

# Kong Hee's Church Clarifies Pastor's 'Apology From God'

Pastor Kong Hee of City Harvest Church in Singapore sparked outrage online with a YouTube video in which he seemed to be saying God was apologizing for his struggles. But his church says it is just a misunderstanding.

"As anyone with a basic education in the English language ought to be able to tell that the use of 'I'm so sorry' here is not in the context of an apology, but a word of comfort, for example, 'I'm so sorry about your mother's suffering,' or 'I'm so sorry you need to go through chemotherapy,'" say Pastor Kong's spokesperson, whose statement was emailed via City Harvest Church's corporate communications department.

"It is in no way an apology or admission of guilt as has been suggested. The message God gave Pastor Kong was that it is necessary for Pastor to journey through this painful experience because it is a refiner's fire, meant to prepare him for the work God has in store for him and the church for the future," the statement continues.

Yahoo! News reports the sermon is most likely from the 2012 C3 Presence conference, held in Sydney last April. This would have been before the news broke last June that Kong and five other church leaders were being investigated for embezzlement. Kong is accused of criminal breach of trust and misappropriating church building funds.

"Father, Father, why, my God, my God, why have You forsaken me and thrown me to the dogs?" Hee asked in the YouTube video after talking about the experience Jesus Christ went through on the cross at His crucifixion and saying he identified with that kind of suffering.

"For the first time in eight months, God—I heard Him cry, and

He said, 'My son, Kong, thank you. Thank you for going through this. I need you to go through this alone so that you and City Harvest Church can be the man and the ministry I call it to be. I'm so sorry, but you need to go through this by yourself to bring a change to your generation,'" Kong continued.

Applause was heard from the audience, and he continued: "I hear God saying, for the first time in eight months, 'I love you, I love you, I love you.' Waves upon waves of God's love—the love of the Father just saturated me. ... And I knew everything was going to be all right. Everything is going to be all right."

The video has received widely negative reactions. Since its posting on Friday, it was thumbed down more than 3,300 times, compared to less than 200 thumbs up. It has also gotten more than 1,700 comments, many of them scathing.