

Megachurch Pastor Ready to Slay 'Goliath' Cult of Scientology

A Florida megachurch pastor says he's ready to slay the cult of Scientology.

The "community has been tormented by this Goliath for far too long," Calvary Baptist Church Pastor Willy Rice says. "Someone has to pick up a rock and a slingshot and trust God with the results. We believe we are in a unique position in this community and should try to help."

The *Tampa Bay Times* reports the church was set to film a forum for *Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath* in their worship center later this month, but an A&E vice president say no such arrangement was made.

"We believe this represents an important, perhaps historic, opportunity to expose the cult of Scientology and the harm it has brought to our community and to many thousands of people," Rice wrote in a now-deleted blog post.

Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath was nominated for an Emmy.

"The show is inspired by Amy Scobee and her mother Bonny, who told her story from her hospice bed, and her wish was that we were able to stop Scientology and its disconnection policy from hurting families," Remini tells *Deadline*. "I think we've done her a service, because people are now not thinking that Scientology is something to be looked at. It's not something to make fun of and walk away from."

She continues: "I think people have now said, 'Hang on a second. This is actually their doctrine. This is actually what

they follow, and it is not innocuous,'" she continues. "It is actually hurtful and damaging, and I'm grateful that our peers have taken a look at this show and seen the bravery of these people speaking out, because there are repercussions to their actions. It's made me happy that voters are seeing the truth behind Scientology propaganda, and they have taken it in by even nominating us."

TBT reports Remini is not a member of Rice's congregation, but the pastor does have an "acquaintanceship with" former Scientology official Mike Rinder. {eoa}