

Texas Megachurch Faces Backlash Over Traffic Light Debacle

An unofficial definition of integrity is “doing what is right, even when no one is looking.”

The book of Proverbs is filled with wisdom about living a righteous life that is pleasing to the Lord, including the guidance in chapter 11 verse three which reads, “The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perverseness of transgressors will destroy them.”

So when an email was made public from Texas megachurch Lifepointe Church’s Rockwell location encouraging congregants to game a traffic study that was being conducted, it did not sit well with many.

To begin with, the church had hired an engineering firm to work with them and the city to get a traffic light installed.

But instead of waiting for the organic results of the study to come back, an email was sent out to small-group leaders to get the results they wanted.

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According to Religion News Service, “On Friday (May 10), the church, one of the largest and fastest growing in the country according to Outreach Magazine, sent an email to small-group leaders, urging them to encourage group members to sign up for a driving shift during the five-day study in order to pad the numbers.”

Not exactly an honest approach to the traffic survey, but this is especially concerning coming from an organization that is

supposed to carry the name of Jesus Christ and the morals and righteousness that He represents.

“Each shift is a commitment to drive the prescribed route 10 times within that hour shift. It’s great if you make more than 10 laps within the hour, but laps are only counted toward that specific shift,” a leaked copy of the email reads.

RNS reported that shortly after the email went out, and two pastors of the church had signed up as drivers, the email was posted on social media and people did not take kindly to this practice.

In response, the church leadership responded to RNS with a statement saying that one staffer was responsible for the email, and that it was an “unfortunate decision.”

“That decision was made without knowledge by senior executive leadership at Lakepointe and the sign-up list was immediately taken down as we were made aware of what occurred,” Tim Smith, senior executive pastor, said in an emailed statement. “We immediately apologized to our city leaders who made the decision to postpone the traffic count. We are in the process of reaching out to all the leaders who received the sign up and are apologizing to them as well.”

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“We regret how this reflects on the body of Christ and its impact in our community,” Smith’s statement to RNS continued. “We love our city and have much respect for our leaders. We will continue to work with the city to make the traffic around Lakepointe as safe as possible.”

It is easy to get caught up in the way of the world, especially when we see people take shortcuts or game systems to benefit from them. It reduces the will to work hard and

honestly for something when so many others cheat and get rewarded for it.

But that is the plight of the Christian. To abide by the ways of God in a world that rejects Him and His design. We are called to rise above how the world does things and to abide in God's power, putting faith in Him to get us through life according to His riches and glory.

We do not need to risk besmirching His holy name for material things or to get what we personally want. We need to rise above the world, and if things do not go the way we want or hope for, then we press on and thank God for giving another day to grow His kingdom and living a life of victory in Christ Jesus.

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