

June 21, 2013

Brothers,

After many months of prayer and after reflecting on our last meeting together it is with a heavy heart that I submit my resignation as an Elder of Harvest Bible Chapel. This decision is not an impulse nor an emotional reaction but where I feel the LORD has led me to act. In good conscience and out of love for the church and our pastors I could not sit back and quietly rotate off in ninety days. That route would've been disingenuous and dishonest to the congregation and the LORD. My family and I just surpassed the sixteen year mark at Harvest and considering that I've known James since before he was a pastor that clarifies the magnitude of my decision.

I'm thankful for the privilege it has been to serve with each of you and I leave the Elder Board and Harvest Bible Chapel without anger or bitterness but admittedly with sadness. Harvest, James, and all of you that compose the leadership will be in my prayers. This decision is a compilation of matters that are intertwined together but the ultimate affirmation came the other night. From my first phone calls and emails to Robert sharing minor concerns to major concerns I have always endeavored to show respect and be patient. Personally I strive for continual improvement in everything I do. My disposition is not one of a critical spirit and I am often an optimist, but there are many things that we do not see eye-to-eye on. It is not my desire, nor has it ever been, to cause anyone strife, but rather to address things in Christ's church that I don't believe are healthy or in the best interest of the church.

James has asserted multiple times that my concerns have consumed fifty percent of the XLT's time for the last six months and that confuses me. Not because I brought matters to their attention, but that I haven't seen any changes. Additionally, the assertion was clear that I was attempting to monopolize time and be a critical spirit when neither could be further from the truth. James thought it absurd that I could come up with twenty concerns in "one of the fastest growing churches in America". Yes, Harvest is growing and giving is up, praise God for that! While growth and giving are important, don't use those two metrics to assess that all is healthy.

James has repeatedly stated that he is not in a good place and I affirm that. In our recent meeting of seven elders (Scott, Barry, James, Rick, Robert, Bill, and myself) when we requested James disclose his income to the elders he replied, "I would lose 1,000 people before I would disclose that." This is not unique as James rebuked Greg Bradshaw in our December Elder meeting in a similar light when Greg told James, "I'm concerned about the sheep." James rebuked him, "Who cares about twelve or fourteen families whose faces or names I don't even know leave!... What about the shepherd?!" When Christ, the Good Shepherd, stated that He would leave the other ninety nine to save the one, that is where a Pastor's shepherding heart should remain. It concerns me deeply and I warn that James is heading down a very dangerous path if his heart on this matter isn't made right.

During that meeting of seven, Rick stated clearly that they did not trust us. Apparently, grounds of questioning our pastor's behavior are perceived as an attack on him and the church, rather than a loving concern for protecting him and the church. It is important to note that Scott, Barry, and I were appointed to the Pastoral Care Team and **it was our obligation to care for our pastors with special emphasis on our Senior Pastor.**

In our full Elder meeting I was shocked that James mocked Scott by referencing their phone conversation earlier that day. During that call Scott stated that he only had one person he wasn't reconciled with (under the subject of James' lengthy trail of broken relationships) and during our meeting James deflected those concerns by mocking, "In your stream of influence and the volume of people that you interact with compared to me, I would say that I am doing exponentially better than you Scott!" By that statement alone James doesn't take responsibility or blame for his trail of broken relationships. Later in the meeting he also stated that he does not accept any blame regarding his decision to purchase his house in Inverness. **He blamed the Elder Board at the time since they gave him permission.** All of these matters concern me

deeply but apparently Scott, Barry, and I are on the fringe of having concerns over James behavior past and present.

The tone at the meeting was unfortunate and it was clear to me that Scott, Barry, and I were painted to be the villains. When James framed questions to the full Elder Board to see if they supported our actions his questions were completely distorted. When it was our turn to answer whether we approved of the behavior/actions that he alleged were taken, even we were in opposition to the extreme and exaggerated questions! It felt disingenuous to me that Tom Barber's resignation from the Elder Board and departure from Harvest the prior week wasn't even brought up. As a result, none of his concerns that led to his decision were addressed at an Elder Board level, regardless of his decision to rescind his resignation and remain. Yet our concerns seemed to be on an island and Tom didn't affirm any of our concerns in the meeting.

In a court of law the oath stated is, "I swear to tell the truth, the WHOLE truth, and NOTHING but the truth." The truth can be manipulated while still walking a "legal line" of truth but everything done in Christ's church should be above accusation and not manipulated to conform to one's own agenda.

After four years of observation and participation, the assertion that Harvest is an Elder-led church is not reality. The XLT makes most decisions and is compiled of James and four subordinates. Often at our monthly meetings their decisions are reported to the Elder board as having been made and they are simply informing the Elders. We approved a \$30,000,000 annual budget with a pie chart in thirty seconds. As Elders we requested a line-item budget and that request was denied. So much of the lack of trust is admittedly attributed to the fear of an Elder going "sideways" as James often references. If an Elder isn't trustworthy and above reproach/accusation he shouldn't be an Elder! A good friend of mine in ministry told me, "The enemy has no power in the light, he only has power in the shadows." With reference to the church, I fear information that is hidden and not disclosed, especially to the leaders who are accountable for those decisions, only gives the enemy opportunity to do damage.

All of us, including our pastors should meet the minimum standards our LORD requires in Titus 1:7-8, "For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined."

1 Thessalonians 5:21 "but test everything; hold fast what is good". We are instructed to test (examine, investigate, probe) everything to ensure that it is good and right in the eyes of the LORD. We have been told in the past that we can ask anything as Elders but when that happened we were met with resistance.

After James departed the room Randy looked me in the eyes, with clear anger, and said, "We have a lot of work to do and better men to do it." So I am encouraging you to find better men to lead as I will no longer be serving alongside you.

In closing, the Elder Board collectively, apart from Scott, Barry, and me, made it clear that you do not share our concerns with: 1) James' behavior and irritable disposition 2) His refusal to disclose or allow review of his compensation by fellow Elders 3) The numerous faults of HBC's existing authority structure in contrast to the perception of the congregation. Therefore due to my conflicted conscience on these matters as well as those stated above, I can no longer serve as an Elder at Harvest Bible Chapel. My prayers will be with all of you and you have my assurance that I love the church and mean it no harm. Although I am leaving you have my word that I will not tell anyone they should leave Harvest, not even my brother/business partner. I'm hopeful that God will only strengthen Harvest after my departure and give all of you courage to ensure that God is truly glorified in ALL that you do individually and collectively. Please do not barrage me with phone calls or in-person meetings attempting to persuade me otherwise as my decision is made. You are all loved.

You brother in Christ,

Dan Marquardt