

## CHAPTER 1

### PASTORAL ATTRITION AND PERSONAL MOTIVATION

My heart became deeply motivated to study the growing trend of pastoral attrition after my church, my family, and I experienced a unique set of trials and a period of adversity that stretched into a five-year roller coaster of difficulties. It was cathartic to embark on this study—as difficult as the subject matter is—in view of my personal experience. Now I invite you to join me. As we study the reasons for pastoral attrition, we will hear, repeatedly, the oft-cited reason for collapse or quitting: “ministry pressure.” This is certainly a source of stress and difficulty, but it is not a credible reason for *leaving* the ministry. God’s grace is sufficient to carry us through the most difficult of circumstances. The spiritual giants profiled in chapter 6 prove that God’s promises can be counted on regardless of the arduous task of our ministries. My personal experience is another reminder of how the Lord can sustain and even open larger doors of ministry service through what is perceived as the worst disappointments. It is this personal motivation that prompted me to include here the details of my own ministry challenge along with the honest recommendations that spring from what I learned. There is no specific seminary course that covered the tumultuous terrain I found myself in as I labored to build a church for Jesus Christ. Acadia Divinity College’s Doctor of Ministry Handbook clarifies exactly what the D. Min. degree is. In addition to being a professional, advanced, and practical degree, it is also an *integrated* degree. I am deeply grateful that ADC recognizes that

[w]ithout a broad basis of experience, it is near impossible for the student to realize fully the application of all that he or she learns in the practice of

ministry. However, with strong experience in ministry at the DMIN level, the individual will be called upon to integrate experience and learning through theological reflection, advanced learning, and peer interaction.<sup>1</sup>

This certainly has been my personal experience.

Congregational conflict has caused the exhaustion and termination of thousands of pastors. Consequently, a reexamination of church polity is needed in order to insure biblical adherence, financial and personal accountability, and support to the pastor to energize his vision as the senior leader. Archaic church bureaucracy, which serves no purpose in facilitating the effective evangelism and discipleship of a community of believers, must be replaced. In my personal story, included in this chapter, it was the effective form of congregational representation governance by Elders that protected my family, and me as a pastor, from a stressful event of such a magnitude that it could have caused the end of my ministry. I express the deepest gratitude to the Elders who served throughout and endured months of an excruciating trial. Gratefully, we realize now that our entire experience has made us stronger, wiser, and left us in a position to be strategically helpful to other pastors.

In Latin, the word *pastor* means “shepherd” or “herdsman.” The word *pastor* is derived from the Latin word, *pascere*, which means “to pasture” or “to feed.” The pastor who feeds is also the pastor who must lead. The one who leads must have an ability to lead. Some pastors innately have the gift or trait of leadership. Others do not and need to augment their ministry skills every year by participating in a worthy conference or by reading books on leadership. Paul recognized leadership as a spiritual gift and insisted

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<sup>1</sup> *Doctor of Ministry Handbook*, Revised September 2011, (Acadia Divinity College: Wolfville, NS), 1.

that it should be done with “diligence” (Romans 12:8). Wise, determined, strong, loving leadership can make the decided difference in church health, growth, trials, and pastoral longevity.

### **Church Polity**

Every year, congregational conflict and dissension lead to the demise and dismissal of thousands of clergy. Pastors’ emotional and physical well-being, and the longevity of their ministry is directly related to a cohesive, biblical form of church governance that operates in unity and harmony. Increasingly, new, innovative pastors who start churches are opting out of traditional, evangelical Christian denominational affiliations, several of which have bureaucratic, archaic forms of church government. Talented, cutting-edge pastors who desire to start churches that impact their communities and reach the lost have developed bylaws and articles of incorporation for their churches, seeking to establish financial accountability while at the same time dispensing with congregational parliamentary procedures and monthly business meetings that allow dissenting or myopic church members to create potential problems. Most of the effective, growing churches I know and researched have replaced “committees” with “ministries.” They qualify participants according to their spiritual gifting, not by the duration of church attendance, familial relation, or other reason unrelated to the needs of the ministry. In my opinion, the old polity of the Southern Baptist Convention is one of the current reasons for the documented decline in clergy within it, the nation’s largest Protestant denomination. Gifted, talented pastors, who have a passion to reach the lost in their cities, are simply unwilling to play “church games” and “ego games,” which are inbred in the

old polity and which hinder evangelism. As a pastor who both founded and built a mega-church, I know firsthand that most churches in the United States that begin to grow beyond 1,000 attendees either have already adopted new church bylaws or have begun the painful process of changing the old bylaws that were formed when the church was smaller and less significant in size and influence.

Pastors must clearly investigate and understand church polity and procedures prior to the acceptance of a call to the pastorate. Ministers who start churches would be wise to examine, as I did over a period of one year, the bylaws and articles of incorporation of the most effective, biblical, people-reaching churches in the nation and then seek to emulate them. It would be helpful if a Christian attorney would review the implications of the bylaws and articles of incorporation with the prospective pastor, assisting him in his clear comprehension of all of their respective implications for governance. The unpredictable variables of church members' and attendees' behavior create literally a myriad of different dynamics and difficulties which, when combined, will affect how the church is structured to respond to a host of possibilities, problems, and personnel issues—all of which will affect the ministry of the pastor. Church members do not automatically develop an affinity for a new pastor, particularly if he or she is not the founding pastor. The honeymoon, generally, is short-lived and, again, the response of the church is contingent on church governance. Gary Pinion, who successfully served as a pastor, is the author of *Crushed: The Perilous Side of Ministry*. He now ministers to damaged pastors all over the nation. Pinion related the story of how church polity affected one pastor's future ministry. This story could be told thousands of times:

Five years ago this week I moved my family into a beautiful home in the Mid-South hoping for the pastoral experience that I would talk about for a lifetime. I had left one organization of churches for another looking for ‘ministry at the next level.’ We began with a 96 percent call, over a half a million dollars in the bank, a seemingly competent church staff and a pastoral search committee claiming, ‘All this church needs is a good leader.’ They boasted they had no problems in the church, and they were ready to build. The Sunday evening of our candidacy, I was answering questions and I noticed one couple that seemed to have a ‘barb’ in their words as they questioned me. We went to work through our honeymoon period and did our best to enable most of the 26 committees in the church. The former pastor had remained a key part of the church and much of his family held key positions. I was elected to the Vice Moderator position of our local churches and soon became chairman of their finance committee. Our church was standing room only, and we went to two services. Things were on a roll! Somewhere about that time, two or three of the 16 deacons began guerrilla warfare behind the scenes, second-guessing the few leadership moves we were making. After an incident on a trip with our youth, I found myself defending the action that had been taken in correcting and training our student ministries director. Our two services were growing with regular decisions being made in the blended service and our offerings were spilling over into our contingency accounts. Twenty-one months into our pastorate, I was asked at the end of the service, while I was shaking hands, if I would go immediately to my office. There in my office were 21 men who were asking for my resignation by 5:00 p.m. that evening. If I were to do so, then I would receive six months salary as severance. I called aside one of the men in the group who I thought was my friend (he was also the assistant chief of police of a large metropolitan city) and asked, ‘Why?’ He could not give any reason, biblical or otherwise, and was somewhat embarrassed to be part of the whole thing. Soon there was a confidence vote on my ministry and the church was much divided. There were just enough votes to allow me to continue. The emotions were high and I asked our denomination to help us through a mediation process. For a year we bartered back and forth. The building fund had become a sacred cow and the \$50,000 worth of architectural plans for a 600-seat sanctuary had become obsolete. We went on to remodel the existing chapel and watched the people devour one another. Today I sit begging God for another worthy ministry and some repair for my wife and children. It’s almost comical to realize 17 years ago, in graduate school, the theme I chose for my dissertation was, ‘The Evaluation and Suggested Designs for Coping in the Ministry.’ Who would have known!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gary Pinion, *Crushed: The Perilous Side of Ministry* (Springfield, MO: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Press, 2005), 45-47.

On a personal note, Dr. Pinion attempted unsuccessfully to contact me to write an endorsement for his book. He later sent me a copy, which was placed on a shelf in my library at home. At the time, a disgruntled former church member, with the help of one or more people, had written outrageous, defamatory statements about our church and me personally on an Internet blog. Randomly, my wife picked up Gary's book, *Crushed*, and read it on the plane during one of our trips. Cristie was stirred to tears. I vividly remember watching her weep in the plane seat as she read the book, and I quizzed her about its content. Cristie later called Gary to thank him for writing *Crushed*, and I was stirred to invite him to come speak at our church. Months later, when Gary came to town, I gave him the name of the blogger waging war on my church—and character—for the whole world to read on the World Wide Web. Ironically, Gary had pastored the same man years earlier in a small town in Kansas, where the man had been convicted of a felony. As part of his weekend ministry to our church, Gary felt led of the Lord to go and see this man and to ask him to stop his assault on our church. His intervention proved successful and timely for the greatest trial of ministry Cristie and I had ever experienced in 32 years of serving the Lord.

### **Abortion Practices in Kansas**

Humbly, in all my research to date on pastors who have experienced the pressures of ministry, I have not read one story similar to my own. It holds many vital lessons for pastors and others. After 17 years (1979–1996) of itinerate evangelistic work throughout the world, God led me to found a church in my hometown of Overland Park, Kansas. The

church became one of the fastest-growing churches in the nation, growing from zero members to 4,200 in twelve years. In addition, we built a 140,000-sq. ft., multi-functional campus on 51 prime acres in south Johnson County, KS, one of the most affluent counties in the United States. In 2007, unexpectedly, our growth was stymied by a synchronized, high-level, orchestrated, vicious attack. Only eternity will reveal exactly who were the persons behind the scenes trying to silence the outreach and ministry of our church.

Kansas history is rooted in the Wild West: a land of gunmen, outlaw gangs, cattle drives, and pioneer trails west to destinations like Santa Fe, California, and Oregon. Dodge City was notorious for gunslingers and lawmen like Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp. In 1930, the Kansas City Massacre involved the attempt by Charles Arthur “Pretty Boy” Floyd, Vernon Miller, and Adam Richetti to free their friend, Frank Nash, a federal prisoner. At the time, Nash was in the custody of several law enforcement officers who were returning him to the U.S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. The story of the American Mafia is not complete without a chapter on Kansas City. The City of Fountains has appeared in *The Godfather*, *Casino*, and *The Sopranos*, but many people are not aware that Kansas City has affected the fortunes of the entire underworld. “Bloody Kansas” was the battleground between pro- and anti-slavery forces 150 years ago, and it was the epicenter of the abortion conflict in America.

Kansas has been referred to as “the abortion capital of the world,” due to the hero of abortion providers nationally, Dr. George Tiller, former alcoholic, married to Jeanne, father of four, and grandfather of 10. A former Navy flight surgeon, Tiller was the son of a prominent Wichita physician. In 1970, the plane Tiller’s father was piloting near

Yellowstone National Park crashed, killing everyone on board. George came back to Kansas to adopt his sister's child and eventually took over his father's practice. He discovered that his dad had performed a significant number of abortions<sup>3</sup> before they were legal. What a sad legacy his dad left for him to follow.

Only Lloyd's of London would insure his Wichita clinic, now closed. Tiller had worked slowly and deliberately for more than three decades to refine the techniques of late-second- or third-trimester abortions (at a cost of \$6,000 each). Tiller, the leading doctor of only three, late-term abortionists in the U.S., had significant experience and would perform abortions after 25 weeks gestation (since 1998, state statistics show that Tiller performed 4,800 late term abortions; 60,000 abortions total in his career). His expertise with the gruesome procedure and his visibility made him a one-man international referral center widely advertised for post-viability abortions, and women came from across the nation, and from Canada, Japan, England, South America, and China. The informative video played for patients to prep them prior to the procedure inside the clinic had been translated into Mandarin, French, and German. At one time, Tiller's website acknowledged that he aborted babes at 37 weeks gestational age (that's nine months). He listed disorders that he said were among the conditions which justified aborting babies. Several of these maladies were non-fatal; others only mildly disabling. Tiller also matter-of-factly observed that the average age of the more than 1,000 late-term

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<sup>3</sup> "Anti-abortion activists routinely portrayed Dr. Tiller's campaign contributions as 'blood money' that co-opted politicians. 'He owned the attorney general's office,' Mr. Newman said. 'He owned the governor's office. He owned the district attorney's office.' David Barstow, "An Abortion Battle, Fought to the Death," *The New York Times* (July 25, 2009), [www.nytimes.com/2009/07/26/us/26tiller.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1&ref=georgertiller](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/26/us/26tiller.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1&ref=georgertiller). (accessed March 9, 2012).



babies he had aborted was 27 weeks (seven months). “Preemies,” babies born at 24 and 25 weeks’ gestation, survive in the neonatal intensive care units of hospitals.

Trisomy 21 is the scientific name for Down (or Down’s) Syndrome: this was one of the conditions for which Tiller said he “terminates” Pregnancies. He referred to the “crematorium located at our center,” a stark evocation of an infants’ Auschwitz. Tiller allowed women to take pictures with their dead babies after they had recovered from anesthesia, and offered them the opportunity to obtain a “family photo” holding their dead babies. He even had a chaplain on retainer, who would come and perform post-mortem baptisms on dead babies he had aborted, if a mother so desired. If these are babies with souls, why wasn’t this infanticide?

Tiller was renowned for two high-risk techniques: dilation and evacuation for late second-trimester abortion and labor-induction abortions. In a D&E, Tiller medically opened the woman’s cervix and introduced a large grasping forceps, such as a Bierer or Hern, into the corpus of the uterus. When the instrument appeared on the sonogram screen, he was able to open and close its jaws firmly and reliably grasp the lower extremity of the baby. He then applied firm traction to the instrument and caused aversion of the fetus (if necessary) and pulled the extremity into the vagina. Tiller then used his fingers to deliver the opposite lower extremity, then the torso, the shoulders and the upper extremities. The skull lodged at the internal cervical opening. The baby is oriented dorsum or spine up. At this point, Tiller slid the fingers of his left hand along the back of the baby and hooked the shoulders of the fetus with the index and ring fingers (palm down). While maintaining this tension, lifting the cervix, and applying traction to the shoulders with the fingers of the left hand, he would take a pair of blunt curved

Metzenbaum scissors in the right hand. Tiller carefully advanced the tip, curved down, along the spine and under his middle finger until he felt it contact the base of the skull under the tip of his middle finger. He would then force the scissors into the base of the skull or into the foramen magnum. Having safely entered the skull, he would spread the scissors to enlarge the opening. Tiller then removed the scissors and introduced a suction catheter into this hole and evacuated the skull contents. With the catheter still in place, he applied traction to the fetus and removed it completely from the woman.

This procedure is incomprehensible to understand in civilized terms. The procedure cannot be sanitized or legitimized. The reality of partial-birth abortions, like all abortions, makes it irrefutable that they brutally kill a human child—fetal pain has been documented. It is all simply unimaginable, and it is protected by the laws of the state of Kansas. Doctors around the country sent patients to Tiller because of his mastery in performing the D&E procedure on larger babies. Still other abortion providers referred post-viability-abortion (babies able to survive outside the uterus) seekers to Tiller because they feared prosecution.

The induction abortion Tiller would perform would take three to four days to complete. On the first day, the woman was given an ultrasound to determine the gestational age of her baby. Then, with the aid of the ultrasound to guide Tiller, he would inject a lethal dose of the heart medication Digoxin into the baby's heart directly through the woman's abdomen. Digoxin would cause the baby to have a fatal heart attack. This is an off-label application of the drug, which was developed and approved as a treatment for heart disease.

In the beginning, I had no idea of how, and with what vast influence and money, Tiller financed pro-abortion politicians.

### **Definition of Marriage in Kansas**

In 2004, Joe Wright, at the time senior pastor of Central Christian Church in Wichita, Kansas, came to my office in Overland Park and asked me to help secure the passage of the marriage amendment to the Kansas State constitution, an amendment which would define marriage as that of one man and one woman. Joe was a much older pastor whom I had respected for many years; he had built a vibrant church of over 3,000 people.

The Kansas Marriage Amendment was a legislatively referred constitutional amendment. It appeared on an April 5, 2005 ballot in Kansas; it was passed with 70 percent of voters in favor. The bill had initially stalled in the Kansas House of Representatives, but it later passed in 104 of the state's 105 counties, including many traditional Democratic strongholds. In Wichita, voters approved the amendment by a margin of 91 percent. The enactment of this amendment meant that the Kansas constitution was changed, through the addition of language that defines marriage as “a civil contract between one man and one woman only,” and also by declaring that “any other marriage is contrary to public policy and void.” The amendment also prohibits the state from recognizing any other legal relationship that would “entitle the parties in the relationship to the rights or incidents of marriage.”

## Media Retaliation

Three strategic clergy gatherings I organized, with over 1,300 pastors and staff ministers in attendance, helped the amendment to be approved by Kansas's voters. Unbeknownst to me, in the wake of this vote, our local newspaper<sup>4</sup> assigned a reporter (a former over-the-road female trucker and *Wichita Eagle* reporter<sup>5</sup>) to investigate me for nearly one year. This resulted in the publication of an extensive Sunday cover feature story in March of 2007, claiming that people were leaving our church because of concerns about finances. Her nonsensical article alleged that this happened in a year in which we added 1,400 members. In the reporter's numerous additional, alarmist and unfounded stories, she found people who signed affidavits alleging that I had "raised \$10 million dollars and bought my children houses." The repeated and unfounded press attacks (nearly 20 different published articles) against my family, my wife, my church, and me, seemed to have been designed to trigger an investigation of us by the Consumer Protection Division of the state of Kansas. The reporter and her antagonists were successful.

Phill Kline, a Republican, was Attorney General of Kansas from January 2003 to January 2007. In December 2005 and April 2006, he successfully argued before the Supreme Court of the United States in *Kansas vs. March*, wherein the Court reversed a ruling made by the Kansas Supreme Court that the state's death penalty was unconstitutional. Paul Morrison, who followed Kline, was sworn in as the forty-second Attorney General of Kansas, following a 26-year career in law enforcement. He had a

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<sup>4</sup> The Kansas City Star is owned by the McClatchy Company based in Sacramento, CA whose stock was trading @ \$2.59 in February 2012 (NYSE: MNI). Newspapers are dying in the United States and revert to shock journalism as an attempt to survive. In our digital age, their doom is sure.

<sup>5</sup> This same antagonistic reporter wrote erroneous stories against the Roman Catholic Church, which have been repudiated by respected journalists.

previously served as the District Attorney for Johnson County, Kansas (where I pastored) from 1990 until January 2007. In 2005, Morrison switched from the Republican to the Democratic Party and announced that he would challenge Republican Phill Kline (a Christian, pro-life conservative, and friend of mine) in 2006 for Attorney General. Paul Morrison was recruited by Democratic Governor Kathleen Sebelius and announced that he believed that then Attorney General Kline was conducting a witch-hunt against the abortion industry. Morrison indicated, in September 2006, that he would end the investigation if elected. In 2004, as Attorney General, Phill Kline had taken aim at Tiller, who had previously seemed untouchable. Kline subpoenaed the case files of 60 women and girls who had late-term abortions performed at Dr. Tiller's clinic. He also sought 30 files from Planned Parenthood in Overland Park and led a multi-year effort to prosecute the organization for violations. Kline's office's investigation had revealed that, during a time when 166 abortions were performed on children in Kansas, Planned Parenthood had only reported one case of child molestation. However, evidence relating to violations of the law committed by Planned Parenthood was very difficult to secure. The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) and Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), both controlled by the staunchly pro-abortion Sebelius,<sup>6</sup> fought to keep Kline from securing the relevant records. The courts eventually agreed with Kline, and SRS and KDHE were forced to turn over the documents. Among those records were reports on each abortion performed in Kansas, reports that abortion clinics were required to file. Kline kept copies of those records and then, in 2004, subpoenaed Planned

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<sup>6</sup> Tiller, personally, and through his ProKanDo PAC bankrolled Kathleen Sebeilus political career. See complete multi-year documentation: E. F. Glynn, "Summary of Gov. Sebelius, Dr. George Tiller, ProKanDo PAC information," *Kansas Meadowlark* (Mar 3, 2011), [kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/03/sebelius-tiller-prokando](http://kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/03/sebelius-tiller-prokando) (accessed March 12, 2012).

Parenthood for its own records. Planned Parenthood<sup>7</sup> delayed complying until it received a court order two years later, and when it did some of the reports provided by Planned Parenthood did not match the originals that KDHE had provided. Instead, they had been filed, with language—that a later evaluation conducted by Johns Hopkins would bring into serious question—where legitimate medical reasons were supposed to be supplied.<sup>8</sup> However, on November 7, 2006, the pro-choice Morrison defeated Kline with 58 percent of the vote. More than \$1.5 million in campaign support money for Morrison came from pro-abortion groups.

### **Kansas Politics Relating to Abortion**

In August 2006, a Lawrence attorney, Jeffrey Stowell, incorporated a new nonprofit group, Kansans for Consumer Privacy Protection. Its directors were Burkhart and Linda Joslin, and in an October 2006 statement filed with the Secretary of State's Office both were named treasurer of ProKanDo (Tiller's political action committee<sup>9</sup>). The address of

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<sup>7</sup> “According to their own recently released 2009-10 annual report, Planned Parenthood performed more than 329,000 abortions. Conservatively estimating that each abortion cost \$450, abortion services brought in \$148 million of Planned Parenthood's overall \$320 million in clinic revenue, representing 46 percent of its operating budget. The evidence is even more convincing considering that Planned Parenthood has issued a mandate stating that each of its affiliates must have at least one clinic offering abortion services by 2013. Clinics that provide abortions are given ‘abortion quotas’ to be reached each month,” Sue Thayer, “Planned Parenthood's big lie,” *The Washington Times* [www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/31/planned-parenthoods-big-lie](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/31/planned-parenthoods-big-lie), posted January 31, 2012 (accessed March 12, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> The 2011 pre-trial hearing for Planned Parenthood revealed the KDHE had destroyed its original copies of the 23 abortion reports in question. In 2009, Sebelius appointee Attorney General Stephen Six (who replaced Morrison) shredded documents related to the investigation that had been provided to the office during Kline's tenure. The American Life League, the largest grassroots Catholic pro-life education organization in the United States, has produced a video, “She Said, He Shred,” [youtu.be/GCS4HPxs6BQ](http://youtu.be/GCS4HPxs6BQ) (accessed March 12, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> A political action committee (PAC) is a type of political committee organized to spend money for the election or defeat of a candidate. Most of the 4,600 active, registered PACs are ‘connected PACs’ established by businesses, labor unions, trade groups, or health organizations. These PACs receive and raise money from a ‘restricted class,’ generally consisting of managers and shareholders in the case of a corporation and members in the case of a union or other interest group. As of January 2009, there were 1,598 registered corporate PACs, 272 related to labor unions and 995 to trade organizations. Questions are

the nonprofit, provided in its articles of incorporation, was the same as ProKanDo's address. Kansans for Consumer Privacy Protection spent more than \$400,000 on "educational mailings" dedicated to unseating Phill Kline.<sup>10</sup> Its efforts spawned a sister group and a postcard campaign against Kline, and it nicknamed him "Snoop Dog" for seeking records of patients at Tiller's clinic and another in Overland Park. Kansans for Lifesaving Cures, a Lawrence group that backed human embryonic stem cell research, spent almost \$264,000 on direct mail, including postcards criticizing Kline. Under state law, groups that don't "expressly advocate" for a candidate's election or defeat don't have to publicly disclose their contributors or spending. The mailings did not trigger the reporting requirement because they didn't use a "magic" phrase, such as "vote for" or "oppose."<sup>11</sup> Almost all of the \$454,000 the PAC raised came from the couple that founded the Stowers Institute<sup>12</sup> for bioscience research in Kansas City, Missouri.<sup>13</sup>

Morrison won the election and took office on January 8, 2007. Millions were spent on this election: Kline spent \$1.43 million, which would have been a record for an

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asked if PACs can "buy" elections in the United States. There are federal and state PACs. Kansas has approximately 220 state PACs.

<sup>10</sup> Robert D. Novak, "A New Front in the Abortion Wars," *Washington Post* (Oct 25, 2007), [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/24/AR2007102402345.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/24/AR2007102402345.html) (accessed March 7, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> Scott Rothschild, "Kansas gets 'F' in campaign finance disclosure," *The Lawrence World-Journal* (Sept 20, 2003), [www2.ljworld.com/news/2003/sep/20/kansas\\_gets\\_f](http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2003/sep/20/kansas_gets_f) (accessed March 12, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> "The campaign for the embryonic stem cell initiative has been funded almost exclusively by James and Virginia Stowers and their Stowers Institute for Medical Research in Kansas City, according to the Associated Press (AP). The Stowers had already contributed \$9.5 million by May 17, including \$4 million that was spent to collect signatures to get the initiative on the ballot, the AP reported." Liz Townsend, "Deceptive Cloning Initiative on November Ballot," *National Right to Life News* (Sept 2006), [www.priestsforlife.org/legislation/missouri-amendment-nrtl.htm](http://www.priestsforlife.org/legislation/missouri-amendment-nrtl.htm) (accessed March 9, 2012). The Stowers spent \$30 million to change the Missouri Constitution. See Monica Davey, "Stem Cell Amendment Changes Little in Missouri," *New York Times* (Aug 10, 2007), [www.nytimes.com/2007/08/10/us/10stemcell.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/10/us/10stemcell.html).

<sup>13</sup> John Hanna, "Tiller's influence on state debated," *The Topeka Capital Journal* (June 23, 2007), [cjonline.com/stories/062307/sta\\_179509962.shtml](http://cjonline.com/stories/062307/sta_179509962.shtml) (accessed March 7, 2012).

attorney general's race, and Morrison, with the financial help of pro-abortion groups, spent \$2.36 million.

Then, in a strange twist of events, Paul Morrison was presented with a bizarre situation. Since he had been elected Johnson County District Attorney as a Republican (and then he had become a Democrat), under state law his replacement was selected by the Republican Party (December 11, 2006). The Johnson County Republican Precinct Committee-appointed persons decided who was to serve the remaining two years of Morrison's term. They chose Phill Kline. Kline became the District Attorney of Johnson County on the day he left the office of Attorney General, effectively switching jobs with Morrison. From the moment he became the acting Attorney General, Morrison waged a continuous campaign to take Phill Kline down.

Kline eventually brought 107 charges against Planned Parenthood, charges that included allegations of "unlawful late-term abortions," "unlawful failure to determine viability for late-term abortion," "making false information," and "unlawful failure to maintain records." Some 23 of these were felony charges, one for each of the reports that had been altered. Kline left the copies of the documents originally provided by KDHE and Planned Parenthood with the judge. The judge then turned over his copies to incoming Attorney General Morrison, who in turn sued both the judge and Kline in an attempt to force them to turn all evidence over to Planned Parenthood. Kline later wrote that Morrison "lost both of these lawsuits, but the litigation delayed my efforts for years



more and resulted in the Sebelius-appointed Kansas Supreme Court ordering a secret trial and at one time, secretly silencing a witness to Planned Parenthood’s criminal conduct.”<sup>14</sup>

In addition, an Initial Order released on February 20, 2012<sup>15</sup> by the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts, revoked the medical license of Wichita abortionist Ann Kristin Neuhaus, M.D.. It included evidence showing that Tiller had been doing illegal, late-term abortions for at least seven years. The order states on count #14:

In each count of the Board’s petition, the Board alleges that the Licensee (Neuhaus) committed an act of unprofessional or dishonorable conduct or professional incompetence in violation of K.S.A. 65-2836(b). The Board further alleges that the practice of the Licensee (Neuhaus) was professionally incompetent and was unprofessional conduct as set forth in K.S.A. 65-2837(a)(2) and K.S.A. 65-2837(b). Additionally, the Board alleges that the Licensee’s (Neuhaus) practice was in violation of K.S.A. 65-2836(k) in that the Licensee (Neuhaus) violated K.A.R. 100-24-1 in failing to meet the minimum requirements for maintaining adequate records.<sup>16</sup>

### **Tiller’s and Neuhaus’ Relationship**

Neuhaus provided the second referral that Tiller needed in order to legally justify the expensive post-viability (late-term) abortions that were his specialty. She typically saw patients at Dr. Tiller’s clinic once a week. Although patients paid her directly, prosecutors claimed that she and Dr. Tiller had a symbiotic relationship because his patients were her only source of income. Each referral issued by Neuhaus was based on a mental health diagnosis that she claimed justified the late-term abortions. (The Order

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<sup>14</sup> Michael Tennant, “Kathleen Sebelius Destroyed Evidence to Protect Planned Parenthood in a Child Rape Case,” *The New American* (Dec 21, 2011), [thenewamerican.com/usnews/crime/10274-as-kansas-governor-sebelius-destroyed-evidence-to-protect-planned-parenthood](http://thenewamerican.com/usnews/crime/10274-as-kansas-governor-sebelius-destroyed-evidence-to-protect-planned-parenthood) (accessed March 12, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> *Before the Board of Healing Arts for the State of Kansas*, In the Matter of Ann K. Neuhaus, M.D., Docket No. 10-HA00129, [operationrescue.org/pdfs/r\\_Neuhaus%20INITIAL%20ORDER%20002-20-12.pdf](http://operationrescue.org/pdfs/r_Neuhaus%20INITIAL%20ORDER%20002-20-12.pdf) (accessed March 7, 2012). For more information see “Abortion Doctor's (Ann Kristin Neuhaus) License May Be Revoked (8/15/11)” [youtu.be/M8k7trMpuBA](http://youtu.be/M8k7trMpuBA).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

reveals that Neuhaus was a “general practitioner and is not board-certified in any specialty”<sup>17</sup>). Why would Tiller pick her? She certified that each woman met the narrow legal exception to the Kansas law banning post-viability (late-term) abortions, which allowed such abortions to be done only if there was the risk that the woman would suffer a “substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function” if the pregnancy continued. Administrative Judge Edward J. Gaschler indicated that there was no evidence that Neuhaus ever personally evaluated the women (in the 11 cases reviewed) beyond having them answer “yes” or “no” questions, answers that were then plugged into a computer program called *PsychManager Lite*, which automatically generated a diagnosis. For Patient #8, there was no evidence that Neuhaus ever saw her at all. The only information about the individual circumstances of each woman in Neuhaus’ patient records came not from her own observations, but from intake forms generated by unlicensed workers at Tiller’s clinic. In addition, the dates on some of Neuhaus’ computer-generated reports were indicators that late-term abortions were being done illegally. For example, Neuhaus’s reports for Patients #2, #6, #9, #10, and #11 were all generated and time-stamped after the dates that these women’s abortions had begun. Would not any medical professional want to be especially careful to properly diagnosis Patient #1, 14-years-old and 26 weeks pregnant? Would it not sear the conscience of a doctor to mishandle Patient #2, a 10-year-old incestuous rape victim who became pregnant at the age of nine? How could Dr. Neuhaus sleep at night not properly documenting and screening Patient #8, a 13-year-old female who was 25 weeks pregnant? What kind of emotional damage will these women experience for the rest of their lives because of Neuhaus’ irresponsibility? Was the payment of \$300 a patient from

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 10.

Tiller really worth it? Prosecutor Barry Disney has described Neuhaus as essentially a Tiller employee whose only income in 2003 came from patients she saw at his clinic.

### **Paul Morrison and Planned Parenthood**

In December 2007, allegations surfaced that Morrison had been involved in an ongoing affair with Linda Carter, an office administrator in Kline's office, an affair that continued after Morrison was elected Attorney General. Carter admitted the affair to Kline and filed a sexual harassment claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, alleging that Morrison pressured her to obtain sensitive information about Kline and about several pending investigations of the District Attorney's office. Allegations surfaced that Kansas Attorney General Paul Morrison, who ran against Kline with the support of Planned Parenthood, had actually tried to interfere with the investigation against Planned Parenthood by harassing the District Attorney's employee with whom he was having an affair. Linda Carter alleged that, during her two-year affair with Morrison, he repeatedly asked her to give him information about Kline's Planned Parenthood investigation. The *Topeka Capital Journal* broke the story:

Carter, in a statement she signed prior to resigning as an administrator in the Johnson County District Attorney's Office in November, said her sexual relationship with Morrison began in 2005 and continued well into 2007. They had sex in the Johnson County Courthouse, motels throughout Kansas and in at least three other states. The affair flourished after Morrison resigned as Johnson County district attorney and was sworn in as attorney general. Their covert relationship was sustained after Kline was appointed to replace Morrison as district attorney. As the relationship collapsed this fall, according to her statement, Morrison told Carter he loved her and still wanted to marry her. Carter said she told Morrison to 'go home and make peace with Phill Kline.' She also said that Morrison's 'hatred of Kline was going to destroy' him ... In the statement, Carter said Morrison sought confidential information about Kline's effort to prosecute

the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic in Johnson County. She said Morrison also encouraged her to intervene on behalf of eight former Morrison employees who had been fired by Kline.<sup>18</sup>

Morrison admitted to the infidelity. Phone records from the Kansas Attorney General office document Morrison's many phone calls harassing Linda Carter.<sup>19</sup> Because of the affair, Morrison announced his resignation on December 14, and his tenure would have ended on January 31, 2008. The nation's leading partial-birth abortion doctor, George Tiller, and his PAC, ProKanDo, heavily financed both Paul Morrison's campaign for the post of Kansas Attorney General and Kathleen Sebelius' campaign for the governorship of the state. This fact went unreported by our local newspaper.<sup>20</sup> When Kansas allowed late-term abortions for severe fetal anomaly, not only did Tiller justify abortion in cases of cleft palate and Down's syndrome, he justified abortion in the case of healthy twins, stating that having twins could produce a severe economic impact on the family. Using his own definition of "substantial and irreversible harm" as an excuse for performing an abortion on a viable baby, Tiller performed abortions on women who did not want their rodeo competitions curtailed by a pregnancy or who would have had to hire babysitters in order to attend rock concerts. It was for these reasons that Kline

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<sup>18</sup> Tim Carpenter, "More details disclosed in [Kansas AG Paul] Morrison affair," *Topeka Capital Journal* (Dec 17, 2007), [www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1941023/](http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1941023/) (accessed March 6, 2012).

<sup>19</sup> "Documents obtained Thursday from the offices of the attorney general and the Johnson County district attorney under the Kansas Open Records Act show Morrison placed at least 480 telephone calls this year from his personal and work telephones to numbers assigned to Carter. At the time, he was serving as the state's top law enforcement officer in Topeka and she was director of administration in the Johnson County district attorney's office in Olathe. The covert lovers spoke for more than 10,700 minutes in the first 10 months of this year — lighting up the switchboard until their relationship hit a brick wall in October. That averages about 35 minutes a day on the phone." Tim Carpenter, "[Former KS AG Paul] Morrison affair prominent in phone records," *Topeka Capital Journal* (Dec 28, 2007), [www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1945730/](http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1945730/) (accessed March 6, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Earl F. Glynn, "Kansas Political Money: Sebelius, Tiller, ProKanDo,..." (Jan 17, 2009), [www.scribd.com/fullscreen/12956801](http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/12956801) (accessed Feb 13, 2012).

brought charges that Tiller had committed violations of the law.<sup>21</sup> Earlier, under former Attorney General Carla Stovall and Governor Bill Graves's administration (1995–2003), it had been ruled that “substantial and irreversible” harm could include “mental distress.” In particular, the Kansas partial-birth abortion restrictions, 65-6721, reads as follows:

No person shall perform or induce a partial birth abortion on a viable fetus unless such person is a physician and has a documented referral from another physician not legally or financially affiliated with the physician performing or inducing the abortion and both physicians determine: (1) The abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman; or (2) A continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major physical or mental function of the pregnant woman.

Partial Birth Abortion is described under K.S.A. 65-6721 as “[a]n abortion in which the person performing the abortion deliberately and intentionally vaginally delivers a living unborn child until, as in the case of a head-first presentation, the entire head of the unborn child is outside the body of the mother, or, in the case of a breech presentation, any part of the trunk of the unborn child past the navel is outside the body of the mother, for the purpose of performing an overt act that the person knows will kill the partially delivered unborn child and performs the overt act, other than completion of delivery, that kills the partially delivered unborn child.” (The procedure usually employed is to jab scissors into the head of the child.) Kansas's law also provides for “post-viable” abortions under K.S.A. 65-6703.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://youtu.be/M8k7trMpuBA> (accessed 2012, February 13).

## Dr. Tiller Goes Free

It was an explosive case, reported across our state and, in my opinion and that of many others, there was a travesty of justice in Tiller's trial. Unfortunately, because of my visibility on television, my support of the Marriage Amendment, and my opposition to Missouri Stem Cell<sup>22</sup> Research Act Amendment 2<sup>23</sup> (2006), I was dragged into the melée. In a review of Tiller's practices, Dr. Paul R. McHugh, member of the President's Council on Bioethics, the University Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the Henry Phipps Professor of Psychiatry, Director of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and psychiatrist-in-chief at Johns Hopkins Hospital from 1975–2001, had found that not one of Tiller's late-term abortions cases met the Kansas partial-birth abortion restriction. Yet to the shock of many Kansans, the charges against Tiller were dismissed on a technicality.<sup>24</sup> Attorney General Morrison claimed that the charges against George Tiller were only technical infractions of the law, not crimes.

McHugh said that while reviewing the redacted records he had to ask himself the question, "Is any person who comes to this clinic found not to be appropriate on psychological or psychiatric grounds for abortion?" He argued that some of the abortions were declared "justified" on the premise that psychological damage would be done to some of the young women from not being able to attend rock concerts.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> According to Psalm 139:13, life begins at conception. Pluripotent stem cells are harvested from the inner cell mass of the blastocyst, a fertilized egg, which is an early stage human embryo/being. Adult stem cells can be obtained without destroying embryos.

<sup>23</sup> The Missouri Coalition For Lifesaving Cures supported Amendment 2 with a record-breaking contribution of \$28 million from billionaire Kansas City couple, Jim and Virginia Stowers.

<sup>24</sup> Heather Hogue, "Tiller the Killer's Get-Out-of-Jail-Free Card," *Concerned Women for America*; [www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=13329&department](http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=13329&department) (accessed Feb 13, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

On June 6, 2007, Dr. Paul McHugh visited the Kansas City area at the invitation of Women Influencing the Nation, a national women's group. Morrison never contacted McHugh after taking office, even though McHugh is one of the nation's leading psychiatrists. McHugh determined that none of the abortions under review was justifiable. When Morrison learned of McHugh's intention to speak, he issued a gag order and threatened him with a lawsuit (see below).

After Kline lost his re-election bid, Morrison promised he would continue with the investigation—something he failed to do. Dr. McHugh, the state's chief medical witness, claimed that no one from the attorney general's office contacted him. It is also known that Morrison benefited from nearly \$1 million in campaign donations linked directly to Tiller.<sup>26</sup>

Attorney General Morrison did contact Dr. McHugh later on June 12, at a panel discussion hosted by Women Influencing the Nation, with the apparent intent of preventing him from speaking. A man claiming to be a criminal investigator for Morrison stood outside and asked every older man who approached if he were a doctor. A letter eventually handed to Dr. McHugh was a cease-and-desist letter that threatened the doctor with legal action. In it, Morrison claimed that his office had previously contacted the psychiatrist. "Again, we hereby demand that you cease and desist from all public comment about your work in this case," said Morrison in the letter. Morrison also argued that McHugh was violating the privacy of the patients involved, even though McHugh never mentioned the name of a single woman in the interview. The records that Dr. McHugh had reviewed were all redacted with all personal information removed. On March 27, 2009, the jury found George Tiller not guilty on all charges. On Sunday, May 31, 2009, anti-abortion vigilante Scott Roeder shot Tiller, 67, in the head in the front

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

lobby of Reformation Lutheran Church, where he served as an usher and his wife, Jeanne, sang in the choir.

Former Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius is a member of the Catholic Church. In early March 2009, Archbishop Raymond F. Burke, prefect for the Apostolic *Signaturia*, the Holy See's highest court, declared that Sebelius should not approach the altar for communion in the United States. He noted that "after pastoral admonition, she obstinately persists in serious sin." In 2003, 2005, 2006, and again in 2008, Sebelius vetoed legislation that would have limited abortions in Kansas. She also obstructed investigations and inquiries into several injuries and at least one death at the Tiller abortion clinic. At that time, the Kansas Board of Healing Arts was asked to review Tiller's procedures, etc. The Board did not conduct a review, claiming it did not have enough staff to investigate.

There is an interesting trail of money that has both supported Kathleen Sebelius from the time she was Insurance Commissioner (1994–2002) of Kansas through her ascent to the position of governor. To say she is pro-abortion is an understatement. Like Tiller, through her own Bluestem Fund PAC (Appendix J), she has raised and spent almost \$1 million on Kansas politics through the years. "With a Republican majority in both houses of the legislature, Gov. Sebelius used her Bluestem Fund PAC to attempt to buy legislative seats to advance her left-leaning political agenda."<sup>27</sup> Dr. Tiller contributed a total of \$23,000 to Sebelius' PAC. Tiller's clinic, Women's Health Care Services, contributed \$8,000 on January 10, 2002, and \$5,000 on March 19, 2002 to Sebelius'

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<sup>27</sup> E. F. Glynn, "Happy 9<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Gov. Sebelius' Bluestem Fund PAC. Almost \$1 million raised," *Kansas Meadowlark* (Mar 16, 2009), [kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/16/gov-sebelius-bluestem-fund-pac/](http://kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/16/gov-sebelius-bluestem-fund-pac/) (accessed March 13, 2012).



Bluestem Fund PAC. Later in that same year, Tiller started his own PAC, ProKanDo. In the October 2008 report, Bluestem Fund PAC paid \$1,800 for mailings to Zoller Lutz Weinbarger LLC, which is a “campaign shop” set up at the same address as Dr. Tiller’s ProKanDo PAC.

In addition to her pro-abortion agenda, Sebelius did not support the April 2005 Amendment to the Kansas Constitution that made same-sex marriage in the state unconstitutional. She is now the Secretary of Health and Human Services and, under ObamaCare, she has extraordinary powers to regulate health care. Planned Parenthood and the radical Obama administration have rewarded Sebelius for her pro-abortion position; the latter with a position in the Cabinet while she continues to be at odds with the Roman Catholic Church with respect to her views of when life begins.<sup>28</sup> Sebelius was appointed by President Barack Obama to help him push through his plan to overhaul the nation’s health care system. Barack Obama, in his tenure in the Illinois State Legislature, actively opposed legislation that would make it a crime for an abortionist to kill a child when the child was capable of surviving the procedure. Later, when the federal government passed legislation that protected those infants, Obama did not support it.

Judy Smith, the Kansas State Director of Concerned Women for America (for 14 years) and national Board member of CWA for three terms wrote the following:

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<sup>28</sup> E. F. Glynn, “Kathleen Sebelius and Three Catholic Archbishops Battle Over Culture of Life,” *Kansas Meadowlark* (Mar 2, 2009), [kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/02/kathleen-sebelius-and-three-catholic-archbishops/](http://kansasmeadowlark.com/blog/2009/03/02/kathleen-sebelius-and-three-catholic-archbishops/) (accessed March 12, 2012), See also [www.kansasmeadowlark.com/Issues/ProAbort/Sebelius/ArchbishopStrecker.htm](http://www.kansasmeadowlark.com/Issues/ProAbort/Sebelius/ArchbishopStrecker.htm); [www.kansasmeadowlark.com/Issues/ProAbort/Sebelius/MomChildMurdered.htm](http://www.kansasmeadowlark.com/Issues/ProAbort/Sebelius/MomChildMurdered.htm) (accessed March 12, 2012).

During the time I have served as state director [of] CWA and working with other groups, we have helped pass many laws to protect both women and their unborn children such the Women’s Right to Know Act which requires that abortion providers give women informed consent about abortion. We helped enact waiting periods, statutory requirements to report child abuse, abortion reporting requirements including partial birth abortion and post-viable abortions and even laws to give personhood to a child within a murdered woman’s womb—Alexa’s Law. However, no matter what laws are enacted, many of them have been ignored by those tasked to enforce the law—mostly under the executive branch of Kansas—attorney generals, certifying boards, the KDHE, and some of our governors. In fact, it has come to light that even the Kansas courts, including the Kansas Supreme Court, have either interfered with or ignored duly passed legislation. While Phill Kline was Attorney General of Kansas ... he filed charges against George Tiller, infamous trimester abortionist and 107 charges against Planned Parenthood in Johnson County with the approval of three sitting judges. The charges against Tiller became a circus of obfuscation by his cronies. Eventually Kline was even thwarted by Sedgwick County District Attorney Nola Foulston who obtained a dismissal of charges against Tiller by a traffic court judge; Kline had no knowledge of her proposed actions until they were done. Kline was subsequently defeated for re-election by a Sebelius crony Paul Morrison after a massive media smear campaign against Kline. After election, Morrison dismissed the charges as ‘technical infractions.’<sup>29</sup>

### **Targeting of First Family Church and My Family**

The combination of me leading the successful Kansas Marriage Amendment and being vocal about the tragedy of the thousands of abortions that were performed in the state of Kansas where I pastored, have convinced my leaders and our attorneys (Polsinelli Shughart<sup>30</sup>) that both our church, my son, Jeremiah, and I were targeted. At the time, my sermons were broadcast daily on the ABC and NBC affiliates, as well as on independent television stations, in Wichita, and across the entire state of Kansas on several other television stations. I had recently presented a sermon on the ethics of stem-cell research

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<sup>29</sup> Judy Smith, e-mail message to the author, February 25, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> [www.polsinelli.com/kansascity](http://www.polsinelli.com/kansascity).

that landed me in a feature story in our city's business magazine, *Ingram's*, a story related to the potential funding our University of Kansas Medical Center could receive. It, too, was a volatile issue—far more than I realized at the time. In addition, I had been interviewed on several national television shows, including *ABC World News Tonight*, *ABC Nightline*, *Fox News*, *Bill O'Reilly*, and all of our Kansas City media had repeatedly covered our church through our various stages of growth and because of the special guests we hosted, several of them nationally and internationally known. The Kansas Attorney General, Paul Morrison, launched an investigation of our church, my son, and me that lasted for two years and cost our church nearly \$5 million in expenses and lost revenue. Through numerous articles, our local newspaper trumpeted “the investigation” to spread the toxin of doubt about our church. (Upon Morrison's resignation, replacement appointee Attorney General Stephen Six continued the charade of the investigation.) In July 2007, our church received a technically illegal subpoena from the Kansas Attorney General's office (see Appendix C), a subpoena that was a clear violation of the separation of church and state (see Appendix H). Our Elders, led by Board chairman Judge Robert Ulrich, former United States District Attorney (Western Missouri district) appointed by President Reagan, hired a number of attorneys who responded with three, two-inch thick notebooks responding to the overreaching questions posed to the church. The initial cost was a few hundred thousand dollars, spent in an effort to prove we did no wrong. The Kansas Department of Revenue (Appendix E<sup>31</sup>) simultaneously tried to tax First Family Church for every church dinner we had served (approximately 24,000 meals a year) and free Bibles our church had distributed for several years. In a registered letter, the

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<sup>31</sup> After costing our church many thousands of dollars of expense through our accountants to respond to the “taxing” of church dinners and free Bibles, we settled the Kansas Department of Revenue claim for \$16,000.

Department claimed that our church owed nearly \$400,000 in back taxes. Every day for over two years, my wife, my family, and I went to bed, praying, crying, trying to sleep, wondering when the nightmare would end. One allegation made was that I had been improperly reimbursed on the basis of fraudulent expense reports submitted to our church. A forensic audit conducted by the auditing firm, Stanfield & O' Dell (Tulsa, Oklahoma) on every family-related expense report submitted to our church for reimbursement for five years proved there had been no wrongdoing. Furthermore, the audit revealed that I had not been reimbursed for nearly \$100,000 of personal expenses incurred since the church's inception. That forensic audit cost our church an additional \$150,000 to prove we had done nothing wrong. The press continued their harassment with slanderous stories. Several articles, printed over nearly five years, baited me to come on media broadcasts and give them sound bites (bait which I ignored) to defend myself. After two years, the Kansas Attorney General's investigation was closed, citing that there was no wrongdoing. Of course, this result was not trumpeted on the front page of the newspaper.

Former Attorney General Phill Kline documented the flagrant abuse of Morrison, as acting Attorney General, and the Governor of Kansas, Kathleen Sebelius:

The Sebelius shredder worked overtime protecting Planned Parenthood. Two weeks after it was learned that the Sebelius Administration destroyed key evidence against Planned Parenthood it was also learned [that] a Sebelius appointed official destroyed copies of that evidence. Finally, after a decade of obstruction, the evidence of Kansas's corruption to protect Planned Parenthood is leaking into the media. Two weeks ago a hearing in a criminal case against Planned Parenthood was delayed. The delay was a result of the administration of current Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius destroying evidence of criminal activity while Sebelius was Governor of Kansas. The evidence was destroyed at a time the Sebelius administration knew the documents were key to a criminal investigation of Planned Parenthood's failure to report child rape. Planned Parenthood is an important and long-term political ally of Sebelius. When

the documents were destroyed in 2005, I was leading the investigation of Planned Parenthood as the Attorney General of Kansas. Our evidence had revealed that during a time when 166 abortions were performed on children in Kansas, Planned Parenthood had only reported one case of child molestation. My investigators had only obtained this evidence after months of fights with the Sebelius administration and four separate court orders for the administration to produce the documents. The evidence could lead to Planned Parenthood losing more than \$350 million in annual federal funding. Federal law requires Planned Parenthood to comply with state laws mandating the report of child rape. Planned Parenthood knew the stakes in my investigation, I knew the stakes and Sebelius knew as well. After losing the court battles, the Sebelius administration, without notifying my office or the court, destroyed the evidence. Calling it a 'routine' document destruction, the Sebelius administration shredded documents it knew served as key evidence in a criminal investigation against a Sebelius ally. Yet, this alone was not enough to kill the criminal prosecution of Planned Parenthood. In fact, in October of 2007 a judge reviewed my evidence and found probable cause to believe that Planned Parenthood committed 107 criminal acts, including 23 felonies. This evidence was partially based on copies of the documents Sebelius destroyed. The rules of evidence would allow me to introduce the copies of the documents originally produced by the Sebelius administration to my office in late 2004. The case was proceeding. But now, we learn that Sebelius and Planned Parenthood allies had access to another shredder, and a Sebelius appointed Attorney General destroyed these originally produced copies. In 2006, thanks to millions of abortion industry monies and an incredibly false and distorted depiction of my investigation by the Kansas major daily newspapers, I lost my re-election to Johnson County District Attorney Paul Morrison. The Sebelius- recruited Morrison had switched parties from Republican to Democrat to run against me and had to vacate his position as District Attorney to assume the office of Attorney General. Since Mr. Morrison was initially elected District Attorney as a Republican, Republicans chose his successor and they chose me. Accordingly, Mr. Morrison and I switched offices in January of 2007. While transitioning in the offices, I took copies of the KDHE and Planned Parenthood documents with me since Planned Parenthood was within my new jurisdiction and I could continue the investigation. For safekeeping I left the originally produced documents with the Judge who issued the orders for the Sebelius administration to produce those documents. In January of 2007 that Judge gave the documents to Mr. Morrison and new AG Morrison, who ran promising to end my investigation, initiated an unprecedented effort to return all evidence back to the target of a criminal investigation.<sup>32</sup> Mr. Morrison sued the Judge who issued the subpoenas.

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<sup>32</sup> Unlike almost all other states, the Kansas Supreme Court Justices are appointed by the Governor until age 70 without need for any form of confirmation. Sebelius and her Lt. Governor have appointed 5 of the 7 Justices.

Morrison's suit sought an order that the Judge give up any evidence still in his possession. Mr. Morrison joined Planned Parenthood in suing me seeking a court order that I be forced to give up my copies of the evidence. Mr. Morrison lost both of these lawsuits but the litigation delayed my efforts for years more and resulted in the Sebelius appointed Kansas Supreme Court ordering a secret trial and at one time, secretly silencing a witness to Planned Parenthood's criminal conduct. Yet, Morrison took a step too far. In December of 2007, Paul Morrison's mistress stepped forward and claimed that Mr. Morrison was trying to use their relationship to interfere with the investigation of Planned Parenthood. The mistress worked in Morrison's District Attorney's office and when Mr. Morrison and I switched offices, she remained behind in the District Attorney's office to work for me. Morrison resigned within a week. With Morrison's resignation, Sebelius was able to appoint his successor. In January of 2008, Sebelius appointed Stephen Six as Kansas Attorney General. The only offices Mr. Six have ever held are due to Sebelius appointments. Mr. Six picked up where Morrison left off – continuing to sue the Judge and myself. Now we know that Mr. Six did something else. In April of 2009, reports indicate that the Office of Stephen Six destroyed the documents produced to that office while I was Attorney General in 2004. The Six Attorney General's office destroyed documents produced pursuant to a criminal subpoena, which it knew, was evidence in a criminal prosecution filed in October of 2007. Not only this, Six knew I was trying to use those documents in the criminal case. I personally wrote General Six asking for cooperation in the criminal prosecution. He did not reply. General Six did, however, file numerous motions in the criminal case to prevent the use of the documents and only later, after losing the ability to prevent their use, destroyed the documents. The latest revelation of document shredding resulted in current Johnson County District Attorney Stephen Howe requesting a dismissal of the felony charges against Planned Parenthood. Howe had other options than to rely on the Six destroyed documents, but such options would be more difficult and evidently, Howe did not want to bear that burden. Who can blame him – few if any Kansas political players are willing to stand up for this case out of fear for their political futures. In any other state, such conduct by a former Governor and her appointed Attorney General would be condemned from all corners – not so in Kansas. The major Kansas daily newspapers are apologists for abortion on demand and have so distorted this story that it is unrecognizable. In fact, the State's major daily newspaper, the *Kansas City Star*, true to form, tried to blame me for the Six destruction of evidence. I politely reminded the paper that in April of 2009 I was teaching at Liberty University School of Law in Lynchburg, Virginia. Also, a Sebelius appointed Kansas Supreme Court has also unduly harmed the investigation of Planned Parenthood. On this issue the Court is led by Sebelius appointee Justice Carol Beier, a former lawyer with the leftist National Women's Law Center and a Justice who has written favorably about using court decisions as news releases for

the left.<sup>33</sup> Kansas is corrupt and that corruption is only now leaking out. For close to 10 years I have witnessed those pledged to justice and to protecting children acting instead to protect political and money relationships. It is time that the fullness of this corruption is revealed. There are those in Kansas calling for investigations by those in Kansas. Kansas Attorney General Derrick Schmidt announced he would ask others to investigate the record destruction.<sup>34</sup> Simply put, I don't trust Kansas to get the job done. Those who seek to thwart justice have acted openly and with impunity in Kansas. They have successfully smeared and harmed those who disagree with them. And all the while, others who had the opportunity to speak have generally remained silent, fearful of political consequences. In the past, I have witnessed Kansas engage in such 'investigations.' Generally the aim has been to find a reasonable explanation of events that places no blame on those currently with power and to avoid difficult questions. Perhaps this time, on this issue, I am wrong. After all, it is rather hard to explain why you destroyed criminal evidence implicating a key political ally. If that is routine for the Sebelius Administration, no further evidence of corruption is needed.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Justice Beier joined with Planned Parenthood in filing an ethics complaint against me. The Sebelius court appointed the prosecutor and the panel that heard the complaint and will also make the final decision. The panel is recommending that my law license be indefinitely suspended. Among the "findings" is that I lied when my investigators refused early on to tell the Sebelius administration that we were investigating Planned Parenthood. My investigators sought documents within the Sebelius administration but the administration refused cooperation unless we informed them of key details of the investigations. My investigators instead obtained a subpoena and compelled the Sebelius administration to produce the evidence. At my ethics hearing my chief investigator testified that one of the reasons he decided to not inform Sebelius about the investigation is fear that she would tip off the target and that it would result in the destruction of evidence. Now we know that such evidence destruction took place. Even if our concerns had not been proven legitimate, it is a longstanding principle that law enforcement does not have a duty to tell a third-party witness about the nature of an investigation. Such revelation could harm the investigation, cause harmful rumors, harm reputational interests, poison witnesses and possibly physically harm third parties. Regardless of clear law and practice on this issue, the Sebelius Supreme Court appointed panel found my investigators actions to be evidence that I "lied." My appeal to the Court that filed the complaint will take place over the next several months.

<sup>34</sup> The Attorney General has called for Shawnee County Sheriff Dick Barta to lead an investigation into the destruction of the records. Sheriff Barta has a good record. He will report the results of his investigation, however, to Shawnee County Prosecutor Chad Taylor. Taylor won election by criticizing the abortion investigation and should recuse himself from considering the investigation. You can read the most recent story on this topic: Aly Van Dyke, "AG asks county to investigate abortion papers," *The Topeka Capital-Journal* (Nov 9, 2011), [cjonline.com/news/2011-11-09/ag-asks-county-investigate-abortion-papers#.Trr8CLJpukI](http://cjonline.com/news/2011-11-09/ag-asks-county-investigate-abortion-papers#.Trr8CLJpukI) (accessed Feb 7, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Former Kansas Attorney General and Johnson County District Attorney, Phill Kline, e-mail to the author, March 10, 2012.

## Stem Cell Research

My involvement with a second controversial social issue kept a target on my back. Human embryonic stem cell research emerged as a national issue in 2004, with the passage of Proposition 71 in California. Through its passage a right to conduct embryonic stem cell research was enshrined in California's constitution. Proponents of similar medical research in Missouri and Kansas quickly launched an effort to have their states join California.<sup>36</sup>

In May of 2005, Kansas City's leading business magazine, *Ingram's*, and Public Television's KCPT-TV co-sponsored a debate on stem cell research that featured a panel of 11 community leaders from the fields of science, medicine, and religion. KCPT televised the debate and *Ingram's* published a cover story<sup>37</sup> about it, entitled "Science Friction—Stem Cell Controversy Threatens Kansas City's Life Science Movement." Major advocates of human embryonic stem cell research were included in the panel. They came from Washington University in St. Louis, UMKC School of Medicine, and the University of Kansas School of Medicine. All hoped to obtain significant research grants in this area. I was invited as a pro-life advocate, as were Roman Catholic Bishop Robert Finn and Kansas State Senator Mary Pilcher Cook. I reminded the panel that we "believe that God created life and should be the only one to end it ... the more my [congregants] understand about 'clone and kill' the more they're going to speak up." In 2006, Missouri became a national battleground in the stem cell fight. Human embryonic stem cell

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<sup>36</sup> The Stowers gave \$1 million to California Proposition 71: "Stem cell organizers will get \$1M Stowers gift," *Kansas City Business Journal* (Oct 15, 2004), [www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/stories/2004/10/11/daily41.html](http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/stories/2004/10/11/daily41.html) (accessed Mar 12, 2012).

<sup>37</sup> David Smale, "Kansas City @ the Crossroads: Common Ground in Lieu of Consensus, The Exploration of Stem Cell Research," *Ingram's* 31/5 (May 2005), [www.ingramsonline.com/may\\_2005/kc@crossroads/crossroads1.html](http://www.ingramsonline.com/may_2005/kc@crossroads/crossroads1.html) (accessed Mar 7, 2012).



research advocates succeeded in placing Amendment 2, which would permit embryonic stem cell research, on the November ballot. The Stowers Institute (with a \$2 billion endowment) led the effort for medical research in Kansas City, and they were joined by many of the other parties we had debated the year before on public television. The first public polls taken in September showed 68 percent in favor of Amendment 2. On October 21, during the first game of the 2006 World Series in St Louis, a Stowers-produced TV ad, supporting embryonic stem cell research and featuring actor Michael J. Fox, was aired. Ironically, this action energized opponents of the amendment and support began to slip.

Just a week before the election, on October 25, I devoted my entire mid-week sermon to a revelation of the deception behind Amendment 2 and to mobilizing my congregation and our TV audience to take action. I interviewed a Christian physician, Dr. Holly Austin, who laid out the science, and the ethical as well as the therapeutic advantages of adult vs embryonic stem cell use. I preached on the relevant biblical principles: “Even if it were possible to cure some people through therapies derived from embryonic stem cells, the evil destruction of human life required to harvest the stem cells should preclude its use.” I quoted Paul’s admonition in Romans 3:8: “Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—‘Let us do evil that good may result?’ Their condemnation is just!” This teaches that it is wrong to purposely do something evil even if something good will result from it. I went on to detail the problems with Amendment 2, including:

- That harvesting human embryonic stem cells is unethical,
- The deceptive promises being made since only adult stem cell therapies have proven effective, and

- How women would be exploited by the demand for billions of human eggs.

I concluded by challenging my listeners to vote “no” to Amendment 2, to tell their friends and neighbors the truth about Amendment 2, to put up yard signs and to put bumper stickers on their cars. A poll on October 29 showed that support for the Amendment had slipped from 68 percent (as recorded in September) to only 35–51 percent. Stowers and their allies spent \$30 million (\$16 per voter) promoting Amendment 2 and, on Election Day, it barely passed, 51 percent of voters in favor and 49 percent against.

In arguing against the amendment, I quoted Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop (former U.S. Surgeon General appointed by President Reagan) from *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*:

Will future generations look back and remember that ... at least there was one group who stood consistently, whatever the price, for the value of the individual, thus passing on some hope to future generations? Or are we Christians going to be merely swept along with the trends—our own moral values becoming increasingly befuddled, our own apathy reflecting the apathy of the world around us, our own inactivity sharing the inertia of the masses around us, our own leadership soft? If we ache with compassion for humanity today in our own country and across the world, we must do all that we can to help people see the truth of Christianity and accept Christ as savior. And we must stand against the loss of humanness in all its forms. It is God’s life-changing power that is able to touch every individual, who then has a responsibility to touch the world around him with the absolutes found in the Bible.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> C. Everett Koop, M.D. and Francis Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1979), 133.

He is, in addition, the Executive Editor of Kansas City's business magazine, *Ingram's*, Cashill summed up our experience this way:

The media assault on Pastor Johnston was not a result of anything Johnston had done wrong. It was a result of what he had done right, namely defend life and defend traditional marriage in a public way. That he was singled out uniquely among local pastors for the *Kansas City Star's* investigatory zeal was borderline criminal. As executive editor of Kansas City's business magazine, I hosted a televised discussion on embryonic stem cell research. Within the next few years, several of the people on Pastor Johnston's side of the table, including the Catholic Bishop of Kansas City, felt the wrath of the "science" community, including the abortion lobby, and its allies in the media. The Kansas City Chamber of Commerce even got involved in the attempt to take out pro-life legislators who might oppose embryonic stem cell research. This attack was unprecedented and disgraceful.<sup>39</sup>

### **Suggestions for Pastors Going through Conflict**

What follows is what I learned from this entire ordeal that would be helpful for pastors who are leading growing, thriving churches that are touching their communities.

#### *1. Polity*

Our church's form of governance—representative governance by Elders—was essential (see Appendix B, below). No ordinary church member could have grasped in a brief, monthly, church business meeting the depth of the challenges and the corruption confronting us. The media was trying to redefine our church's mission statement and to get me to react and respond. I stayed focused on preaching and teaching and allowed our attorneys to do their work. These were exceedingly difficult days that stretched into

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<sup>39</sup> Jack Cashill, e-mail message to the author, March 13, 2012.

months. We were completing a 70,000 sq. ft. addition to our church facility. Prior to construction, we had bonded the job to insure full payment to every subcontractor. When the media storm hit, subcontractors filed liens, which was not necessary, but was an understandable precaution on their part to insure they would get paid. Again, in reporting this, the local newspaper distorted the story so as to create doubt and suspicion. Needless to say, our entire construction job was paid in full, but not one article in the newspaper reported that fact. One cannot imagine members at a traditional, monthly church business meetings dealing with these monumental issues. I am grateful to board chairman Judge Ulrich and to Jeff Anderson for their superb leadership and friendship throughout this ordeal.

## *2. Communication*

I, along with our Elders, made the grave mistake of not immediately addressing the slanderous front-page newspaper story head-on and of profiling the biased reporter and her slanted journalism on the very first Sunday of the media attack in 2007 (See Appendix D, below.). This cost us hundreds of members and over \$1 million in tithe revenue. Silence, while we tried to figure out the magnitude of the attack against us, bred suspicion. My advice now is: When media attacks come, respond immediately, factually, and forcefully. Timing is absolutely essential.

## *3. Marriage*

My wife and I have had a very strong, close, romantic, passionate marriage since we wed in 1979. If this had not been the case, our marriage would have never survived the many

months of stress. We did not stop our dates, our romance, and even our brief getaways during this trial. I am so grateful to my wife, Cristie, for her strength during these difficult days. All of my research indicates that pastors who have a dull, unromantic, spiritually and sexually unfulfilling marriage are prime candidates for sexual misconduct, moral failure, and for ministry death. Pastor, enrich your marriage—keep your wife your lover, not your roommate or just the mother of your children. Don't let the sizzle of sex with your wife die.

#### *4. Legal Advice*

Jay Sekulow, lead attorney from the American Center for Law and Justice,<sup>40</sup> led our entire defense and team of attorneys. He told me, “This is the most politically motivated witch-hunt I have ever seen in my over 30 years of defending religious freedom in the United States.” Had we not had Jay leading our defense and response and constantly advising our leaders, legal team, and befriending me, we might have actually been hit with some kind of false formal charge, tarnishing forever our ministry. As it was, the investigation was initiated by a subpoena that violated the clear, historic guidelines of the separation of church and state established by the Government of the United States (See Appendix H, below.). One of our first actions was to have noted attorney Bruce Hopkins, senior partner at the firm of Polsinelli Shughart, review the subpoena. He, along with two attorneys who specialize in non-profit law, went to Topeka, Kansas to meet with the Assistant Attorney General. Together, they pointed out the *many* defects of the subpoena and succeeded in having the subpoena's myriad requests narrowed down to information

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<sup>40</sup> For more information regarding the American Center for Law & Justice go to [www.aclj.org](http://www.aclj.org).

that we could provide, information which indisputably proved that our church's board of directors had exercised proper oversight of church finances. It was a long, laborious, draining process. It was not until two years later that the Attorney General's file was closed, citing no wrongdoing. Remember, all it takes to start an investigation on your church or pastor in the United States is for numerous complaints to be made to the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Justice, the FBI, the Attorney General, or the state Department of Revenue. It cost my detractors the price of postage stamps on envelopes; it cost us millions of dollars. Angry former employees and disgruntled former church members can turn your life into a living hell—proceed with caution.

### *5. Disclosure*

After long careful, prayerful reflection, as the senior pastor, I take the blame for the fact that we did not fully disclose information about salaries or any other issue related to the multimillion-dollar budget of our church. Nothing was being intentionally hidden; it was simply the way we had effectively led our church since its inception, and the same procedure is common to most U.S. mega-churches. However, in retrospect, if we had divulged information about our finances, we could have minimized the aura of suspicion the reporter kept trying to engender. Each year, the church's board of directors commissioned an independent, certified audit, and each year we received audits that identified that the auditors had no "going concerns" about our finances. As with any rapidly growing entity, we received management letters with our audits, providing recommendations from the auditors as to how to improve our accounting procedures. Monies were always carefully and properly accounted for; however, only the board was

privity to salary amounts and other line items of an extensive budget of \$11 million dollars (again, this is a very common practice in many mega-churches in the United States).

From 1996–2010, our church had grown from zero members to over 4,000, and we had raised nearly \$59 million. Although audits were conducted annually, the reports were not distributed or posted on our website. This was an error, and I take full responsibility for it. It was not uncommon for our budget to increase at a pace of \$1 million per year—we were growing fast (too fast, I now see). I was submerged in the preparation and delivery of major sermons, in creating themed series with accompanying sermon study outlines, PowerPoint presentations, and video clips for both Sunday and Wednesday night services weekly. We should have opened our financial books for anyone to see—we had absolutely nothing to hide, as was proven by the fact that both our church and I were exonerated on every single point, by independent investigations, annual costly independent certified audits by the biggest non-profit accounting firms that served us and the largest Christian ministries in the nation, and by the Stanfield & O’Dell forensic audit.

To establish my compensation as lead pastor, the board had salary studies conducted by a reputable independent accounting firm. I was not a participant in any vote, nor was any family member, in the establishment of my compensation. Recommendations were made by the compensation committee and were then submitted to a vote by the full board of directors. In my estimation, a growing, thriving local church must be completely open about everything, most important about its finances. I want to warn “high-impact” pastors about the attacks and the deceptive strategy of multiple, baseless complaints being made to government organizations. These complaints led to the

investigations to which my church and I were subjected, and it could happen to *any* church or pastor. You had better be ready.

### *6. Politics*

I regret championing the marriage amendment, with all the political involvement it brought and all the ramifications it had for my church, our good people, and me. I do not regret preaching and teaching the biblical values of the family, sexuality, life, or the Scriptures' teaching on the proper definition of the home. However, by being the catalyst in the passage of the Kansas State Marriage Amendment, I inadvertently entered into a battle with the gay community. The irony was that I had been the facilitator of our church's homosexuality comfort circle and weekly ministered to both gays and lesbians, several of who became dear friends (and not all of whom were convinced that they would change their sexual orientation).

I would advise pastors to stick to the mission of the church—to stay true to pursuing the goals of evangelism, discipleship, and fellowship for, when a pastor goes into battle, he takes every weak and strong church member in his church into battle with him. As shepherds, we are called to protect the Lord's sheep, and sheep are not always the most intelligent of animals. Our battlefield was littered with people who could not handle the intensity of the attack on our church and on me. For that I am profoundly sorry. All it takes to change a constitutional amendment is litigation or, as we have recently observed in California, intervention by the Ninth Circuit Court. Politicians tried to use me because I had a high profile in my city and state and because there were many thousands of people wired into our ministry. As a steward, I was wrong to have not prevented them



from using me in this way. My painful lesson, I now pass on to pastors: teach the word, love the people, instill biblical values, let nothing sidetrack you from your mission to reach the lost—and steer clear of every divisive political issue that will hinder your efforts to reach people because you are stigmatized by the press or by detractors upset at your success. Politicians are *politicians*—avoid all of them. In a private meeting with Kansas Senator Pat Roberts with a major donor at the Four Seasons Hotel in Palo Alto, California, I told him in detail of the attack our church was enduring. In a private meeting at the Overland Park Marriott Hotel with Senator Sam Brownback, he, too, was informed of the scourge our church was receiving. Neither did anything to help—it wouldn't have been politically advantageous to them to do so. Learn the lesson, please. I also met privately with former United States Attorney General, John Ashcroft, in Virginia Beach. Both pro-life, senators Roberts and Brownback commended the appointment of Kathleen Sebelius to serve as the federal Secretary of Health and Human Services, an unconscionable, hypocritical act given the impact she will have on health care in the United States and on furthering the protection of abortion:

“Congratulations to Governor Sebelius on being nominated to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services,” the Senators said. “It’s an honor for the State of Kansas to have an elected official appointed to the president’s cabinet.”<sup>41</sup>

Believers, properly taught the word of God, will vote their faith without your assistance, prompting, or the recommendation of *any* politician. The mission of the church is to care for people’s souls and minister to their hurts and to the needs of the lost, and it should not be clouded even minutely by *any* politician or political agenda item. If I

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<sup>41</sup> “Sen. Brownback supports Sebelius, draws disapproval,” *Catholic News Agency* (Mar 2, 2009), [www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/sen.\\_brownback\\_supports\\_sebelius\\_draws\\_disapproval/](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/sen._brownback_supports_sebelius_draws_disapproval/) (accessed March 13, 2012).

could rewind the tape, I would have thanked Pastor Joe Wright for coming to see me and told him my *only* interest and involvement is the Great Commission our Lord gave us in Matthew 28:18–20, and that I could not be involved in the marriage debate. That mature decision would have protected the many people in our church and community who needed their pastor and the ministry of God’s word, love, and care. Instead, I took a ringside seat in a media spectacle and gladiator game, and they only distracted from the mission for almost five years.

### *7. Media*

Teach your church about the deceptive nature of newspaper and television media/journalists. Give the media time and they will turn on you. If you are a public figure, and every pastor who has any impact in a city with a growing church fits that profile—you must avoid them. Do not talk to them, and provide only sound bites in written form from a qualified spokesperson, someone other than you yourself. The newspaper industry is dying and soon will be dead. In our instant digital age it is a relic of the past, which is why paid subscriptions to all newspapers, including *The New York Times*, are in rapid decline. Recognize that newspapers can publish false “slice-and-dice” journalism and that they rarely tell the full story. In an increasingly decadent age, the aim of desperate journalists may be to discredit your church and you as a pastor and cast suspicion on your ministry. People will forgive you for everything but success. The reporter who investigated me for five years was a journalist for *The Wichita Eagle* (Tiller’s hometown newspaper), and she also did an extensive hatchet job on the Roman

Catholic Church<sup>42</sup> (and see Appendix I, below). Select someone qualified within your congregation who has the skill to competently write press releases about any newsworthy event that might emanate from your church. Address every issue head-on, immediately, from the pulpit, and provide a written copy of any and every statement so that your people can read what was said. Post the identical release on the church website. Give the facts and hold nothing back.

### *8. Exercise*

During these severe trials, a local businessman unexpectedly called me to tell me he had built a private gym in one of his buildings and had hired a trainer who, at his expense, would work out with me three times each week. During my toughest days, I maintained a workout regime and started running a number of miles each week. Each day, the overwhelming stress on me discouraged me from exercising, but I ignored those inclinations. I also went to a local dietician and, under his supervision, lost nearly 40 pounds; I remain under his surveillance with regular check-ups and blood profile tests. Had God not led that businessman and me to take those steps I could have seriously injured my health in the toughest stress days of my ministry. Pastors, exercise!

### *9. The Primacy of Pastoring*

In retrospect, I realize that I should not have made myself available to our Kansas City media. For years, talk radio and television stations would call me for sound bites on news

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<sup>42</sup> Benjamin Mann, "KC Star risks credibility with bias against accused priest," *Catholic News Agency* (Dec 11, 2011), [www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/kc-star-risks-credibility-with-bias-against-accused-priest](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/kc-star-risks-credibility-with-bias-against-accused-priest) (accessed Mar 9, 2012).

events locally or nationally. I debated with several eccentric clerics on issues on our local PBS television station, which had a show that aired in prime time. With all our church's other television saturation I was an attractive sitting duck at which to shoot. If I could do it all over again, I would have avoided all local media, choosing instead for the church to have a PR spokesperson. My conviction is that a pastor should teach his people, reach the lost, model the message, love his wife and family, and realize that the media will turn on you. Dealing with the media is like keeping a poisonous snake as a pet—give it enough time, and the right circumstances, and it will bite you. I am aware that many pastors and churches receive no media attention at all; however, to the growing number of dynamic pastors of North America: I urge you to take it from someone who has been there—steer clear of the media. The media are not your friends, regardless of what their spokespersons say. Of course, these remarks do not pertain to purchased airtime where a church has control of the content aired on television, radio, or the Internet.

### *10. Trials*

At the same time that the two-year attack on us ended, our bank, Regions, based in Birmingham, AL, was unexpectedly downgraded because it was ten billion dollars in debt, and the recipient of un-repaid TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program) funds from the federal government. Just as unexpectedly, the bank called the mortgage on our church and demanded repayment of our \$13 million mortgage within 30 days, a mortgage on a \$32 million dollar, 51-acre campus we had spent 12 years building. Our church had made all payments to the bank but, after 17 months of working with their special assets team, we could not satisfy them with any of the various solutions we offered. In September

2011, they foreclosed and took our property—this was one of the saddest days in the life of our church, and in my life, in my wife Cristie’s life, and in our life together. You can imagine the stress and grief of this tragedy occurring in the aftermath of what we had already experienced. We had to immediately reorganize a new church entity to protect ourselves from this troubled bank, whose attorneys leaked false information to the media.

Godly men who started churches and pastored them for 30–50 years mentored me through this: I had planned to do the same. The first 17 years of my career was spent in evangelism, preaching in over 1,200 churches internationally. The Lord, through many months of prayer and many tears, revealed to my wife and me that He had closed a door so as to lead us to offer more deep support to leaders and to share with them the many lessons we had learned from our experience. Together, we are going to minister to and mentor pastors. We intend to build an itinerate, North American media ministry with a vision to reach the world. Our disappointments have thus turned into God-sized appointments. On many days of the ordeal, Cristie and I stayed on our knees in prayer convinced that Romans 8:28 is true, and we have lived to see it—that “all things work together for good.”

### **Church Polity**

“Polity” is defined as the governmental organization of an institution and, in this dissertation, it applies to the church. Traditionally, there have been three forms of church government:

(1) The episcopal model, in which churches are governed by a bishop. The Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church are examples of this form of church polity.

(2) The presbyterian model, in which churches are governed by regional bodies, often known as “sessions,” which are comprised of laypersons and clergy, Presbyterian churches, among others, are governed by this form of polity.

(3) The congregational model, in which the individual church is understood to be the whole church in a particular area of community, and in which major decisions are made by the whole church body. Baptist churches and Pentecostal churches, among others, are examples of churches with congregational forms of polity.

Many mega-churches have chosen and are choosing to institute modified congregational forms of governance, in which the church is governed by a board of Elders functioning essentially as a board of directors. Mega-churches often choose this model because of the complexity of church business and the relative speed of decision-making by boards as opposed to the speed of decision-making by meetings of members. Historically, Southern Baptists taught that congregational church governance was the New Testament model. The SBC contends that the New Testament at the very least provides the congregation with the authority to (1) elect its leaders; (2) accept members; and (3) dismiss members. Moreover, they add (4) the right of the congregation to approve the budget.<sup>43</sup> Southern Baptists teach that the basis for this congregational form of government can be seen in both individual passages of Scripture and in two larger scriptural themes. Individual verses or passages such as Acts 6:1–7, 11:22, 13:1–3, 15:1–3, 1 Cor. 5:4–7, 2 Cor. 2:6–8, and 2 Thessalonians 3:6 show local congregations acting to govern themselves and order their affairs. Southern Baptist have taught that the major

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<sup>43</sup> Robert A. Wring, “Elder Rule and Southern Baptist Church Polity,” *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry* 3/1 (2005): 188–212.

scriptural themes are the priesthood of the believers and the autonomous actions of New Testament churches demonstrating only voluntary cooperation—this is where the Cooperative Program of missional giving enters the Southern Baptist Convention.

Morris Chapman, former president and chief executive officer of the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, in the foreword to a book titled, *One Sacred Effort*, wrote the following:

The Convention has experienced the conservative resurgence, an almost unheard-of return to orthodoxy by a modern denomination. The SBC and its institutions are now at the forefront of conservative theology and historic Christianity in our culture ... It is time for Southern Baptists to turn our attention once again to the cooperative missions methodology that has been so useful in the past ... I am convinced our Lord providentially gave the plan called “The Cooperative Program” to our Southern Baptist leaders in the 1920s. The mark of God’s Spirit has been upon it.<sup>44</sup>

The authors, citing several passages in Acts, argue how early church leaders as well as believers came together, reviewed the ways God had used them as a collective body, and even pooled their financial resources to minister to the lost, believers, and actually united for mission purpose and funding. This is true, but it does not dictate that all missional giving must be directed through the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. The international missions program of the SBC is very effective. Although the Cooperative Program supports these missionaries in total, we cannot deny the superb outreach of New Tribes Missions and its nearly 6,000 missionaries (equivalent to the SBC in number) who, among many others, are worthy of our support.

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<sup>44</sup> Chad Brand and David E. Hankins, *One Sacred Effort: The Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists* (Nashville, Tenn: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), xi.

The Southern Baptist Convention is a legal corporation, but an unusual one. The SBC has no assets, no employees, and it owns no property. It comes into existence when the Southern Baptist Convention comes into session and ceases to exist when the final session is adjourned. The work of the Southern Baptist Convention does not, however, stop. Trustees and employees of the various entities and committees of the Southern Baptist Convention carry it out. *One Sacred Effort* would be incomplete without the information included in chapter 11, titled “Tensions, Trends, and Troubles.” Why the decline in cooperative program giving? Why the absence of younger pastors in attendance at the Southern Baptist Convention? A review of tensions in the SBC included identification of the conservative resurgence, which resulted, it is alleged, in moderate-to-liberal churches splintering and forming the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a move which siphoned funds away from the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. The relationship between Baptist colleges and state conventions was also cited; but there is more to the story. Younger pastors, aggressive in their approach to reaching the lost, have all heard stories of or personally experienced church politics and infighting related to normal church business. Any church member, regardless of the state of his or her own spiritual, marital, parental, or tithing life, can come into a business meeting and cause trouble. Scores of my peers have consequently opted out of such churches and, in conjunction with experienced, qualified attorneys, created bylaws for their churches (See Appendix B, below.).

Southern Baptists argue that the New Testament provides the congregation with the authority to elect its leaders. I would argue that only spiritually qualified believers should be electing church leaders, and this is not the situation in congregational forms of



governance. The simple fact of being a church member does not give one the spiritual maturity necessary to make such serious decisions. Again, the SBC contends that Acts 6:3, in the selection of the first deacons, states that the multitude “chose out from among them” and verse 5 indicates that those chosen by congregation were appointed. In addition, Acts 15:22 says, “Then it pleased the apostles and Elders, *with the whole church*, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.”

I too share a basic belief in the right of the congregation to choose its leaders; however, who, what, and how many qualifies the “congregation” when weighty spiritual decisions regarding the church’s ministry rest on the “congregation?” It appears to be the view of at least one SBC theologian that John Calvin, in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* on page 1066, stated that Acts 14:23 illustrates that congregational affirmation was to be “by a show of hands in every church.” He alleges, furthermore, that Calvin presented this in his interpretation of the Greek word usually translated as “appoint” but which carries the meaning of “choose or elect by the raising of hands.” To insist that every member, or any member, regardless of spiritual qualification, should be able to “raise their hands to vote” on any and all issues in a church business meeting is absurd, I suggest, and contributes to the increasing pastoral attrition rate in the U.S. The SBC professor in question, in addition, notes that Cyprian implicitly approved the notion of congregational affirmation by insisting that the choosing of the bishop be effected in the presence of the people. Of course, the people should observe and be cognizant of how the leadership is appointed in the local church, but who or what qualifies the congregation to make these decisions? Those who make decisions must meet the qualifications of 1

Timothy 3 and Titus 1—i.e., they must have the spiritual maturity to understand the grave seriousness of spiritual leadership in the church.

Southern Baptists also argue that the New Testament asserts the authority of the congregation to accept members. Romans 14:1 states: “Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things.” This letter is not written to the Elders or leaders of Rome; it is written to “all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints” (1:7). Another example of the authority of the church to accept members comes from the New Testament example of church discipline given in 2 Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians 2:6–8, Paul urged the church at Corinth to allow a member back into fellowship after discipline had been successfully effected, by reaffirming their love for him. These verses also indicate the discipline had been “inflicted by the majority.” Yet I can hardly believe that New Testament local churches had an official “membership” roll as does the contemporary church. Again, the issue is one of church polity—what is the most efficient government for the church which can insure accountability, and can support, encourage, and hold the pastor and staff accountable and lead the ministries of the church to be effective and fruitful?

Congregationalism also rests on the larger scriptural theme of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9), in which it is written that all believers possess the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17), and thus can receive guidance of the Lord and have direct access to the Lord without the need of a human intercessor. This presupposes a congregation of members who are all regenerate and in touch with the Holy Spirit.

Many progressive churches are turning to this kind of Elder rule, a modified congregational representative form of church governance. Other pastors choose to abandon congregational church governance because they have experienced situations where it was necessary that a vote be held before every light bulb was purchased and every dollar spent, and where secondary issues have derailed the church from visionary, innovative, evangelistic ministry. The Elders or board can wisely approve the way money is being spent in the form of an annual budget projecting revenues against expenditures. This model facilitates church members to understand how the money they contribute is used, and it can increase trust. But whatever form of church governance is adopted, careful prayer and thought must be given to it so that it does not by its restrictive nature eliminate entrepreneurial, creative pastors who would reject it or distract the church from marshaling its people to do the work Jesus commanded in Matthew 28:18–20:

And Jesus said came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

## **Conclusion**

Local church governance must be clearly understood by all believers and members of the assembly. If a church desires to have an effect on a community and fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20), it must carefully and scripturally adopt bylaws and articles of incorporation that facilitate that goal. A number of churches have become toxic, replete with poisonous factions that have developed expertise at pastoral exhaustion leading to departure or termination. A congregational representation form of

church governance led by godly, wise, spiritually qualified Elders who form a board of directors provides a model of church polity that can be both accountable and efficient. To successfully endure adversity and congregational conflict, pastors and laity must be literate about church polity, communicate clearly, adopt a policy of full disclosure, have the aid of a qualified attorney, avoid the rabbit trail of politics, and prevent media exploitation. Furthermore, pastors must maintain strong marriages; they must exercise; and they must remain undivided in the fulfillment of their noble calling. What are the exact statistics of pastoral attrition? Why we are losing so many clergy? Our next chapter offers an accurate assessment of the extent of the epidemic and helps us begin to understand the reasons for it.