

In Defence of Mike Bickle

Paul Davies

... and other leaders who have sinned.

It has been said, and often repeated, that the Christian Church is “the only army that shoots it’s own wounded.” This has been readily apparent in any number of scandals in recent years, and particularly in the events surrounding Mike Bickle, founder of International House of Prayer (IHOP-KC). I am frankly appalled at the speed at which Christians, even leaders, take sides and spout their opinions on these matters. Accusations of betrayal, leaks to the gossip rags of juicy details, and videos decrying the sinful actions of the fallen, arguing the specifics of the events or calling for the (figurative) hanging, drawing and quartering of the accused. This vitriol is, of course, couched in terms of “supporting the victims”, many of whom in this specific case were adults who should have known better.

Part of the problem is the rampant sexual immorality throughout Western society, which continues in the church. There is little practical teaching on “taking every thought captive”, “denying yourself”, “fleeing from youthful lusts”, and so on. We have clear evidence that even Pastors, who should rightly be held to account to a higher standard, are struggling in this area, and few have managed to overcome. To be clear, the Biblical standard is that sex is ONLY within an exclusive, heterosexual, married relationship. Anything outside that is sexual immorality, which is universally condemned in the Bible. In the very final pages of the Bible, it says:

“But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.” (Rev 21:8 NIV)

The Western Church needs to start taking this seriously. God WILL NOT be mocked. A man reaps what he sows (Gal 5:6,7).

We need to acknowledge that we are all sinners saved by Grace. Even Pastors and leaders. We are in a war, and the enemy “*prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*” (1 Peter 5:8,9). We are all under attack, and we need to be much more supportive of those who fall, in addition to those they hurt. “*So, if you think you are standing firm, *[Ro 11:20; 2Co 1:24] be careful that you don't fall!*” (1 Cor 10:12).

I want to be clear, because the title will trigger people, these leaders who sin are WRONG! It should NOT have happened. But my point here is **the ungodly way many Christians are responding to these incidents**. Jesus commands us to “*...Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another*” (John 13:34). He goes further: “*...Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...*” (Matt 5:44). In his High Priestly prayer, just before He went to the Cross, He prayed: “*...that they may be one as we are one...*” (John 17:11 & 22). We are falling FAR short of that standard.

In Isaiah 58, the Lord warns us about the things we do to seek him, particularly fasting, and how we fail because we do not adhere to justice and mercy. He links this to our own lack of blessing and difficulty in accessing healing. He makes it clear that we must LIVE OUT the gospel message we claim to adhere to, and He will respond when we do.

*Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?*

*Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?*

*Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
**when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?***

Then *your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.*

Then *you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.*

If *you do away with the yoke of oppression,
with the pointing finger and malicious talk, (Isaiah 58: 5-9)*

When a Christian is exposed in sin, they are “naked”, just like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. We “clothe” them by **NOT gossiping about their fall**. They are our brethren, even if they are the perpetrator who caused hurt to others. God cares how we care for His children - even those who fall. We should be praying for Mike Bickle, and for all those hurt by the events that have flowed out of his sin. The passage above makes it clear that God is watching and holding us accountable for how we react.

In addition, the Apostle Paul writes: “*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently*” (Galatians 6:1). Cancel Culture has NO place in the Church! I am absolutely shocked at the things I have seen online about Mike Bickle and his ministry. One leader friend said he was throwing out all of his Bickle books. Others are claiming he should “never minister again”, and still others that the Prophetic History stories were all lies. I know this last one is false, because my parents were there for some of it, and had personal experience of the accuracy of the prophetic ministry that came out of KCF, and the positive role that Mike played at that time. There have been some useful criticisms of Mike’s ministry - one of which is the lack of accountability when prophetic words were NOT fulfilled. That should have been acknowledged and the Lord sought for an explanation - openly. But to deny the call on Mike’s life and the good fruit

that the Lord has brought over the years is absolutely invalid and wrong. He clearly seems to have struggled with these sins for years - where was the spiritual discernment among his team to hear clearly from God and set him free? We are the body of Christ - we do not cut off our finger because of a scratch, we tend it till it is healed. How much more are we failing to properly tend His children who fall?

Restoration is NOT getting someone back into fellowship. It IS getting them back to where they were before they fell! The Bible is clear "... God's gifts and his call are irrevocable" (Romans 11:29). How DARE we presume to revoke what God has initiated? We need to have the grace to allow a restoration process to take place, and not try and demand a particular outcome that is not Biblical.

It is totally hypocritical to call for Mike Bickle's cancellation and still use David's psalms (which are part of the Bible). No leader I'm aware of, who has fallen publicly in recent years, sinned worse than King David. David lusted, committed adultery, then pre-meditated murder to cover up his sins. He suffered consequences despite his repentance, but **God did NOT remove him from his position, deny him fellowship, nor refuse to use him again!**

We need to be far more careful in the way we react to Leaders who sin. God is cleaning up His Church, and we are beginning to see an outpouring of the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. His sword is double edged - it cuts both the sinner and the accusers.

"For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God..." (1 Peter 4:17). Don't be on the wrong side of this issue...

Paul Davies
www.Ancientwells.org.au