

Ravi Zacharias' Daughter Fights Back at Criticism Levelled Against Ministry's Leadership

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Responding to scathing statements leveled at her and other leaders at Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, Naomi Zacharias says many allegations of failing to show “godly sorrow” nor “repentance for their actions” following the Ravi Zacharias abuse scandal are “categorically false.”

Naomi Zacharias, one of the daughters of the late apologist Ravi Zacharias, told Premier Christian News that “It is heart-breaking to read this,” she said of the statement released last week at , the apologetics ministry website of Mike Licona, an associate professor of theology at Houston Christian University, formerly Houston Baptist University.

In February 2021, renowned apologist and Bible teacher Ravi Zacharias who died in May 2020, through a thorough investigation, was found guilty of multiple instances of sexual misconduct and abuse. The investigative report said Zacharias lied in his 2017 statement that “I have never engaged in inappropriate behavior of any kind.”

reported that Licona and his wife, Debbie, are co-signers of the statement. Other signers are Paul Copan, professor of philosophy and ethics at Palm Beach Atlantic University; William Lane Craig, professor of philosophy at Houston Christian University and research professor of philosophy at Biola University's Talbot School of Theology; and Sean McDowell, associate professor in the Christian apologetics program at Biola University's Talbot School of Theology and

co-host of the Think Biblically podcast.

“A group of men that has neither church or organizational authority, nor the expertise to investigate things of this nature, unionized themselves as a self-appointed judge and jury, ultimately creating a club to gossip and print lies as truth,” Naomi Zacharias said. “There are so many categorically false statements, the only evidence is that 1,000 hours will not produce the truth to him who does not genuinely want it.”

The report specifically criticizes members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) formed by Sarah (Davis) Phillips, Michael Ramsden and Abdu Murray.

The statement released by read, in part:

We now submit our findings. This is not a comprehensive report of all that took place at RZIM, but rather a summary of the types of abuse and deception that were representative of RZIM’s organizational culture. Based on the evidence acquired from our inquiry, we have come to the following conclusions:

1. Numerous RZIM staff members globally who pushed back or asked legitimate questions during the period of 2017-21 were intimidated, mistreated or retaliated against by members of RZIM’s Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Those employees were doing what the SLT had a responsibility to do and failed to do.

2. Many of these RZIM employees subsequently went public with their concerns. To this day, Sarah (Davis) Phillips, Michael Ramsden and Abdu Murray assert that these employees were wrong in doing so. Michael Ramsden went further, stating that these employees were part of “The Resistance” to bring the ministry down. In contrast, Dr. Diane Langberg, who has worked for over 50 years with trauma victims, stated that, when abuse is occurring inside of a system, you have to go outside the system for justice. We believe these employees acted in a way that was morally necessary.

3. Regrettably, some former RZIM employees, as well as some leaders in the church and the apologetics community, have been influenced by Sarah (Davis) Phillips, Michael Ramsden and Abdu Murray to believe the worst about the employees who have raised public concerns. We acknowledge the pain (Davis) Phillips experienced as a result of her father's actions that warranted sympathy and support. However, because of their actions toward their employees, these three individuals have positioned themselves as "victims", rather than offenders, and have garnered undue sympathy and support. We believe this report provides a detailed and factual basis for reconsidering their narrative.

The rest of the allegations level against leaders at RIZM can be found here.

Sarah (Davis) Philips, Ramsden and Murray are all accused of "bullying" and "chastising" employees for raising "legitimate questions." Philips is specifically accused of reprimanding staff for "insubordination" and sidelining them for "challenging leadership."

Premier Christian News reported that while the report also acknowledges the trauma caused by the actions of her father and gives her credit for pushing for an internal investigation looking at the culture at RZIM, it argues that "being a victim of her father's actions does not excuse (Davis) Phillips for her own behavior toward RZIM employees."

"In what once began as claimed advocacy for truth and women, specifically, they now use their unique platform to inflict pain, destruction and frankly a relentless pummeling on a woman who has already suffered heart-shattering loss and trauma they can't possibly understand," Naomi Zacharias told Premier Christian News. "Instead of coming alongside her and working to bring healing, as Christ did, and helping her to somehow live, they issue yet another statement that attempts to humiliate, destroy, present lies as fact and prevent her

from surviving. Last I checked, she isn't applying to work with them.

"I see nothing biblical here, and if this is the current leadership of Christian apologetics and the search for truth, a meaningful defense of the gospel in the public square will not thrive. Perhaps they should also be grateful Peter, Paul, David and Deborah have not formed a committee to evaluate their qualifications for leadership of any kind." {eo}

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