

Sexual Abuse in the Church Needs to Stop!

I'm so absolutely grieved! So tired of reading about **sexual abuse scandals** in the **church**. Beyond all the pedophilia in the Catholic Church, there are plenty of Protestant sexual scandals making headlines. The sexual abuse in the church needs to stop!

The latest allegation comes against Jesus People USA in Chicago. A 90-minute documentary film, *No Place to Call Home*, puts the allegations on the big screen. *The Chicago Tribune* reports that Heather Kool, 38, has filed a lawsuit saying she was abused in the 1980s by members of Jesus People USA.

For all the high-profile cases, there are many smaller instances that we never hear about. In February, a man was indicted for sexually abusing a 6-year-old girl in a Mountain View church bathroom in Anchorage, Alaska. Also in February, a Maryland man was charged with sexually abusing a 15-year-old girl when he served as a deacon at Grace Apostolic Church.

Again in February, a Southwestern Illinois man was charged with four counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse on a teenager—and five other males have since come forward with similar complaints about the deacon at the First Baptist Church. And would you believe, in February, a Willow Creek Church volunteer in Chicago was charged with aggravated sexual abuse for molesting two boys. Also in February, a South Jersey church organist was charged with sexually abusing five boys in 30 days.

The reports just go on and on—and on. It's sickening. **Evangelicals** put so much effort into battling issues like **gay marriage** and **abortion**, which is all well and good, but where is the crusade against **sexual abuse** in the church? The secular

media is reporting these instances, but it seems unless it's a megachurch pastor or a celebrity preacher involved, cases of kids being molested in Protestant churches continue arising without much attention.

Church, sexual abuse in our sanctuary's backrooms and playgrounds is a bona fide epidemic. Again, for all the focus on pedophilia in the Catholic Church, it appears the Protestant church is rivaling priestly perversions. Lawsuits are now emerging from folks like Heather Kool—and more are bound make their way from the sanctuary to the courtroom, especially if Kool sees success and especially if the church refuses to keep sweeping these dirty little secrets under the rug.

In my book *The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel*, I point to one root of this sort of immorality. In **charismatic** circles, we call it the **spirit of Jezebel**, which is essentially a spirit of seduction that woos people into immorality and idolatry. (See Revelation 2:20.) Sexual predators carrying the Christian banner have been seduced and deceived by this spirit, which has somehow justified sexual abuse in their darkened minds. The **spirit of Jezebel** has formed a stronghold over our nation. Lester Sumrall warned about this before he went on to glory—and it's happening right before our eyes.

The sexual abuse in the church needs to stop! I urge anyone who has been sexually abused at the hand of a pastor, priest, deacon or anyone else who works in the church to rise up and speak out. Go to the police. File a lawsuit. Cry out to God for justice. It's time to clean house—and judgment begins in the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17).

The only way to defeat the **spirit of Jezebel** is to expose it and confront it. This seducing spirit is targeting the next generation, wounding their souls and leaving them open attacks from other spirits that could destroy their lives. Indeed, I

am convinced that many of these sexual abusers had broken, wounded hearts of their own—perhaps they were molested as children—and have given over to the lusts of the flesh through the temptations of seducing spirits that justify the behavior.

Whether you agree that spirits are influencing people to commit sexual crimes or not, can we agree that it's time for accountability in the house of God? Can we agree that the sexual abuse in the church needs to stop?

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