

Voice of Evangelism Board Stands With Perry Stone Against Continued Allegations of Misconduct

Perry Stone remains the subject of controversy, but the board of his Voice of Evangelism/Perry Stone Ministries has taken a clear stand in favor of the beleaguered evangelist through the release of a statement of support. This statement comes in response to a March 31 article in the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, which claims the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation is “looking into” Stone and “has interviewed at least five people who claim to be victims or who are connected to Stone’s ministry” regarding allegations of sexual harassment and assault.

In August 2020, Stone was placed on a mandatory “sabbatical for rest and restoration,” citing serious health concerns “related to spiritual and physical burnout” including dangerously high blood pressure, as reported by Charisma News. At the time, VOE media relations spokesperson John Rodriguez also said “a couple” employees at VOE had met with the board to address concerns of “inappropriate words and actions” on Stone’s part.

Late last year, the *Times Free Press* reported additional allegations of misconduct against Stone, including a claim that the FBI was investigating his ministry. The VOE board issued a statement reported by Charisma News at that time. “There is nothing new to report,” the board said. “The story reported by the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* is lacking in true journalistic substance, and most of all the sources were offered and granted anonymity, allowing the story to be sensationalized. The VOE board stands firm in its decisions

and will continue to operate in true biblical godly integrity.”

Stephen Strang, Charisma founder and CEO, said at the time that, as a journalist for five decades, he knows better than to take accusations at face value. “There are journalists who love to sensationalize negative stories on ministries and disgruntled people who like to harass ministries,” he pointed out.

The *Times Free Press* says a TBI spokesperson confirmed its investigation of Stone “at the request of Steve Crump, district attorney general for Bradley, McMinn, Monroe and Polk counties, and that as of this week, the investigation is active. No further details about the investigation were provided.” Crump declined to comment on the situation.

The VOE board again questions the veracity of the *Times Free Press* report and stands behind Stone, noting that the team has worked with the internationally known evangelist to set “strong boundaries” around him, “including a seasoned accountability ministry team that meets with [him] regularly.”

Below is the full statement from the VOE board in full as received by Charisma News.

On March 29th, we received an email from Wyatt Massey with the Chattanooga Times Free Press notifying us that someone had provided him with six hours of recordings of some of the leadership meetings that took place a couple of years ago. We cannot of course verify the authenticity of said recordings. With today's advanced technology recordings can be altered and manipulated to say things that were never said. There is no doubt that the intention of his impending story is part of a coordinated smear campaign against [Stone]. The fact that someone secretly recorded these private meetings shows that person(s) malicious intentions. We have also been contacted by numerous concerned friends of the ministry that Mr. Massey

had contacted them, "I am the religion reporter with the Chattanooga Times Free Press. I have been speaking with former and current employees of Perry Stone/Voice of Evangelism to learn more about the ministry. Your name has come up in my previous conversations and I would like to get your perspective. Our conversation can be off the record, meaning no one would know we spoke and your name would not be included in anything I publish. Please let me know if you are interested and we can set up a time to talk." Anonymity without accountability gives people that ability to make false accusations.

The Voice of Evangelism Board "Ministry Leadership Team" has decided to make this statement continuing in the spirit of transparency and integrity about the events that took place two years ago and to also act as an extension of Perry himself.

As the Board previously stated, Perry had started to encounter serious health issues related to spiritual, emotional, and physical burnout. Doctors quickly determined that his blood pressure was at levels indicating the potential for a dangerous stroke. This demanded immediate attention and an independent team equipped to provide medical supervision to resolve these issues was employed. Perry was on the verge of a physical and mental breakdown. Through his forced leave of absence and counseling he recognized that his struggles with depression had caught up to him and that he needed to develop a new healthier lifestyle, which he has wholeheartedly embraced.

As the Ministry Leadership Team conducted its three-month long investigation two years ago, it became evident that some of the accusers wanted Perry permanently removed so they could be appointed by the Ministry Leadership Team as the new leaders. Comments were even made by the accusers that Pam Stone should also step aside in their attempt to get control of VOE, even though Pam did nothing wrong. The comments

through social media outlets are truly absurd accusations and absolute false statements being made regarding Perry and the Voice of Evangelism ministry. Defamatory and slanderous statements have even been made online by individuals that neither Pam or Perry have ever met or know. They are trying to increase their online following by making false and liable accusations. Even the late Billy Graham as well as other wonderful ministers have been attacked by them. Unfortunately, the woke culture that we live in gives people the illusion that they can spew untruths without impunity.

The Ministry Leadership Team took the proactive and justifiable measures at the time to place Perry on a six-month forced leave of absence. Although different time lengths for the forced leave of absence were discussed, after an extensive review the decision was made that six-month was appropriate. The investigation revealed that no acts of adultery were committed. Some of the accusations were withdrawn, some of which were not signed or identified as to authorship and others of which the Ministry Leadership Team found were not convincing or were otherwise unreliable.

In May of 2020, Perry publicly expressed his remorse, "I confess at times I've been inappropriate in all this weariness of just non-stop ministry ... I let my guard down and I've asked, of course, God, and others to forgive me for that." Seeking forgiveness is expressed through God himself.

In the heat of the moment and with emotions running high, words that were expressed in a private setting out of sincere concern for Perry are now being used to malign the ministry by Mr. Massey and others. Statements made by Perry, at the time of the recordings, were made by a hurting and distraught man who was in fear of losing his family and ministry over accusations. There were some that were demanding that Perry never preach again; the Ministry Leadership Team fiercely disagreed with those demands. Thankfully, we serve a loving and forgiving God who provides through His grace full

restoration.

The Ministry Leadership Team has worked with Perry to set in place strong boundaries including a seasoned accountability ministry team that meets with Perry regularly. The Ministry Leadership Team continues to evaluate his spiritual, emotional, and physical health and help to lead the ministry forward. Perry has humbly done everything that the Ministry Leadership Team has asked of him.

The Ministry Leadership Team of the Voice of Evangelism has not been contacted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or any other such investigative entity. Consistent with the findings of the Ministry Leadership Team and as a result of the allegations in early 2020, no one has made any accusations of any misconduct which would involve any considerations other than civil considerations. If contacted by any governmental agency we would cooperate fully.

Voice of Evangelism is committed to continuing to make substantial contributions to the betterment of the people of Southeast Tennessee and around the world. Once again, hundreds of thousands are hearing the love of God and the available gift of Salvation from the message delivered by Perry and other committed members of VOE.

The Ministry Leadership Team stands firm in its unwavering support of Pam, Perry, and the entire VOE ministry team. It will always continue to operate in true biblical Godly integrity. Please continue to pray for us as the ministry is experiencing unprecedented growth.

As we make this statement Pam and Perry are off celebrating their 40-year wedding anniversary. Their marriage is stronger than it's ever been.

As this story develops, Charisma News asks that you join our staff in prayer for the Stones, the Voice of Evangelism

ministry and for anyone affected by this challenging situation. {eoa}

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