

Christian University Fires Theology Professor With History of Sexual Abuse

Cedarville University fired theology professor Dr. Anthony Moore after discovering more information about his past of sexual abuse.

Moore was fired three years after the Christian university originally learned of the sexual misconduct, which involved multiple instances of Moore secretly videotaping a male youth pastor while showering.

Investigative journalist Julie Roys reports that the university fired Moore when it came to light that his misconduct took place over a span of several months. Cedarville University President Dr. Thomas White tells Roys that the school hired Moore on a probationary basis with a five-year restoration plan. Moore worked as an assistant professor of theology and also volunteered as an assistant basketball coach.

According to a statement posted April 24, White was under the impression that Moore's sexual misconduct was not a habitual issue and was limited to two videos over a short period of time. He was also reportedly unaware of the unhealthy friendship between Moore and the victim.

But White found out on April 22 that the secret videotaping took place over at least six months and fired Moore the next day.

The abuse allegedly took place while Moore was pastor of The Village Church's Fort Worth campus. The church fired Moore in 2017, which Senior Pastor Matt Chandler said was for a "sin issue."

The youth pastor never pressed charges, though he did file a complaint with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office in October 2018. He tells Roys that he discovered he was being secretly filmed when he found a phone wrapped in a towel above the shower in January 2017. When he realized he was being recorded, he searched the phone and found four other videos of a similar nature.

But according to an interview with the youth pastor, Roys reports that the abuse went beyond secret filming and involved 10 years of "emotional, verbal and spiritual abuse." The youth pastor and Moore became close friends at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Moore quickly established a position of spiritual authority over him.

The youth pastor tells Roys that Moore tried to control him. When the youth pastor moved to Washington, D.C., Moore told him he would "kill himself" if the youth pastor didn't call him. Although the youth pastor realized Moore had an unhealthy dependence on him, he didn't think Moore struggled with same-sex attraction because he was a married father of three.

In a video addressed to the Cedarville University "family," White apologized for hiring Moore.

"I was motivated by the love of others, desire to radically live out the Gospel in my own life, and a prayer to see James 5:19 happen," he said. "I'm sorry that I brought Anthony Moore to Cedarville University. I did not know all the information at first. When we learned the new information, we took the action needed. Dr. Moore violated our agreement. There are no other plans for restoration like this on campus.

"Even though no incidents were reported by students, I'm recommending to the Board of Trustees that we hire an outside, independent agency to confirm that nothing inappropriate occurred on our campus, with that report to go directly back to the Board of Trustees."

But some are not satisfied with White's apology. A group called JusticeCollective posted an online petition calling for the university to fire White for his handling of the situation. The university has not yet responded to questions regarding the online petition, according to the Dayton Daily News.