to share some crucial thoughts on this paragraph and related matters. Two days ago you wrote me on behalf of Dave and Joshua.

"As for responding to your documents, we do not believe that we broke our word—we said that we would give you our perspective on your documents, and that's what we did in our letter on March 11. Although we did not produce a lengthy document addressing the hundreds of pages you wrote item-by-item, we never committed to do that, nor did we feel that would contribute to a reconciliation. Indeed, the appropriateness of what you were requiring of C.J. and the board would in our minds constitute one of the many items where a mediator would be necessary and could prove helpful in moving forward." (June 14)

You are twisting my words again. I never asked for an “item-by-item” account (though there is no reason not to provide one). I asked for a thorough response to RRF&D and AFA from C.J. I sent him 300 pages. C.J. could easily have produced a revealing and thoughtful 100 page response and the Board could easily have produced a 30 page, not three page response. Instead I received 19 pages from C.J. over 3 months and much of the second response was a restatement of the first response. Moreover, the greater detail I was promised never materialize unless you count the five pages of denials and rebuttals he added. Basically, that was the only new material.

So let’s be clear. I requested a thorough response as a prelude to a meeting but you believe such a document is detrimental to reconciliation and therefore refused to provide it. You withheld such a response knowingly and willfully. That’s your decision but please hear yourself! Your adamancy, not mine, is the only reason talks and meetings have not transpired. Your decision to withhold an open, honest and accountable response is to blame for any lack of progress toward reconciliation. Here again is what you said, “Although we did not produce a lengthy document [this understatement makes me laugh – you produced less than one page per hundred pages] addressing the hundreds of pages you wrote item-by-item, we never committed to do that, nor did we feel that would contribute to a reconciliation.”

So, [you provided] no substantial response because it would not contribute to reconciliation. I completely disagree. Have you found my documents detrimental? Of course not. Therefore my request for a full and complete response to RRF&D and AFA was not unreasonable. And please don’t distort or exaggerate what I requested and use it as an excuse for not responding. Your refusal to walk in the light is the only reason we have not met. It is wrong to say I am not willing to pursue reconciliation or that I am not willing to meet in person. That is not true. I’ve been very willing. If you had done your part, like I did my part, we might be reconciled. Here are your words.

We (the SovGrace board) received your latest document yesterday. We are grateful for the communication although saddened that at present you are still not desirous of meeting with CJ or any of us to pursue reconciliation. That remains our sincere desire, and we stand ready to participate with you in such a process. (Jeff Purswell, June 11)

And Jeff, please remember to interpret my words in context and avoid imposing a foreign meaning upon them. Of course, I am referring to your erroneous comment, “As for responding to your documents, we do not believe that we broke our word—we said that we would give you our perspective on

your documents, and that's what we did in our letter on March 11." I didn't say the Board broke their word, only that C.J. did. I hear they offer a good course on hermeneutics at the Pastors College. You might want to enroll in the class. Furthermore, I am open to an apology unless the entire Board determines such an apology is "unwise, inappropriate and unnecessary." A little humor my friend.

It sounds like you are following through on my suggestion.

You are welcome to submit RRF&D, AFA and CR to any outside "mediator." Better, give them to a panel of distinguished judges trained and proven in the rules of evidence. Consider my documents the results of a deposition. They are my sworn "courtroom" testimony. Far better than any board room conversation. (CR, p. 194, footnote 426)

Therefore, I think the following proposal is fine. You are welcome to proceed. I am not sure I'll participate, but they can still review my material.

We are initiating a completely independent review of all the allegations you've raised concerning C.J. and the Sovereign Grace board's response to those allegations. Our goal in this is to ensure the most thorough and objective process possible, and so we will seek to engage an independent panel of mediators who are spiritually mature, trained professionals who have no connection to Sovereign Grace. This panel will be able to review all of the written communications concerning this matter and interview any person, including yourself, whom they deem to have relevant information. The goal will be for them to provide an objective and detailed critique of C.J.'s and Sovereign Grace's actions, as well as any appropriate evaluation of others involved in these various events. They will also provide specific recommendations for what remedial steps C.J. and Sovereign Grace should take in the future. (Jeff Purswell, June 14)

If I do participate in this process the following guidelines must be adopted.

- All conversations or interviews with any mediator will be digitally recorded and electronically sent to me and everyone else on the Board of Directors.
- Only conversations and interactions between the mediators will be kept confidential. In others words, all other deliberations will be conducted in an open court.
- All email, correspondence, and documentation exchanged between us and any mediator must be copied to me and the Board.

There will be no secrets. Nothing will be “confidential” (i.e., hidden, concealed, withheld). These requirements are non-negotiable. None of these guidelines were followed during my assessment in June/July 2009. As a result, Bob, Wayne and Phil, were deceived by the lies and false witness of key individuals without me knowing what was being said and therefore unable to correct the record. Of course, Bob did little to investigate their veracity and happily believed much of their slander.

My willingness to consider participation does not mean I am going to withhold my concerns for C.J. and the Board until the findings of an independent panel are complete. I have been very patient with you men. For 18 months I worked to produce 3 major documents out of my deep love and concern for you. I spent all our savings, maxed out our home equity, and lived without medical care. We are broke. That is fine, but like I’ve said, we’ve come to the end of road. You have not provided me a substantial response on the issues, questions, and illustrations I progressively shared with you. So it is now time to broaden the court of appeals. I’ve been extremely loyal to all of you. I am not your nemesis. I mean you no harm. But it is time to tell others the truth since you are unwilling to speak to the blogosphere, the movement and the SGM pastors.

You are free to disagree with aspects of what I’ve written in RRF&D, AFA, and CR. But so much of what I’ve written is indisputable and it is serious. You should have quickly acknowledged wrongdoing, made public confessions and provided me reasons for any disagreements. C.J.’s confession on Dec 16, 2010 was a good start. But it was only a start. After that, it petered out and died.

I will not be sending my material to the blogs but it is inevitable that some of it will reach the blogs. I am not to blame. The additional actions I am taking are due to your intransigence. Hundreds of people have wondered what I thought about Dave’s “tyranny of the aggrieved” statement at KingsWay Community Church. The same is true of C.J.’s absence at the CLC Members Meeting on May 22. I’ve withheld comment. No longer.

I have done nothing behind your backs. I’ve been upfront about everything even when that put me at a strategic disadvantage. For example, I’ll be sending RRF&D, AFA and CR to all the elders at Covenant Life Church and a few others this week.

All of this I do with the good of the gospel in mind. It is time for you, C.J., Dave and Joshua to deal with reality, repent, and made reforms for the glory of God, not the public image of Sovereign Grace Ministries. It begins with C.J. and he has been silent, unconvinced any public contrition or confession is necessary.

I love each of you. I will continue to pray for the good of the ministry.

Brent

TELL IT TO THE CHURCH¹ -
JUNE 26, 2011

Matthew 18:17

*If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church;
and if he refused to listen even to the church,
let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.*

For over three decades, I have faithfully served my friend, C.J. Mahaney. This service has taken on many forms; all of which I count a great blessing to have provided. I consider it a genuine honor to have served C.J. and Sovereign Grace Ministries from its inception. My sincere love for him and the ministry continues to this day.

During the last decade, one form of service included the correction of my friend. In the account that follows, you will read about my attempts, and the attempts of others, to help C.J. grow in the grace of holiness. But before I do, let me hasten to say that C.J. is an extremely gifted and gracious man in many contexts. I have learned a lot from his example and his teaching. There is much to commend about him.

Nevertheless, the account you are about to read has to do with those aspects of his character needing conformity to the image of Christ. Like all of us, C.J. is a sinner saved by grace. But unlike us, C.J. is the leader of a large and influential movement. He is called to a higher standard of conduct (James 3:1), not the lower one by which he has too often lived. The sins of which I write are long standing. The most serious ones remain unacknowledged. What you are about to read is shocking and disillusioning. You should ask God to give you grace in order to process this material. And let me add, we are never without hope in Christ. The third step of Matthew 18:15-18 is redemptive in nature. It has in mind the repentance of the sinner so that restoration, reformation and restitution can follow.

Sovereign Grace Ministries and C.J. are experiencing a time of humbling. The once stellar reputation of the ministry exists no longer. There has been a decline. In recent years, hundreds of people have left churches in numerous cities due to a growing distrust of their leaders. These were good people and in many cases people who had been part of the movement for a long time. They were loyal. They were servants. They were followers of Jesus. Now they are gone.

Two separate blogs chronicle the faults of Sovereign Grace and the experiences of former members. I venture to say this opposition from the Lord will abate or cease

¹ I planned to send this appeal to the my friends in Sovereign Grace Churches on Sunday, June 26 but did not do so. I present it now so people can understand the events as they unfolded and benefit from the content. On Saturday, June 25 at 2:02 pm, I made this document available to the SGM Board and CLC elders. I told them of my intentions to send it out in advance of doing so.

when C.J. decides to confess his sins and leads others in the organization to do the same. God has raised up the blogs, much like he did the Assyrians or Babylonians, for the chastisement of some leaders in the movement. I almost never look at the blogs and this assessment is not an endorsement of those statements that are slanderous. On the other hand, God has used the blogs to try and get the attention of C.J. and others in the movement. There are real problems which are not being dealt with in an open, honest and accountable manner. The blogs address some of these problems.

In November of 2007, I resigned from the Board of Directors (a.k.a. the apostolic or leadership team) for Sovereign Grace Ministries after 25 years of dedicated service. A few months later, I was sent out from CrossWay Community Church to plant a new church to the north of Charlotte in March of 2008. In July of 2009, I resigned as senior pastor of Grace Community Church having been declared unfit for ministry by Sovereign Grace Ministries.

Over the past two years, I have remained silent in public but not in private. I've produced three major documents for C.J. I am currently completing work on a fourth entitled, "The Untold Story." It chronicles the unbelievable events surrounding my resignation as senior pastor. Like my previous writings, I hoped this undertaking would be unnecessary. But men have chosen to remain silent about their sins and deceitfully cover up what actually transpired. As a result, the former members of Grace Community Church have only heard a deceptive tale and one that has been retold in many places. I hope to be done with "The Untold Story" by the end of August.

On Thursday of this past week, I sent the following questions to C.J.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2011 9:15 AM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Change of Heart?
Importance: High

Dear C.J.,

I ask the following questions with grace and tenderness of heart. Have you had a change of heart and mind? If so, are you willing to provide me a complete and thorough response to RRF&D, AFA, and CR in preparation for a meeting between us? And are you willing to walk in the light by publicly confessing the sins I've addressed?

I mean you no harm. These are redemptive requests designed to serve you and the movement you lead. Please provide me a response in the next day or two.

With sincere affection,
Brent

On Friday of this past week, I sent the following message to all four men on the Sovereign Grace Board of Directors.

C.J., Dave, Joshua and Jeff,

Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to you in name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I've given more thought to the idea of involving an independent panel of mediators and one other condition comes to mind that must be agreed upon in advance by you, the SGM Board of Directors. As it stands, it appears I'll be facing the combined personalities of Sovereign Grace Ministries, Covenant Life Church and Peacemakers in array against me. Therefore, you must allow the panel to interview up to 25 people who share concerns and experiences which are similar to my own. I will be the one responsible for putting this list of people together for the panel.

Moreover, these individuals must be granted anonymity if they request it. Some of them are afraid to speak up. All their testimonies will remain confidential. This is similar to the procedure used when testimony is given before a Grand Jury in our court system. Their statements will not be accepted as fact by the panel but will help the independent mediators understand the widespread nature of my concerns. These interviews will aid the panel members in gaining a full and complete picture of representative stories and people's experiences with Sovereign Grace Ministries. This is extremely important. Otherwise, it is the one sided testimony of three large organizations against the testimony of a single individual - me.

As I've repeatedly said from the beginning, this isn't about C.J. and Brent. This is about deceit, hypocrisy, self-preservation, and the love of reputation in Sovereign Grace Ministries as exemplified by C.J., Dave, Bob, Gene, et al. Here's the way I've put it.

"Lastly and most importantly, I write because of my deep love for you and for Sovereign Grace Ministries. My greatest concern is for the increasing presence of deceit and hypocrisy rooted in self-preservation and love of reputation. I'd be overjoyed to see you acknowledge these things to the movement, whether or not you ask my forgiveness for anything specific. Comparatively speaking, the latter is unimportant. Ultimately, this isn't about us. It is about something much bigger.

Therefore, I provide the history that follows for your careful consideration.” (Response Regarding Friendship & Doctrine, p. 3)

I’ve provided 521 pages of historic testimony, all carefully documented, but it has produced no contrition, repentance, confession or restitution. Deceit, hypocrisy, self-preservation and the love of reputation remain unconfessed alongside a host of other serious sins.

“Primarily, I hope and desire to see a restoration of integrity, truth telling and justice in Sovereign Grace so there is no lying, spin, manipulation, lording, cover-up, or partiality. I am concerned for the movement. Some men have followed sinful aspects of your example and leadership – the kind referenced in this response. These men have acted deceitfully, judgmentally, unbiblically, and hypocritically. Their example in turn, has harmed others and been corrosive in its effect.” (Response Regarding Friendship & Doctrine, p. 128)

I inquired of C.J. on Thursday to see if he’s had a change of heart. I have not heard back from him.² I also asked the elders of Covenant Life Church to take immediately action on June 17. I’ve not heard from them either.³ Therefore, it is time to tell the churches of Sovereign Grace Ministries about C.J.’s sins for their protection and his good. I hope brothers and sisters, Care Group leaders and deacons, administrators and pastors, will courageously appeal to C.J. and he will listen to their voices. To date, he has not listened to my voice, or the voice of others, on many critical matters.

I am confident; however, that the grace and mercy of God will prevail! I look forward to the day when I can once again commend C.J., the Board of Directors, and Sovereign Grace Ministries without reservation. As it stands, they cannot be trusted and anyone who does is acting foolishly or in ignorance.

In the bonds of Christ’s love,

Brent

I have also been told my appeal to the churches will result in great agony for me and my family. Who knows, that may be true but I cannot imagine any greater agony than what we have already experienced. And of course, my concerns transcend my little world. I am also concerned for the people who have experienced similar travails in Sovereign Grace Ministries.

² In anticipation that I might not hear from C.J. since the Board forbid all email interaction with me.

³ Also in anticipation that the CLC pastors may follow C.J.’s example or provide me an unsatisfactory response that necessitated sending out “Tell It to the Church.”

From: Ken Sande
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2011 9:17 AM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: RE: Preconditions Unmet

Dear Brent,

I agree that this situation has reached a critical crossroads. In your recent "Concluding Remarks" memo, you wrote, "Well, we have reached the end of the road. It is now time for me to share my concerns with the Sovereign Grace pastors ... and a small group of former Sovereign Grace pastors or employees."

This statement among many others seemed to send a clear and unequivocal signal that there was no openness or desire on your part for any kind of personal engagement with CJ or the SGM Board. I fear your taking this step will move everyone much farther away from a process that might get to the heart of the issues you've raised.⁴ This makes me incredibly sad, Brent, because I think it will mean you and your family will live with great agony of soul for years and years to come...

This third step is a sober step and one that has been in the works for the past 11 years. There is nothing "funny" about it but Ken needed to be chided for his pronouncement of doom.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, June 19, 2011 10:20 AM
To: Ken Sande
Subject: Purgatory

Hey Ken,

I think your calculations are off a little. We've already lived in "great agony of soul" for the last seven years. Our purgatorial existence began August 20, 2004 but I'll be sure to let my entire family know it will continue "for years and years to come." So thanks for your prophetic word! Well, I need to run...Mass begins soon. I've got to start reducing the years of temporal punishment. ☺

Breathing grace,
Brent

⁴ I responded to this assertion on Monday, June 13, 2011 10:48 AM. The email is found on pages 4-6 in "In Need of a Public Rebuke."

P.S. Seriously, I don't mind your warning...given your perspective it's perfectly understandable.

On Sunday morning, March 17, 2002, C.J. wrote the following to all the pastors in Sovereign Grace Ministries regarding the senior pastor in our Philadelphia church and his need to step down. It is one of many examples that could be put forth.

"I type this e-mail with great sadness for I must inform you that it has become necessary for Bill to step down from pastoral ministry.... An announcement of this nature should sober and provoke each of us as we travel to the Leaders Conference. May we arrive at this year's conference more attentive and responsive to God's word, more humble and teachable. Bill rightly states in his confession that this day was avoidable not inevitable. Recognizing that the seed of every known sin resides in our heart let us purpose to identify and mortify all known sin. Let there be no secret sin in our lives. Let us be specific with those we are accountable to about our sin and current temptations so that we will not one day have to stand before the church and make a similar confession as Bill will make today."

This day was also avoidable but C.J. repeatedly chose not to follow his own counsel over many years. This will be evident as you read "In Need of a Public Rebuke," "Response Regarding Friendship and Doctrine," "A Final Appeal," and "Concluding Remarks." I did not write these documents with the churches of Sovereign Grace in mind. I never hoped or planned to send out these documents to all the churches. They were my private appeals. But those appeals have largely gone unheeded.

And if it was true that Bill must step down, that Brent must step down, that a host of other men must step down; is it not true that C.J. should step down? Absolutely, if you apply the same standards to him that he has applied to everyone else. This is an obvious conclusion. But I am not recommending that C.J. step down from ministry.⁵ I am exhorting him to start over, come clean, and be genuinely accountable.

Finally, I have no doubt C.J. and the men around him love the Lord Jesus Christ. They are doing many things that glorify God. That is why I look forward to commending C.J. and the ministry again when repentance, reformation, and restitution have occurred. Trust lost can also be regained.

⁵ The next day I changed my mind and wrote Joshua. "I've changed my thinking regarding C.J. You must be ready to replace him the end of this year. There will also be changes with Dave and Steve." I felt this was a prophetic word for Joshua.

IS C.J. ABOVE REPROACH?
JULY 17, 2011

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach.

The Pastor's Priorities

Here's what I was saying before C.J. announced his leave of absence on July 7. This email was sent to the Covenant Life pastors, the SGM Board and some others.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Tuesday, June 28, 2011 11:56 AM
To: Adam Malcolm; Ben Wikner; Braden Greer; Brian Chesemore; Corby Megorden; Dave Brewer; Don DeVries; Eric Sheffer; Eric Simmons; Grant Layman; Greg Somerville; Issac Hydoski; Jamie Leach; Joe Lee; Jon Smith; Joshua Harris; Kenneth Maresco; Mark Mitchell; Matt Maka; Mike Bradshaw; Robin Boisvert; Bo Lotinsky; Bob Kauflin; C. J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Gary Ricucci; Jeff Purswell; John Loftness; Ken Sande; Pat Ennis; Tommy Hill; Tony Reinke; Gene Emerson
Subject: Watch Your Life

The following is an excerpt from C.J.'s chapter in *Preaching the Cross* on the consequences of neglect. [see C.J. Mahaney, "The Pastor's Priorities: Watch Your Life and Doctrine," in *Preaching the Cross* by Mark Dever, J. Ligon Duncan III, R. Albert Mohler Jr., C.J. Mahaney, John MacArthur, John Piper, R.C. Sproul (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2007), 121-122.]

"Sound doctrine is not enough, because, according to Scripture, the fundamental qualification for pastoral ministry is godly character. Neither skill, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, nor reputation, nor personality, nor apparent fruitfulness of public ministry will suffice. Scan 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and you will encounter a profile of personal piety.

"Yes, the pastor must be able to teach. Certainly, he must handle the Word of truth accurately and skillfully. But the foundational assumption of Scripture—both for appointment to or continuation in ministry—is that the pastor provide a godly example, not a *perfect* example but an authentic example. As Spurgeon exhorted his students, "Our characters must be more persuasive than our speech."

"If we neglect the command of 1 Timothy 4:16—if we fail to watch our life closely, carefully, and uncompromisingly—negative consequences are inevitable, for ourselves, our family, our pastoral team, and our church. A marked or prolonged inattention to personal holiness in a pastor is a grave matter that must be addressed. At Sovereign Grace Ministries we have sought to apply this passage in relation to the pastors of our local churches. We believe that the biblical requirement for a pastor is not flawless character but mature character. We are all progressively growing in godliness. A pastor who recognizes an area of immaturity and takes specific action towards change demonstrates close attention to his life and doctrine. Likewise, if a particular instance of non-disqualifying sin occurs in a pastor's life, but he genuinely repents before God and the appropriate individuals, this also honors the passage we are examining.

"There are, of course, some sins that are particularly serious, both in the effect they have upon others and what they reveal about the condition of the heart. Even a single instance of such sins—sexual immorality, financial impropriety, violent behavior, and others would automatically disqualify a man from pastoral ministry. In addition to such grave instances of sin, a serious, ongoing pattern of disobedient deviation from biblical requirements in the life of a pastor can also be disqualifying.

"For example, a single lustful look, quickly confessed and repented of is part of growing maturity. However, a pattern of pornography could be disqualifying. Similarly, an isolated instance of lying speech, promptly brought into the light is evidence of ongoing sanctification. Repeated examples of deceptive behavior, on the other hand, call into question a pastor's trustworthiness. Likewise, an outburst of irritation immediately regretted and repented of is proof the Holy Spirit is at work. But a reputation for anger is not consistent with the biblical requirements for a pastor.

"Where such patterns of sin exist, we believe that genuine care for a pastor and a church involves a corrective process. Of course, this must be administered with all humility, gentleness, and patience. Occasions requiring the loving confrontation of a pastor in sin have been among the most difficult and painful of my ministry experience. But in the end, the corrective process has normally produced God-glorifying and fruitful outcomes in a pastor's life, family, and church."

I'd encourage you to read the entire chapter before your meeting with C.J. At this juncture, you must ask serious questions about C.J.'s qualifications and whether he should continue as the President of Sovereign Grace Ministries.

I remember listening to C.J. preach this message at Together for the Gospel in April, 2006. I was glad for his content but terribly grieved by his hypocrisy. C.J. was not practicing what he was preaching (Matt 23:3). In reality, he defied his own teaching. Later this message was written down.

It is difficult to read "The Pastor's Priorities: Watch Your Life and Doctrine." There is so much I could say about its content in comparison to how C.J. lived his life. Suffice it to say, he was not paying attention to himself.

Hypocrisy of this magnitude is a serious sin. We should all study Matthew 23 – it speaks of outward appearances, the love of reputation, requiring action of others we don't follow ourselves, etc. I care deeply for my friend, but he is not above reproach. He is assailable on many fronts. Therefore, C.J. should not continue as President of Sovereign Grace Ministries. It is time for a transition. A new beginning is in order.

Are You Above Reproach?

Two days later I wrote C.J. again.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2011 5:09 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney
Subject: Resignation as President of SGM

Dear C.J.

I am sure these have been difficult days for you. My heart goes out to you. Coming face to face with your sin and its consequences is a painful, frightful, and discouraging experience. In the midst of it all, I hope you are also experiencing God's love revealed in the cross of Christ and poured out in your heart by the Holy Spirit.

Recently you wrote me about your progress in grace.

From: C. J. Mahaney
Sent: Saturday, June 25, 2011 1:58 PM
To: Brent Detwiler
Subject: Confidential

Brent,

I was reluctant to send this but decided to do so. I am not trying to impress you or convince you about what I am perceiving in my heart. But since I began to reengage with your documents a couple of days ago and with the help of others I have already perceived a couple of areas of sin I didn't clearly perceive previously. It's discouraging how slow and dull and blind I can be. My pride/self-righteousness are no doubt the root cause. Pathetic really.

Just wanted to inform you of the small incremental stuff that seems to be happening. My hope is that it continues.

Thanks for your patience and care my friend. Please keep praying for me.

With my gratefulness,
C.J.

I sincerely rejoice in any additional illumination you are experiencing. I look forward to hearing about it.

Yesterday was an important day; you met with all the CLC elders. I hope their rebuke impressed upon you the seriousness of your sins. In 1991 you replaced Larry as team leader. The year before, all of us recognized and talked about God's opposition to People of Destiny International. You, Steve, Bo and I were ready to resign if Larry did not step down. Part of the reason was due to limitations of gifting and part was due to deficiencies of character that Larry was not seeing. We knew change was needed. The same is true today. Sovereign Grace Ministries has increasingly experienced the opposition and discipline of God. I don't want God's discipline to become God's judgment. Sovereign Grace could easily end up in the ditch.

Your confession and resignation are keys ingredients in restoring God's favor to the ministry.

James 4:5-10 "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? [6] But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." [7] Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. [8] Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [9] Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Now is the time for submitting, resisting, drawing near, cleansing, purifying, lamenting, mourning, weeping and gloom. Therefore, I say the following with no joy in my heart, satisfaction in my soul, or retribution in my mind. It is time for your resignation as President of Sovereign Grace Ministries. This should be obvious to you by now. No one should have to ask for your resignation. There is no need for any further assessment. It is clear – you are not above reproach. You should not be overseeing Sovereign Grace Ministries.

In your case, there has been no conspiracy, betrayal, rush to judgment, piling on or false witnesses. Everyone has been merciful, patient, long suffering, and forgiving. You have been afforded a degree of kindnesses no one in the ministry has ever been extended. So if the Bible has a normative and causative authority in your life in the matter of qualifications for leadership, you will resign immediately.

Of course, you can proceed with an outside evaluation of Sovereign Grace Ministries. That is fine. You can hold on announcing your resignation until the Pastors Conference in November. That is fine. You can wait on disciplining Dave, Steve, Bob and Gene. That is fine. But staying your resignation is not fine. You should not object or resist. To do so is a blatant repudiation of Scripture.

*1 Tim 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach. The word (Gr., *anepileptos*) literally means "not apprehended, that cannot be laid hold of; hence that cannot be reprehended, not open to censure, irreproachable," blameless," "irreprehensible, unassailable." It bespeaks of irreproachable conduct and it also means "not only of good report but deservedly so!"*

*Titus 1:5-6 ...appoint elders in every city as I directed you, [6] namely, if any man is above reproach. The word (Gr. *anengkletos*), literally means "that cannot be called to account, unprovable, unaccused, blameless."*

We are not talking about minor offenses that disqualify you like a hypothetical speeding ticket in 2000, a conflict with Carolyn in 2004, an unkind word about

Larry in 1997, or a sinful judgment of Brent in 2006. No, we are talking about longstanding sins of a serious nature. There is only one reason people believe you are above reproach – they don't know the truth about you. It has been concealed and covered up.

C.J., it is not God's best for you to resign in protest, under pressure, begrudgingly, out of self-pity or resentment. You should resign in faith with the full assurance it is right and pleasing in the sight of God. Not because you've been asked to resign; but, because you want (as in need) to resign.

Honestly, there are no decisions any of us need to make with regard to whether you should resign as President. You, me, the SGM Board, the CLC elders, Ken Sande, and the outside mediators don't have a say in the matter. The decision was made for us a long time ago. Around A.D. 63 when 1 Timothy and Titus were written. All we need to do is obey the clear teaching of Scripture. There is no uncertainty, ambiguity, or question about its relevance to you. This is not a matter of interpretation. If you are "above reproach" than every leader you've disciplined in the history of Sovereign Grace was above reproach. Their sins were never greater than your own.

This doesn't mean you don't have anything to offer Sovereign Grace Ministries or the Body of Christ. It doesn't mean you live in isolation and disgrace. It means, first things first. Like being under authority rather than in authority. Like serving instead of leading. Like discipleship in place of discipling.

You planned to turn things over to Josh at age 60. God has moved up the timetable by two years. Like you've always said, his character and gifting exceeds yours and it exceeds mine. It is time for a new birth in Sovereign Grace. Men like Aron need to replace Dave Harvey and Craig/Tony need to replace Steve Shank. Dave and Steve have sinned greatly. God will reveal it as it has with you. So it is time for men to step down and aside and let others learn from our successes and our sins.

I look forward to the recovery of our reputation and the return of good people to our churches. I look forward to true pluralities among elders instead of autocracies and timocracies. I look forward to honesty instead of partiality. I look forward to justice in dealing with others in place of sinfully judging others. I look forward to transparency instead of hypocrisy. The best is yet to come.

I did not hear from C.J. so I wrote him again.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Friday, July 01, 2011 9:07 PM
To: C.J. Mahaney
Subject: Resignation

Are you going to resign or do you believe you are qualified to continue as President of SGM? I'd appreciate a prompt answer. I want your thoughts. No one else's. What do you believe about yourself? Are you above reproach? Yes or no?

God's Word Is Our Final Authority

After several email exchanges I sent C.J., Dave, Jeff and Joshua the following.

From: Brent Detwiler
Sent: Sunday, July 03, 2011 1:38 PM
To: C. J. Mahaney; Dave Harvey; Jeff Purswell; Joshua Harris
Subject: "Am I Qualified?"

You say, "Am I qualified to lead SGM? That is for others to determine, not me." This is only half true but here's what important. Dave, Bob, Steve, Joshua, Kenneth, and Grant enabled you to continue in sin without consequence, without discipline, and with little (or no) accountability for the past six years. After 2004 all of them (in varying degrees) opposed me and defended you. Steve began in 2004. I was thrown under the bus and run over. This was especially true of Bob, Kenneth and Steve and the least true of Grant. Dave's opposition to me and defense of you began in 2006 after he decided in 2005 to accommodate your sin and relate to you as though a "teenager." None of these men, including Jeff, have ever required of you what has been required of others or commanded in Scripture. Furthermore, they show no signs of obeying Scripture now. To my knowledge, none of them feel you are unqualified to lead SGM or asked for your resignation. For a fact, that is true of Joshua. In the end, it won't matter, you'll be forced to resign or suffer dire consequences. I say that with absolutely no malice.

Any progress we have made in the past 18 months (or 11 years) has been over my dead body. An almost literal statement. The past year and a half, I have dragged all of you along every step of the way. Nothing has come easy. Everything has been resisted, contended, or initially dismissed. Even now you are forbidden by the Board from sharing your self-assessment with me. Very little has changed. To my knowledge, no proactive measures have been taken by any of them throughout the 18 months. Even the independent panel was my

idea. All action by you and them has been in response to my constant appeals or reproves or requests. Please correct me if I am wrong on any particular.

Instead they've applauded you when they should have been confronting you for lying, deceit, hypocrisy, abuse, etc. They have been weak, docile, and cowardly. They've demonstrated no "backbone" in their dealings with you. Nothing has been volunteered or initiated by them. Everything has been required by me. They have protected you, catered to you, and required little of you throughout the process. Even now, they won't tell me if they've been in contact with the mediators and had conversations or exchanged documents; both of which are in opposition to my conditions for participation. I'd like to know what has been going on? But these men have not walked in the light with me. At best, they have walked in the shadows. I've had to build a case using 600 pages of documentation and telling you of my imminent appeal to all the SGM elders before getting any substantial response. Listen, I am not a Board member. I am not paid by SGM. This should not be my job. My goodness, I've even financed the whole project myself. And now, Joshua is presenting me as the one and only witness against you. He said, "The challenge I face is that all of this documentation [RRF&D, AFA, CR, TUS] is coming from just one witness (you)." Holy Hanna! We can't find a second or third witness anywhere! Well drop all charges against C.J. immediately! We are transgressing God's Word! We are forbidden to proceed. Stop!!! The Scripture says, "Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses" (1 Tim 5:19)

May I make a request? Can I ask a favor? Would you do me a service? Shoot that dam witness and put him out of his misery! I mean, "Dear Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Is this the strategy the Board is taking with the evaluators? It appears so and also with the CLC elders last week. From Joshua's report to me, it does not appear you were rebuked in keeping with 1 Tim 5:20. They only asked "hard" and "serious" questions. And recommend your resignation, God forbid, that appears to be is the job of the independent evaluators. I know all of this is new for some of the elders, but not for many of them.

So now I am the only witness against you. Well, that brings back a lot of bad memories. But it is nothing new. Since Dave bailed, no one has stood with me. No one has listened to me. No one has supported me. I suspect there will be many secret (oops, I'm sorry, I mean confidential) conversations with the mediators where all of you bludgeon me again. This time can you use butter knives instead of butcher knives? When has this not been the case? Never. And when has Bob confronted your abuse of authority? When has Steve reproved your deceit? When has Jeff rebuked your extraordinary hypocrisy? All of these things have been left to me and I have paid a big price.

Back to the original subject. After all this I am supposed to trust Dave, Joshua and Jeff to determine if you are qualified. I don't trust them. They have been partial and biased since August 2004. In addition, I've addressed serious abuses by Dave, Bob, Steve, Kenneth and Gene. At no point in time, have any of these abuses been acknowledged, let alone addressed. No one has ever returned to me. Not so much as an "I'm sorry." On countless matters, these men should have beat down my door by now to ask forgiveness. But not a word. And please don't use the excuse of waiting for a final report from the "independent panel of evaluators."

I don't trust you. I can't trust you (as much as I'd like to). And I trust Dave the least. He has become a master manipulator. I'll make that case clearer in additional writings. But for now just one example, he covered up Gene's evil actions and kept it from the leaders and the church. I asked him not to do this but he continued without ever responding. Let me add he did not act alone. He did it with the full knowledge and approval of you, Joshua, Jeff and Pat. This documented in "The Untold Story" (pp. 27-31). But I imagine after each of you have talked the mediators, the record will be "set straight" without me knowing what bogus or deceitful arguments are put forth. Well, given the events of last week, I have decided not to participate in the independent review. The process has been compromised already. My trust in the Board has vanished. So far as I know, my conditions for transparency and accountability have been utterly disregarded by Joshua, Dave and Jeff.

I still have not come to the end. "Am I qualified to lead SGM? That is for others to determine, not me." Given the above, it should not be for Joshua, Jeff and Dave to determine though that is their rightful role and responsibility but they have failed. And it should not be for independent evaluators to determine. The only way trust will be restore in SGM is for the Board to governing itself with integrity. I don't think that is possible unless men are replaced.

The Board may not require your resignation but that does not in any way absolve you. The half you got wrong, that is untrue, is your responsibility to weigh yourself in the sight of God, in light of Scripture, and in accordance with your conscience. If you believe you are above reproach, you should say so and defend yourself. That is encouraged in Scripture though condemned in SGM. Of course, your assessment may be wrong or their decision unjust. You may still be fired but at least you have been honest.

And if you believe you are not above reproached, then you should resign. Don't passively wait to be told what to do. That does not please God. Assess

yourself. Do you qualify? Should you continue as President of SGM? What do you say? Do you really need more evidence before making a decision?

Unfortunately, the churches of SGM will have to determine if you qualify.

I look forward to the completed report of the evaluators. I will write an endorsement, or repudiation, or a combination of the two, and post it on the internet. As I told Joshua. I have much more to say about the events of this week.

Sincerely,
Brent