

Joel Osteen, Rick Warren Among Facebook Money Scammer Targets

As if they haven't caused enough pain and chaos, Internet scam artists have come up with a new sect of the public on which to prey these days: pastors and evangelists.

recently reported that high-profile Christian leaders like Joel Osteen, Rick Warren, Perry Noble, Craig Groeschel and Miles McPherson have warned their supporters about unauthorized Facebook pages that have been identified with their ministries. Scammers were reportedly using the fake accounts to solicit donations.

Other evangelists that have been targeted include John Hagee, Benny Hinn, Jamal Bryant and LifeWay Research President Ed Stetzer.

The Kansas City Star reported that local pastor Rev. Adam Hamilton, of the 18,000-member United Methodist Church of the Resurrection of Leawood, Kan., was a victim of a scammer who attempted to "con people into supporting phony church mission projects."

Hamilton told the *Star* he is angry and continues to warn his congregation about the scams.

"Somebody is using my pictures and my name in order to take advantage of other people and to hurt them," Hamilton said. "That makes me mad. It sounds like another Nigerian scam."

Hagee posted a video on YouTube warning his followers about the fake Facebook pages.

The *Star* also reported that a fake appeal on a Facebook page of Hawaiian pastor Wayne Cordeiro "persuaded at least one member of his congregation to wire \$1,000 to the scammer,

according to , which tracks fraud on the Internet.”

Osteen’s fake Facebook message asked for money for an orphanage. The Better Business Bureau’s website reported that the language used to convey the message is suspicious because it is in broken English. Osteen does not speak in broken English.

Before making a donation of any kind to any organization, the Better Business Bureau suggests that you check with their website about the organization, or you can check out .