

Passion for Truth's Jim Staley Admits to Cheating Elderly Investors

Jim Staley has pleaded guilty to four counts of wire fraud.

The controversial pastor of Passion for Truth Ministries admitted in court that he made more than a half-million dollars while cheating investors out of \$3.3 million.

U.S. assistant Attorney Diana Collins tells the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* most of the victims were elderly who wanted to invest in a nice pastor.

"Seniors tend to be more trusting and give people the benefit of the doubt, particularly people who hold themselves out as religious leaders," she says.

Staley released a video yesterday explaining why he chose to plead guilty: He says that the charges have nothing to do with his role in ministry, but date to his time working with an investment firm.

"During the course of my sales efforts to individuals with whom I'd had prior existing professional relationships, I made false statements and promises, which resulted in fraud charges," Staley says. "Consequently, 16 people lost a significant amount of money. ... I cannot begin to tell you how many sleepless nights I've had knowing my clients who trusted me suffered because of my actions. I accept full responsibility for these losses."

Staley has come under fire in his professional ministry for his involvement with the Hebrew Roots ministry.

According to the Hebrew Roots website, Staley "had a supernatural experience and began to looking at the Bible

through the Hebraic mindset, the mindset of the original authors. Eight years later, he has been dedicating his life to teaching others the same amazing life-changing Truths that have transformed him and his family.”

He created Passion For Truth around these beliefs.

“To know the Truth of the Scriptures from the perspective of the ones who wrote them, instead of the perspective of the Greek ‘church fathers’ or western-American denominationalism. It is our passion to dig into the Scriptures and understand them within the framework from which they were written without reading into them 1,800 years of church tradition and man-made doctrine,” according to the Hebrew Roots site.

He came to those conclusions nearly a decade ago, and has since changed his life around those thoughts.

As for his current charges, Staley says he thanks God he is not the same person he was seven years ago.

“It will be tempting to try to make conclusions and fill in gaps based on the information I’m giving you, as well as the news media,” Staley says. “Whatever, if any sensationalism is given to my story by the media, is out of my control. This has been extremely difficult on me and my family, and we are praying that the Father will somehow, someday have His way in all of this.”