

Following Plagiarism Accusations, Mark Driscoll Apologizes for Mistakes

Nearly a month after he was first accused of plagiarism, Mark Driscoll apologized Wednesday in a statement from his publisher, Tyndale House.

"Mistakes were made that I am grieved by and apologize for," says the pastor at Mars Hill Church in Seattle. "As a Bible teacher, I know that Jesus loves us and uses everything for good. I know He cares very much that we do things in a way that reflects His glory. As a result, I have been praying that He would help me learn through all of this to become more like Him and more effective for Him."

Ron Beers, senior vice president and group publisher for Tyndale, says the company supports Driscoll.

"Because of the biblical manner in which Pastor Driscoll has handled this situation," Beers said in the same statement, "Tyndale strongly stands behind him and looks forward to publishing many additional books with him. Tyndale believes that Mark Driscoll has provided a significant call to Christians to unite together in translating the message of Jesus faithfully to a post-Christian culture, to proclaim clearly, loudly and unashamedly the Good News of Jesus."

On Nov. 21, syndicated Christian radio host Janet Mefferd interviewed Driscoll on her show to promote his new book, *A Call to Resurgence*. Tyndale arranged the phone interview, during which Mefferd accused Driscoll of quoting Peter Jones without proper citation in the book.

But the accusations did not end there. Mefferd posted on her social media pages photocopied evidence that Driscoll borrowed

material from D.A. Carson's *New Bible Commentary*—word for word, without proper citation—in his book *Trial 8: Witnesses from 1 & 2 Peter*.

“Since that time, both Mark Driscoll and Tyndale House have been asked to make statements addressing this issue,” the book publisher states. “While Tyndale has made two brief statements, it has spent much of the past three weeks looking carefully into these claims, as has Pastor Driscoll.

“Tyndale House and Mark Driscoll take any claims of plagiarism seriously. Tyndale does not condone it in any of its works, and if discovered, the company takes action to correct it immediately. Driscoll has consistently spoken out against plagiarism in his writing and publishing. If any mistakes are ever made in that regard, he is equally committed to correcting such errors as soon as they are discovered. Pastor Driscoll has fully cooperated with Tyndale and both have worked together to carefully investigate the issue with respect to *A Call to Resurgence*.”

The statement continues, “After taking the necessary and important time needed to investigate all aspects of this issue, Tyndale House Publishers has concluded the following:

“1. Pertaining to his Tyndale book, *A Call to Resurgence*, Tyndale believes that Mark Driscoll did indeed adequately cite the work of Peter Jones. While there are many nuanced definitions of plagiarism, most definitions agree that plagiarism is a writer's deliberate use of someone's words or ideas, and claiming them as their own with no intent to provide credit to the original source. Both Mark Driscoll and Tyndale completely agree that the above definition describes an ethical breach and therefore work hard to provide proper citation and to give credit where credit is due in all their works. Tyndale rejects the claims that Mark Driscoll tried to take Peter Jones's ideas and claim them as his own. Moreover, at Pastor Driscoll's invitation, Peter Jones has written on

the Resurgence website, and spoken at a Resurgence event, as well as a Mars Hill workshop. Quite the opposite of trying to take Peter Jones's ideas, Mark Driscoll has provided several opportunities for Peter Jones to publicly express his ideas to a large audience.

"2. In a separate issue unrelated to any Tyndale title, the radio host also made an allegation with regard to a study guide that was published in-house at Mars Hill. In this instance, Pastor Driscoll agrees that errors were made. He says:

"In recent weeks, it was brought to my attention that our 2009 Trial study guide on 1&2 Peter contained passages from an existing work for which no proper citation to the original work was provided. The error was unintentional, but serious nonetheless. I take responsibility for all of this. In order to make things right, we've contacted the publisher of the works used in the study guide, offered an apology, and agreed to work with them to resolve any issues they had. Also, I personally contacted one of the editors of the work that was not rightly attributed. Thankfully, he and I have a longstanding relationship, which includes him teaching at Mars Hill and publishing a book with us through Resurgence. He's a godly man who has been very gracious through all of this. I am deeply thankful for his acceptance of my apology, as I deeply grieve this mistake with a brother in Christ whom I appreciate very much.

"Our Full Council of Elders and Board of Advisors and Accountability have all been thoroughly informed, as I am gladly under authority both internally at Mars Hill to a team of Elders, and to a formal leadership team from outside of Mars Hill."

Beers adds, "To his credit, Mark Driscoll has moved quickly to make all necessary changes where mistakes were made in the study guide. Moreover, he has assured us that he has

personally spoken with the primary editor of a commentary that was inadvertently used in the study guide without adequate citation, and all parties spoken to have told Pastor Driscoll that they are satisfied with the steps he has taken to correct the errors.”

[Click here to read the statement in full.](#)