

Rick Joyner Denies Todd Bentley 'Cover-Up,' Urges Independent Investigation

Rick Joyner broadcasted live on Facebook Wednesday afternoon to address lingering questions surrounding public accusations against evangelist Todd Bentley and Joyner's own involvement in the ensuing controversy. Joyner denied all allegations that he was part of a Bentley "cover-up," and encouraged the creation of a third-party council of Christian arbiters who could determine the truth of the matter.

On August 22, Stephen Powell accused Bentley of "sexual perversion" involving both male and female interns. Powell said Bentley got drunk, looked at pornography, used crude language and offered a male intern money in exchange for sex. Bentley has denied these allegations, calling some of them wild exaggerations and others complete fabrications.

Joyner was part of a "healing team" created for Bentley in 2008, after Bentley stepped down from ministry due to an affair. Powell has accused Joyner of overlooking Bentley's sins and not disciplining him properly.

In the video, which was hashtagged #RicksRant, Joyner said he has had lunch with Todd and Jessa Bentley, who told him they have been "falsely accused." He said he has no spiritual authority over Todd but does still consider him a brother in Christ. Joyner also said the Bentleys consider him to be their spiritual father.

"I had lunch with Todd and Jessa yesterday," Joyner said. "You know, they're struggling. They really could use your prayers. You could imagine what they would feel like, and even if you think they're guilty, this is not the way things are supposed to be done. They feel like they've been falsely accused of

just horrendous things. They've been convicted and found guilty. I got together with them to encourage them that there may be a way for them to be exonerated or found guilty. I made it clear. I said, 'Any of the stuff you're guilty of, it's going to be found out.'"

Joyner also flatly denied allegations that he has been protecting Bentley or covering up his misdeeds.

"Personally, I've been accused of covering up stuff," Joyner said. "I've never wanted to cover up a single thing for Todd's sake, for their sake. Anything that isn't true—for their sake, it needs to come to the light."

Joyner did not say whether he believed the allegations against Bentley, instead suggesting that "biblical due process" through some sort of governing judge or judges should be implemented.

On Wednesday, Dr. Michael Brown said he would "assemble a group of trusted and respected men of God who will review the charges against Todd and make a determination, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 6." Joyner said he and Brown independently arrived at that same conclusion, and urged people to pray for the council of arbiters.

"I feel like it is really the Lord moving [Brown]," Joyner said. "He had some good ideas for people who should sit on [this council]. He didn't think he should sit on it and be a judge in this situation. I don't think I should be. I'm too engaged. I know too much. I shouldn't be. Even in a regular court, I should be recused. I think the process is just beginning. I have great hope for it."

Joyner said he fears without established arbiters, many more ministries will be attacked and scandalized in the coming years. He expressed once again his distaste for public accusations.

"I think without this [council] happening, we're going to have increasingly devastating attacks on people," Joyner said. "Ministries [will be] destroyed, brought down—some of them may deserve it. Some of them may need it. But that's not the way it should be done. And when it's done the wrong way, far more people are hurt. We've got to learn in my opinion to not be quick to convict and condemn until people have been subjected to biblical due process. ... You may be right in your accusations, but you have opened yourselves wide to the accuser. Look at all the ministries that have been devastated by doing that."

Joyner said that if this council is successful—and sets a precedent for handling future church scandals—"all the controversy" will be "worth it." He also said he may not be blameless, though he did not know what he might be guilty of.

"I want to go back and check," Joyner says. "I've been challenged on some things. I may have fouled up or violated some things myself. If so, you would have a rant with me apologizing for those things. But if this process continues, and I believe it has been a valid due process, you probably won't hear from me any more about this."