

Creflo Dollar Denies Punching Daughter

Megachurch pastor **Creflo Dollar** addressed his congregation on Sunday morning, declaring his innocence amid charges that he choked and slapped his teenaged daughter.

Dollar walked on to the platform, received a standing ovation from thousands of people attending World Changers Church, and spoke to his congregation about the incident for about 10 minutes.

"I want you to hear it personally from me: All is well in the Dollar household," Dollar said. "A family conversation with our youngest daughter got emotional. Things escalated from there."

The faith preacher also insisted that his daughter "was not punched." "What a police report described as scratches on her neck were remnants of a long-ago case of eczema," Dollar said. "Anything else is exaggeration and sensationalism."

World Changers Church International member Naomi Lyles told Channel 2 Action News that Dollar did not commit the crime of which he has been accused: "I've raised children of my own, and being a parent is not easy. I'm 100 percent behind my pastor. He's human."

Police arrested Dollar on Friday, accusing him of hurting his 15-year-old daughter during an argument at home. He was officially charged with simple battery, family violence and cruelty to children and released on \$5,000 bond.

According to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Alexandria Dollar told deputies she saw her father grab her little sister by the shoulders and slap her in the face. She also said her sister tried to break free but was thrown to the ground, at

which point Alexandria ran to get her mother, Taffi. Taffi's presence reportedly put an end to the fight.

Alexandria later reversed her statement to sheriff's deputies on Friday.

"Like all of us who are parents, there are times when discipline and training our children can become very intense," Dollar said. "I would never approach one of my children to intentionally inflict bodily harm. I love her with all my heart."

Dollar then turned his attention to how the police handled the case, describing his emotion as "angry."

"I want to say this very emphatically: I should have never been arrested," Dollar said, noting that when the truth is revealed "you will be appalled."

Dollar ended discussion about the incident by reading from Psalm 35, which he says describes what has happened to him: "Malicious witnesses testify against me. They accuse me of crimes I know nothing about. They repay me evil for good ... I am attacked by people I don't even know. They slander me constantly. They mock me and call me names. They snarl at me. How long, oh Lord, will you look on and do nothing? Rescue me from their fierce attacks ... May those who rejoice at my troubles be humiliated and disgraced."

"Now, he concluded, "that's all I have to say about that. Let's get to the message that the enemy is trying to stop."

Click play to watch a video of Dollar speaking to his congregation on Sunday.