

As Robert Morris Case Continues, How Should Christians Interpret Such Scandals?

Robert Morris, the disgraced pastor from Texas, just appeared in court for the first time since his tumultuous exit nearly a year ago from Gateway Church, the church he founded in 2000.

“It’s really sad and tragic when those things take place,” Jeff Schreve, an author and pastor based in Texarkana, said on a recent episode of “Faith vs. Culture,” referring to cases like the Morris scandal.

Breaking News. Spirit-Filled Stories. Subscribe to Charisma on YouTube now!

Morris’ dramatic fall from grace rocked not only the church’s massive congregation, but Christian culture writ large as the 63-year-old former pastor was accused by Cindy Clemishire of repeatedly sexually assaulting her in the 1980s, when she was just 12 years old.

After Clemishire leveled her accusations against Morris, he resigned from his post as lead pastor of the multisite Gateway Church based in Southlake, Texas. He was then indicted in mid-March by an Oklahoma multi-county grand jury on five felony counts of lewd and indecent acts with a child.

On May 9, he appeared in public for the first time since his ouster. The ex-minister showed up grinning for a hearing in Oklahoma, where Osage County Judge Cindy Pickerill set a preliminary hearing for Sept. 4.

Get your FREE CHARISMA NEWSLETTERS today! Stay up-to-date with

current issues, Holy Spirit news, Christian teachings, Charisma videos & more!

“How that guy thought he would not be disqualified from public pastoral ministry is beyond me,” said Schreve. “[I]t looks like he may go to prison; he should for what he did.”

/**/

The Southlake campus alone saw a significant decline in attendance and tithing contributions in the wake of the revelations about Morris. In an internal video leaked on Facebook in November of last year, one of Gateway’s three remaining elders, Kenneth Fambro, said tithes at the church had dropped by 35%-40% since Clemishire first revealed her allegations against the now-disgraced Morris.

Processing these kinds of stories can be overwhelming, even sparking theological and spiritual questions, casting clouds of doubt over some believers’ faith in God. Scandals of this magnitude are certainly not something most believers will face directly. Nevertheless, everyone will be met by disappointments and discouragements at some point in their lives.

Join Charisma Magazine Online to follow everything the Holy Spirit is doing around the world!

While Scripture makes it clear those in spiritual leadership will be “judged more strictly” and should be held appropriately accountable for their actions (James 3:1), Schreve encouraged Christians to remember “we all have feet of clay,” a reference to the Old Testament book of Daniel, and urged caution and discernment when it comes to spiritual authorities.

To read the full story, visit our content partners at Faithwire.

*Reprinted with permission from . Copyright © 2025 The
Christian Broadcasting Network Inc. All rights reserved.*