

Mike Bickle: I Believe Joshua Harris and Marty Sampson's Stories Are Not Over Yet

Mike Bickle and other leaders at the International House of Prayer (IHOPKC) recently recorded a video response to recent reports that Christian leaders like Joshua Harris and Marty Sampson have fallen away from their Christian faith. (Sampson has since clarified his faith is on "shaky ground" but not yet renounced.) In the video, Bickle applauded Harris and Sampson for chasing truth and integrity and wrestling with their faith, and expressed hope that they would eventually return to Christianity.

"One thing that's really important is that for Marty or Joshua, either one, this isn't the end of the story," Bickle says. "I mean, good guys have hard moments. So I don't look at this and say 'This is that. It's over.' I say, 'No, Marty, Jesus loves you. We love you. We're standing with you as a human being, as a believer in the body of Christ all these years.' Yeah, you have a hard moment. You might say, 'Hey, it's more. I've already made some decisions.' But I know our heavenly Father, and there's a cry in your heart for the Lord.

"So this isn't the end of the story. We continue like we've always done: we show love and support. I don't mean support of wrong ideas, but support of the quest, the struggle, the journey. Because we're going to be there together in the ups and the downs. The Bible clearly talks about a falling away in the generation the Lord returns, but that doesn't mean [for] every individual that has a huge setback [that it's] the final chapter of their life. I'm still praying and believing, and if I had the chance to talk to them, I'd show love. I'd hug them. I'd say, 'Man, your hearts are hurting. I get it. I see a cry for honesty and integrity and being genuine. That is good. But

there's some wrong answers to that right cry. But again, the wrong answers aren't always the final answers.'"

Bickle added later that it's important to "honor the authentic questions, because truth is never hurt by questioning it." Yet he encourages believers who are strong in the faith not to lose heart when they see Christian leaders falling.

"Yes, some are stumbling and they don't have the answers and they're embracing wrong answers—but millions are not," he says. "So I would say we don't look at this one stumbling and say, 'That's my future.' We look at the one stumbling with compassion and tenderness, and if we're grounded in the world in a biblical community of godly relationships ... we can make it through those hard times together."

Bickle also confessed that the modern charismatic church can create these doubts in people because of its emphasis on hype. Though he does not attribute any malice or ill will to people who exaggerate, he admits it's a big problem.

"Here's what I think troubles people: It's hype," Bickle says. "I'm a part of the charismatic community in terms of experience. I appreciate that part of the body of Christ. But I am troubled by how much hype is in some of the charismatic camps—meaning the exaggeration on the stage, the manipulation, the overstating things. Forcing people to buy into 'Are you feeling the power?' And they [have to say] 'Yeah' or they feel rejected if they don't say, 'Yeah.'"

"I think a lot of stuff is fake. I don't think it's charlatan deceivers. I think it's people saying, 'I don't want to be left out. I don't want to be left behind. Yeah, I did a miracle, I think, sort of, kind of.' You don't need to do that. We don't need to help the Lord by faking manifestations, faking healings, overstating healings. The numbers are more than they were more before, and they're going to really increase, and they're not at the level we want. But I don't

buy a whole lot of testimonies.

“There’s real ones, and I’m not throwing out the baby with the bathwater. [Just] because there’s fake preachers that manipulate crowds and because there’s fake manifestations and fake healings, it doesn’t mean they’re all fake. To me, I work through. I want to see the gold in the midst of all the rust and the negative. If you’re only looking at the fake, you’re going to miss a lot, because there’s a greater story going on. The gold is there. And it is increasing.”

To watch Bickle’s full video response, watch the embedded video [here](#).