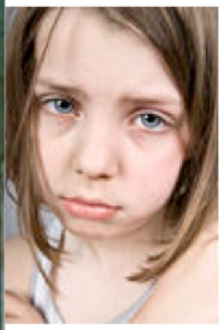
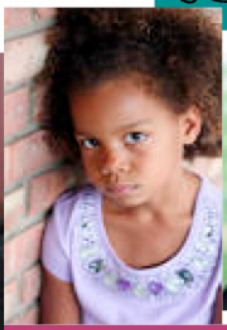
"The three companies that insure the majority of Protestant churches in America say they typically receive upward of 260 reports each year of young people under 18 being sexually abused" *Associated Press*



PREYING

How Child Molesters Are Managing to Infiltrate Churches of All Denominations; and Why Trusting in Background Checks and Procedures Will Leave Our Little Ones in Jeopardy

JOHN CAMBRIDGE



"The book is very well done." "Wonderful"
"Thank you ... for your excellent research."
Diane Roblin-Lee, Evangelical author and mother

PREYING: How Child Molesters Are Managing to Infiltrate Churches of All Denominations; and Why Trusting in Background Checks and Procedures Will Leave Our Little Ones in Jeopardy

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All Scripture quotations in this book are taken from the (Authorized) King James Bible.

This book is dedicated to
every child molested in a "Christian"
environment—the very environment they
should have been able to trust the most.

It is also dedicated to Christ Jesus my Lord,
who came to "bind up the brokenhearted, to …
comfort all that mourn; … to give unto them
beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning,
the garment of praise for the spirit of
heaviness; that they might be called trees of
righteousness, the planting of the LORD"
(Isaiah 61:1-3a)

Each of these messages is from a survivor of grievous childhood molestation in a "Christian" context…

"[Y]our book … [is] very helpful. I will recommend it to anyone"

"I am ... very grateful to the Lord for the timing [of your material], because it helps me to ... be able to grip the facts instead of feeling like I'm teetering on the edge of insanity."

"Thanks for all your hard work on the book! It's helping in more ways than you know. There will be a lot of children who will be spared because of it."

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“I really am grateful to you for the work that you have done with this book. May the Lord bless your work and use it to protect little ones from having to go through what I went through.”

PREFACE

It would be no 'scoop' to report that cases of child molestation appear to have mushroomed across the globe over recent decades. And such growth is hardly surprising when we reflect on the multitude of ways the Internet inflames perverts and helps them commit abuse. (Several other facets of modern society also encourage the abuse of children. For specifics, see chapter 5 of this book.)

Thus, it will stun few readers if I note that, back in the year 2000, the U.S. government estimated there to be *400,000* convicted child molesters in the US.[1] This figure is all the more horrendous because as few as 5% of molesters are ever caught and convicted.[2]

The resulting problem is so self-evident that I doubt it would come as a particularly great shock if I were to mention a Boston University study which concluded that, by the time they reach 14 years of age, 25% of American girls (yes, one in every *four*) has been sexually abused, and that, by the age of 16, one in every six *boys* has been so abused.[3]

Similarly, many readers will be well aware of the degree to which this curse has afflicted Catholic circles. And most of us will have come across at least a handful of cases within the Episcopal, or 'Anglican', world…

But this book will uncover the child-molestation today within *my* beloved world, to which—for simplicity's sake—I'll assign the umbrella term "evangelical". One website alone lists hundreds of confirmed molestations within evangelicalism.[4]

To *some* people, a total in the hundreds may not seem desperately serious on a worldwide scale. But this is just one site. And it's a site which focuses exclusively on abuse by individuals in positions of authority, rather than dealing with *all* molesters.[5] In addition, many of the site's cases involve multiple victims, and the site only looks at a very small number of countries. (The folks who compiled the list stopped updating it fifteen years ago after making their point. Other sites expose subsequent cases—and the evidence indicates that things are getting steadily worse as each year goes by.[6])

Just as disturbing, an FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin says that as few as 1% of child molestation incidents get *disclosed*, let alone prosecuted.[7] There is also evidence that, even where abuse is disclosed, most churches cover it up for fear of destroying their witness to the lost. All told, a figure in the hundreds is obviously just the tip of the iceberg.

It's also plain that no denomination is exempted from this problem. Whether a church is Brethren or Baptist, Methodist or Mennonite, Presbyterian or Pentecostal, Church of the Nazarene or Church of God… Or Apostolic, Calvary Chapel, Charismatic, Congregational, Elim, Foursquare, Lutheran, Orthodox, Purpose-Driven, Reformed, Salvation Army, Vineyard, Wesleyan… You name it. All are being affected—as are many non-denominational fellowships, despite the very palpable sincerity with which their members seek to walk with God.

And the problem now appears to be threatening every hue of church *within* each denomination, from strongly evangelical to deeply emergent, and from thoroughly cessationist to ultra-charismatic. This book is about every such church. Sometimes I shall need to use the term 'evangelical' to refer to them all in one go. But that's just my shorthand way of distinguishing them from

the Catholic and Episcopal worlds. When you see "evangelical" in this book, please don't be tempted to assume, for instance, that emergent or contemplative fellowships aren't included.[8] Further, this problem with child abuse in our churches appears to span the globe. As we look into the matter, it will become unquestionably clear that no fellowship, regardless of its geographical location or its doctrinal stance, can afford to ignore this danger.

In 2007, the founder of a ministry specializing in warning evangelicalism about societal issues which undermine it stated, "One of the major problems that Christians need to address is the **presence of juvenile and adult pedophiles within the church**. … During one of my recent visits to a major city, I heard reports about pedophiles in **four** prominent churches I visited. … The stories I hear like this are **too numerous to remember**".[9] The situation is patently bad.

The extent of the problem doesn't seem widely known. One reason is that churches are understandably less than eager to advertise the possibility that molesters could be operating in their midst. We will look at other reasons shortly. Below is just a brief, introductory selection of molestation cases to illustrate the sort of horrors that are going on and to help prove that this challenge exists across the denominations.

Readers are now requested to brace themselves for some distressing information. While I have kept this book free of any *gratuitous* material, it's just impossible to write a 'decent' book on such a hugely indecent topic, and unless we are confronted with the reality of a subject, it's easy to give it less importance than it deserves. Holy Scripture admittedly says: "whatsoever things are **pure**, … **lovely**, … of **good** report; … think on these things" (Php. 4:8), but this doesn't mean we never need to face up to things that *aren't* pure, lovely, and of good report. *God's word itself* exposes rapes, murders, gruesome deaths and so on. "Revolting as this subject is, it is also imperative that [we] not bury the issues surrounding child sex offenders in an attempt to escape their vulgarity. Paedophiles [*the British spelling*] are not going to go away, so we must … educate ourselves".

***Important Note**: Such is the upsetting nature of the topic discussed in this book that I have felt obliged to accompany*

it with a heartfelt warning and disclaimer. If you've been a victim of abuse, you are urged to read it before continuing. Please see this endnote.[10]

> "An instructor at … Grace Evangelical **Lutheran** church ..., Fritz A. Callies, 61, has been sentenced to 8 years in prison for sexually assaulting 2 girls, ages 9 and 10. Over a **dozen** women have come forward saying Callies abused them as girls"[11]

> "Ambrocio Martinez Sabala, a former pastor at a **Foursquare** Church …, was sentenced … to seven years in state prison. He had pleaded no contest to molesting **several** of his **daughters**"[12]

> "[**Baptist**[13]] church pastor Larry Nuell Neathery was convicted … of **25** felony charges involving sexual assault or molestation of five **boys**"[14]

ATTENTION:

The three cases below are *unutterably* horrible (although I could have cited even worse ones). I had no choice but to include them though, as the only people who are helped if we constantly obscure the true nature of such crimes, are the people *committing* those crimes.

> "TASKER Donald Gilbert, 61. Melbourne trainee **Presbyterian** minister and school teacher. Receives 6 year jail sentence … after being convicted on **29** child sex charges, including 12 counts of indecent assault, … and 5 of committing unlawful sexual intercourse with aggravating circumstances, against 4 **boys**, aged **5** to **11**"[15]

> "Lloyd Luciano Sampson, ***New Apostolic Church*** minister, [was] charged with 15 counts of sexual penetration and indecent assault on 3 girls (sisters), ... The offences [only came to light] … after the youngest girl finally complained to her older sisters

> because she was hurting so much she wanted to kill herself. Doctors found internal injuries. … [The 'minister' was] [s]entenced to 10 years"[16]

> "Calling his crimes a 'most sick, disturbing and tragic matter', Justice Thomas Riordon convicted **Pentecostal** preacher Rev. Aubrey McCallister of touching, fondling and sodomizing a young girl for 10 years, beginning when she was **7**. The assaults took place at his home and [at] … Sunday school"[17]

Sincere apologies for all offense caused by the above, but I could see no option but to publicize some of the things being endured by our children.

I won't dwell on all this. But I do just need to mention the "evangelist" and professing evangelical Tony Alamo. In 2009 he was convicted on ten counts of 'Interstate Transportation of Minors for Illegal Sexual Purposes, Rape, Sexual Assault and Contributing to the Delinquency of Minors'. "Prosecutors said Alamo took five underage girls across state lines for sex … [O]ne was … [just] **9** and was 'married' to the evangelist."[18]

Sheree Beasley, who was abducted, abused and murdered at the age of 6 by an elder of an evangelical church.

In some later chapters in this book, I'll need to cite more cases—and other denominations. But to underline how serious things are, here's one final observation for the time being. The largest case of child prostitution in U.S. history was committed by professing evangelicals.[19]

I guess we're all tempted to assume that God would never let anything ghastly happen in our own fellowship. However, I **beseech** readers to finish this book before making a definitive judgment on that. The Bible speaks of God allowing people to commit some awful crimes, including the murder of Abel, the murder of John the Baptist, and the murder of Stephen. He also permitted Doeg to slaughter massive numbers of priests of the Lord—plus their wives, ***and children*** (1 Sam. 22:18-21). God also allowed Athaliah to murder all but one of the children who comprised the "seed royal" (2 Kings 11:1-2). God also allowed Pharaoh and Herod to destroy young children belonging to His People. God even permitted the rape of David's own daughter (2 Sam. 13:14).

Unfortunately, the solutions touted today for safeguarding our children are very dangerous. The first chapter of this book explains that remark. The book then offers a simple, practical, and God-honoring way to deal with the whole problem. (I have concentrated on making the text as sound, accurate, helpful and clear as possible. My prose is therefore unlikely to be the most elegant and swirling in the history of the English language. But I honestly feel the help it offers means it's unusually valuable.)

For any readers who are curious as to why I spent four years of my life researching and writing this book, please know that I was not molested myself. I simply heard of enough cases to warrant proper investigation. I quickly had cases coming out of my ears, but could find little within evangelicalism about the problem—far less any material on a good solution. My concern for God's People constrained me to study the situation further, and He definitely seemed to be with me throughout the project.

As for myself, I was graciously saved more than 30 years ago and have been in "full-time" teaching ministry for nineteen of those.

May our glorious God bless you through this volume.

Administrative Notes

It is best if this work is read in the order presented, as later material occasionally presupposes the reader has seen earlier sections.

This book applies worldwide. But in deference to the sheer number of evangelicals in the USA, I have used American spellings. Hence the American—rather than British—spelling of 'pedophile'.

To avoid technical terms in this work, I am employing the word 'pedophilia' in its widest sense, i.e. to mean any type of sexual activity involving a person under 16 years of age.

It is *assuredly* not the case that all molesters are male. But, for the purposes of readability, I generally refer to pedophiles as 'he'.

The words "church" and "fellowship" in this book are used interchangeably and just mean "assembly" in the Christian sense.

There is a common misconception that, when phrases like "molestation" or "sexual abuse" appear in articles, or in books, or in media reports, they normally refer to fondling (which is bad enough). They don't. Normally they refer to *rape*. The same is true in this work.

Please note that all emphases in quotes in this volume are my own unless otherwise stated.[1]

[1] I always try to provide notification whenever I am making points derived from an external source. On a handful of occasions in this book, I have included material that originally appeared in items published by Bayith Ministries, and I haven't offered any indication of this. This is because I act as an adviser to that organization from time to time, and the points in question emanated from me.

My undying thanks go to all those who selflessly gave of their various talents to help make this book happen, including: Anne, Elizabeth, Alan, Deborah, Robin, Al, Diane, James, and Glenys.

A Christian publishing house in America was planning to add this book to their repertoire, but in the hope that it will comfort survivors of abuse to learn that I'm not profiting from the agony of molestation victims, and to make my findings accessible to everyone regardless of their financial circumstances, I have felt it right to put this volume on the Internet in a freely downloadable—and electronically searchable—form. It can be obtained at preying.org.

1

ARE PROCEDURES ENOUGH?

"How *dare* [my son's abuser] rob my son of the carefree innocence of childhood! How *dare* he rob me of my parental privilege and responsibility before my son was old enough to know about such things! … How *dare* he impose himself on my son as the first experience with sex! … How *dare* he express his most vile imaginings on my sweet child? How *dare* he carry on a relationship with my family for years, hiding this terrible secret? How *dare* he subject my son to the lifelong challenges of a molested child? How *dare* he pretend to be such a fine, upstanding, charming member of society?"

'Jocelyn' (italics in original)[20]

Let's imagine that a man struggling with pedophilic tendencies joins your fellowship in order to conquer his urges. Let's also suppose he is open about his condition to the elders. Informed of the situation, the elders can draw up a set of rules

to help ensure he avoids temptation while getting the necessary support…

Of course, this assumes that the man will *abide* by these rules. And there's the risk that he will damage the reputation of the fellowship by abusing children within the local community instead of the church. We'll return to these issues later, but it is already clear that *reliance* on procedures is unwise in this case.

That, then, is the situation where a person is known to be a pedophile. But what of attendees whose pedophilic tendencies aren't known to us? Such has been the explosion in abuse over the last few decades that many fellowships have felt obliged to introduce background checks on everyone being considered for youth work. But reliance on *this* procedure doesn't come close to solving the problem either, for three different reasons:

(1) Offenses Undetected

Even if the background checks being deployed are of the highest quality, titanic numbers of people have abused children *undetected*. (In most, if not all, of the examples we've already looked at, the abuser was able to get away with molestation for a very long time. We'll see further such cases later, but a police officer with experience in this field confirms the unhappy truth that, "Detection usually takes years".[21])

Most adults imagine that children will speak out as soon as they have been assaulted. But that is to ascribe adult ways of thinking to children—and it's a lethal mistake. The depressing fact is that, unless the abuse is sudden and brutal, children do *not* speak out. Formidable evidence for this comes courtesy of the nearly THIRTY YEARS of undetected abuse committed by Geoffrey Dobbs, who came to be known as 'Australia's worst paedophile'. Despite Dobbs being a "missionary", a "**Sunday school** teacher, **church youth leader** and a '**highly regarded**' church member", he went to prison for life for the abuse of **62** young girls.[22] The nature of the abuses committed was deeply grievous—and detectives believe he may actually have abused

"more than 300 girls"—yet he was only caught by accident, not by *any* of his victims reporting him.

Why are children so reticent to blow the whistle? There are two dimensions to this problem:

Nature

Researchers Abel and Harlow tell us: "Studies reveal that in almost **every** incident of sexual assault, the victim--whether that victim is an adult woman, a little girl or a little boy--feels in some way **responsible for his or her victimization**". This propensity to blame oneself is particularly strong with children, because youngsters are naturally trusting—especially of adults. Satan, being no gentleman, exploits this feature and encourages the child to assume that he or she must have been at least partly to blame for what the adult did to them (just as children usually assume they are at least partly at fault if their parents divorce). To illustrate the potency of this feature within youngsters, just consider this statement from a woman who was only 8 years of age when she was raped. She was 27 before she could say: "it was only **recently** that I stopped blaming **myself**".[23]

The tendency in children to assume that they "must have done something" to bring on the abuse (or else that they should at least have been able to prevent it), regularly keeps them from reporting what has happened.[24] Their reticence multiplies when the shame they feel is combined with the horrendous details of the abuse. As one brokenhearted mother of a seriously abused boy worded it in an email to me, "They don't tell us, do they? They feel so ashamed, dirty and guilty". Tragically it was only many years later that this dear Christian mother learned of the molestation of her cherished son—and the misery he endured, alone, for the rest of his childhood.

A child may also find it hard to speak out due to fear of what will happen to them if the report isn't believed. A girl we shall call Becky was frequently raped, for a period of two years starting when she was 14, by a 40-year-old church elder called "Pastor Martin". In the end, Martin was sentenced to 205 years in prison for his many crimes against her. But, "Becky said she never told anyone what was happening [during the 2 years she was having to suffer his abuse] because Martin was so popular

with church members and such a powerful manipulator: No one would believe her"...

> "I was **scared**. If it came out, he would twist things and make it look like **I** was the one who did the wrong thing. I watched how people reacted to him. They really believed in him."[25]

Ironically, children can also stay silent out of concern for what will happen if they *are* believed. If, let's say, the abuse is being committed by a close relative, the child may well fear the disintegration of its family—the very unit the child views as its "source of survival". A child can be so terrified of hurting their own family that they will courageously do everything they can to hide what's happening. They may not even show reluctance about spending time with the abuser, so as to avoid being asked any 'dangerous' questions.

Among the other features of a child's mind which get in the way of speaking up, "Little children do not have the same **frames of reference** as adults. They do not process things the same way. They don't have the **life experiences** necessary to know how things will play out."[26] Children commonly worry, for example, that their parents won't *love* them as much if they tell them they've been abused. Some youngsters even fear that their parents will stop loving them at all. "Will they blame me? Will they still love me? Will they send me away to a boarding school?" These are the sorts of confused thoughts that molested children, both young and older, have.[27]

All of the above makes it difficult to report the abuse when it first occurs. But when the child isn't able to tell anyone about the *initial* abuse, they start to feel like an *accomplice*. "It becomes **even harder** to tell someone [about the abuse, the longer it carries on], because (they) feel complicit" notes a District Attorney in North America. "Guilt prevents them from coming forward. No wonder these kids are screwed up...".[28]

Efforts of abuser

What is the other type of reason children stay silent about their abuse? A good way to begin answering this question is by

giving two statistics. The first one is that, "In **80** to **90 percent** of … cases, the offender is **well known** to the victim".[29] The second confirms it: "89% of youngster sexual assault situations entail **individuals the child knew**".[30] These figures smash the old, "social myth … that a child molester is most apt to be of a low-class breed lurking in dark [places], interested in abduction of children he does not know. In fact, most sexual abusers of children are **respectable, otherwise law-abiding** people who cultivate friendly relationships with their chosen prey".[31] Abel concurs. He rightly observes that the typical molester, "**never** assaults children he does not know; he only chooses children with whom he can first build a trusting **relationship**." This is vital for us to realize, because it gives us a better understanding of how abusers manage to keep children silent.

Originally, I was planning to list some of the different techniques pedophiles have reportedly used to discourage their victims from divulging abuse. But I came to realize it would be unbiblical to do so, and that it might well help those interested in *molesting* children.[32] (The solution I proffer in this book will defeat all techniques.) Suffice it to say that even a pedophile of very low intelligence can prove fiendishly clever in ensnaring children. To adequately convey the inventiveness, deviousness and imaginativeness these men can bring to bear when weaving their diabolical webs, the best analogy I have come up with is the advertising industry and its seemingly inexhaustible supply of ways to convince us to buy things we do not need and do not want—and even things which are bad for us. When this level of craftiness is employed against unsuspecting children, and when it plays on their natural naïveté, it makes them far too worried to speak up, and enables abusers to molest in safety.[33]

As well as being (literally) devilishly cunning, pedophiles are frequently prepared to spend *months* grooming the child, as well as *years* earning the trust of the parents, in order to create the circumstances necessary to molest without being reported. Why is a pedophile willing to wait such a huge length of time before committing abuse? There are several reasons:

> The strength of his urges means permanent abstinence is an unacceptable idea, but the abuser risks losing an

enormous amount—including reputation, friends, job, marriage, home, and liberty—if he is found out. Thus he feels it imperative to devote whatever time proves necessary to prepare the ground. As a specialist police officer has phrased it, "There are no lengths to which a paedophile will not go to groom a child".[34]

The molester wants to be able to abuse the child for as long as he feels like. The investment in ensuring he can do so undetected seems worthwhile to him.

Just as an angler is content to spend months luring a desirable fish into his net, so pedophiles seem to enjoy the hunt—i.e. the "thrill of the chase". They delight in pitting their wits against us and 'pulling the wool' over folks' eyes.

Most pedophiles find their target children adorable. Hence they see it as no chore at all to spend time in the presence of ones so sweet, "cute", and easy to impress. Some abusers even think they 'love' the children they stalk. (But what sort of 'love' loses interest in a person just for growing up?[35]) Pedophiles are delighted to be near the object of their affections, especially if they are deepening the friendship or gaining useful intelligence on the child or its family. (The grooming process is so subtle that the target child is consistently unaware of it and certainly has no idea where it is leading. But when the abuse starts, their failure to realize what was going on is one more reason why they feel partly responsible for the abuse and are inclined to stay silent.)

The pedophile knows the grooming process is likely to supply some opportunities for lascivious gazes. (Most parents are frustratingly ignorant of the profound effect evidently caused to pedophiles by outfits which show any of a child's shape between the waist and knees.[36]) The abuser also knows that, whenever the adults aren't looking, there may be scope for inappropriate physical

> contact of a sort that the child will interpret innocently. **Please Note:** A molester may already have completed the grooming of children in one or more *other* families, in which case his evil lusts are finding an outlet while he 'softens up' a new victim.

There are ways to increase the willingness of a child to reveal abuse, and I'll come to that topic later. But every decent parent would vastly prefer that the abuse didn't start in the first place—and that's really what this book is designed to achieve. Since even a single molestation can cause a child to suffer for an entire lifetime, my focus is on ensuring abuse never begins. (For indicators that a child is being abused, see this endnote.[37])

It goes without saying that offenses are normally going to remain undetected if the child stays silent. And, to repeat what we saw earlier, as few as 1% of molestation cases get disclosed. But even if an abuse survivor does feel able to speak up, which could easily take years or even decades, statutes of limitations may have expired, or witnesses may have moved away and be impossible to trace, or memories of key witnesses may perhaps have faded too much, and the perpetrator can escape again.

Additionally

There are other reasons why children can remain silent, beyond those we've discussed here. Some of these are covered later, primarily in chapters 7 and 9. Extra reasons are listed on this book's website, preying.org.

I ought also to note that, even in the event that they are prepared to come forward, some molested children are ignored, e.g. by the teacher who, not knowing if the allegations are true or false, is "frightened of recriminations if they're proven to be wrong",[38] or by the parent who believes the molester over their own child, generally because "for most people the possibility is just too horrible [and too embarrassing—if the parent failed to protect the child] to seriously consider".[39] Some folks choose to "avoid the demands of becoming 'involved'", unaware that they can report molestation anonymously.

In other cases where an abused child manages to speak up, the abuser eludes the attention of the authorities due to extreme

ignorance on the part of adults who assume the abuse was 'just a one-off' and will never recur. But, where a molester *is* taken to court, "**Invariably**, a long and disturbing history of abuse emerges during their trials, a history peppered with 'second chances' and 'missed opportunities' where [folks] have fallen for a paedophile's appeals for mercy, that it was a momentary lapse and will never happen again".[40]

And in those cases where the child tells its mother about sexual abuse by another family member, the mother may not be able to face the prospect of her husband, or father—or son—in jail[41], in which case the report may well be kept 'in-house' and never reach the ears of the authorities.

On other occasions where children might be prepared to speak out, they can, chillingly, be left in no position to do so:

> "LOWE Robert Arthur Selby, 57, Melbourne Sunday school teacher and Presbyterian church **elder**. Receives life jail sentence … after being convicted of kidnapping and choking to death girl, [Sheree Beasley] aged 6, … Lowe [molested the girl in the process]. … [R]eport lists Lowe as one of [the Australian state's] **top 4 sex fiends**"[42]

Child *murder* by members of evangelical churches is not unknown, even if we ignore deaths from "exorcism rituals" and from neglect. For instance, Rachel Senter was murdered at the age of just 10; Andrea Pandy and Tonya Gibson were both 13, and the photos in this book are all of further children murdered by professing evangelicals.

In conclusion, it doesn't matter how good the background checks deployed are. It is plain from what we've now seen that the majority of pedophiles will get through the net.

(2) Flaws in background check procedures

Even when the molestation of a child has been reported to the authorities, background checks are *never* guaranteed to flag this. Here are four disgraceful reasons why:

Limited scope of checks

A British survey found that only about 5% of child abuse cases reported to the authorities reach court.[43] And, obviously, there are some frustrating reasons why even these few precious cases may not lead to *convictions*.[44] Unless a background check is thorough, it won't pick up the bulk of those molesters who get reported.[45]

If a background check is performed on an offender from another country, there is a substantial danger of their crime(s) being missed. Even when our police are able to liaise properly with the police in the relevant foreign country, more than a few of those countries perform no such checks.[46] In some countries the policing of pedophile activity is absurdly limited. Indeed, in some countries the activity is *legal.* Thus, even a home-grown offender can cheat background checks if he confines his abuse to visits to such regions.

And if the background checks are restricted to the abuse of *children* then they will never detect some of the people who are a threat to children. One researcher points out that, "many child sex offenders are **not** 'pedophiles'. They are **often** 'situational offenders', [i.e.] someone who engages in sexual activity with children not as their primary sexual preference but only due to a **particular situation** they are faced with, and would **not** … engage in such activity except for that situation." A guy called Matt would seem to be one example. He was a member of an evangelical fellowship and was "always into adult sex", but he found himself in a position of trust with two emotionally needy girls and, "in both cases … it was a matter of convenience".[47] Another example could be Jeffrey Hannah. He abused minors as an evangelical youth minister. "I honestly believe", he says, "that had I been a college pastor, I'd [have] slept with college girls … But I was a **youth** pastor. It was less about **age** and more about who I spent all my time with".[48]

Data Protection problems

It beggars belief, but police forces have been known to wipe the record of individuals against whom there was credible evidence of abuse, on the basis that data protection legislation required them to do so. British readers may recall that this was

precisely the state of affairs for Ian Huntley. In spite of having allegations of four acts of underage sex and three rapes hanging over him, and despite full police checks being performed by his new employer, he was nevertheless able to get a job as a school caretaker because the police had deleted all of this information, believing it unlawful to hold data on allegations which did not lead to a conviction. Huntley subsequently murdered two girls at the school.

When it comes to our churches, a specialist UK charity has even highlighted "a police refusal in some areas to disclose information about the presence of abusers in the congregation. Some [forces] do, but many refuse to, citing data protection or human rights legislation as their justification".[49]

Database errors

As we have now seen, background checks let the majority of pedophiles through. This would still be the situation even if police databases were always being perfectly maintained. But police databases are very *im*perfectly maintained.

I have seen frightening statistics about the accuracy of entries in criminal databases, so it was not a big shock to learn that people have sometimes wrongly been given a clean bill of health due to database errors.[50] Reflect too on this news item:

> "In April 2003, the US Justice Department … **discharged** the FBI of its statutory duty to ensure the accuracy … of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database [*which holds the criminal records of individual citizens*]. … The US Privacy Act … requires the FBI to make **reasonable** efforts to ensure … [its] accuracy. However, in April, the Justice Department **exempted** the system from the law's accuracy requirements"[51]

Final analysis

Having spent a year working in database administration, I can confirm that the quality of police data is heavily dependent on the quality of the staff handling that data.[52] Even in the best

scenario, where the information is all complete and accurate, it *still* doesn't mean the correct facts will be passed on to us:

> "A convicted pedophile sentenced to do community service in a German [***evangelical***] kindergarten will return to court next week to face charges of abusing two children there ... The man was allowed to work as a janitor at the Evangelical Kindergarten St Petri in Melle, … because a court worker **missed** three prior pedophilia convictions on his record"[53]

If one person gets through the net, they may go on to molest scores of children. And some children get abused up to 1,000 times by the same individual.[54] All told, it is very unwise to place your trust in background checks when recruiting youth ministers. But even if background checks miraculously always managed to spot the danger, this still wouldn't come anywhere near solving the problem, for the reason given next.

(3) Alternate access

By far the largest problem with reliance on background checks for those entering youth work is that access to children can be gained by *avenues **other** than youth work*. Contact with children can, for instance, take place informally at social events like church outings or holidays. With unspeakable wickedness, an 'evangelical minister' once raped three sisters during a trip "arranged by him so [that] the girls could help him **distribute religious tracts**". Abuse of our youngsters has even occurred in church washrooms during services.

Abusers can perhaps most easily access church children by cultivating relationships with families, especially one-parent families, who are not aware of the abuser's true nature. When a molester has deceived his way into the bosom of such a family, the opportunities for accessing children are manifold. Just one way is through babysitting. With the lack of extended families these days, many parents need babysitters. A member of your own church, and one whose services are free, is a temptation.

The risk of inadvertently putting our children into the hands of a pervert is very real, because child molesters can be amazingly charming, resourceful and patient.[55]

And even if we succeed in keeping our *own* homes free of pedophiles, who are our children mixing with when visiting the homes of their friends? (Sleepovers are a particular menace in this regard. Sleepovers carry other dangers too, hence respected Christian writers on family issues oppose them adamantly.)

But the opportunities for access don't stop there. Even if a church were somehow to successfully keep children *physically* separate from pedophiles, the Internet allows *electronic* access to them. A pedophile can infiltrate a fellowship, decide which children are of interest to him, obtain their names, and start to groom them online—by posing as a Christian child and getting in contact with them via the relevant social networking site.

For any reader who thinks this idea far-fetched, below is one of the ways a church's youngsters can be at risk even if no pedophile is *ever* able to darken its doorstep:

> "A **postman** who used Facebook and Bebo to groom up to **1,000** children for sex has been jailed. ... [*This total monster*] created at least eight fake online identities and targeted youngsters he met on his **post round**, … [and also as a **taxi driver**] and [even] in his role as a **football club secretary**. ... [The guy] worked as a postman in his home town, where locals regarded him as cheerful and helpful. But [he] was secretly pursuing youngsters on social networking sites—[usually by] using false names and posing as a teenager. Many of his victims were tricked into performing sex acts on a webcam and he convinced some [of his victims] to meet him in parks, on beaches and at his home, where he abused them"[56] (Social networking sites carry *other* severe risks too. Please see this endnote.[57])

It is evident that pedophiles can readily gain access to a church's children *outside* of formal childcare scenarios. Thus it is more than a little foolish to imagine that screening for youth work will keep our children safe from this scourge.

FINAL POINTS FOR CHAPTER

Those folks with pedophilic tendencies who have not yet actually committed abuse would *also* pass background checks. But they could easily go on to molest children. The temptation is especially great where the person gains a role in youth work, or indeed gains *any* trusted access to children. (We shall return to this category of person shortly.)

Here is one closing thought on background checks. If a person fails such a check it will usually be because, somewhere along the line, *abuse has been committed*, in which case one or more souls have already had to suffer. God would surely never require anyone to *actually suffer abuse* in order for His People to be able to identify a risk. If a church cannot discern whether or not a given person is a threat to children without resorting to police checks, then that church has got a problem. And if elders don't possess the maturity to discern whom the Lord would—and wouldn't—want in a given role, then I reckon those elders need to pull their socks up.[58] *(Please Note: Whenever I use the term 'elder' in this book, I am including those individuals who have been given a title such as 'pastor', 'presbyter', 'bishop', 'senior pastor' or similar.)*

Naturally, a church can always introduce procedures that apply to *all* attendees, whether or not those attendees are going to be involved in any youth work. But this solution still leaves children at dreadful risk. For a start, no set of rules could ever be well-crafted enough to stop an experienced abuser. But there is another, much bigger, problem.

Regardless of the quality of the rules a church lays down, such rules are not going to be applied rigorously, 24/7, within a *home* setting. Members of a child's own family are not going to be expected to live by the rules, and neither are members of the extended family. At first glance this may not seem a significant problem (although the rate of incest today is astonishing; one in every ten families in the UK is known to have experienced it), but in truth it's a nightmare because Christians routinely allow trusted souls from outside the family into their homes *and into their family circles*. This means an abuser can wheedle himself into being made an honorary member of a congregant's family,

with the various substantial privileges this affords him.[59] It also allows *other* potentially dangerous folks to access our children. We may permit our teenage son to have one or two of his nicer friends around. Or we may allow a seemingly decent person to rent a room in our house. What church rules could protect our children from such people? It is precisely the sorts of scenario outlined in this paragraph which comprise the majority of child abuse cases.[60]

And if our children are involved in activities unconnected with the church, and if we are not able to keep them under our watchful eye during such activities, even the finest church rules aren't going to safeguard them.[61] Even in a *church* setting there are multiple ways we haven't touched on yet in which children are severely imperilled through reliance on procedures. These will be covered later, mainly in chapters 4, 7 and 8.[62]

I suspect reliance on procedures is often the result of church elders attaching insufficient gravity to the issue of child sexual abuse. We should be in no doubt at all that molestation of children is utterly repugnant to God. In Matthew 18:5-6 the Lord said, "whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that **a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea**". *(If God automatically protects every child who believes in Him, as some Christians suppose, why did He give such a warning about the abuse of exactly this category of child?)* Since the abuse of children is extraordinarily serious to God, it should be similarly so among His People.

If procedures can't be relied upon, what *can* we rely on to protect our children? The next chapter answers this question.

2

THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

"The Bible is not only the world's best-seller; it's man's best buy"

Anon

Given what we've discussed already, how can Christian churches possibly keep their children safe? The answer will be unpalatable to certain readers, but I implore them to bear with me until the end of this short chapter. From my investigations over the years, it is *manifestly* true that the more an institution which claims to be "Christian" adds to, subtracts from, or fails to revere and respect the word of God, the greater the risk to its children.

In later chapters we'll see the practical outworking of this correlation between abuse and disrespect for God's word. But

for now I shall appeal to God's word itself to demonstrate why loving, and therefore obeying, the Bible serves to safeguard our children from abuse.

Let's start by discussing Psalm 119. If we want to avoid our churches being *ashamed*—which is a natural consequence of a pedophile attack—Psalm 119 repeatedly calls us to stick to Holy Writ. This psalm also says that God will be incomparably more willing to protect us if we are living by His written word (see verses 153-4, plus vv165 & 173[63]).

In a few moments we'll look at the common objections to this idea. But for more evidence that we must indeed abide by God's word if we want to shield our children, bear in mind the following:

> What is the right path to take on a given matter? David said to God, "Thy **word** is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). See also v9.
>
> The Bible says of God, "His **truth** shall be thy **shield and buckler** *[i.e. thy **protection**]*" (Psa. 91:4). What is God's truth? In John 17:17, Christ says to His Father, "Thy **word** *[*Greek: *logos]* is truth".
>
> Further proof that obedience to Scripture will result in the Lord watching over us and protecting us from evil, derives from passages like Proverbs 3:1-2 and 1:1, 33; Psalm 18:16-22; Proverbs 2:1-12 (c.f. Psalm 31:19-22, 34:7); Leviticus 26; and Proverbs 14:26 & 19:23.

An elder in a church I once attended claimed the Bible to be "impractical". But he was mistaken. After all, the Bible was written by our very *Creator*. Paul demolished this elder's error when he wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**: That the man of God may be **perfect, thoroughly** *['thoroughly' in UK editions]* furnished unto **all** good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). "**All** good works" undoubtedly includes the work of **keeping children safe from pedophiles**. Not only is the Bible the solution when it comes to

making fellowships secure, but the evidence I have seen is that it is central to the restoration of abused children *and* pivotal to the authentic rehabilitation of pedophiles too.

Our carnal selves have a predisposition towards replacing scriptural commands with man-made traditions. But no matter how venerable or seemingly reasonable a tradition might be, if it isn't in the Bible then we must ask some searching questions as to why God chose not to include it.[64]

To give readers a break from distressing details of child abuse, this chapter seeks to answer all the objections normally made against submitting to God's word in such a fulsome way. If you are already comfortable with this degree of commitment to the Bible, you can safely bypass this chapter—although you should find it an opportunity to be refreshed after the preceding revelations.

ARGUMENTS

In some circles, one or more arguments are wheeled out to decrease reverence for the Bible, especially when its teachings don't match our own notions. I've reproduced these arguments below, along with a few thoughts.

"To always put the Bible first is Pharisaical."

In the past, those folks who were steadfastly committed to God's word were called "evangelical". In some quarters today they are dismissed as "Pharisaical". But the Pharisees were not *genuinely* committed to the scriptures. Christ exposed their true loyalties when He told them: "laying **aside** the commandment of **God**, ye hold the tradition of **men**" (Mark 7:8). He went on to say to them, "Full well ye **reject** the commandment of God, that ye may keep your **own** tradition" (Mark 7:9). Christ also upbraided them for "making the word *[*Greek: *logos]* of God of none effect through **your** tradition" (Mark 7:13). The Pharisees added traditions and invented rules not found in the Scriptures and they used these to negate commandments God had placed in His word (Mark 7:10-13).

Another way the Pharisees avoided submitting to God's word as a whole was to focus on less crucial points in the Bible and to exaggerate the import of those points in order to 'justify' side-stepping the weightier parts of Scripture (Matt. 23:23).

Yet another way the Pharisees dodged commitment to the Bible as a whole was to be legalistic—i.e. to ignore the 'spirit', or general thrust, of the Bible, and to demand instead that *every* commandment they found acceptable must be obeyed in *every* circumstance, no matter how special or extreme. This is not in line with the thrust of Holy Writ (Matt. 12:1-5). What *is* in line with it is that we ought to revere the *whole* Bible.

Ironically, if we put the (whole) Bible first, i.e. before any other beliefs we have, we are being the *opposite* of a Pharisee.

"The Bible says, '[T]he letter killeth' (2 Cor. 3:6b)."

This part-verse from the apostle Paul is frequently offered as a reason to demote Scripture (although it's ironic that folks are prepared to rely on *that* portion of Scripture when telling us *not* to rely on the scriptures). In truth, Paul is ***not*** rejecting the Bible. He noted that the scriptures are "able to make thee wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15), and he made further statements to the effect that the Bible is life-*giving* rather than life-taking (Rom. 3:1-2; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; Php. 2:16; and Eph. 5:25-26).

Paul and the other apostles expected us to rely on, and submit to, Scripture (e.g. see Rom. 12:19; 14:11-12; Gal. 3:10-13; 1 Cor. 1:18-19; 9:9-10; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2:5-6; Jas. 4:5; Rev. 1:31 and 1 Tim. 5:17-18). Indeed these men of God called us to be *devoted* to Scripture (e.g. see Rom. 4:1-3; 11:1-4; 15:4; Gal. 4:22-31 and 2 Pet. 1:20-21). What then did Paul mean when he said "the letter killeth"?...

A look at the context of his statement shows that he was referring to "the letter" *of the law*. He was discussing the law *of Moses* (v13), written on "tables of stone" (v7), which "kills" in the sense that it shows us what sin is and reveals that we must **die** to our old selves if we want to be born again (see Galatians 2:19). The law 'kills' the "old" man, the old self.

"Surely we should live in the Spirit?" Yes. But living in the Spirit is entirely compatible with obeying the word—as the

apostles demonstrated. If a spirit guiding someone leads them into conflict with the Bible *that the Spirit Himself gave us*, then that person is being led by a false spirit.

Of all the people in the Bible who were led by the Spirit, Christ Jesus was obviously the most anointed. Yet this did not stop Him from promoting Scripture *and living by it* (as we will see shortly). Compare this with the idea that Scripture kills.

Paul's true worry about Scripture, as he showed later in this same epistle, was with its *mis*-use by those not devoted to seeking out and learning the truth from it; i.e. people who were guilty of "handling the word of God **deceitfully**" (2 Cor. 4:2). Such behavior will certainly kill spiritually.

We must not think the Bible kills. If we sincerely ask God to speak to us through it then it will bring us both light and life (Psa. 119:9-11, 50, 105; Prov. 3:1-2 & 22:17-21).

"God is greater than His word."

This proclamation is a way of telling congregants not to be concerned about extra-biblical features in their church. But the Bible says something remarkable about this. It declares of God, "Thou hast magnified Thy word **above all Thy Name**" (Psa. 138:2b). So, God honors His word even more highly than His own wonderful Name. How is this possible? I will explain. While Christ is God's word in *human* form, the Bible is God's word in *written* form. And this has huge ramifications for how we ought to treat Scripture. The Bible is devoted to Christ, and Christ was devoted to the Bible (Matt. 22:29; Mark 12:24; John 10:35b etc). Scripture describes both as, "**the** truth". They are inextricably united. Any attack on the written word is an attack on its great Subject, the Lord Jesus.

When someone insists that we are not to see the Bible as our supreme authority, they are implying that God contradicts His own word. The Bible nowhere says God is greater than His word. What it does say, over and over, is that God is *true to* His word. Christians who love the Bible are sometimes accused of 'bibliolatry' (usually by people who condone *real* idolatry), but how can any of us have *too* much respect for the very word of God?

You can't put God in a box."

This argument is used to justify the notion that God does not adhere to the principles He has spelled out in His word. But this results in a very unstable state of affairs for believers. If we have no objective basis for testing things, how can we possibly obey God's injunction to test *all* things (1 Thess. 5:21a)? And why were the Bereans praised, rather than rebuked, when they "searched the scriptures daily" to check whether what Paul was teaching them was so (Acts 17:10-11)? How can anyone bring correction to a person who genuinely, but erroneously, believes God has told them something? Again, Holy Scripture is not just divine but is actually *Jesus Christ Himself in written form*. God has arranged for His word to perfectly reflect Himself. We can always rely on it (see Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 119 verses 9, 97 & 105; and so on).

"The Bible has errors; so we can't fully trust it."

As godly researchers have shown, the supposed errors in *sound* translations[65] of Holy Scripture rapidly disappear when properly analyzed; e.g. when the precise wording is considered, and when the passage is interpreted in the light of the relevant culture at the time it was written. Far too often, ministers make assumptions about the Bible—e.g. that similar passages across the gospels are always referring to the same event—and end up falsely concluding that the Bible has errors. For more details on the above points, see the Q&A section of preying.org.

(There's an extremely good reason why God has allowed His perfect word to include things which, on the surface, look like imperfections. God intrinsically identifies Himself with the truth, so He takes it as a massive personal affront when people refuse to love the truth. Thus, rather than *force* us to believe the Bible—which is the truth—He *tests* our love for the truth. One of the ways He does this is by allowing a tiny proportion of the evidence to appear, if viewed superficially, to point away from the fact that the Bible is His inerrant word, so that anyone who doesn't genuinely love the truth will have 'enough rope to hang themselves with'.[66])

But how does one explain the *irrefutable* differences between the gospels? The following note covers this issue:

> The 4 gospels each have a specific purpose. They serve to demonstrate Christ's: <u>*Kingship*</u> (Matthew); <u>*Servanthood*</u> (Mark); <u>*Humanity*</u> (Luke); and <u>*Deity*</u> (John) *respectively*. The gospels therefore describe a given event from different (but never mutually exclusive) vantage points. E.g. the different quotes for the inscription above Christ's cross just reflect different perspectives on the *same* wording. They do **not** preclude each other:

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MATT: THIS IS JESUS              THE KING OF THE JEWS
MARK:                            THE KING OF THE JEWS
LUKE: THIS IS                    THE KING OF THE JEWS
JOHN:         JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS
FULL: THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS
```

There are many miraculous features of the Bible. It was clearly "given by inspiration of God". But it would be a deeply unimpressive God who couldn't keep errors out of His word!

"We need the speaking (i.e. *Rhema*) word, not the written (i.e. *Logos*) word."

Paul told us, "Let the ***[<u>logos</u>]*** word of Christ dwell in you **<u>richly</u>**" (Col. 3:16), but some folks argue that the written word must be made subservient to "things that God is saying *today*." However, this means we end up in a quandary, since different individuals will have different ideas about what God is saying and, with no definitive plumb-line, we are poorly positioned to know who is right and who isn't.

Some other thoughts occur, namely: Why has God given us scriptures if we don't need them? (And is He unable to give us a Bible that applies until Christ Jesus' return? In fact, hasn't He promised to do this very thing?) Why did sound disciples of God in Scripture devote themselves to knowing the Bible, and why did they counsel others to do likewise? Why did awesome men and women of God over the centuries give their very lives

to protect the Bible? And why does the underground Church in China constantly beg western believers for Bibles?

(A fuller treatment of this *Rhema* v *Logos* argument, plus an even more basic flaw in it, is obtainable from the book cited in this endnote.[67])

"As long as we are walking with Jesus, who is the Truth, we don't need the Bible too."

If that's so, why didn't the New Testament apostles ever tell us this? After all, we can apparently save ourselves a lot of time by leaving our Bibles closed. In contrast, and as we have seen, Paul unambiguously stated: "**All** scripture is … profitable …, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto **all** good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

At least until a man of God is "perfect" and has been *thoroughly* furnished unto *all* good works, it is evident that he needs Scripture. One can always argue that, as long as a man is walking with the *true* Jesus—as opposed to a counterfeit Jesus of the type Paul warned about in 2 Corinthians 11:4—then we need nothing else. But, again, Christ and His disciples urged us to revere and obey the scriptures. And ignorance of the Bible is inevitably going to hurt our ability to determine whether we are walking with the true Christ or a counterfeit.

If we have access to Scripture, a key and indispensable way the Lord guides us is through our study of it.

"Paul taught that we should follow <u>tradition</u>."

Paul did teach the Christians in Thessalonica to "hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or **our epistle**" (2 Thess. 2:15), and also to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of **us**" (3:6). However, we are talking about the period before the New Testament canon came into being…

This was a special time, requiring special arrangements. But the last verses of Revelations look *very* final, and God has not added to His word for more than 1900 years, so it should be

plain to all believers that the canon is closed. That being so, the traditions we ought to follow today are those in God's word.

Paul himself warned against following after "the tradition of men" (Col. 2:8). Remember too what the Lord Jesus Christ said about following tradition (see page 25). Many problems in the history of the Christian Church would never have arisen if believers had checked that the traditions they were being taught were fully in accord with God's word as a whole.

"The Hebrews were of the East, where truth was known via experience."

Obviously it was the case, *until the canon of Holy Writ was complete*, that God's People had to identify *some* truths by experiences. But now that we have the complete word of God, and since it is Christ Jesus in written form, it does not lack any spiritual truth we need—and God is never going to undermine it by making it *disagree* with any truth.

"We should be moving on from Scripture into the Spirit."

Where does the Bible say this? The Bible contains vast amounts of prophecy—yet far from saying of itself that it will become redundant before the Lord's return, it prophesies it will stand "**for ever and ever**" (see Psa. 119 vv 44, 89, 144, 152 & 160, plus 1 Pet. 1:25 and Psa. 111:7-8). We are sometimes told that God is doing a "new thing". This is really code for "Don't expect to find this in the Bible". But the scriptures tell us there is *no* new thing under the sun (Eccl. 1:9). And, what happens if a believer falls for a spirit other than the true Spirit of God (as per 2 Cor. 11:4)? How are we to show such a person their error if we only have a subjective basis on which to do so, instead of the solid-as-a-rock foundation of the Bible?

"The Bible was unavailable to many people in history, so it can't be the full word of God."

This sort of position is the result of making unwarranted assumptions about God and His kingdom. God has undeniably

arranged for basic truths to be obtainable from sources beyond the scriptures (Psa. 19:1), but such truths always agree with the Bible. Any 'truth' which contradicts an unambiguous teaching in Holy Writ *isn't* true. And anything pertaining to our spiritual walk will, unless it is unimportant or already commonsense, be set out in Holy Writ. If God has seen fit to bless us with access to the Bible, we must make it our final authority for all matters of faith and practice. The lives of past believers who have done so with all their heart confirm that the Bible is God's word.

***

Hopefully I have not overlooked any of the arguments people have devised for making the holy scriptures subservient to something else. But if I have missed any, I can't help feeling that the true nature of their proponents, and the falsity of their position, becomes apparent when we consider that these people ignore ***all*** *the reasons, many of them cited in this chapter, for adhering to God's written word.)*

CONCLUSION

Any teaching which undermines the authority of the Bible will tend to push those people who have pedophilic leanings to ignore scriptural warnings and surrender to their cravings.

But there are certain unbiblical features in evangelicalism today which directly encourage and even *facilitate* child abuse. These are the focus of this book. I have grouped them into sets and they are discussed alongside the most relevant category of abuser. There are four 'types' of molester operating within our churches…

3

ABUSER TYPE 1: INFILTRATORS

"You know the famous quote from the bank robber Willie Sutton when they asked him why he robbed banks. He said, 'Because that's where the money is.' *Why do you find all these predators at church? Well, that's where the children are.* … <u>Any</u> place that children are, pedophiles and predators are not far behind"

Grady Judd, County Sheriff
& Evangelical Christian
(Italics in original)[68]

The first type of molester operating in churches today is the kind that joins a fellowship with the *objective* of exploiting the children there.

Child molesters purposely target church groups because such groups are "so open and accepting".[69]

> "[As] one convicted sex abuser told clinical psychologist Anna Salter in her book *Predators: Pedophiles, Rapists, and Other Sex Offenders*: 'Church people'—always looking to see the best in people, to welcome converts, to save sinful souls—are 'easy to fool.'"[70]

A charity in the United Kingdom says up to "**three-quarters** of known sexual offenders monitored by the police and probation services attend a place of worship on a **regular basis**". I rather doubt if that figure applies to other types of ex-convict—the implication being that many sexual offenders are not attending places of worship with good intentions.

Below are three big reasons why predatory pedophiles can gain acceptance into evangelical churches. Please note that the first reason listed will grieve certain readers because it will not agree with a tradition they've been taught. I beg anyone who is troubled by recommendations in this chapter to hear me out. If you're sure I'm wrong, don't hesitate to contact me (preferably with the Bible references behind your stance) but please don't give up on the rest of the book. Its subject is too crucial for us to part company so soon.

Opportunity Increased Through Not 'Judging'

Just because someone says they're a Christian, it doesn't mean they *are* one. After all, *Hitler* claimed to be a Christian. Despite what we may have been told, the thrust of Scripture as a whole teaches us that a person claiming to be a Christian does not oblige us to accept that claim blindly. The Bible calls us to be "wise as serpents", not naïve. By assuming that no believer can ever figure out if a person is lying when they say they are a true brother, churches are opening themselves up to infiltration by child molesters.

A standard response to this point is, "judge not that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). But, when this passage is viewed in the light of the subsequent four verses, it is plain that it is referring only to *hypocritical* judgment—rather than to *all* types. (There does exist a godly variety. For, later in that very chapter, Christ Jesus remarks of people, "Ye shall know them by their fruits", which obviously requires us to make judgments.) For evidence that this "judge not" passage cannot possibly mean Christians are never able to determine if an individual seeking to join their fellowship is really saved, we only need to visit 1 John, all five chapters of which prove that we can indeed, with care, discern whether someone is genuinely saved or not. Additional help on this topic can be reached via this endnote.[71]

While it's unarguably the case that we can't know another person's heart *in detail* (unless God supernaturally reveals it to us, as He apparently did in places like Acts 5:3 and Acts 8:21-23), nevertheless Scripture makes clear that, as long as we are not hasty or superficial in our assessment, we can find out the *general* state of a person's heart (Matt. 12:34b; 2 Tim. 4:10a; 3 John 1:9 etc). God would not want churches to be incapable of recognizing false brothers. And since the Bible tells us that true Christians have "the mind of **Christ**" (1 Cor. 2:16), how can it be that we are not equipped to ever make judgments?

Let's pause and consider a scenario. Imagine you've just purchased a new car, and a young man in your fellowship asks if he can borrow it to take his betrothed to a movie theater. You would sensibly make a ***judgment*** about both the young man's likely ability to return your car in one piece and whether he and his fiancée are certain to act honorably during the evening you are being asked to help faciltate. This illustration shows that it isn't automatically wrong to make judgments about people.

In fact, a considered and Bible-based judgment *serves the person being judged*. We are endangering people if we assume they are saved when they aren't. (A well-meaning fellowship is harming the sister of an acquaintance of mine by accepting her as a believer when she isn't. God is endeavoring to humble her in order to save her, but she is completely misinterpreting His actions thanks to her elders telling her that she is already saved. These folks are inadvertently pushing her *away* from God.)

Some readers may respond, "Fair enough, but the only thing anyone needs to do in order to prove they are saved is to say the words "Jesus is the Lord"—because Paul tells us: "**no** man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the **Holy Ghost**" (1 Cor. 12:3b), and if a person has the Holy Ghost they must be saved!"

At face value, this verse does suggest that all a person needs to do is merely speak the four-word phrase "Jesus is the Lord" and we must accept them as having the Holy Spirit. But to ensure our interpretation of any given Bible verse is correct we must check if it lines up with the direction of Scripture *as a whole*. And in this case it very plainly doesn't. Many passages in God's word make no sense at all if the above interpretation is right. Christ Himself told us, "by their **fruits** ***[plural***; *i.e. not just the utterance of one short phrase]* ye shall know them. **Not** every one that saith unto Me, **Lord, Lord**, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:20b-21a).

What, then, is the correct way to understand this "Jesus is the Lord" verse? Firstly, let's note that the chapter in which it appears is devoted to the use of spiritual gifts—indicating that this test only applies to those people who are already operating in spiritual gifts. (The first half of the verse confirms that false brothers can *also* operate in such gifts.) Next, the Greek word translated "say" is a forceful one which requires that the person speaking must speak with conviction such that hearers are sure that the speaker genuinely believes the statement they have just made about the Lordship of Jesus. And—finally—the speaker needs to demonstrate unambiguously that he or she is referring to the true "Jesus". Folks have been known to pick up lethally erroneous ideas about Jesus, and the Bible says such people are referring to "**another**" Jesus (2 Cor. 11:4). Therefore, to prove to us that the speaker is referring to the *true* Messiah, they must make this plain from a doctrinal standpoint.[72]

In the same vein, if we accept a person as saved simply because they confess that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh", as per the test in 1 John 4:2, we need to explain why God's word lists so many other tests that must also be passed. 1 John alone includes several (e.g. see 1:8-10; 2:3-4, 9-11, 15; 3:6-8, 10-11, 14-15; 4:4-6, 8; 5:4, 12).

Opportunity Increased Through Merely Requiring Modest Changes

A pedophile who deliberately joins a fellowship in order to access its children may initially admit to being unsaved. But there is a nefarious reason for doing so. Such a confession will naturally result in evangelistic efforts towards the person, who will then pretend to be converted by those efforts. The problem is that more than a few churches today are badly placed to spot false conversions. (Evangelism in certain churches is formulaic rather than Spirit-led, which does nothing to help the situation.)

Some churches try to teach that salvation is a *process*—and consequently that we should not expect anything along the lines of a scales-falling-from-the-eyes degree of transformation in the souls to whom we've witnessed. Instead, we are exhorted to interpret *any* positive change in them as meaning God must have accepted them. But *anyone* can mimic positive change in their life. This is an especially trivial task if the individual has purposely behaved in a substandard way to start with. (It was a newspaper headline about predatory pedophiles infiltrating and exploiting the gullibility of evangelical churches which was an early catalyst for researching this book.)

For the biblical hallmarks of conversion, see the item cited in this note.[73] "[I]f **any** man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, **all** things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). If we believe our evangelism to be sound, let us expect a commensurately deep effect on our converts.

Opportunity Increased Through Not Criticizing

These days, we Christians are sometimes told "We are not to criticize one another". Laudable though this certainly seems, is it a tradition from *God*? Or is it instead just from men? Does the following passage not sound like criticism?

> "But Peter said unto him, **Thy money perish with thee**, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be **purchased with money** ... [T]hy **heart** is **not right in the sight of God**. Repent therefore of this thy **wickedness**…" (Acts 8:20-22) [To 'repent' of a sin means that you really and truly wish you'd never committed it and you really and truly want to never commit it again.]

The Bible informs us that admonition, reproof, and even rebuke (which sounds even *stronger* than criticism), are crucial features of a healthy church. A believer is mightily helped if he is challenged before he can 'compound his error'. Admonition, reproof, and rebuke are all God-ordained tools for maintaining righteousness in the church: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Tim. 5:20; see also Titus 1:10-14 and 2 Tim. 4:1-4).

Of course, all correction must be brought in love. But these things are not incompatible. We in the West tend to have an impoverished idea of what "love" really means. God's word likens refusing to rebuke our brethren to *hating* them, since we are not warning them about the dangers of their bad behavior: "Thou shalt **not** hate thy brother in thine heart: thou **shalt** in any wise **rebuke** thy neighbour, and **not** suffer sin upon him" (Lev. 19:17).

For readers who accept that we are permitted to rebuke our brethren, but don't believe we are allowed to criticize them to others, consider how Paul not only "withstood [***Peter***] **to the face**, because he was to be **blamed**" but told the whole church in Galatia about it too. Paul also 'named names' in 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 1:15; 2:18 and elsewhere.

The idea that we are never to criticize others opens the door again to predatory pedophiles. For, if they ever slip up in their efforts to pass themselves off as true Christians, a ban on criticizing anyone discourages us from doing anything practical about it. Even if we suspect grooming, or actual *child abuse*, to be taking place, a ban on all criticism tempts us to ignore what is going on because we are prohibited from letting anyone else know what we might have uncovered.

> "A case in point occurred in Tampa, Florida, when a mother walked in on [*an individual*] when he was placing his hands on her son's genitals. He told her he was giving her son an 'anatomy lesson,' and she believed him! … [S]he could not permit herself to **believe the evidence before her very eyes** that a [*member of her evangelical church*] could betray her trust, **sexually abuse her child**, then lie and cover-up. The mother realized the truth when [the man] was later arrested for other molestations, and she testified against him during his trial. [He] was sentenced in 1986 to five years in prison"[74]

One sister in the Lord who is also working to stop child abuse, writes: "With **every** child protection case I have dealt with there has **always** been an individual in the background who has had concerns … and **not felt able to raise them**".[75] When it comes to *molestation of children* at the very least, it is "right to raise concerns when you have them".

Melissa Benoit was just 13 when she was raped and murdered by Henry Meinholz, a trusted member of an evangelical church.

Melissa's killer had left his prior fellowship—because he sought a "more liberal church".

The evidence is that he left his old church in order to ensure that he could groom and abuse children in an unobstructed way.

FINAL POINTS FOR CHAPTER

In summary: There are churches where we are told never to judge. And if we *do* judge, we are instructed to greatly lower our standards. And even if we do judge with biblical standards, we are not allowed to confront that person—or indeed anyone else—with our judgment! Such churches are setting themselves up for unthinkable tragedies, because no abuse is too depraved for some molesters.

A number of the problems discussed in the remainder of this volume *also* aid infiltrators in their efforts to join churches and molest the children in them. Let's now turn our attention to the next kind of abuser.

4

ABUSER TYPE 2: SEEKERS

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"

Jeremiah 17:9a

The second category of people who are abusing children in our churches are the ex-offenders who join us with a genuine desire to put their past behind them but who are failing to do so because of weaknesses in our fellowships.

In this chapter we'll discover some of the ways in which churches are inadvertently leading these sincere seekers to turn back to their old habits.

Various readers will strongly differ with aspects of this chapter. But I again urge such readers, with every last fiber of my being, not to throw out the rest of the book on that limited basis. In later chapters they will find much that they can agree with and make use of.

Likelihood of Re-Offending Increased Through Watering Down of the Gospel

The biggest obstacle to putting the 'old self' to death is that the Gospel being presented in some fellowships today is so emasculated that people are *not being saved*. Man's inherently sinful nature, the true ghastliness of Hell, the need to count the cost—all are being played down. Even Christ's own words like "wrath", "damnation", "torment", or indeed "punishment" are never to be heard in a number of quarters. For more details on such matters, please see this endnote.[76]

As well as being watered down, the Gospel coming from some churches is frequently confused. This can tempt souls to pick and choose what to believe and cause them to invent their own gospel. When an opportunity for sin arises, such confusion can give people enough 'wiggle room' to imagine they can get away with unbiblical acts. A confused gospel is typically going to lead hearers to suppose their ungodly behavior can be 'made up for' by good works—but Rom. 3-5; 9:30ff; Gal. 2:16-4:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5; Mark 1:4 and Heb. 10:26-27 all teach us otherwise. "For by grace are ye saved through **faith** … **Not** of **works**, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). A discussion of this topic is available in the item referred to here.[77]

If a man thinks he's saved when he isn't, several errors we identified in the preceding chapter as helping infiltrators gain access to our children also help sincere seekers do likewise.[78]

Likelihood of Re-Offending Increased Through Legitimization of Pedophiles

Evangelical churches legitimize pedophilia if they endorse institutions or individuals who *protect* pedophiles. A number of senior Roman Catholics, for instance, fall into this category.[79] Until the year 2000, it was standard practice across swathes of the Roman hierarchy—including the very top level—to protect offending clergy. Yet, those responsible are sometimes praised, with no caveats, by evangelicals today.

Sadly, evangelicals legitimize pedophilia in other ways too. When speakers in a given church are not capable of Spirit-led preaching, they naturally resort to gimmicks to make their evangelism engaging. A common method is to include quotes from famous figures. Unfortunately, sufficient care isn't being taken to avoid citing pedophiles. And, if a pedophile is quoted approvingly, this lends credence to pedophilia—which in turn tempts ex-offenders to backslide. (This is why I'm reluctant to name any such pedophiles here, other than Islam's Muhammed (when he was 49 years old, one of his wives was just 9 years of age).[80] But many churches are unwittingly promoting multiple pedophiles—an unjustifiable state of affairs nowadays, when a quick Internet search would instantly deal with the problem.[81])

If we give credibility to pedophiles, or those who have protected them, or those who have promoted pedophilia or who have deliberately facilitated pedophile acts, we could tempt ex-abusers to re-offend. (We may also end up aiding any molester who seeks to convince children that abuse is acceptable. Since the molester can show that the church's elders legitimize *others* who believe molestation to be okay, children may be persuaded that molestation is not a sin, or at least that it won't be followed up by the eldership if a complaint were to be made.)

Likelihood of Re-Offending Increased Through Complacency

A charity specializing in the field of averting pedophile attacks in the professing Church remarks, "We have long said that churches can be some of the most dangerous places that a child can go to, if those in charge do not take protection issues seriously … because, unlike **ANY other** organisation, churches **open their doors to all**. They would be foolish, therefore, to ignore the possibility that they could have sex offenders in their congregations." (Caps mine.)

Wise elders are an absolute joy to have in your life, so it pains me to have to admit that elders can indeed be foolish. In the next paragraphs, we will see some of their unwise notions.

"God would never let it happen here"

We've already seen some of the dangers of taking the position that "God would never let it happen here". Such a claim is very unwise when we consider that God *has* let it happen across the denominations. The apostles never encouraged *any* fellowship to see itself as immune from Satan's attacks. Quite the reverse. They wrote: "Be sober, be **vigilant**; because **your adversary the devil**, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8; see also 1 Tim. 3:2). As I'll establish later, it is profoundly misguided to think one's church is ever impervious to the enemy. Ironically, such an outlook is one of the main errors that help him operate.

Some elders say, 'God will protect us and our children!', yet these same elders are often leading their flocks away from the protective principles God gave us in His word. This road is an exceptionally perilous one for all concerned.

"We elders are too smart to be caught out"

Pride is ***unimaginably*** dangerous. Elders who think they are too well-informed, or too wise, to miss a pedophile, are duping themselves and jeopardizing the safety of the children in their care. It's true that certain types of individual pose a greater risk of molesting than others. But, as we'll find in the next chapter, even if elders were miraculously somehow to become perfectly acquainted with the background of *everyone* at their church, it would only scratch the surface of the problem. (Just one of the difficulties we face is that, "Up to a **third** of molestations are perpetrated by [the child's] parents, including fathers and step-fathers, [and] a quarter by other family members including uncles and brothers".[82] With the exception of those family members who aren't genetically related to the children, society would view such people as trustworthy guardians.) A police officer working in this field has confirmed, "they come in **all** sorts of shapes and sizes. There are no stereotypes".[83]

And they can also be of any ***age***. A U.S. Department of Justice review reported that "23% of all sexual offenders were **under** the age of 18".[84] Churches are asking for real trouble by allowing young adults, and even teenagers, to take positions of trust. (As others have pointed out, teenage boys can readily be

likened to "raging hormones on two feet".) In a weak or sickly fellowship, this is a recipe for disaster:

> "Terry Eads, a church youth pastor [*sic*] …, was sentenced to prison for raping a 4-year-old boy … Eads, 18, hung his head through the sentencing hearing. … As a victim, the boy and his parents' identity won't be released. But their pain is evident. 'It's something that **NO ONE** should have to go through. It's something you can't describe, it's just **so** horrendous,' said the boy's father. Eads 'raped my son with me in the house. He raped my son in our church' probably **40** times, the tearful father said. … The abuse lasted for two years, from 2000-02 when Eads was **15-17** years old and the boy was 4-6"[85] (Caps mine.) *In upcoming chapters, we will learn of abusers much younger than 15.*

Women can also abuse. A study by the U.S. Government, for instance, found that females were responsible for molesting more than one in ten of those victims under the age of six.[86]

"We're covered"

Churches can obtain financial insurance against being sued as a result of pedophile acts. Shockingly, this is apparently causing some elders to become complacent, soothed by the knowledge that the fellowship is fiscally insulated. Elders must take care never to lose sight of the fact that they are responsible for child protection *before* monetary cover.[87] From my studies, too many churches are not being proactive, and elders (out of pride) often don't take the issue seriously until a catastrophe strikes. As one specialist has observed, "it is **very** worrying if it takes a major tragedy to jolt some out of complacency".[88]

Such complacency is particularly unfortunate in view of the number of children that can be affected by a single abuser. "Interviews guaranteeing complete confidentiality **and immunity from prosecution**, conducted by Emory University psychiatrist Dr. Gene Abel, uncovered this: Male offenders who abused girls had an **average** of 52 victims ***each*** [and] men who molested **boys** had an astonishing average of **150** victims".[89] If readers doubt

these figures, I would ask them to take stock of Tony Leyva, a "Southern tent show revivalist" who operated an "interstate sex ring". He monstrously abused young boys he met in the course of his 'ministry'. When the law finally caught up with him, he pleaded guilty to molesting as many as 100 boys.[90] According to some observers though, the total was nearer *800* victims.[91]

Mind-blowingly, one sometimes still finds complacency in churches *after* they have suffered an attack. My brother once visited a fellowship where the attitude was: "We've had a case of abuse before, thus we are experienced in this area, so abuse can never recur here". Needless to say, my brother didn't stay to find out. I've learned of churches from a very wide range of denominations that have been hit multiple times by pedophile acts. One in Wales has experienced at least five episodes over the years, each by a different man. And I've recently heard of a fellowship in the USA which has had seven.

For a much more complete set of reasons why churches may become complacent, and for my responses to each line of argument they use to justify their attitude, see chapter 8. (One reason for complacency is a failure to grasp just how incredibly damaging abuse can be to a child—physically, emotionally *and* spiritually. Chapter 8 seeks to put this right too.)

FINAL POINTS FOR CHAPTER

Taken individually, the primary topics discussed in this chapter may not seem desperately compelling. However, they definitely represent a serious threat when combined. Let's bear in mind too that most of the comments in this entire *book* apply to sincere ex-offenders. I just happen to see the above issues as being more relevant to this category of person than to others.

5

CAUSES OF PEDOPHILIA

"Never has there been a time in this world when such a tsunami of smut has flooded humanity, drenching every aspect in images designed to increase man's libido. Never have the purveyors of pornography had such a widespread influence on the development of our boys and girls"

Diane Roblin-Lee

At this point we need to take a one-chapter break from discussing the different categories of potential abuser.

So far, we've concentrated on people who have, at one time or another, actually molested a child. Putting these *active* pedophiles to one side for now, there are many individuals who have *tendencies* towards pedophilia but who have not gone on to abuse—yet. Some readers will question the idea that "many" people are tempted in a pedophilic way, so I shall substantiate that claim.

Initially I'll look at the state of affairs when it comes to heterosexual males. I'll start by inquiring how adult males view teenage girls, as this is a vital key.

Males—Heterosexual

Whenever analyzing sexual attraction, we must obviously consider man's *carnal* side. For an adult male, by far the most physically magnetic aspect of any woman is her face. A female blessed with a pretty face can still be highly alluring even if she has an unappealing body, whereas the opposite is seldom true. This is a crucial point, because a teenage girl's face can be very attractive to a man. (Well-adjusted adult women can easily find the face of an especially handsome-featured and clear-skinned teenage boy very pleasing, so women shouldn't be perplexed at the notion that adult men can feel the same sort of way towards the faces of teenage girls.)

Other major causes of 'interest' for men include fitness and femininity—both of which are typical of teenage females. Smooth, elastic skin is another big 'pull' and is naturally to be found among most teenage girls. Healthy hair, when presented in a way that complements the face, is another strong draw to a man's carnal side, and teenage females often possess such.[92] (It is noteworthy that, just as women can be seduced and mentally swept off their feet by what they *hear*, so men can be seriously overwhelmed and intoxicated by what they ***see***. And I vividly remember my mother visiting me at school when I was 12 and remarking on how the girls of my age looked exactly like small adults—i.e. they already possessed a number of the visual cues that men are designed to find appealing.)

Yet another complication is that, by the age of 13, most girls are becoming interested in the opposite sex in a 'physical' way. At 13, they are also physically capable of "the act", which helps to explain why, for many centuries, the age of consent for females in the UK was just twelve.[93] (**IMPORTANT**: I do not seek for ***any*** reduction in the UK's current age of consent (16). Whatever the **physiological** situation may be, modern society

ensures that few girls under the age of 16 are *emotionally and cognitively* ready to deal with sexual activity and its potentially colossal consequences. And modern society rarely furnishes a sound enough support-system in the community to enable girls to make scriptural choices when it comes to grave matters like fornication and abortion. Nor am I trying to suggest it is natural for *adult* males to seek 'relations' with girls so young.[94])

To the preceding paragraphs, some readers may say "these physical features of teenage girls have *always* been the case, so if your analysis is correct, why are males apparently unable to control themselves today to the same extent they could in times gone by?" Sadly, there are numerous aspects of modern society which intensify pedophilic feelings. Five are given below:

(1) Internet

I won't be going into details, as I don't believe it would be healthy to do so, but multiple features of the Internet encourage pedophilic thoughts. What's even worse, these features can all be accessed '24/7' in the privacy of one's own home. I would characterize the Internet as a depressingly efficient machine for converting males with negligible pedophilic leanings into full-blown abusers. And it can convert their outlook from a passing interest to compulsion within a shockingly short space of time. The Internet represents a very slippery slope here. (It is also a vehicle for committing abuse, as we'll see later.)

To support my proposition that the Internet is a significant factor in the explosion of pedophilia today, I have reproduced a few quotes from an expert on the relationship between the two:

> "The Internet is as perfect … for paedophiles as coffee is for mornings"[95]
>
> "The Internet … offers <u>limitless</u> temptation to those already entrenched in pornography"[96] (Obviously it can be tricky for a man to resist temptation when he is only a couple of taps on a keyboard—or even just a mouse-click—away from the thing tempting him.)
>
> "[*Referring to a young man who descended from viewing adult pornography on the Web as a child to*

> *developing a voracious appetite for films of extreme abuse of young children*:] What started as a 'laugh' … became an **addiction** … [He might have been rescued from the path he allowed himself to slide so far down, were it not for the] **constant** fanning into flame of his deviancy that the Internet provided"[97]

(2) Pornographic Magazines

Over a period of twenty years from the late 1980s, *dozens* of magazine titles were launched which focused on supplying pornographic images of 18-19 year old girls who looked even younger than that, presented in outfits, surroundings and poses chosen to make them appear younger still. And such magazines weren't hidden away in big city backstreets, but could be found on the high street of just about any town, along with DVDs of the same type of material in video form.[98] Governments finally took steps to curb the way these girls were being portrayed, but not before millions of men had purchased a supply.

(3) Sexualizing Culture

These days, western society is causing teenage girls to be "sexualized"[99] (i.e. to appear more sexually interested than they really are) and to seem *physically* more mature than they really are, by bombarding them with images in films, on television, in concerts etc, of outrageously-attired celebrities, provocatively-dressed pop 'princesses', and scantily-clad dancers—and then making such clothing available for them.

Even on our streets, many adult women wear provocative clothing and then wonder why children do likewise. The world often denies it, but children seek to copy things they see adults doing. Producers of a television show a few years back gave a seven-year-old girl freedom to pick, from clothing available on the market and targeted at her age, whatever items she wanted to wear. Included in the resulting 'ensemble' were a short skirt and *fishnets*.

(4) Loss of Innocence

Teenage girls are being pushed into experimenting with sexual activity by the godless types of magazines, music lyrics,

films, and TV shows aimed at them. An additional factor is the inappropriate sex education our youngsters are being force-fed in school systems these days.[100] There is also the *peer*-pressure from friends who have been corrupted by these things. Another problem is the boredom young girls suffer nowadays thanks to diminished attention spans and the increasing lack of extended families and healthy, tight-knit communities.

Widespread marriage breakdown is also leaving many girls having to cope with the emotional damage caused not just by their father's departure but also by the reduced presence of a father *figure*. This situation inclines girls to yearn excessively to be wanted and loved by an adult male, which, obviously, can put them in danger. One molester in evangelicalism described a victim of his, whose dad had left home, in this way: "She was … emotionally weak and just wanted someone to love her. She wanted males to love her. … I played on her needs. … She was always very clingy. … She was emotionally needy because of her circumstances and she craved the attention".[101]

(5) Lack of Femininity

Men desire a lovely character in a mate. As politically incorrect as it is to say this nowadays, men are supposed to be masculine and women are supposed to be feminine. The great majority of men want their womenfolk to be feminine—e.g. to be sweet, gentle, patient, kind, soft-hearted, gracious and pure-minded (1 Pet. 3:1-6; Eph. 5:22-24, 33b etc). But the 'feminist' movement has told women to be almost the inverse of this. The resulting lack of femininity turns men off and can lead them to target their sexual drive at younger girls who still possess their natural femininity.[102]

The old saying, "Once bitten, twice shy" applies too. Any male who has experienced deep and unjustified unpleasantness from a woman (or who feels totally rejected by *anyone* he was close to), will not be eager to put himself in a position where he might suffer this again. There will thus be a temptation to seek out the company of females who are sweet, kind, respectful and submissive. And if a man *continues* to be on the receiving end of unfeminine treatment from women, he's likely to pursue any females with desirable characters—virtually regardless of age.

Where Does It Start?

Each of the above issues is patently a real problem for a man who already has a tendency towards pedophilic thoughts. But how do these thoughts arise in the first place?

I know of no good reason to believe pedophilic leanings in humans are ever inbuilt.[103] It's impossible to imagine God would ever create a predisposition in any adult to be sexually attracted to children. The causes are *environmental* (although unarguably it is man's sinful heart which is to blame for allowing these causes to lead him down this road). What are the environmental factors? Here are several:

> # If a male is forced to endure a long enough period of time without healthy friendships with females in his own age-bracket, this can lead to an interest in a younger age-bracket. Where the male in question is still an adolescent, the resulting age-bracket is going to be very young. But even an *adult* male can end up desperate enough (either because he is lacking some of the social skills necessary to make friends with age-appropriate females, or because such females are simply not around) to target children, if that seems the only alternative. One female colleague of mine neatly encapsulated the situation, and the potential strength of the male sex drive, by observing that, "When a person is starving, **any** food looks good".
>
> # In today's frequently dysfunctional society, where boys are spending huge amounts of time watching TV/videos and playing computer games rather than learning how to relate to others, many are ending up socially delinquent and emotionally unable to bond properly with females of their own age. In such cases, the younger girls—because they are more easily 'managed' (and are more forgiving of any social *faux-pas*)—are likely to be the focus of the sexual urges of these males.
>
> # My studies show there is much truth in the words of Dr. Roland Summit when he says, "apparently normal men [can] slip rather easily into exploiting **whatever**

… sexual object is most available and most easily subordinated". We must also keep in mind that young girls—including pre-teens—can be interested in grown males *in a non-sexual way,* and that their 'interest' can be misinterpreted by any male who has not been taught what makes young girls 'tick'. Attention of this nature from a girl can get misconstrued, and an innocent crush can get acted upon in a totally inappropriate way by a male who is unfamiliar with such things.[104]

Related to the above, if an adolescent male regularly views hardcore pornography, it will cause his flesh to desire experiences somewhat more 'advanced' (and/or domineering) than he is ever likely to be able to satisfy with girls his own age. Thus he could well be tempted to turn to girls young enough to dominate. (Even if an adolescent male were to limit himself to pornographic images of *adults*, the porn industry is run by the enemy (and hence has the worst interests of society at heart), so it habitually provides at least a few images of even deeper depravities than its customers were asking for, including material that promotes pedophilia.)

Adult men are also at risk of becoming pedophilic from hardcore adult pornography:

> "When they feed on images of perversion, regular sex becomes **boring** ... They hunger for something more adventurous, … less attainable, [and] with a titillating element of danger."[105]

> "Many men told me they started out looking at adult porn and never intended to look at children, but after looking at adult porn for a long time, they get bored. They want to try something different. They start looking at children. Then, they **can't get enough of it**."[106] (Even *legal* images can be very unhealthy. See preying.org/Imgs.)

Note: Alcohol and drugs naturally reduce self-control and so exacerbate the temptation caused by porn etc.[107]

Even if a male has the ability to make friends with members of the opposite sex his own age—and is not in a position where they're unavailable—this certainly does not preclude problems. If the accessible women his own age are strident or generally unfeminine, this again could tempt him to seek out ever-younger females until he hits upon feminine ones. From my own research, many men take their initial steps down the pedophile road because, in broken societies today where adult women can often be impatient, cold and impure, and where even a lot of teenage girls can lack warmth and innocence, pre-teens can appeal to men due to their loving, affectionate and purer natures.[108]

One indicator that a girl has been sexually abused is if she acts in a sexually provocative way towards men. Tragically, such behavior can itself produce pedophilic inclinations in men. Quite a number of years ago I read an article about children in the UK. Young girls who'd been molested by their fathers were being placed with lovely foster parents. The article went on to report that these girls—I believe they were around twelve years of age—had previously been abused to such an extent that they had apparently come to suppose *any* father figure in their life would yearn to have sex with them (or, to put it correctly, *take* sex *from* them). Despite all these foster fathers being very thoroughly vetted, many were finding it exceptionally tough to remain self-controlled when the child, to show gratitude for her new father's kindness (or perhaps to test his trustworthiness), sat on his lap and disrobed.

In bygone times, young boys saw girls as "sissies" and generally ignored them. But boys today are being prematurely prodded into sexual activity by a number of things. For starters, there is modern TV. Researchers

have shown that the younger a child is exposed to TV shows aimed at adults, the sooner they become active sexually. Then we have 'lad's mags' which, nowadays, include pornography. Not only do magazines like these have no age-limit for their purchase, nor do they have to be placed out of reach of young boys. This is a non-trivial problem, because "[c]hildren have neither the life experience nor the brain development to fully differentiate between a reality they are moving toward and a **fiction** meant [solely] to entertain." Then we have the ***Web***. Again, I won't go into details, but boys can—inadvertently or otherwise—find myriad images of an enormously provocative nature, including women posing in unfortunate ways and smiling at the camera, making boys subconsciously imagine these women are desirous of sex with them. When boys are provoked in this way, they are very likely to encourage young girls into sexual activity. Today's technology, which results in easy access to extremely sexual material is "warping young people's views of what is 'normal' or acceptable behaviour". This is so for girls as well as boys. Indeed, magazines actually *targeted* at young girls now contain "entirely inappropriate" material—in the words of Sue Palmer, author of *Toxic Childhood*, who then explains, "The very blatantly sexual ethos expressed in them is becoming normalised among young girls". (As noted earlier, girls for whom sex is 'normalized' can present considerable difficulties for men, regardless of whether those men have pedophilic leanings or not.)

IMPORTANT NOTE*: I am not attempting to make excuses for pedophilic activity. It is utterly sinful, totally unjustifiable, and profoundly offensive to God and to any right-thinking person. I am merely trying to explain why we have such an enormous and growing number of pedophiles these days, and thus why it is so crucial for churches to take the problem seriously. Hopefully this chapter demonstrates the need for churches to ensure they are as sound as possible in order to keep their children safe and to help those attendees with pedophilic feelings to handle temptation.*

But how, the reader may be asking, does an interest in pre-teens turn into a hunger for even younger children? The issue is spiritual. When a person feeds their carnal side to a gluttonous-enough degree in any area, Satan is able to step in and convert their sin into a compulsion (2 Pet. 2:19 and Rom. 6:16). Being from Satan, it's a compulsion which—not unlike drug abuse—can readily become ever less natural and require ever 'harder' experiences to satisfy. As I say, the World Wide Web makes it incredibly easy for an individual to develop such a compulsion. And whenever fed, it will tempt the person to greater extremes, including extremes of age.

This spiritual dimension is a vital matter. Unless *specifically* dealt with 'at the foot of the cross', sinning in this area means the Devil retains a 'landing strip' in a man's psyche. This weakness can lie dormant for decades. The man may not even realize it's there. But during a period of loneliness, depression or grief (or accidental exposure to certain images) it can resurface.[109] Thus, even if a male makes a *thousand* age-appropriate female friends later in life, it is not hard for him to be lured back into pedophilic thoughts if the 'right' stimuli come along.

What this means is that we can't just be on the lookout for males who are incapable of developing friendships with women. Even happily-married men can still retain this landing-strip from their youth. They remain prone to very serious pedophile acts. A woman in the Pedophile Unit of the UK Police says, "I deal with **far** more attached men than single ones."[110]

Closing Remark: The fact that pedophilia is learned, rather than innate, suggests that *anyone* can fall, if the circumstances are challenging enough. The Bible alerts us to the truth that the heart of man is "**desperately** wicked" (Jer. 17:9a). It is even possible that the *strongest*-willed among us has the potential to molest—if only in a really extreme situation. For any male readers who are certain they could never descend into *any* sexual activity with *any* under-age person… Imagine if your wife were to leave you for someone else, despite you having been a wonderful and devoted husband. Now let's say that you and a pretty-faced, flirtatious and willing fifteen-year-old girl with a strikingly good and very well developed physique are the sole survivors from a shipwreck and are stranded together on a deserted—but comfortable—island for

months. Can you **guarantee** that, no matter how she behaved, or how low your defenses were (e.g. through tiredness), you would at no stage do *anything at all*? From memory, if the girl looked as grown up as Brooke Shields seemed to at fifteen—I was fourteen at the time—I confess I'm not 100% sure about myself.

Males - Homosexual

From scriptures like 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and Romans 1:21-32 (not to mention Leviticus 18:11 and 20:13, plus the actions of the men of Sodom) and from things like the rate of partner abuse within homosexual relationships, it seems evident that any person dabbling in homosexual practice is making themselves vulnerable to demonic influence.[111] That being so, unclean spirits are likely to have the same effect we observed above—i.e. leading the man to be interested in ever more ungodly experiences and hence ever younger males. (Where a man has a preference for the dominant, rather than the effeminate role within homosexuality, he'll almost inevitably be attracted to boys anyway.[112])

Women

Although women can end up committing dreadful child molestation, the route they take is consistently very different from that taken by men. An experienced member of the British justice system reports that women child-abusers are: "usually operating in conjunction with someone … and I have **always** found that someone to be a **man** … The origin of **her** offences lies in **allegiance to the man**".[113] It is normally a *man* who leads, or rather coerces, her to start down this demonic path. And since women can develop acute and resolute loyalty to evil men, this is a terrible menace.

If the woman also believes her *welfare* to be in jeopardy if she upsets the man, he may be able to lead her into practically anything, including turning a blind eye to the abuse of her *own offspring*. As previously, if a woman gives demons an opening,

they will nudge her towards ever more evil actions, even if the man who led her down this path should disappear from her life.

The idea that women almost never abuse children in a sexual manner is "a foolish presumption that facilitates female abuse".[114] (Where a male pedophile has got a woman under his thumb, the assumption that women rarely abuse also facilitates *male* abuse, because the male can use the woman as a 'front' to gain access to children. The help of a woman can also make the resulting abuse far harder to detect, and can even legitimize the abuse in the eyes of the molested child.)

But have we had any female abusers in *evangelicalism*?...

> "[A female] pastor of a [Word of Life Apostolic] church … was sentenced to **life** in state prison … for abusing her five adopted daughters, [*aged from 4 to 11 at the time*]. ... [Jessica] Banks [was given] two consecutive life sentences, … for the **years** of abuse she inflicted on the five sisters. [Banks] was convicted … of 13 counts of child abuse and two of sexual penetration by force and fear."[115]

We'll need to look briefly at other such cases later. In view of the nurturing instinct God has bestowed on females, most of us imagine the above type of offense to be quite impossible for a woman to commit. But devils are involved, so such offenses are *entirely* possible. (In fact, I had to omit the worst elements of this case.)

FINAL POINTS FOR CHAPTER

While I was researching this book, one person shared with me his firm belief that pedophile activity around the world has always been at a steady level. This individual was adamant that the *perceived* rise in activity in recent decades is just the result of society becoming more aware of what's going on.

It's true that, at their heart, people haven't changed. But the *world* has changed—and in ways that lead many more souls to develop, and submit to, pedophilic fascination.

Admittedly the changes over the last fifty years or so have been gradual enough for some folks not to recognize them. But they become highly noticeable when we consider the immense moral slide in pop music lyrics and computer games (as well as films and TV programs); plus the gargantuan rise in drug abuse and cases of depression during that time. *Each* of these tends to foster pedophile activity.[116]

We are sometimes told that the world is getting more and more righteous. But I beg the reader to give a sober, considered assessment of what has happened to their nation in the last fifty years. We've already covered numerous societal problems that are present today, each of which encourages pedophile activity. Below, I've cited further such problems pertaining to the UK. Has your country become *more* righteous in these areas, or has it deteriorated, as in Britain?

> *God is being pushed out of schools and out of public life generally. By contrast, platforms are often given to folks who deny the existence of the supernatural realm and who teach us that living things are essentially mere bags of chemicals—helping pedophiles feel it doesn't really matter what they do to another person.
> *Community cohesion has decreased greatly in many places, leading not just to the *fracturing* of society, but to the *splintering* of it. This has created a colder, more selfish, and lonelier place for people to live.
> *The nation has become more carnal, superficial, and celebrity-obsessed. Just one of the unhealthy effects is that many mothers are happy for their young daughters to dress and act in ways pedophiles find enticing.
> *The UK is growing in: occultism, hedonism, egotism, exhibitionism, materialism, alcoholism and narcissism.
> *The number of parents who are raising feral children has increased gigantically.
> *There is a push to lower the age of consent from 16 to 14. (The age of consent for homosexuals has dropped to 16 to match the heterosexual case, so theirs too will drop to 14 if this push succeeds.)

*Psychologists are advancing the idea that pedophilia can be innate, *and thus that it is a legitimate lifestyle*.
*Explicit sex education is now being given to children at the age of *five*, as is the promotion of homosexuality. And young girls can legally obtain contraception—and even abortions—without their parents being informed.
*Despite countless promises over the years that revival was "around the corner", and despite all the initiatives, *many of which we were assured would lead to revival*, the state of the Church in Britain is very weak, and not even a shadow of what it was 150 years ago.

Each of the above is sure to add to pedophile temptation. And please don't imagine this list to be exhaustive. We ought, for example, to bear in mind the explosion in divorces. Divorce promotes pedophile activity in all sorts of ways. We've already noted how it leads daughters to seek love from the adult males around them. Divorce also tends to produce dysfunctional *sons*, increasing their social awkwardness and the likelihood of them pursuing younger girls. Divorce routinely leaves fathers feeling short-changed when it comes to love and respect from females, which can provoke them to seek these things from young girls. Frequently, divorce also has the effect of biologically-unrelated step-fathers and step-brothers or sisters joining the family, with the self-evident hazards that accrue from this.[117]

But even if we dismiss all these changes in society, the invention of the *Internet alone* has resulted in a huge increase in pedophilic activity. There are many reasons for this. Just one such reason we haven't touched on yet is that, instead of being isolated, the Internet enables anyone with pedophilic leanings to "find others like them in **seconds**". The unhealthy effects of this are multifarious—including making deviants believe their leanings are natural, thereby emboldening and inflaming them.

6

ABUSER TYPE 3: MEMBERS

"[W]e must … face the reality that those we may know and love are not beyond falling prey to the darkest inclinations of their hearts"

Diane Roblin-Lee[118]

According to a study for the USA's National Institute of Mental Health, as many as 5% of all Americans will molest a child. That's up to 1 in **every** 20 Americans—potentially more than 10,000,000 abusers.[119] (The actual figure may prove even worse, because this statistic was determined before the 'World Wide Web' took off.) The previous chapter attempted to explain why pedophilic inclinations are found in swathes of the populace today. It would clearly be deeply unwise to assume this tendency is not reflected, at least to some degree, in the membership of our churches. (Even if all members are saved, this doesn't guarantee that none of them will experience pedophilic thoughts. Christians are not immune from being tempted by the enemy.)

Several issues within modern evangelicalism could lead members with pedophilic proclivities to start abusing. Here are three such. Again, if the reader disagrees with anything below, please don't throw this book aside. Just skip to the next section.

Temptation Increased Through Faulty Portrayal of God

Today, some churches short-change members by giving a misleading impression of what God is like—thereby obscuring how essential it is to live according to His word. Scripture tells us that He is the "great and terrible God" (Neh. 1:5; Psa. 99:3); a "consuming fire" (Deu. 4:24; Heb. 12:29), and that it is only thanks to His "mercies that we are not consumed" (Lam. 3:22). Yet today we are sometimes taught that He is actually a "fun-loving, partying" God.[120] Holy Scripture says: "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts", but we may nowadays get told that God accepts us "just as we are" (causing those folks with pedophilic tendencies to imagine they are accepted without the need to crucify those tendencies).

The Bible also informs us that we mortals are physically just dust (Gen. 18:27)—and that even John the Baptist was not worthy to loosen Christ's shoes. However, these days we may get told that God's attitude towards even the *least* godly among us is, "I don't care **how** [*badly*] you [*perform*] … I think you are **fantastic**! I think you are **wonderful**!".[121] In all the Bible, God doesn't say this sort of thing to even His choicest servants.

Finally, Scripture teaches that "The fear of the LORD is the **beginning** of *[i.e. is foundational to]* wisdom" (Prov. 9:10; Psa. 111:10), and indeed that our God is "**greatly** to be feared in the assembly of the saints" (Psa. 89:7a). It is worthwhile to digest the fact that even the whole of the universe, comprising 100 billion galaxies or more, cannot contain Him (1 Ki. 8:27), and that He is omnipotent. If He wants to, He can annhilate the entire universe in an instant. (Look up at the sky and you'll get a faint glimpse of His greatness.) Much more importantly, He also has the power to cast us into hell. Hence Christ's warning:

> "Be **not** afraid of them that kill the **body**, and after that have **no more that they can do**. **But** ... Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath power to cast into **hell**; **yea**, I say unto you, **Fear Him**." (Luke 12:4-5). [Plainly, 'fear' can't just mean 'revere'.]

A list of every injunction in the Bible to fear God would be very long. But certain fellowships seem to have lost much of their fear of Him. Here's one quick illustration. I have watched elders mock congregants who bowed their heads while praying. The congregants were told they looked like they were washing their hair and that there was no reason whatsoever for them to lower their heads. Dissuading men from fearing the Lord—"the great, the mighty, and the terrible God" as He is described in Nehemiah 9:32—is hardly going to help folks with pedophilic leanings withstand temptation. It will do the opposite.

> "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that **fear** God, which **fear** before Him: But it shall **not** be well with the wicked, … because he **feareth not** before God" (Eccl. 8:12)

Temptation Increased Through Compromised Teachings on Behavior

General

Some churches have now moved away from the biblical position on numerous fronts associated with godly living. For example, instead of unambiguous biblical words like 'adultery' and 'fornication', preachers refer to 'sleeping around' or 'being larger than life'.[122] And instead of being taught self-control, we are sometimes told that the Christian life is meant to be a party.

Salvation is being redefined as "freedom", understandably tempting some to imagine this means freedom to do what they like. Even where such compromises are introduced with good intentions, they fudge the principles God laid down for us, and they give people a latitude God never intended them to have.

"Intimacy"

I have come across churches which erroneously teach that 'Christians are to be intimate with one another—and the Bible relates this word to *sexual* union'. If congregants believe they are meant to be intimate with fellow attendees, and if they are taught that intimacy is related to "**sexual** union", we should not be surprised if those with pedophilic inclinations view this as a green light to be sexual with child congregants.

Temptation Increased Through Tolerance of Unholy Living

The Bible is unequivocal about sinful living, declaring plainly: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall **not** inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

God is *utterly* pure and holy. Thus, even the righteous are scarcely saved (1 Pet. 4:18). The Lord sets **very** high standards for His People. His word even informs us, "all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8). Just a brief look at the deaths of people like Nadab & Abihu (Lev. 9:22-10:3) demonstrates God's total purity and His stringent standards. Or consider the punishment meted out to Achan in Joshua 7. During Jericho's destruction, an Israelite called Achan simply coveted and purloined a few of its items. As a result, God cursed the entirety of His People, resulting in the deaths of dozens of them. In order for the curse to be lifted, God required that Achan, and *everything* that he had, including all his sons and daughters, be stoned to death. And then burned. And then covered with stones. It's true that the above examples come from the time before the Cross, but God's *character* does not change, as He showed when He put Ananias and Sapphira to death in Acts 5 just for pretending they'd been paid less for a field than was the case.

Admittedly, the Lord Jesus was compassionate towards the woman caught in adultery (in the sense of not ***stoning*** her) but He still permitted her to suffer the desperate humiliation of having her adultery publicized and to experience the *threat* of being stoned. He confirmed to her that her behavior was sinful and He commanded her never to allow a repeat. (It is important to understand that sexual union is a picture of the relationship we will enjoy with the "Bridegroom"—Christ—when we go to be with Him. Hence, when this picture is perverted as a result of sexual sin, it is an ***extraordinarily*** serious matter. Which is why sexual sin—the umbrella term is "fornication"—is singled out in 1 Corinthians 6:18 and why it is included in the tiny list of unusually dangerous and timeless sins in Acts 15:20 & 29.)

Given all this, it is clear that some churches are being far too tolerant of sin, including the sexual variety, by congregants. What these churches fail to grasp is that low standards when it comes to *one* person's sexual sins will encourage low standards when it comes to the (potentially *different* character of) sexual temptation that others are prone to.[123]

The Bible says "without … [*holiness*] no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). Holiness entails separating ourselves from unclean things and from the world's ways; yet there are parts of the modern Church which seemingly can't get *enough* of the world's ways. Permitting the world's values into our churches is inevitably going to promote sexual sin. Particularly so today, when the world is flooded with sexual images and we are being confronted with them on a frequent basis—whether it be in the movies, in newspapers or magazines, or on television screens. Even posters on billboards and in shop windows are displaying images of young women showing a lot of their shape, and more than a few women nowadays make themselves up to look like sex objects in public. Since we can't avoid our own streets, and since our carnal side is being provoked by these sorts of things, surely we need to *raise* the level of holiness in our churches (to help us fight the flesh), not lower it?

Some readers will have been taught that compromise here is necessary to attract unsaved visitors. However, this would be to claim that the 'ends justify the means'—i.e. the opposite of what God's word teaches (Rom. 3:7-8) as King Saul and others

discovered to their cost. In the scriptures, the use of the world's ways by Christians is roundly denounced and is called "going down to Egypt". Christ was able to attract the unsaved without letting the world's values seep into His life. If our churches do not have the same sort of effect today it is because they need to become more, not less, Christ-like. (See preying.org's "Q&A" page for further material on this.)

Instead of trying to boost the holiness of their fellowships, certain preachers populate their sermons with coarse joking, or with "smooth words" that play down God's standards, or with quotes from deeply inappropriate people (one church in Britain distributes material which approvingly quotes sexual deviants like D.H. Lawrence, Byron and Madonna), or else they pepper their talks with endorsements by self-proclaimed apostles who unrepentantly commit abhorrent sins.[124] At the end of the day, if a Christian is a member of a church which is no longer holy, this can lead to an enormous reduction in his self-control.

Please Note: The reader may agree with the points in this book but may be attending a fellowship which doesn't. Happily, this state of affairs does not mean your children are automatically at risk. As long as you are putting God's word first by seeking to 'purge out any leaven' in your own life—as well as prayerfully endeavoring to get your church to correct the types of problems discussed in this book—then you will surely know God's hand of protection over your little ones. (But if your church refuses to change, beware of legitimizing it. You cannot afford to make the same mistake Jonathan made in staying with Saul (1 Sam. 31:2). Our loyalty is to God and His word before any particular fellowship.) Some parents may complain that they have enough on their plates already. What they are forgetting is that, if they get their spiritual lives in line with God's word, He will ensure that all their other needs are met and that every issue is looked after without them needing to strive (Psa. 23; Php. 4:19; Psa. 1; Jer. 7:23; Joel 2:27; Psa. 5:11-12; 128:1-3; Luke 10:41-42 etc).

7

ABUSER TYPE 4: MINISTERS

"HOLMES Garry William, age 48, Perth Pentecostal, … Rhema Family Church missionary and former Jesus People mission director. Receives 4 year and 6 month jail sentence in W.A. District Court after pleading guilty to 30 child sex charges, including 29 counts of indecent assault …, against boy, aged 13, over 3 year period between 1983 and 1986 while elder of New Day Ministries."

News Report, 1993.

As we saw at the start of this book, one website alone records hundreds of cases of child abuse committed by men in ministerial roles, from youth ministers right up to the topmost level. For many folks, it is inconceivable that a minister in their fellowship could ever slide into abusing a child. But let's take a moment to chew over a few things.

We ought to keep in mind that, if a church has any of the flaws described in this book, it is those in positions of authority who've permitted that state of affairs to arise—which suggests they can't always be relied upon to be sound and to have good judgment.

Individuals in authority have more opportunities to abuse than most. For a start, they enjoy massively increased scope for abuse thanks to the medium of 'counseling' sessions. They also have privileged, even 24-hour, access to buildings and rooms in which they can molest unnoticed. And they're afforded more trust and liberty than the average member—by children as well as adults.

In the Preface, we looked at several specific cases where ministers were enjoying the trust of their congregation but were privately committing depraved acts on the children of that very same congregation. One could easily have filled the rest of this book with such instances. To help us see how this situation can arise, here are three ways in which fellowships encourage those in ministerial roles to commit pedophile acts.

Prevalence Increased Through Elders Covering Up Abuse

When elders uncover abuse, they often cover it back up. After all, its existence reflects very negatively on them. (Some of the brothers in the Lord I respect the most are elders. It gives me no joy to have to criticize any elders.) Sadly a proportion of elders today want to be viewed as infallible. Such folks would hate for their congregants to realize they are so far from being infallible as to have missed an active pedophile.

Elders are sweeping under the carpet *all manner* of serious sins within churches. One researcher has said, "You would be shocked to know the number of sexual incidents in the church that have been ignored or covered-up in the last ten years."[125] *All* such cover-ups promote child abuse…

One reason is that, if elders conceal a heavy-duty sin, and if the cover-up is discovered (or indeed just strongly suspected)

within any sections of the congregation, then members who are tempted towards pedophilia could well feel emboldened to try abusing children—since they will believe that, even if they get caught, there is an excellent chance *their* crimes will be glossed over too. God's word warns us: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed **speedily**, therefore the heart of the sons of men is **fully** set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).

Cover-ups of *pedophile* acts promote abuse for a second reason: i.e. they enable the perpetrator to continue to molest—either at the same church or one elsewhere. (And, if a child gets abused and reports it, but the report has no apparent effect, will the child bother to speak up about any subsequent abuse?)

Why have I said cover-ups encourage child abuse by *ministers* especially? Partly because they're more likely to hear about it, thanks to the privileged access ministers usually have to that type of information, and partly because elders are more likely to cover up abuse committed by *fellow ministers* than by others, because it is even more embarrassing for them.

At the start of this book, I observed that only a fraction of molestation cases get uncovered by churches. However, only a fraction of *those* few cases get reported to the police and become public. In other words, the many hundreds of cases documented on the Internet do not constitute the "tip of the iceberg" after all. They only comprise the ***top*** of the tip of the iceberg. And this sad fact itself facilitates abuse, because it conceals the true extent of the problem and thus (a) encourages complacency by elders, (b) makes elders less likely to believe reports of abuse, and (c) makes churches which experience abuse feel even more isolated than is entirely appropriate, causing them to be more inclined to cover up the abuse, and so it goes on.

The reason normally given to the victim and parents for keeping the matter quiet is: "If the public finds out, you will ruin the reputation of this church. Many souls we might have saved will go to Hell. You don't want that on your conscience do you?"

There are many flaws in this argument. Here are seven:

(1) What if the pedophile has also abused children who are not part of the fellowship? What type of witness will a cover up be to them? (An example in Canada of this exact situation was one of

the first instances of evangelical child abuse I ever came across. A minister had molested boys in a town's "Little League", but his church drew a veil over it. Years later a friend of mine met one of these survivors who had absolutely zero interest in learning about Christ after his abuse had been hushed up by Christ's 'followers'. I would not be surprised if he'd spent much of his life rubbishing the Christian faith to his family and friends and anyone else who would listen.) For the good of every other child the offender may have abused undetected in the past, *or may still be abusing now,* we mustn't allow a cover-up.

(2) A cover-up will give the abuser very little incentive to stop molesting children. And, statistically, he is likely to attack many other youngsters. Covering up abuse is also likely to tempt others to abuse, for reasons we discussed a few moments ago. Consider the attendant damage to the church and the risk to its image from these facts.

(3) If the cover-up ever becomes public—and there is always a real chance of this—the reputation of the church will be hurt even more seriously, especially if the molester went on to rape children in the outside world after the cover-up took place.

(4) What sort of message will a whitewash send to the abused child? Among other things, a cover-up is bound to cause the child to "view [the elders] as allying [themselves] with the offender". It may even lead the child to think God is okay with abuse, or that He's favoring the molester. How are such things going to help the child's faith in its elders, or its walk with the Lord? Effectively, a cover-up damages the already-pulverized child even more. God is hardly going to bless a fellowship that mistreats these "tenderest of lambs" as they have wisely been called. *God*-given growth in a fellowship comes through the genuine purity of its members, not through a mere *façade* of purity. The Lord is not exactly eager to add souls to a fellowship that doesn't know how to look after the souls already in its care. (Unsound churches may still see growth in numbers, but that doesn't mean any of these new attendees are saved or were sent by God. We will need to return to this point in chapters 8 & 9.) The Lord is vastly more willing to add converts

to those churches which look after their children *properly* than to churches which inflict additional pain on children after they have been defiled, emotionally brutalized, and spiritually mangled.

(5) If a predator has been able to infiltrate a fellowship and molest a child, that church has serious issues it needs to put right. The problems in the fellowship may even be severe enough that the church in question is not truly saving people in the first place. (If the elders don't have the discernment to notice that a predator is abusing a child in the church, they are unlikely to be capable of spotting false conversions.) If the church gets itself 'straightened out', the effectiveness of its evangelism will be greatly improved, but there will be greatly *reduced* motivation to sort the fellowship out if the abuse is kept quiet.[126]

(6) An even more fundamental problem with the argument that we should cover-up child abuse in order to protect the reputation of the church is that, as we saw in Chapter 6, the scriptures warn us that the ends do *not* justify the means.

(7) The Holy Bible gives this unmistakable command to elders: "Them that sin rebuke before **all**" (1 Tim. 5:20a).

Even if the elders do inform church members about the molester, they sometimes downplay the seriousness of the abuse and mask the depth of the depravity involved. When challenged, they may claim they did this to assist with the abuser's restoration or to avoid a split in the church. Again, there are more than a few problems with hiding the true gravity of the crimes.

Firstly, it causes the victim considerable extra agony, for it trivializes their suffering. Secondly, it obscures the truth about the abuser, which doesn't help other congregants relate rightly to him and may tempt him to continue his attacks (if more discreetly).

Thirdly, there is no need for a church to split if the elders are prepared to act like *Christians*—i.e. to take the appropriate share of the blame; respond with humility and teachability; and make the changes urged in this book. A full-time advisor on child abuse in the evangelical church has said, "when we're most transparent and vulnerable, **that's** when God can do his most powerful work

... I've seen that in churches: When [elders] do respond that way, it's pretty powerful what results..."

Fourthly, the danger of a split is worse if the elders play down the molestation and this fact ever leaks out.

Fifthly, major reforms to the fellowship are needed to ensure no recurrence of abuse. If elders water down what has occurred, it lessens the impetus for the fellowship to take stock of its current state and decreases the motive for elders to get their act together. (If elders see themselves as sound, and believe their teachings to be sound, and think the way they run the fellowship is sound, and yet none of this stopped the perpetrator from molesting children, it is clear that drastic measures are needed to ensure abuse never recurs. The eldership will have immeasurably greater incentive to sort themselves out if the members know just how fallibly these elders have performed.)

Some elders have a few Bible verses up their sleeve which they exploit to wriggle out of properly informing the church as to what has happened in its midst. Detailed answers to each of these verses are available at preying.org, but each can also be set aside by pointing out that the interpretation being placed on them is not in line with the rest of Scripture.

Note: For various reasons, Scripture requires the affected parties to take a different approach from the normal, Matthew 18:15-17, rules on handling offences by church members. What are these "various reasons"? Below are just *some* of them: (1) Sexual abuse frequently causes far too much psychological and spiritual damage to a child for the demands of Matthew 18:15-17 to be met (see pp. 91-3 & 117); (2) Youngsters will almost certainly not have the mental and emotional maturity required by Matthew 18:15-17 in this sort of situation; (3) Grooming by pedophiles has a corrosive effect on a child's understanding of right and wrong, making Matthew 18:15-17 inapplicable. (I've described the correct approach to handling abuse by members of the church on the webpage preying.org/Handle. There you'll also find biblical answers to all the excuses people use to try to talk survivors and their parents out of taking this approach. No such 'excuse', regardless of how scriptural it may appear to be, can stand against the spirit of God's word as a whole.)

It is erroneous to believe that all sins are to be treated the same. For example, a comparatively small sin might, biblically, elicit a rebuke, but when two men blasphemed, Paul "delivered [*them*] unto **Satan**" (1 Tim. 1:20).

The fact that God has put child abuse in a special category of sin is proved in the section of Matthew 18 truly relevant here: "whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (vv5 & 6). *If this is how strongly God feels about the activities of pedophiles, is He not more than a little angry with the souls who facilitate the monstrous deeds of such people?*

Cassandra Blondheim, stabbed to death at the age of 15 in a vicious, unprovoked attack by a fellow member of her evangelical church.

Her case represents another type of situation where the Matthew 18:15-17 principles aren't applicable. (Her friends warned the elders beforehand about the murderer, but the eldership refused to judge him.)

When the topic of how to deal with child molesters comes up, some people refer to John 8:7 and declare, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." But when the Lord said this to the men who had surrounded the woman taken in adultery, He was using a Hebrew turn of phrase that his hearers understood to mean 'Let him who is without **this particular** sin cast the first stone'. (Both before and after Christ said this, He wrote in the dust on the ground. It appears He was writing the names of the women with whom the accusers had ***themselves*** committed adultery. This would certainly explain why, *one by one*—when the relevant name(s) appeared—their consciences were pricked and they left the scene.)

If it is true that only people without ***any*** sin are permitted to 'cast stones' then no-one, including mass-murderers, would ever get disciplined, since none of us is *altogether* free of sin (1 John 1:8-10). And if no-one is allowed to chastise anyone, then many verses in the Bible are wrong (e.g. 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; 2 Thess. 3:14-15; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; Titus 1:10-13; 1 Tim. 1:20; 5:20; 2 Tim. 4:1-2; Rom. 15:14 & Acts 8:20-23).

Prevalence Increased Through Elders *Committing* Abuse

If an elder is an abuser, he may cause other ministers to abuse, because he is likely to have introduced teachings and/or practices that keep his own molestations from being uncovered, and these will almost always make it easier for other ministers to get away with molestation.

(An abusive elder represents a further risk to the church's children. An elder of this type is bound to direct his fellowship down the wrong spiritual path—undermining every member's walk with the Lord and making it harder for members to cope when temptation comes, ministers included.)

In such a compromised church, another problem arises. Let us imagine a child reports abuse by an elder but the abuse is covered up. Among the people most likely to know what has happened will be the other ministers. If one of those ministers has pedophilic leanings too, he may end up *colluding* with the elder to enable both of them to molest in safety. Two abusers in collusion means one can act as a 'lookout'. And two ministers can naturally defend each other's reputation if one of them ever falls under suspicion. Both facts make discovery of abuse even trickier than it already is.

There have been many instances of collusion between abusive ministers (even if we ignore the court cases that failed due to expired statutes of limitations). We'll see some of them later, but I really ought to mention a few while we are on the subject. One particularly appalling case at a church in the USA

involved three ministers, two of whom helped their 'pastor' to rape a 13-year-old boy.[127]

Collusion was also clearly present in the case of Tony Leyva—the 'tent revivalist' who raped up to 800 boys. Leyva and two other ministers, Rias Morris and Freddie Herring, ran a "child prostitution ring".[128] According to the authorities, "the evangelists shared the [children, some of them as young as 8] among themselves, taking them to religious crusades … across the South to [molest] them".[129]

And, although I haven't personally seen it proved in a court of law, it would be the miracle of the century if there had been no collusion between abusive staff members at any of the residential schools for Native Indian children run by professing evangelicals from the United Church of Canada. I'd encourage readers unaware of what took place in some of these schools to invest at least a little time finding out (you'll need a very strong stomach though). The guilty schools allowed some of the most systematic child abuse in the whole history of evangelicalism. They also show what happens when restraints are taken away. The number of victims has been described as "staggering", and a Supreme Court judge in Canada has described what went on as "institutionalized pedophilia".[130]

Prevalence Increased Through 'Nicolaitan' Culture

The term 'Nicolaitan' is derived from the Greek words *nicos* (conquer) and *laos* (people).[131] Thus, Nicolaitans seek to dominate people. In the Christian context, they try to subjugate members of churches.

As always, one can find a tiny handful of part-verses in the scriptures which imply that it is reasonable for ministers to act this way. But if we stand back for a moment and peruse the thrust of *all* the post-Cross scriptures, it's evident that this sort of behavior is wrong…

> # Christ told the multitude *and His disciples*, "**<u>one</u>** is your Master, even **<u>Christ</u>**; and **<u>all</u>** ye are **brethren**." (Matt. 23:8; see also vv1, 9-11).
> # Christ washed the feet of His disciples to show them how they ought to treat the brethren (John 13:1-17).
> # 1 Peter 2:5-9 unarguably teaches the priesthood of ***all*** believers.
> # Similarly unambiguous is 1 Peter 5:1-3. The apostle writes, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am **also** an **elder**, … Feed the flock of God …, taking the oversight thereof, **not** by constraint, but willingly; … Neither as being **lords over** God's heritage, but being **<u>ensamples</u>**…*[i.e. exemplars, setting examples]*"
> # God says He "**hates**" both the deeds *and* the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6, 15). God also praises the Ephesian church for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6), and admonishes the church at Pergamos for allowing the presence of folks who hold to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:15).

If the above isn't enough to prove that subjugation of one's brothers in Christ is the opposite of God's will, consider Matthew 20:18-28, or Philippians 2:1-8, or Acts 20:32-35.

But in what ways does Nicolaitanism increase the problem of sexual abuse of children by ministers? Regrettably there are numerous ways it does so.

Perhaps the most obvious one is that, if children are made fearful by the domineering attitude and—supposedly—special status of the ministers, they are more likely to submit to abuse. They are more likely to keep quiet too. And, if an abused child perceives its parents to be in awe of the minister, the child will be even *more* discouraged from reporting molestation—just as we saw in Becky's testimony on page 12.

Even if a child does tell its parents, the latter may be too programmed into supposing their ministers can do no wrong to listen to the report—or too intimidated to do much about it.[132] (We must not be fearful of any mortal man: "The fear of **man** bringeth a **snare**: but whoso putteth his trust in the **LORD** shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). See also endnote 204 on this.)

A Nicolaitan culture in a church can also lead the congregants, in an effort to rally round the ministers, to act in a thoroughly unpleasant way towards a complainant and his/her family. This emboldens potentially-abusive ministers, because they realize that even the least brainwashed and least pliant of the congregants will be highly reticent to challenge them.

How do Nicolaitans keep people cowed? There are many ways, and we'll see several in chapter 9. Among their weapons, they make use of their superior intellect, superior education and superior vocabulary to embarrass and 'wrong foot' folks. But they have three other techniques I want to focus on here.[133]

One of the ways in which Nicolaitans subjugate people is to teach, or at least hint at, the (supremely unbiblical) idea that anyone who leaves the fellowship, *or is ejected from it*, forfeits their salvation.[134] This can convince parents not to take action following abuse, out of fear of excommunication.

Nicolaitans also tend to warn the congregation never to question their teachings or judgments, on pain of God's wrath. This enables them to influence a victim's views on the morality of the abuse suffered, and it also serves to get in the way of the proper handling of abuse cases when they're uncovered.

The third technique is, I feel, the most insidious. Some Nicolaitans will subtly promote the notion that the ministers in the fellowship are some sort of special breed, in a 'class apart' from the rest of the brethren. Such a 'special breed' attitude can facilitate child abuse by ministers in a number of ways. An "us and them" outlook leads ministers to think that the purpose of the congregation is to serve them. This can tempt a minister to take advantage of the church's children—since he believes that such children have been put there to meet his 'needs'.

When a minister is caught out, this "us and them" attitude also guarantees that the other ministers will 'circle the wagons' to protect him. Such a tendency among ministers dampens the preparedness of congregants to inform elders of a child's abuse by a minister.

I've come across plenty of cases where fellow ministers rallied around the abusive minister while doing little *or indeed nothing* to help the victim and its family. Here's just one:

> "Baptist minister James Luttrell, … was [arrested for the crime of] raping a six month old baby boy. The evidence was **incontrovertible**, yet another minister **outspokenly** defended him **and** paid for his legal help"[135] Luttrell was found guilty.

[*For any readers who cannot believe that an adult could ever rape a baby, it is unfortunately not uncommon. Indeed, pedophiles have been known to lust over images of* ***unborn*** *babies, as police officer Harry Keeble observed in his book* Baby X. *We* ***must*** *realize that pedophilia is* ***demonic****. This is evidenced not merely by the extremely young age of some victims, and the extreme depravity of some of the abuse, but also by the extreme deviousness shown by abusers—including young or stupid ones—plus the extreme voraciousness of some pedophiles, and the extreme difficulty they frequently have in comprehending the true seriousness of their crimes.*]

It gets worse. Nicolaitan ministers can start to believe their own hype that they can do no wrong. When this happens, they are very likely to blame the *child* for the abuse suffered. This is again no idle remark. In fact such a response occurs regularly. (Pinning the blame on the child is done out of desperation too, but can indeed also be the result of delusions of grandeur.)

Important Digression

Some believers assume that, if bad things ever happen to you, it must be your fault. If you've been sexually abused, you 'must be to blame' for what you suffered. The molestation case quoted above, involving the rape of a six-month old baby boy, is one reason why we should question this idea.

Likewise, when Pharaoh ordered every male child born to the Hebrews to be drowned (in Exodus 1:22), were the babies responsible?

What did Christ Jesus say when He talked about the abuse of Christian children? Did He blame them? Did He give even the ***faintest hint*** that they carried responsibility when He taught "whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." (Mark 9:42)? If readers

would like an explanation as to why God sometimes allows the molestation of His children, please see preying.org/Why.[136]

Many folks blame children for failing to resist abuse, but children are often terrified and can't be expected to withstand a grooming process designed to seduce them (these processes are demonically-inspired, after all).

Even where no grooming was undertaken *and* the child behaved in a flirtatious way, this still doesn't necessarily mean they should carry any blame. Their flirting was almost certainly the result of parental and/or societal failings, none of which the child is responsible for. Besides, if the male couldn't handle the flirting, and if he couldn't get the child to cease and desist, he should have flagged this to the parents. If this too didn't work, he should have done everything he sensibly could to avoid the child's company. (Even if there was no grooming and the child gave *consent*, this still doesn't mean they should automatically carry any blame. If the child was under, say, 13 years old when the abuse began, they were incapable of giving true consent. If older, they were probably a victim of factors like peer pressure *or indeed an inadequate church*. But regardless, when it comes to "sexual abuse of minors, consent is **irrelevant** ... There is an [extreme] **inequality** of **power**." This principle was illustrated in 2017 when a U.S. comedian with a high degree of influence in the industry admitted abusing (adult) female comics. Victims had assumed their fledgling careers might be fatally harmed if they didn't give in to his repulsive desires.)

In extreme cases of Nicolaitanism, elders will even imply that they are on a par with *God*. Not only do such claims cause people to fear these elders even more; they lead congregants to 'outsource' their spirituality to these elders. The members feel that the elders *'are'* the church, and that the rest simply need to hang on to the elders' coat-tails to be saved. This leads to blind trust and blind obedience—neither of which is helpful if abuse occurs. Such trust and obedience also reinforces the lofty status the elders have assigned themselves. Elders are *not* the church. Nor does the church belong to them. (If members are mistaken on this, and don't maintain a *personal* relationship with Christ

but instead go through any 'intermediary', they are not going to receive the spiritual sap (i.e. strength) that comes from abiding in Christ and thus are not going to be anywhere near as capable of handling temptation as would be the case if they had God's Spirit helping them. The resulting threat is plain.[137])

Instead of encouraging Christians to think for themselves, Nicolaitans brainwash people into uncritically accepting what they say and do, enabling them to get away with murder. (If a child has been brainwashed to accept the behavior of ministers unquestioningly, why would he/she report abuse by one?)

When a Nicolaitan eldership discovers a minister in their church has molested a child, they'll go to great lengths to avoid taking any blame for creating a sickly church and for failing to discern that one of the ministers under their very wing was an active pedophile. One way they side-step blame—especially if they learn of the abuse before the parents do—is to require the offender to transfer quickly and quietly to another fellowship. This serves these elders in several ways—*but inevitably at the expense of the Body of Christ*. Just for starters, whole new sets of youngsters are endangered by it. To make sure the molesting minister is welcomed by the new fellowship, the original elders won't warn them about his real nature. In fact, oftentimes they will even give him a glowing reference. This naturally tends to *increase*, rather than decrease, the trusted access this molester has to Christian children. Such elders also oppose the creation of any register of abusive ministers within their denomination (which, for undiscerning churches, would serve as a useful first line of defense—as long as it doesn't engender a false sense of security) because a register would make it possible for folks to uncover some embarrassing home truths about these elders.

Another way Nicolaitan elders often protect themselves is by teaching that, even if a minister is a proven molester, no-one is allowed to do anything about it, since the Bible says "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm". But on both occasions when this phrase appears in the Scriptures (1 Chron. 16:22 and Psa 105:15), it's in reference to the *entirety* of God's People (see vv13 and 6 in the respective passages), not just to those in authority; and it is *abuse*—e.g. physical or spiritual—which is being referred to, not correction or justified criticism

or deserved reproof. So, it is those who *abuse,* e.g. molest, *any* of God's People who going against these verses.[138]

(There's an additional irony here. We'll be harming God's People if we gloss over the molestation. We'll be harming the elders too, since they won't be as humbled as they need to be.)

Nicolaitans discourage us from checking if they are sound, and from checking if they are actually saved at all. They expect us to trust them from the 'get-go'. But trust needs to be ***earned***, and earned the *right way* (i.e. by exhibiting the same spirit Paul showed, e.g. in 2 Corinthians chapters 11 and 12). Nicolaitans demand our trust on corrupt grounds. They frequently attempt to win trust by getting equally-Nicolaitan elders to praise them to us. Lying signs and wonders are also used to gain our trust. The Bible warns us, "there shall arise **false** Christs, **and** false **prophets**, and shall shew **great** signs and wonders" (Matt. 24:24; see also Mark 13:22 & 2 Thess. 2:9). So, while signs and wonders were an excellent test of *Jesus' Messiahship* (the Jewish People in Christ's day knew that only the true Messiah would perform certain special miracles), they are an extremely *bad* test of a *mortal man's spirit*.[139]

Consider this too. An elder may be very intelligent, smile continually, be incredibly charming, have a wonderful sense of humor, and be a great public speaker. Yet, spiritually speaking, none of this means *anything at all*. (A lady once told me I was wrong to criticize a certain Nicolaitan minister. She argued that he was above reproach because he was an "impeccable family man". But even serial killers can be impeccable family men.[140] It is no guarantee of spiritual soundness.) In John 7:24 the Lord warned us, "Judge not according to the **appearance**, but judge **righteous** judgment". A person may be able to boast an armful of impressive skills, talents and qualifications, but they are all immaterial when it comes to spiritual trustworthiness. *Anyone* who subjugates congregants should be opposed.

To be fair, some Nicolaitan ministers are sincere and have found themselves down this rabbit-hole thanks mainly to false teachings they have been fed by other Nicolaitan ministers. But they still need to be challenged, if only for our children's sake. If a minister imagines himself to be on a par with God, he is likely to conclude that the normal rules do not apply to him—

and even that he can virtually whatever he likes. If congregants start to treat him as godlike, it will place an intolerable pressure on him which could also lead him to sin. And if folks give him more trust than he deserves, this too is a cause of temptation.

When ministers have gained the excessive and wrongly-based trust they demand, this assists abuse and allows them to credibly deny any wrongdoing. It even allows them to get away with making the *child* responsible for the abuse it suffered.

(Note: Just because an elder preaches high standards of behavior does not mean he actually believes in those standards and won't permit atrocious sin in his own life or in the lives of fellow elders. I know of Nicolaitans who have told people it is sinful for a betrothed couple to so much as hold hands, and yet have gone on to unreservedly exalt elders who have committed long-term adultery or even worse.)

Research into sexually corrupt ministers has found that there was no pattern *except* that "**all** [of them] no longer had a regular quiet time in fellowship with God, and none had **made themselves accountable**…". Far from prohibiting it, ministers should *encourage* church members to watch out for them. The Bible informs us that, "in the **multitude** of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14 and 24:6), and Christians are *commanded* to determine the spiritual condition of any folks who claim to have spiritual authority over us (Matt. 7:15-21; 1 John 4:1).

> "The extent to which a minister-molester is held above suspicion, ... is [*well*] exemplified by a 1987 criminal suit ... The arrest of Rev. Jack Law … was heralded by a headline, 'Girl, 5, Raped Under Pew.' He was accused not only of that, but of molesting and raping her two sisters. ... The girls had tried to tell their parents, but were **not believed**. 'Being a preacher,' the father said of him to local media, 'we **thought he was a good man**.' Law killed himself … rather than face trial."[141]

If this preacher had truly been a "good man" he would have urged his congregants not to view him as anything special but to realize he was as prone to temptation as anyone else. He would also have asked them for their assistance in keeping him

on the 'straight and narrow' by watching out for any problems, and by challenging him on such problems before they grew.

Ministers must obviously make themselves accountable to fellow ministers. But this is not an infallible arrangement. Even if all ministers keep themselves from all Nicolaitan ideas, they may still let standards slip when judging other ministers. Why? Because they're inclined to compare others to *themselves* rather than to the Bible. And if they all do this, compromise is bound to enter in whenever they turn a blind eye to unbiblical features in the lives of fellow elders to avoid having to face up to those shortcomings in their own lives (2 Cor. 10:12). Every minister needs his ***congregants*** to ask him "the hard questions about his personal life and thoughts" in case fellow ministers fail to.

Side Note On Teachings

Even if a minister has earned trust the right way, it still doesn't mean we should blindly accept what he teaches. Some believers have been instructed never to question anything said by a minister. (I well remember an elder telling his congregants that they were obliged to "assume that everything said from the front is the word of **God**".) But all men are flawed—including elders (James 3:2)—and God's word specifically charges us to test "**all** things" (1 Thess. 5:21a). So, not only is it *acceptable* for believers to question what they are told by their ministers, it is a biblical requirement. This is robustly confirmed by the fact that the Bereans were applauded rather than scolded for testing Paul's words (Acts 17:10-11). It is further confirmed when we note that Paul exhorted, "**Judge** … what I say" (1 Cor. 10:15b, see also 11:13).

If we aren't weighing and checking the teachings of those men who claim authority over us, it's hard to see how we can obey the commandment in 1 Timothy 6:3 to "withdraw" from anyone who teaches "otherwise" to the things Paul taught us. In fact, Scripture tells us that one of the ways we are to find out if a given elder is "approved of God" is by the soundness of his doctrine (1 Cor. 11:19), which naturally requires us to *test* his doctrine. God *commended* the Ephesians for "trying" (testing) those who purported to have spiritual authority (Rev. 2:2).

When confronted with the above scriptures, some people try to duck them all by quoting the solitary verse in Philippians which says "Do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Php. 2:14), as if this applies to everything any elder tells us to do. But the preceding verse makes it plain that the "things" in view here are the things *the Lord*, not our eldership, has told us to do. The Bible consistently says that disputings are absolutely crucial if we are being taught falsehoods.

(We must understand individual verses in the light of their *context*. The context is primarily to be found in the surrounding verses and chapters, but we must also consider the direction of the whole Bible. This is an **unbelievably** important discipline, especially when dealing with elders who are knowledgeable in the scriptures and who can thus always find a verse somewhere to support their position.[142] The next time an elder defends his stance on a particular matter with a single verse, ask yourself if his interpretation is in keeping with the tenor of God's word in its *entirety*. We can **never** afford to make the Bible hostage to one verse. Such a 'per-Verse' way of handling the scriptures is truly perverse. It perverts our understanding, and thereby helps any perverts around us to commit abuse.)

Real men of God humble themselves like a "little child" (Matt. 18:3-4). And they love the truth. They have ***no problem at all*** with their teachings being tested against God's word by congregants, and with themselves being taken to task whenever they go wrong, as Peter was. They can see there is no harm in it. On the contrary, they are grateful for it. They respond to all sincere challenges with grace and openness to correction.[143]

8

RISKS FROM REJECTING THIS BOOK

Some readers may have decided they can safely ignore the advice offered thus far. In this chapter I'd like to investigate the validity of their justifications for doing so. I have written each section below as if I were answering the person directly.

"There are no children in our fellowship."

Most of the arguments in this book apply to sexual abuse of vulnerable *adults* as well as children. Many arguments also apply to *non*-sexual abuse of adults. (Unhappily, *all* such types are found within professing evangelicalism today. The website associated with this book gives data proving this.) As indicated

in the relevant chapters, there are even more benefits to putting right the errors highlighted in this book than the ones I've just cited. And anyway, once we notice unbiblical teachings and/or practices in our church, God calls us to correct them whether or not we've yet recognized the value of doing so.

But even if none of the above were to carry any weight, and even if no children will ever attend your fellowship in the future, at least *some* congregants are sure to come into contact with children in the *outside* world and could bring your church into disrepute that way.

"We give our children excellent anti-victim training, hence they are safe from grooming."

There are several dangers with this line of reasoning.

Firstly, while it is true that many molesters prepare the ground first by grooming the child, this is certainly not always the case. Inexperienced pedophiles and most young abusers are normally opportunistic and may do no grooming *at all* prior to molesting. Other abusers hope the inbuilt characteristics which stop children from reporting abuse will be sufficient, or that the dynamics which stop adults from believing such reports (or at least stop parents from taking molesters to court) will apply in their case. Others will abuse a child and then run—potentially taking the child with them.[144]

Abusers can have reasons for avoiding the subtleties we might warn our children of. For example, if the molester is lazy or impatient—or if he has gained a false sense of security from past successes—he may be much more brazen than others. And if he feels protected by his colleagues in the 'Establishment', or if he knows about the particular types of grooming a child has been warned of, he may dispense with the standard methods.

The second danger is that no training is perfect. This fact is especially tiresome when it comes to pedophiles, because of their horrible deviousness. No matter how well a child has been trained, it is at risk if exposed for long enough to certain types of sexual deviant—because *devils are helping them*. Returning to the analogy employed in the Preface, imagine if the world's craftiest, most charming, most unscrupulous, most determined

salesman got access to your child. In time, he would manage to chip away at them until he'd achieved his aim. So it is with the dedicated and experienced pedophile.

Some molesters have surreptitiously *drugged* their targets, a tactic which can nullify even the best anti-victim training.[145] And this book includes many other real-life instances of abuse where anti-victim training would have offered zero protection (e.g. see later parts of this chapter, plus endnote 61).

The third danger is that you are assuming your children will *obey* the anti-victim training you give them. But if children are raised in an unsound church, with unsound friends, they are unlikely to be as obedient as you would like. Almost *all* of this book was written on the basis that your children are supremely well-behaved. If a child is anything less, this brings many extra risks and undermines your anti-victim training.

Another problem is that, if God lifts His almighty hand of protection from around us, then the best defense in the world is useless (Psa. 127:1). And God is likely to do this very thing if we flagrantly disobey injunctions He has given us in Scripture. Since no church can afford for even one abuser to find his way past the anti-victim training supplied, I *implore* you to reassess the idea that good training obviates the need to put your church right.

"All our children are constantly supervised by two adults."

Even if such supervision were to take place *24/7* (a virtual impossibility), it would provide no guarantee that the children are safe. What if the supervisors comprise a 'husband and wife team' where the wife is willing to turn a blind eye? I really hate to write the following, for it is hideous beyond measure, but it has even been known for wives to *participate*:

> "REV. [sic] THOMAS WELSCH, 39, and his wife Jean, 40, were sentenced to 30 years in prison … after pleading guilty to 5 counts each of child sexual abuse. Originally they were charged with **571** counts involving 3 victims. Welsch and his wife abused twin sisters, 13 [*and another teenage girl*]

> … He was pastor at Immanuel United Church of Christ … for **10 years**."[146]

Or else, what if the two supervisors are ministers who are in collusion with each other (as we saw in chapter 7)? Or what if both supervisors are members of the same depraved family?

> "Rev. Wally Walton, Grace United Methodist, … pleaded no contest to felony charges of incest & sexual contact with a minor, & was immediately jailed. Walton has agreed to provide details of 'sex crimes & illicit sexual activities' against latchkey kids, Girl Scouts & other children. ... Walton's **wife** Betty was charged with sexual contact with a child, [and] incest … **Also** indicted are Walton's adopted **twin daughters & son-in-law**."[147]

Even if we discount the possibility of two child-molesters meeting up online and conspiring to target your church with a view to being paired up as supervisors, it is plain that the 'two adults' procedure has loopholes. And wherever the supervision is *not* 24/7, a number of further dangers mentioned later in this chapter will be present.

"For the whole of its long history, our church has managed to avoid this problem. And statisticians say that pedophile attacks are decreasing in number. So why should we bother with your book?"

Firstly, how do you know for sure that your fellowship *has* avoided this problem? It is common for children to keep abuse secret for many years.

Some statisticians do indeed claim that molestation rates are currently decreasing. But other statisticians firmly disagree. The levels of under-reporting are gigantic, *dwarfing* the figures available for statisticians to analyze. And since these analyses almost always use different methodologies from each other, it is impossible to draw such conclusions from them. Moreover, factors which affect the levels of reporting can vary over time. (The rise of the Internet, for example, helps pedophiles become

more skilled at getting away with abuse. And divorce tends to increase *incestuous* abuse—a type of abuse with even smaller rates of reporting than others, for reasons given on my website. Both factors hide the true rate of abuse more than usual.)

But even if it *is* the case that the prevalence of molestation is decreasing, the rates are still ***enormous***. In 2008, researchers analyzed 65 studies across 22 countries. They found that these studies "**ALL** agree that child sexual abuse is a **MUCH** more widespread problem than previously estimated" (Caps mine.)[148] Researchers seldom find the levels of abuse for girls to be less than 1 in 5 in North America. Sometimes the findings are much higher.

Besides, it only takes *one* pedophile for a child's life to be destroyed and for a church to be badly hurt. Not so long ago I learned of a law enforcement unit whose role it is to 'locate and analyze images of molestation in an attempt to rescue children and bring their abusers to justice'. A member of the team once went to a conference of computer specialists to encourage these I.T. experts to assist in the war against the perverts. This team-member took along five photos, representative of the images he and his colleagues were forced to deal with on a daily basis, to show them. After displaying only two of the pictures, the room full of grown men could take no more.

One of those men present, contacted several days later, reported that the second image was so dreadful that he couldn't find a way to get it out of his head—despite being desperate to do so. If *he* was mentally scarred as a result of merely looking at a photo, one can only imagine the effect the abuse had on the child (or children) shown in it.

"Our elders have assured us that a revival is just around the corner. Your book is therefore redundant."

God won't give true revival to a fellowship which shows contempt for His word.

But even if a revival were to begin right this minute, it would take time to encompass the region, leaving your church at risk in the interim. And unless the revival converts *everyone*, the danger of predatory molesters will persist. (Besides, as we

saw in chapter 6, just because someone is saved does not mean they can never represent a hazard to children thereafter.)

Even more significantly, elders have been promising for *decades* that revival was not only "just around the corner", but was at the very door. At times, this sort of prediction has been accompanied by 'signs and wonders', but it all turned out to be false. Some folks have also prophesied dates, yet each date has come and gone without the promised revival. (In 1993, 'Pastor' John Hinkle actually prophesied that, on June 9th of that year, God would remove the evil from the earth.) When the promises fail, we are habitually exposed to some attempt at face-saving. We may be told—for example—that the 'revival' is an "inner, spiritual" one (except it never seems to come to anything), or that revival *has* broken out—but in another region (except the claims never seem supported by the hard facts on the ground). In July 1990, Paul Cain stated: "**Thus saith the Lord**: Revival will be released in England in October 1990". As we saw at the end of chapter 5, England is going the *opposite* way. (Another flaw with such predictions is available via this endnote.[149])

"Our church is growing fast, so we must already be okay."

Biblically, God brings *true* revival to those places where His People have repented of their sins and are seeking to obey His word as closely as possible. If your fellowship is not trying to get in line with the (fairly basic) scriptural principles laid out in this book, the 'revival' being experienced is not *God*-given. (Gaining new attendees does ***not*** necessarily mean your church is making new *converts*. Assuming no-one is joining you with the deliberate intention of abusing your children, unsaved folks can attach themselves to fellowships for all sorts of other non-Christian reasons,[150] and even sincere attendees can think they have been saved when they haven't. See chapter 9 for more.)

It's fatal to believe that a fellowship which is growing in size must be in God's will. After all, if the fellowship becomes more "compromised" sexually, and if the fellowship happens to grow numerically at the same time, people might interpret it as meaning God is relaxing His position on sexual sin.

But it is similarly very dangerous to believe that a church which is in God's will must automatically be growing, because it encourages elders, out of a desire to keep the members happy and to gain respect from likeminded churches, to do whatever they feel is necessary, no matter how unbiblical, to achieve that growth. In this book we've already looked at a number of these perilous methods. The next chapter lists several others. Elders are also more likely to *cover up molestation*, because they feel any other course would undermine the church's reputation and thus threaten its growth.

If elders think that every fellowship which is in God's will must always be increasing in size, they will also tend to slacken the tests for anyone who seeks to join the church (all the more so if the numbers wanting to join are small). Despite the clear statement in Holy Scripture that, "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14), any tests which would otherwise be performed to check the genuineness of conversions may get thrown out—opening the door wide to deviants.

"There aren't enough pedophiles in my part of the world to make the changes worthwhile."

There is no denying that some countries are in a worse state than others. A well-placed police officer in Britain tells of a "rampant **epidemic** of child abuse **ravaging** our country",[151] and the statistics coming out of South Africa are beyond words, whereas the data from Taiwan suggests the molestation rate is much lower there. Nonetheless, the problem is widespread and seems to be growing everywhere.

Even if the part of the world you are based in means there is only a small probability of an attack, the effects of abuse are just too awful for you to consider taking the risk.

The things that are happening to children are mind-bending. Believe it or not, this book has stopped well short of exposing the true depth of wickedness to which some professing evangelicals have sunk in their abuse of children.[152] If you knew the full extent of the horror being perpetrated, you'd do everything you sensibly could to get your church sorted out, to avoid any possibility of it.

You'd never forgive yourself if an attack occurred and you hadn't made appropriate efforts to avert it.

Apart from the *physical* harm, which can include sexually transmitted diseases, pedophile attacks can also push the victim into depression, alcohol/drug abuse, homosexual tendencies,[153] consensual under-age sexual activity, schizophrenia, violence, self-mutilation, and suicide. From experience of working with survivors of molestation, I've observed that the psychological effects of abuse can be catastrophic, especially if the abuse has not been short-lived. Even just their belief that they must carry such a secret, a secret they feel they must hide from everyone, is a heavy burden for a child. But in order to make sense of the abuse, children perform mental gymnastics of a spiritually very detrimental kind. So, molestation can harm a child physically, psychologically *and* spiritually. And it can crush a child's spirit such that they literally cannot take it. God's word warns us, "a wounded spirit **who can bear?**" (Prov. 18:14a).

Some people find it hard to understand this. But a woman raped as an *adult* may well take years to come to terms with it, even if it happened 'only' once. It is much more of a nightmare for a child, and they are much less well equipped to cope. And let's be realistic. Pedophiles seldom rape a child *once*.

A whole raft of difficulties can arise from abuse, and these can badly affect the survivor for the rest of their life if they are not in a fellowship capable of restoring them fully. (Even more tragically, the vulnerabilities which result from child abuse can actually tempt other pedophiles to direct their attentions toward the abused child.[154]) I know of women in their *sixties* who are still suffering very serious, physical and emotional ailments as a result of sexual abuse as a child.

And churches are at risk of creating children who molest others, as abuse breeds abuse.

> "At the very **least**, sexual abuse of children most often results in bitterness, hostility, misplaced guilt, depression and shame. Unless **properly** addressed and dealt with, these can last a lifetime, destroying not just the lives of the victims, but all those whose lives are intertwined with them"[155]

Then there is the *spiritual* damage that results when a supposed "man of God" sexually exploits a child.

> "Sitting in a pew watching the molester raising his hands to God and singing 'Hallelujah' Sunday after Sunday, makes a child doubt the integrity of every man there [*and also the integrity of God Himself*]. … [Such children] receive a double whammy—the results of their **abuse** plus the possible loss of the very thing that should be of greatest help in their restoration—their faith"[156]

God will hold churches accountable if they have not done what they should to protect the children He placed in their care.

Just one last thought. Even if your part of the world were to be totally pervert-free, the children in your fellowship can be at risk of abuse from people in another country, and indeed in *any* other country, thanks to the Internet. We briefly discussed this danger in chapter 1, and we'll need to return to it shortly.

"Our church isn't accepting new attendees at the moment, so abusers can't get in."

From the statistics provided in this book, your fellowship would need to be microscopic, or located in a country where the problem is *very* small, for this to be a tenable position. Otherwise, the 'law of averages' means your fellowship already comprises at least one person who has pedophilic leanings.

But there is another problem. Your church's children can be at risk from people *outside* the fellowship. Children can be imperiled by members of their own family, or extended family, or step-relatives, or friends of the family, or teachers etc, even if *none* of them attend your church.

A peculiarly inconvenient threat is that posed by other children:

> "I have a step-son who is 11 who was caught doing stuff with my little girls."[157]

> "Our daughter reported a **church**-friend's attempts to introduce her to lesbian acts during a sleepover. The girl was only 12 years old!"[158]

> "[Sadly] we learned that taking in an unwanted **seven** year old niece to raise had damaging, **lasting** effects on our other children. We were unaware of the evil done to her at young ages. It came out in her actions to our youngest son, a four year old. … Who would expect a … [7-year-old] child to even **know** about the things she did or asked our young son to do?"[159] [This mother also noted the amazing "sneakiness" this young girl employed to mask the abuse she was committing. I suggest this is further evidence that molesters are aided by devils.]

> "[T]wo of my brothers molested me; … One of the brothers ... [went on to lure] me, by fear, to allow a neighbor boy to do certain things. The molestation stopped at around the age of 12, thankfully. But as a Christian now, I still have to occasionally fight off bizarre sexual thoughts that want to come in"[160]

Do any of the children in your fellowship have hobbies or other interests which bring them into contact with any adults or children unconnected with church?

As I say, the Internet means an *even wider* range of people can abuse our children.

"We will pray for protection and leave the rest to God."

Prayer is important for keeping a church safe. But if a fellowship is willfully disregarding God's word in any area, how can its prayers be as effective as they could be (Psa. 66:18; Deut. 1:43-45; Prov. 28:9)?

Surely we put God to the test if we disobey Him while expecting Him to bless us. And He specifically says, "thou shalt **not** tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12).

> "[Having been] molested myself, I was very leery of anyone 'babysitting' my kids. My husband and I

> never allowed sleepovers. … [Beyond these things] I **prayed <u>diligently</u>** for **<u>years</u>** that the Lord would protect them from ever being molested. I believed that if I prayed this diligently, that it was according to His will and I would have the request I ask[ed] of Him. That is ***<u>not</u>*** what happened"[161]

"Our church is mature, so God will protect us."

The section on complacency in chapter 4 responds to this sort of argument. And such a stance does seem a little prideful or at least haughty, whereas the Bible warns us: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18; see also 2 Sam. 22:28).

It is necessary for us to ask what *makes* a mature church. Some readers may say, "Our church is mature because we have the spiritual gifts in operation", but the Corinthian church was likewise able to say this and yet was still vulnerable to grievous sexual sin and other evils (see both epistles).

Genuine spiritual maturity would lead a church to want to purge out all the leaven of unbiblical ideas that have entered in, as 1 John 2:3-4 confirms. (Even if a church is so mature that it can set pedophiles completely free from any sexual interest in children, this still doesn't make it impervious to attack.)

And if you are adamant that your fellowship is completely safe, what about the other "Christian" groups with which your congregants associate? Para-church organizations are definitely not immune. Without needing to research this area, I learned of compelling evidence of pedophile activity in the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism,[162] Focus on the Family,[163] the Christian & Missionary Alliance,[164] Teen Challenge (an ironic name under the circumstances),[165] and others.[166]

"Our church is Spirit-filled, and we have prophets, so the Holy Spirit will warn us of danger."

If a church is led by the true Holy Spirit, it will also be led to obey the Bible which the Spirit Himself inspired.

And if we can leave all problems to the Holy Spirit, why does the Bible instruct us to be "wise as **serpents**"? Consider also David's adultery. Nathan was a true prophet, yet he wasn't led to expose what the king did until *after* Uriah's murder. Nor did the Holy Spirit apparently warn the priests in David's day that Doeg was coming to murder them all. Did the Spirit warn Abel that his life was in jeopardy? Did the Spirit warn anyone that Tamar was going to be raped?

In this book, we've already seen cases of child sex abuse in neo/Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Here's another:

> "A Pentecostal minister [Darrell Bell,] convicted of repeatedly raping his daughter has been sentenced to 17-50 years in prison … His daughter … said her abuse began at age 10 and continued until she was 18 and moved away."[167] (From what I've seen while working on this book, incest in evangelical circles is much more prevalent than many of us suppose. We mustn't deny that it could happen, and may even be happening now, in our own fellowships.)

If any readers remain sure that the Holy Spirit will warn their church before any abuse of congregants can occur, I think I can guarantee that at least one person in a church you admire has committed serious abuse of congregants *without* the Spirit giving any prior warning. Names which spring to mind include Jim Bakker (who went to prison for defrauding his followers of millions of dollars), Dan Strader (jailed for bilking some of his church's elderly congregants), and Bob Jones (the 'Kansas City Prophet' who coerced women into disrobing in front of him).[168]

One could also make mention of Earl Paulk, or Sherman Allen, or Eddie Long. And, given the popularity of Hillsong, I cannot sensibly avoid bringing up Frank Houston. Members of Hillsong fellowships have been kept staggeringly ill-informed regarding the extent of Houston's pedophile activities, but most will probably be aware of the homosexual abuse he committed against his 'worship leader' in Sydney.[169]

Coming more up to date, I'd advise readers to look into why the "empire of Bill Gothard, founder of the … Institute in

Basic Life Principles, crumbled", or into the shocking reasons why Lee McFarland, a "major Global P.E.A.C.E. Plan partner" and a close associate of Rick Warren, has been obliged to leave the megachurch in Arizona that he himself founded.[170] Today, the Internet exposes *many* other cases of abuse of congregants in popular churches, including of course the largest evangelical fellowship in the world.[171]

"We are the 'Elect', so we can't be deceived (Matt. 24:24)."

This verse exemplifies the need to interpret any *single* passage of Scripture in the light of the rest of the Bible—rather than in isolation. Even a very brief consideration of the rest of the New Testament shows that this verse cannot possibly mean what some folks understand by it. If Christ's disciples were not capable of being deceived, why did He tell them: "Take heed that ye be not **deceived**" (Luke 21:8a), "**Take heed**, lest any man deceive you" (Mark 13:5b), and "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:4b)?

Eve was deceived. So was Joshua (see Joshua 9). So was Jeremiah (Jer. 20:7). And so was Solomon (1 Ki. 11:1-13)—the wisest mortal to ever live. We can all be fooled at times. And I am afraid any reader who imagines we don't need to be in line with Scripture *already has been*.

"Our members can infallibly discern perverts, and we keep all pedophiles away from our youngsters until healed."

This would be a miraculous achievement. Pedophiles have been able to molest children in churches of very many different types and stripes.

But, for the sake of argument, let's assume that all folks with pedophile tendencies in your church are indeed identified and always kept separate from all the children. This won't stop them from targeting children *outside* the fellowship.

Take Joe Barron. He was an elder at Prestonwood Baptist Church. He was "arrested … for solicitation [*over the Internet*] of a [*13-year-old*] minor".[172] He pleaded guilty to four counts.

What's worse, the World Wide Web enables pedophiles in our fellowships to '*remotely*' groom our children. Various parts of the volume you are reading can deal with both threats.

But again, if a church chooses to ignore the biblical points in this book, it seems unlikely that God will protect its children from Internet predators who are *not* part of the fellowship. Any readers who see this as an unlikely scenario ought to be aware that "thousands of highly skilled child abusers **permanently** prowl … cyberspace solely to find a child. The computer is … an **extremely** dangerous place".[173]

Internet Threat to Children

This seems a good moment to offer some tips on the risks of the Internet, and how to keep children safe on it.

(a) Dangers

We've already looked at the threat of pedophiles posing as youngsters and grooming a child to the point where the child is prepared to meet up *secretly* with its new and exciting friend. (And there is always the danger of such solicitation by another youngster.) Back in 2001, before 'sexting' had even taken off, research showed "1 in 5 children (10 to 17 years old) receive unwanted sexual solicitations online".[174]

But even if they never meet up, a pedophile can still abuse a child by transmitting indecent messages and/or images via the Internet. Here's just one of the ways it happens:

> "[The] sharing nature of social networking websites means it's fairly easy for [*pedophiles*] to dupe their victims into [*visiting hard-core porn websites*]. To stop this happening, you need to be vigilant against links posted on your profile page or sent within an instant message, even if these appear to come from a **friend** … Young users are particularly susceptible to [such tricks]".[175]

"1 out of 4 kids has been sent a picture [*online*] of naked people or people having sex".[176] A more surprising, but terribly common, form of abuse is achieved by getting the child to take

and send indecent images of *themselves*. The child is invariably cajoled into posing—and ultimately performing—in front of a webcam. Readers may doubt that any child of Christian parents could ever be groomed into doing such a thing, but we mustn't underestimate the capacity of pedophiles to charm and seduce. And we must ***never*** assume that children think the same way as adults. (If we cast our mind back to our childhood and to some of our early decision-making, we'll see why.)

Every child wants to feel they have significance. The Web tempts them to gain significance in hazardous ways.

We must remember, as well, that young girls want to be thought of as ***mature***—and that Western society offers them a hugely corrupt idea of what maturity involves. "Impressionable youngsters [can gradually be led] into behaving beyond their years when their understanding of maturity is drawn from pop stars [*& cheerleaders etc*] gyrating, film stars pouting, TV stars groping, [and] magazine stars stripping—far from having to be **persuaded** to behave indecently, for some children it is like living out the dream".[177] Every girl delights to be thought of as physically attractive and desirable. If she believes she is posing for an appreciative dreamboat of a boy a little older than she is (perverts send photographs of fit and handsome-looking boys, and pretend to be them—to uncanny effect), she might well be steadily led to perform worse and worse things. And she is *very* likely to take the necessary steps to keep anyone from finding out. When the man possesses enough indecent photographs of the girl, he will often blackmail her into permitting even worse abuse—by threatening to publish the images.

Even the very godliest of children will inevitably become curious about sexual matters, at least by the time they're going through puberty. An ex-policeman has made the point that the Internet puts such children in harm's way, due to all the online perverts willing to take advantage of this natural curiosity.

(b) Solution

As others have said, letting your child onto the Internet is like letting them walk down a dark alley. Never let them do so unsupervised. No switched-on Christian parent would allow a child to have access to the Internet in his or her bedroom,[178] but

do our children ever get to visit the homes of friends who have access to the Web in *their* bedrooms? The Internet is indeed a 'web', able to ensnare our children if we aren't careful.

Here are some other good rules, from an experienced and knowledgeable parent: "[My] children are not allowed secret passwords or usernames for any area of the computer"; "The computer is located in a communal area of the house"; "When the kids are on the computer, I make sure I am around"; "[W]e make no secret of the fact that the Internet is not safe because unpleasant people use it for unpleasant reasons"; "If you read what you don't understand when your child is online, question it".[179] Some further tips can be found via this endnote.[180]

Parents who allow their children onto the Web must try to have a grasp of security issues related to home computing. For instance, it is very advisable to buy software to help keep your child from accessing sites with 'adult' content (some examples are: 'Net Nanny®', 'I Am Big Brother®', 'CyberSitter®', and 'K9 Web Protection'). Such software does not mean any of the above guidelines can be disregarded though. Even with the best safeguards, children are often savvy at finding workarounds.

Important Note: With modern cell-phones, children can do just about anything they can with a computer and webcam. It is therefore necessary to restrict them to less capable phones (if you are convinced they need one at all, since phones carry real health risks for children[181] *and allow them more freedom than most can handle aright), and to keep careful tabs on what they are doing with them.*

In closing, even if every parent or guardian of a child in your church implements a sound Internet regime, God will not be happy if the fellowship has deliberately rejected the aspects of His word discussed in this book. As such, I cannot see Him being well disposed to keeping that church's children safe.

9

TESTING TRADITIONS

It is time to come to some slightly more advanced issues.

Accusations - True Or False?

What would you do if a complaint of sexual abuse was made by a Christian child against an elder in your fellowship? In fact, let's imagine charges of sexual abuse against the same elder have been made by not one child but *seventeen* of them. In such a case, elders at a large church in the USA managed to exploit a tiny set of verses in Scripture to dismiss every charge against their 'pastor'. How did they achieve such a feat? There were several stages:

(1) They appealed to Deuteronomy 19:15, which commands: "**One** witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of **two** witnesses, or at the mouth of **three** witnesses, shall the matter be established". Since most of the instances of abuse had only a solitary witness, those allegations were summarily thrown out. *The fact that seventeen separate people were witnessing to the same iniquity was treated as immaterial!*

Were the elders right to interpret Deuteronomy 19:15 in this way? The passage refers to a witness "**rising up**" against a person, as if 'out of the blue'. In light of this fact, and if we use some good old-fashioned common sense, it becomes apparent that the verse only applies when no hard evidence exists *apart* from human testimony. If there exists concrete evidence which corroborates the testimony of a witness, the need for a second is obviously redundant.

It is helpful for us to determine the purpose of this "at the mouth of two witnesses" verse. As the subsequent verse shows, it is designed to make things tougher for anyone who wishes to tarnish a man's good name *unjustly*. (If there were no passages like this, any godless person seeking to harm the reputation of a good man would merely need to make some false accusations.) Given the intent of this verse, we ought to ask three questions regarding charges of sexual abuse made by a young believer:

> 1. What is the likelihood that a child raised in a sound Christian home is going to develop a vendetta against an elder in their church such that they will be prepared to falsely accuse him of sexual abuse but <u>not</u> be willing to report their *true* complaint against him?
> 2. What is the probability of a child brought up in a sound Christian home being *able*—let alone willing—to think up a revolting sexual sin to accuse an elder of?
> 3. What is the chance that a child coming from a sound Christian home is going to stick to their guns with this collection of wicked lies, under an appropriate form of examination, and give a unified and consistent account of the thoroughly fictitious circumstances? "[D]ata and experienced clinical opinion suggest that children do

> **NOT** fabricate accounts of being molested except ... when there are clear motivations to do so ... [*If this is true for unsaved children, it is much more so with a God-fearing child*] ... Most children cannot talk about sexual occurrences unless they have EXPERIENCED them." (Caps mine.)[182]

For any reader who still thinks there needs to be at least two witnesses, let's consider a scenario. Let's imagine a man in your church decides to murder another congregant but leaves a *mountain* of evidence—forensic and otherwise—of his crime. Let's also imagine that a very trustworthy and extremely godly person were to witness the slaying. Are we really supposed to let the murderer off, despite the copious evidence against him, just because more people weren't around to see the killing?

Let us recognize too that no Christian child would lightly invent a story of being molested, and that good evidence which corroborates the child's testimony (e.g. their familiarity with a private aspect of the perpetrator) is *a 'witness' in its own right* as per scriptures like Genesis 31:48, Exodus 22:13 and Joshua 22:26-27. Let's also face up to the fact that multiple Christians testifying to the same abuse by the same person constitute more than one witness. Ignore these truths and we give an invitation to pedophiles.

(2) The next step by the elders of the aforementioned church was to appeal to 1 Timothy 5:19, which says, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but **before two or three witnesses**". This verse is frequently misunderstood. It does not mean there must be at least two witnesses to an elder's sin before it can be taken seriously. After all, it's not exactly common for there to be more than one witness to most sexual offenses.

The clue to the correct meaning of this passage is its use of the word "before" instead of "by". It is the *bringing of the accusation*, rather than the sin itself, which must be witnessed by two or more people (see Matt. 18:16). If someone wishes to make an accusation against any elder, they must be prepared to do so in the presence of (i.e. "before") at least two people—as this acts as a handy initial test of the accuser.

(Important Note: Because Christian children are not in the habit of lying, and because children find it ***extremely*** tricky to talk convincingly about sexual activity if they have never had experience of it, and because of the tremendous fear and shame an abused child feels in discussing what has happened to them, I personally don't believe 1 Timothy 5:19 applies in this case. But regardless, common sense dictates that, if their accusation pertains to **abuse**, we must take immediate measures to ensure the child's protection even if he or she cannot yet face making their complaint before two witnesses. Youngsters are unwilling enough to report their abuse as it is—even in cases where their abuser hasn't taken steps to make it tougher still. Any delay in finding a second witness in front of whom the child feels able to speak could give the offender the chance (a) to clean up any forensic evidence, (b) to coerce the victim into retracting their complaint, and (c) to continue abusing.)

(3) The elders' next step in rejecting the charges against their 'pastor' relied on the fact that the youngsters did not "cry out" during their reported abuse. This idea is based on Deuteronomy 22:23-27. But there are numerous problems with this argument. Firstly, the passage refers only to "a **damsel** … betrothed to a husband", whereas our complainants were boys. (The passage also refers only to *rape*, which is not what the man in question had been accused of. No wonder the elders chose not to quote the passage *or* give the Bible reference for it when insisting to congregants that it was an important rule to take into account.) Next, there are several reasons why this 'crying out' principle can't apply to a *child*. One is that the instinctive response when a child is frightened is to freeze and react submissively. It is an inbuilt mechanism and it usually precludes any crying out. One victim of Frank Houston said this about how he felt, and what he was thinking, while he was being molested:

> "I would be petrified and would just lay very still. I could not speak while this was happening and felt like I could not breathe"[183]

And if the child has been groomed, they may have consented to the molestation. But 'consent' in such circumstances is neither here nor there.

(4) The next step was perhaps the worst. We've already seen how the elders instantly dismissed all allegations for which the accuser was the only witness. These elders went on to argue the following:

(a) They judged the remaining allegations by taking into account the victim's willingness to talk to: the elders; the investigator; ***AND the 'pastor'***. But this is hardly a wise gauge. All of the children were boys, and no boy is happy to inform other people, especially other males, that he's been "interfered with" by a ***man***. (Boys also hate to come across as too weak, or scared, to fight off an abuser.) And, irrespective of gender, every victim is *very* reticent to speak in front of the *abuser himself*.[184] Further, if a fellowship's other elders aren't known for showing the fruit of the Spirit (e.g. patience, kindness, and gentleness) then abused children are also going to find it jolly tough to speak to *them*.

(b) The elders judged the truth of the complaints by taking into account the behavior of the victims *subsequent* to the alleged abuse. But is it not inevitable that a child's walk with the Lord will be seriously hurt if one of the elders of their church has sexually abused them??

(c) They judged the accusations by taking into account the victim's willingness to identify himself. Thus, even in those cases where there were multiple witnesses, if the child was hesitant to come forward (which, as we saw in chapter 1, is almost guaranteed with anyone who has been molested) then that child was not seen as credible and his report was not given weight.

(5) The elders' next step was to argue that, since it was an *elder* who was being accused, he could be trusted. They appealed to

Hebrews 13:17, which tells Christians to "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account". But since elders from across the denominations had *already* been proved to be highly untrustworthy, and had been found guilty of sexual sins of one type or another before the case we are studying, this was a very improper line to take:

> "[A] 1997 issue of *Newsweek* … noted that various surveys suggest that as many as **30 percent** of male Protestant ministers have had sexual relationships with women other than their wives. The *Journal of Pastoral Care* [back] in **1993** reported a survey of Southern Baptist pastors in which … **70 percent** had counseled **at least** one woman who had had **intercourse** with another minister. A **1988** survey of nearly 1,000 Protestant clergy … found that 12 percent **admitted** to sexual intercourse outside of marriage"[185]

The elders we are discussing had no right to imply it was so unlikely that an 'evangelical' minister would molest a child. Annie Laurie Gaylor had published a book in 1988—fully nine years earlier—indicating that this sort of thing was worryingly common. By 1993, several other books had confirmed this. Just a little research, or even a single phonecall to any of the firms which insure churches, would have educated these elders about a multitude of cases, including ones dating back to the *'60s* and before.[186]

Tests - True Or False?

The elders' final step was to factor in the accused's 41 years of service which (supposedly) revealed "no chinks in his armor". The first problem is that this is an unfeasible judgment to make. How could any elders *possibly* have known this man so thoroughly over this many decades as to be able to report so confidently that he had *no* chinks in his armor? Another flaw in

their claim is that *everyone* has 'chinks in their armor'. We all sin from time to time. Besides, if this 'pastor' was as awesome as they claimed, why was the church he'd overseen for years so unsound that seventeen of its young members were prepared to perjure themselves in such a grotesque way?

The third problem with the elders' statement here is that, even if a believer somehow managed to have 'no chinks in his armor' in the *past*, this certainly doesn't stop him from falling subsequently. Superb men of faith in the Bible fell into horrible sin at times. King Solomon started out as a man of God, yet in his later years he perpetrated eye-watering amounts of idolatry. His father was a man "after God's own heart" who committed adultery and murder. And on three occasions, Peter denied the Lord. If these men of God were capable of such things, all of us have the capacity to commit serious sin.

The elders never revealed which tests they employed to determine the quality of the accused's walk with the Lord. And this is a vital question—because the wrong tests are often used. Some folks will be impressed by an individual who has the gift of prophecy and the faith to move mountains, but Paul warned: "though I have the **gift of prophecy**, … and though I have **all** faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not **charity**, I am **nothing**" (1 Cor. 13:2). And in the next verse, he went on: "though I bestow **all** my goods to feed the poor, and though I **give my body to be burned** *[i.e. as a 'martyr for Christ']*, and have not **charity**, it profiteth me **nothing**".

If the Bible's definition of charity is not a fair description of a given elder, then that elder is not nearly as close to God as he claims. Here's the definition: "Charity **suffereth long**, and is **kind**; charity envieth not; charity **vaunteth not itself**, is **not** puffed up, Doth **not behave itself unseemly**, seeketh not her own, is **not** easily provoked, … Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the **truth**" (1 Cor. 13:4-6).

Some readers may conceivably reject this, believing that fruits like prophesying accurately, or the casting out of devils, or healing of the sick, are the right tests. To support their view, they may point to Matthew 7:20 which says, "by their **fruits** ye shall know them". But such folks may possibly have lost sight of the next two verses:

> "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. **Many** will say to Me in that *[last]* day, Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied** in Thy name? and in **Thy** name have **cast out devils**? and in **Thy** name done **many wonderful** works? And then will I profess unto them, I **never knew you**: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." [*See pages 119-120 of this book for an explanation of this passage.*]

When checking someone's salvation, the fruits to look for are not things like 'the creation of large/popular churches', or even 'the performing of miracles'. Instead, they are things that are *unarguably* of God; things that can't possibly be man-made or subtle, enemy-engineered counterfeits. They are things that are *unequivocally* divine…

Someone who is truly saved will freely confess the core doctrines given in 1 John (vv1:10; 2:22-23; 4:1-3). And, if they hold to an erroneous stance on any other doctrine, they will not insist that a person must adopt that same position in order to be saved (Titus 3:10; Rom. 16:17). Anyone walking soundly with God will also be growing, simultaneously, in *all nine* facets of the fruit of the Holy Spirit—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, *[&]* temperance *[akin to self-control]*" (Gal. 5:22-23a).

Those of us in "full-time ministry" are not excused this. We can be tempted to believe we are too busy or too burdened and are therefore not required to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. But the bigger a person's ministry, the bigger the responsibility they have, and therefore the *more Christ-like they need to be*. If we are truly abiding in Christ, we'll automatically produce the fruit of the Spirit. But if we take a holiday from our daily quiet times, we'll start to shrivel up in terms of the fruit of the Spirit.

If someone has the Spirit of Christ, they will exhibit the abovementioned *fruit* of the Spirit of Christ, and will therefore remind us of our "**gentle**", "**meek** and **lowly**" Saviour who was "**full** of **grace** and truth". As a friend has remarked, lamenting her old fellowship which spiritually fell away very badly, "We noted over the years that preachers seemed to be judged on

how 'successful' their ministry was rather than their integrity, teachings or lifestyle." Picking the wrong tests can be deadly. As I sometimes remind people: if Noah's family had judged his walk by the fruit of his 120-year preaching ministry (*zero* souls saved), instead of the fruit of the Spirit in his character, none of them would have stepped onto the Ark.

Some elders try to explain away their scandalous behavior via the adage "New levels, new devils". They are implying that a deeper walk with the Lord can result in *lower* standards—due to increased temptation resulting from the activity of ever more powerful devils. But elders who are genuinely close to God are allocated the grace necessary to cope with anything Satan tries to throw at them. According to Scripture, elders should behave in "blameless" ways (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:2; 4:12). Even though he was an apostle, Paul's behavior was a model to the Christian church. Instead of crying "new levels, new devils", he knew it was a principal job of an elder to *set an example* to the flock (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Php. 3:17; see also 1 Pet. 5:1-3).

Certain elders shift the blame by claiming their flesh *made* them sin. However, the fruit of the Spirit includes self-control, so they cannot make this excuse (see also 1 Cor. 10:13).

Sincere, mature ministers of God exhibit the same sort of character displayed by the apostle Paul, and can say with Paul: "We then, as workers together with Him, … [*are*] in **all** things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much **patience**, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, … By **pureness**, by knowledge, by **longsuffering**, by **kindness**, by the Holy Ghost, by **love unfeigned**, …" (2 Cor. 6:1-6).[187] Put simply, any man or woman who authentically has the Spirit of Christ will, in the way they handle themselves, *remind* us of Christ.

Brethren - True Or False?

For reasons which will become obvious in a moment, I quickly need to summarize, in two sentences, what the elders at this U.S. church did. Even though seventeen youngsters lodged complaints of abuse, and even though some of the episodes had

more than one witness to them, the elders still managed to find ways to throw out every charge. They showed no qualms about exploiting scriptures which didn't apply, and where they could find no passages to twist in support of their position (to provide *some* sort of a fig leaf) they just carried on regardless.

Their behavior was so disgraceful that ministers in sister fellowships took the almost unprecedented step—amongst this group of churches—of criticizing them. Yet the elders ignored even this, displaying no teachability. The accused man resigned (this seems a peculiar step if he was completely innocent), but the elders arranged for him to return to the church to receive a reception in his honor. When this was advised against by their wider circle, the advice was again disregarded.

Eventually, the outcry over the affair reached ear-splitting proportions and the elders realized they had to respond. So they agreed to hire a private detective to look into matters. But this was clearly just a sop, because they refused to make known the findings of the resulting three-month investigation. Again, this refusal was in the teeth of their brethren in sister churches who begged them to publish the findings to quell the suspicion that they were withholding data that would establish the accused's guilt. (It turns out the 'pastor' had been arrested for an indecent act with another man in a public toilet.)

I have to say, I seriously struggle to believe that a true Christian could ever do all the things these elders did. From my research into the case, I personally doubt if these elders were saved. I'm not saying they weren't. The point I want to make is that it is at least possible—and that we must recognize the fact that not all elders in all churches are genuine brethren. Indeed, Paul taught us that even churches founded by the most anointed individuals can eventually find themselves led by ungodly men when he wrote the following words to the elders at the Church in Ephesus—a church he helped set up:

> "Take **heed** unto yourselves … For I know this, that after my departing shall **grievous wolves enter in among you**, ... Also of your **<u>own</u> selves** shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples ... Therefore **watch**, and remember, that

> [*for*] … three **<u>years</u>** I **ceased not** to warn every one **night and day** with **<u>tears</u>**." (Acts 20:28-31)

I'm obliged to say that the elders we have been studying did indeed "speak perverse things", which is just one of many reasons why I feel obliged to question their genuineness. God's word says, "Whoso walketh **uprightly** shall be saved: But he that is **perverse** in his ways shall **fall**…" (Prov. 28:18).

The ways in which unsaved members, let alone unsaved elders, exacerbate the risk of pedophile attacks are varied. We shall see some of these below. Others are listed on the website associated with this book (preying.org). We must not be naïve about the possibility of unsaved folks getting accepted into the memberships and even elderships of our churches. (Depending on the quality of a church's teaching, unsaved members may or may not *know* they are unsaved, but they pose a risk to children either way.)

Readers may be wondering how it is possible for unsaved *elders* to convince a fellowship that they are not only saved but sound. Here are ten such techniques:

> When the fellowship is criticized, the elders insist it is an attack from the enemy. This bolsters their argument that the fellowship is in God's will and that the devil is trying to dupe it into taking another direction.

> The elders are able to 'pull the wool over people's eyes' with their verbal dexterity. Their "smooth words" allow them to present *anything* that happens to the church in a positive light. Even when God brings a judgment on the fellowship, the elders are capable of explaining it away.

> A key tool is flattery. For instance, the elders may claim that their church is on the "cutting edge". Not only does this enchant congregants; it also provides a ready-made explanation when things go awry, because the elders can argue that 'no church has ever been as far along the road as we are, so it is only to be expected if we occasionally make a mistake'. *Note: By claiming that their fellowship*

is on the cutting edge, the elders also neuter their critics, because congregants feel that outsiders are not qualified to make a judgment unless they are on the same "cutting edge"—i.e. are already allies of the fellowship.

The eldership may put more effort into attracting better-off people to the church than to drawing poorer folks.[188] (But see Gal. 2:9-10.) This, in tandem with an excessive focus on money by elders, results in the church getting a lot *materially* from members. The elders can then throw piles of cash at problems to paper over them, once again obscuring God's attitude towards the elders.[189]

By being meticulous, and by wanting the fellowship's activities to be organized like a commercial business, the elders can make it *seem* like the Lord is with the church. Events tend to be over-planned and tightly ordered. (I'm not chastising churches for wanting to act professionally, unless it restricts the Holy Spirit's freedom. However, I do have serious concerns when a church applies secular principles to *spiritual* activities. The Kingdom of God is not a 'business', and Scripture warns: "My thoughts are **not** your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the **heavens** are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). See also Prov. 3:5-7; Rom. 11:33; Mark 8:27-36; 1 Cor. 1&2 plus 3:19-20.[190])

Elders may well endorse the *very* unbiblical idea that churches which are growing in numbers must inevitably be on the right track (in which case a lot of cults must be of God!). By employing the techniques we are looking at in this list—often alongside self-promotion by unbiblical means—elders can ensure this numerical growth. But the extra numbers mainly comprise believers who've chosen to transfer there from less compromised—and thus more challenging—fellowships. The other new attendees will be unsaved people who *think* they're saved and who are treated as saved by these elders. (It is ***spiritual*** growth—

i.e. where members are becoming more and more Christ-like—which fellowships should aim for. Those churches which rely on the sort of techniques in the above list are *falling away*, spiritually-speaking.) *Note: A fellowship's size, or rate of growth, can intimidate congregants who would otherwise be willing to raise legitimate concerns.*

The elders are likely to exalt anyone prepared to work with them. This includes unsound 'leaders' from outside the fellowship. Thanks to the fulsome praise lavished by the elders on these outside individuals, congregants learn to respect the latter. When these outside leaders naturally reciprocate the elders' praise by extolling them back, the congregants think more highly of their *own* elders too.

The elders' unbiblical doctrines, practices, and friends, all allow counterfeit spirits to operate powerfully within the church. Such spirits bring an array of lying signs and wonders (as per 2 Cor. 11:4; 2 Thess. 2:8-12; Mark 13:22 and so on) to deceive gullible congregants. These 'signs' can even include genuine healings (see p. 119).

If lying signs prove insufficient to keep the congregation happy, the elders simply claim to have achieved further miracles—but always ones that are impossible to verify. Elders may, for example, invent signs they performed in remote or inaccessible parts of the world, so as to keep us from checking up on them. Alternatively, they keep back information necessary to verify the story. They may also mislead us by making *exaggerated* claims, e.g. about the number of people taking part in church activities, or the number of unsaved people witnessed to. Elders may also arrange for acolytes to publicize donations made by these elders (except that the money they give has usually been wrested from their own congregants).

Some elders may endeavor to surround themselves with things that are attractive to our physical senses. So, they may pay a lot of attention to their outward appearance, or

they may turn church services into a show (where do we see these things in the New Testament?). This hides their lack of *spiritual* beauty. In place of the **inner** beauty that genuine believers like the apostle Paul had, they focus on *visual*/*physical* attractiveness and hope their mere charm or charisma will be interpreted as inner beauty.

Presentation is important to some elders, even though it clearly wasn't at all important to the NT apostles (2 Cor. 10) and is the very antithesis of how Christ operated. The famous Broadway song *Give 'Em the Old Razzle Dazzle* could have been written for such elders. They put on a show to dazzle us and blind us to the spiritual shortcomings of their case. They entertain us so as to amuse us and dissuade us from properly investigating the substance of things. They thereby keep us in a state of blissful ignorance and contented confusion. (Some elders even imply that knowledge is "of the Devil"—making a mockery of almost the entirety of God's word, not least the book of Proverbs (e.g. see 1:22-29; 5:2; 14:7; 15:7 & 20:15). In Hosea 4:6, the Lord even says "My people are destroyed for **lack** of knowledge".)

In case any of a church's congregants *still* want to check the soundness of the doctrines and practices of the eldership, they are told, falsely, that it is unbiblical for the congregants to analyze what the elders are teaching or doing.[191] (Readers may be wondering why the Lord doesn't simply expose these elders for what they are. He *does* expose them, in a sense, for He causes them to fail the true tests of authenticity. But God usually leaves them be, so that He can test whether or not we are going to obey the Bible and reject them ourselves.)

Spirit - True Or False?

Unsaved people are under the influence of false spirits. But *believers* can be influenced by false spirits as well. I'm not talking about 'demon-possession' here. I'm just observing that, if we don't watch ourselves carefully, believers can be misled

by unclean spirits. If any readers think this is impossible, Paul asked the Christians in Galatia, "who hath **bewitched** you…?" (Gal. 3:1). Likewise, Peter asked Ananias, "why hath **Satan** filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost…?" (Acts 5:3). And Paul warned us that, "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing spirits**" (1 Tim. 4:1b-2). Consider also 2 Cor. 11:4, or simply recall what happened in the Garden of Eden.

The fact that unclean spirits can influence both saved and unsaved members of our churches has important ramifications when it comes to child molestation. Below are three of them.

(1) A false spirit blinds a person's eyes to what is going on.

A false spirit will seek to cause us to misread the signs and assume abuse has not occurred:

> "In 1999 … members of Great Hills Baptist Church stood by their 44-year-old youth minister [Charles Willits] accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old boy [over several months], **refusing to believe he was capable of the crime**."[192] (In court, he was found guilty and given a 15-year sentence.)

> "The Salvation Army would not remove its minister, Gary Hallock of Pennsylvania, from his duties teaching children bible stories, even after he had been **arrested** for sexually abusing children at his church! [*He should have been suspended as a precautionary measure until the eldership had fully investigated the complaints.*] The 'captain,' … had victimized **seven** children, ages four to 15, and even a profoundly retarded 15 year old boy. He was sentenced … to up to 72 years in prison. ... [**And** a] civil suit was launched against the Salvation Army for their negligence by parents of victims"[193]

(2) If abuse is reported, a false spirit encourages a cover-up.

As we saw with the elders earlier, an unclean spirit will not only seek to cover up abuse, but will also enable people to

find fiendishly clever and devious ways to do so. Beyond this, an unclean spirit will prod other church members to cajole the abused into retracting the charges. In the case we examined at length above, the youngsters and their supporters were literally bombarded with harassing phone calls, and even death threats, from church members in what looked like a coordinated effort to pummel them into withdrawing their accusations.

If the case goes to court, demons will endeavor to get the abuser acquitted or handed the briefest sentence possible:

> "In most of the Salvation Army cases, … the denomination has hired defense, sometimes paid for special investigators, bail, **and** costs of appeals ... People give [*the Salvation Army*] money to feed the hungry, not to help molesters of children"[194]

A false spirit will also encourage church members to give the victim the cold shoulder, to dissuade any other congregants from 'making trouble' in the future.

(3) Even if abuse is proved, its significance is downplayed.

God has a special place in his heart for Christian children (Matt. 18:10). Molestation of such children is utterly abhorrent to Him. As others have pointed out, if two adult males agree to engage in sexual intercourse, the Bible describes the act as an "abomination" (Lev. 18:22), yet it is at least consensual. When a precious child is *raped*—with all the damage, spiritually and otherwise, which ensues—just imagine how our righteous God must feel.

An unclean spirit will not want a fellowship to take child sex abuse as seriously as the Lord does. This is because a more relaxed attitude will encourage the fellowship to hide the abuse (or, where a cover-up is not possible, to push the court for the minimum sentence), thereby *helping the pedophile to carry on abusing*. A relaxed attitude also encourages other molesters to give in to their urges. In chapter 7 we explored further risks to children from attaching insufficient gravity to molestation. For a picture of the blindness an unclean spirit can cause, see this:

> "**[S]upporters** … **filled** the courtroom during hearings against Rev. James Britton Myers. … Although he was convicted of the heinous crime of **raping** a little girl at his Christian school over a **five-year** period, starting when she was **five**, one member of his congregation called the crimes '**one drop of ink in crystal clear water**'"[195]

Let's just pause and consider the sweetness, preciousness, and innocence of the average five-year-old girl. Now consider the purity, trusting nature, and total lack of guile of a five-year-old *Christian* girl. Then let's consider the physical *fragility* of such a small child. We must not imagine what this grown man did to her, but let us take a moment to recognize the misery this poor daughter of God must have suffered over those five long years. The physical pain alone must have been dreadful.

Rape can be "**ravaging** to an immature body".[196] Effects can include lacerations, genital infections and prolapsed 'secret parts' (a really tragic condition), not forgetting HIV.

What I also find desperate is that some believers will be most vocal in their insistence that we swiftly forgive and forget such crimes, yet they will often be much less willing to forgive a lesser sin. A colleague of mine put it this way:

> "A 'Christian' who is discovered as a paedophile seems to be afforded every ounce of grace, while someone caught embezzling the church treasury would probably count himself lucky to just be arrested! I find the topsy-turvy values of … [*some professing Christians*] nauseating quite frankly."

He also rightly observes that anyone who questions the salvation of a professing Christian found guilty of molesting a child may sometimes receive more censure than the pedophile himself, despite Matt. 18:5-6; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-24; Eph. 5:2-12; 1 John 2:3-4; 3:10, 14; 4:7-8; 5:4, 18 etc.

Imagine how *thoroughly* heartless a person needs to be to repeatedly rape children so young, given the "fear, helplessness and pain that their little bodies and minds have to endure". And now ask yourself how very far from God a person would have

to be to commit *any* sexual abuse of a ***Christian*** child without feeling so chastised, convicted, or ashamed, as to take the steps necessary to avoid any recurrence.

How did our 'one drop of ink' child-raper manage to fool so many folks into believing he was a fine man of God? Firstly, these folks were evidently not using the correct tests. Secondly, some preachers are extraordinary actors, and are astonishingly good at pretending to be something very different from reality. Thirdly, *unclean spirits* can assist by blinding the spiritual eyes of congregants. Such spirits can also make the offender capable of 'charming the socks off' those around him.

We must stop being so gullible. Charm is phenomenally deceptive. The very word "charm"—as in 'magic charm'—is a gargantuan clue to what is really going on and how we ought to relate to those people who rely on it. (The word "charm" comes from the Latin for "incantation" and is often defined as a type of spell or enchantment. See Deut. 18:10-12 & Isa. 19:3-4.)

People can have a charming exterior and yet be ***very*** different under the surface. There are plenty of cases in modern history one could cite—especially from the world of politics. In the evangelical world as well there have been many times when sincere churches have been deceived by a charming elder who was, in reality, a true monster. And we are not talking of serial adulterers, rapists and pedophiles only. Some men—like Javan McBurrows,[197] Simon Douglas, and Philip Curcio—turned out to have *murdered* a child while in eldership. Andras Pandy and Dennis Rader were both elders and *serial* killers. (Pandy killed at least six people.[198] The remains of eight more were found in his house. Rader, a member of 'Christ Lutheran Church', did away with 10 people, torturing them beforehand,[199] yet he was so charming as to be elected president of his Church Council.)

Here's another example of an utterly deceptive exterior:

> "The Rev. Clyde L. Johnson, pastor of the largest Baptist church in Petersburg, … was convicted of the rape and sexual battery of **four** girls, aged nine to 16, in his congregation. Despite the conviction, **and** [his] cruel and slanderous statements about the young girls made in an effort to protect himself, he

> received **continuous religious support**, including … rallies, [and] money. ... One church member, … [*who was very justly*] **angered** by this … support of a child rapist, commented: 'Some people **worship** preachers.'"[200] [Please Note: *Any 'man of God' who leads people to 'worship' him and gets exposed as an active pedophile is likely to lead some followers to assume molestation to be much less grave than it really is—thereby tempting them to abuse*.]

It is hard to overstate the importance of the following point. No matter how wonderful a person's ministry appears to be, they are not what they claim to be if their *character* doesn't remind us of the Jesus we read about in the Gospels. It doesn't matter if they can prophesy accurately; it doesn't matter if they give vast sums to the poor; it doesn't matter if they achieve big responses from their evangelistic outreach. If their character is not like that of Christ, it is because they have not submitted to the *Spirit* of Christ.

I can't help thinking of a certain, well known Australian preacher and pedophile. If only folks had assessed his spiritual condition on the basis of his character—rather than his ability to charm and manipulate audiences and entice people to follow him—many boys, some as young as eight, would have escaped serious molestation at his hands (plus the damage to their faith that resulted). Just because he won unbelievers over to himself and his worldview doesn't mean those people were necessarily won for Christ. If you disagree, please see this endnote.[201]

Where a false brother (*or a sincere but deceived and unsaved person*) is being aided by a devil, he may be able to produce supernatural signs and wonders (see Deu. 13:1-4; Exo. 7 & 8). These signs and wonders can include *genuine physical healings*, just like witchdoctors can sometimes perform. Satan is more than happy to 'lift' a sickness from off a person if this will bring the person into greater spiritual bondage and if it will persuade the folks who hear of it to revere the human servant of Satan who 'caused' the healing. When the Lord Jesus spoke of the woman whose back was so bowed that she could not lift herself up, He said "**Satan** hath bound [*her*]" (Luke 13:16).

Where God has permitted Satan to bring an illness, Satan may have the right to lift it. And if such a healing serves Satan's purposes, he is *more* than willing to lift it.

Let's not be wet behind the ears. He is incomparably more deceptive and crafty than folks tend to suppose. I once pointed out that there was *plentiful* evidence that a world famous name in Christian circles was not a genuine brother. A guy wrote to condemn me for my position, but he did so on the basis that the person I was concerned about did not run around the streets in a hooded cloak while shouting praise to Lucifer. Unfortunately, false shepherds are far subtler than that. All they need to do is lead us just a couple of degrees away from the correct heading and we will soon be in very unhealthy territory.

> "For such are false apostles, **deceitful** workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for **Satan himself** is transformed into an **angel of light**. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of **righteousness**" (2 Cor. 11:13-15) [This subtlety means we should not be *unduly* embarrassed if we have been fooled by false apostles.]

The idea that anyone would *deliberately* oppose Almighty God seems 'off the wall' to many Christians. But when people get deceived as to Lucifer's real nature and agenda, and when they develop a grudge against God, and if they pick up unclean spirits, it can happen quite easily. And regardless, God's word warns us that there is no shortage of such people (Matt. 24:4-5, 11), so we can be certain they exist.

Judgment - True Or False?

The issue of judgment is a pivotal one. We touched on it towards the beginning of chapter 3, but there is much more we could say in defense of judging. For instance, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and others, judged people. And Paul even rebuked churches for *not* judging (1 Cor. 5:11-13).

It is frequently said that we can't know another's motives. Yet Paul knew the motive behind one of his co-workers when he wrote, "Demas hath forsaken me, having **loved this present world**" (2 Tim. 4:10a), and the apostle John knew "Diotrephes … **loveth** to have the **preeminence**" (3 John 1:9). If, as God's word tells us, "out of the abundance of the **heart** the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34b), then we *can* get an idea of what is in someone's heart if we acquaint ourselves with what that person says. And if God directly shows us what's in a person's heart, or if the evidence is copious enough, we *can* draw conclusions. What's more, if the spiritual health of others is endangered by a person's heart, we *need* to.

Consider this also. The Bible unambiguously commands Christians "**not to keep company**, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner" (1 Cor. 5:11). We are given a similar injunction in 2 Thessalonians 3:6. How are we to obey these commands if we are never able to make judgments?

The Q&A section of www.preying.org looks at this topic further, and responds to the arguments people produce to side-step all the Bible verses we've now seen.

Margaret Schlosser. She is a powerful illustration of the need to determine the spiritual soundness of the elders in your church. (It is vital that elders be saved, and qualified for the post, else they may not be able to spot danger signs; may not know what to do if they *do* spot them; and may not know how to teach *congregants* how to spot them.) Margaret was murdered, at just 11 months of age, by her mother. The method used was utterly heartbreaking, just as it was for the murders of Joel and David Dobben (two years of age, and 13 months old respectively) by their father. In both cases, these disturbed parents were attached to evangelical churches.

FINAL POINTS FOR CHAPTER

Some elders claim the enemy to be powerless to have any effect on their fellowship. I remember attending a Bible camp where we were told this very thing about the camp. The event was held inside a horse-racing track, and we were assured that Satan was riding a horse at break-neck speed around said track in utter frustration at the fact that he was going to be unable to influence any aspect of the gathering. These days I realize it is naïve, not to say conceited, to imagine that one's fellowship is immune from Satan or his agents operating within it. Actually, the scriptural pattern is that God deliberately *allows* them to be present—to test us, and to reveal whether we will cling to His word or will instead allow ourselves to be charmed and led into compromise. (This happened to Eve, but other examples from Holy Scripture could be given. See 2 Peter 2:1 and Jude 14 for confirmation of the pattern.)

For obvious reasons, Nicolaitans and false brothers will strongly oppose the book you are reading. They will doubtless use various methods to discourage people from taking notice of the recommendations here. If you come across a critique which rubbishes this volume, I suggest asking yourself if the reviewer has really *invalidated the advice supplied here by demolishing the key arguments and evidence offered in these pages, or has instead just complained about secondary features—or has even made remarks that are not about the book's content at all—and has told you to reject it for these spurious reasons. (The Lord always provides a few straws for folks to clutch at if they don't want to hear the truth, as we saw on page 28. Back in the early days of the Church, 2000 years ago, people even found ways to discredit Paul (e.g. see Rom. 3:8) and to reject Christ Himself (e.g. see John 8:48). By all means contact me via preying.org if you are troubled by anyone making accusations about me. But you are urged to consider that, whatever one thinks of me, this book stands (or falls) on its own merits.*[202]*)*

10

WHAT TO DO NOW?

What are we to do, in order to keep our children and churches safe?

(1) Protecting Our Children

To safeguard its children, a church needs to get properly in line with God's word, including the biblical precepts touched on in this book.

This volume has discussed a number of things in modern evangelicalism which encourage pedophile attacks. But there are further such things which, partly for reasons of space, I felt I had to exclude from this work. Some of them are as important as the ones covered here though. They are tackled via the website.

I plan for the website to hold any updates for this book, and to be a repository for my responses to reviews of it—and to any

questions I receive about it. In the text of this book, I've promised the availability of a fair number of web articles. As I write, many are already in place. Additionally, the site includes:

> -What to do if you suspect child sexual abuse.
> -Vital "Do's and Don'ts" if a child reports abuse to you.
> (The page's URL is 'preying.org/What'. I urge readers to memorize the contents of that page and its URL.)
> -My qualifications for writing this book.
> (Of course, the most important qualifications are that the Lord called the author to write it and that He guided the work. Hopefully it is evident by now that these were the case here.)

I also intend for the site to offer guidance on what to do if you've been a victim of abuse, or someone you know has. And I am seeking God regarding articles on other practicalities too.

IMPORTANT: An early reviewer of this book emailed me to say, "I'm looking forward to your getting the **website** up and running … since it's **there** that one will be able to have some sort of valuable offensive measures to go by." While I strongly sympathize with this outlook, I feel it is wrong. By ***far*** the most important offensive measures we can implement are those that bring us into line with the *Bible*, and we've already covered the great majority.[203] What's more, by putting God's perfect word first, we can afford to be "anxious for nothing" (to paraphrase Php. 4:6), to "rest in the Lord" (Psa. 37:7), and to trust God to watch over our children—as long as we don't take liberties and put Him to the test. We can have total confidence that, since we are honoring God, He will honor us (1 Sam. 2:30). The world tries to convince us that child security is all down to "a mix of intelligence, instinct and luck", but this simply isn't so.

"[W]hatsoever is not of faith is **sin**" (Rom. 14:23b). We must not act faithlessly in *any* area of our Christian lives. If we fret about our children, we are not showing faith—and thus we are displeasing God (Heb. 11:6). We must avoid responding to the threat of pedophilia in our own way or strength.

At its core, pedophilia is a *spiritual* issue. If we attempt to deal with such problems using human wisdom, we undermine ourselves and, more importantly, our children. Why so? Firstly, because God's ways are **vastly** higher than ours and are **always** best. **Human wisdom is *NO* match for Satan's crafty ways.** Next, God has cursed anyone who trusts in man's strength for their safety (Jer. 17:5). If we rely on ourselves in the protection of children, are we not doing this?[204] Lastly, rigid adherence to man-made procedures restricts the Holy Spirit. While we must obviously take sensible precautions, we must be *balanced* and not 'wrap our children up in cotton wool' socially-speaking, or else we limit the Spirit. We must rely instead on God's word. A constant theme in the Bible is that God will be with us if we'll trust in His word rather than in ourselves.[205]

Jennifer Moore, aged 13, was raped by a 'youth pastor' of an evangelical church. He had no criminal record, so background checks would not have helped. And I doubt if any set of church procedures would have stopped him either, since Jennifer did not attend his church.

To make certain Jennifer didn't report him, he murdered her and dumped her body. It is not hard to imagine the profound shame this all brought on the church. (As far as I can ascertain, no set of church procedures could have guaranteed the protection of *any* of the rape victims whose photographs appear in this book, nor any of the 26 murder victims alluded to in the text.)

Another key to keeping a church's children safe is for every believer to be as informed as sensibly possible about the matters raised in this volume. I recommend prayerfully making this book known to the members of your fellowship. (You'll need to use an approach suited to the degree of 'openness to correction' of each person. And it's often best to start by approaching those members

with whom you have the closest relationship, or those whom you know to be the wisest or most Christ-like. This will make it more difficult for any reckless elders to ignore your advice.)

I cannot over-emphasize the fact that all the procedures, all the anti-victim training, and all the other precautions in the world are not going to be sufficient if a church doesn't put right the errors cited in this book. In contrast, if a fellowship 'purges out the leaven' of any mistaken beliefs and practices, it can rest assured that God will watch over its little ones.

Note: If your church can't be convinced to get properly back to God's word, there is no law against members starting up their own fellowship.

In some quarters, the above sentence will elicit the reply "Aha! This person cannot be of God, because the Bible says 'Mark them which cause divisions and avoid them'". The first thing to say in response is that God's word is being misquoted. Romans 16:17 reads, "mark them which cause divisions and offences **contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned**; and avoid them". This can't possibly refer to *all* division, since the Bible specifically commands us to separate from professing believers in various circumstances. Take 1 Timothy 6:3-5: "If any man … consent not to … the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, … destitute of the truth, supposing that **gain** is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself**." Or Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition **reject**". Or 2 Thessalonians 3:14: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed". See also: 2 John 1:7-10; 1 Cor. 5:11-13; 2 Thess. 3:6; Prov. 13:20; 2 Tim. 3:2-5 etc.

In Luke 12:51, the Lord Jesus Himself said, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, **Nay**; but rather **division**". He calls us to separate from those professing believers who are bent on taking the wrong road.

The types of individuals being alluded to in this "mark them" verse are those who "cause offences" (e.g. by promoting unbiblical spiritual practices), and those who cause division by insisting we must believe false teachings in order to be saved.

The passage is assuredly *not* referring to those individuals who simply want a God-fearing, truth-loving church for themselves and their children—and who are not willing to compromise on that most godly desire.[206]

(2) Managing the Pedophiles

How is a church supposed to manage the pedophiles? Again, it needs to start by putting right the issues described in this book.

A worrying feature in some churches is that elders merely try to reduce the *opportunities* for abuse—rather than seeking to remedy the underlying sickness. In other words, elders endeavor to contain, not eliminate, the disease. Even where excellent child protection policies are deployed, these will always rely to some extent on pedophiles abiding by the commitments they make—such as refusing hospitality from families who are unaware of their 'interest' in children. Even the most superb procedures in history still leave the pedophile unhealed and a constant risk to the church and/or local community. This is not a good solution—especially as our God is omnipotent.

In the case of a known pedophile wanting to join your fellowship, the elders need to get him (or her) truly saved before allowing them near the congregants. Special care should be taken to ensure that the prospective member has grasped the abhorrence God feels toward pedophile activity, and that the person has fully repented of that scene prior to—or at—their conversion. (See the Q&A section of preying.org for more information regarding this pivotal matter.) Once the person has passed the biblical tests for a genuine conversion,[207] they need, like anyone else, to be provided with solid discipling and oversight to make sure they are growing in the Faith.[208]

In the case of a *pre-existing* member of your church who experiences pedophilic thoughts, I'm intending to add a page to the website with material on what they need to do if they are to conquer their addiction. But it can be summed up in one short phrase: 'Truly love—and hence obey—God's written word'.[209]

If any attendee isn't fully delivered of his pedophilic side, he will find it very hard to resist looking at those children who attract him. If he's in sight of such children in a church service, it will be next to *impossible* for him to avert his eyes from them all the time. And every second he spends gazing at them—even if his thoughts about them are entirely non-sexual—excites *and* ***feeds*** his pedophilic side, strengthening its grip on him. Being allowed into the presence of youngsters he considers alluring is injurious to his health—because "sowing to the flesh" results in ***corruption*** of the flesh (Gal. 6:7-8). And every moment spent ogling children increases the risk of him molesting a Christian child and thus going to Hell. Until he's been released from his inclinations, he needs to be kept away from children. Whatever practical arrangements are required to achieve this in your own fellowship's particular circumstances should be followed.[210]

God doesn't waste space in His pure word. For this reason He has not tended to include points which are common sense. By definition, all such things are already self-evident—at least with a little thought or experience, or by listening to someone else who has a bit of experience. Thus, any child protection policies which are common sense in your church's particular situation should be respected. But I'm obliged to re-emphasize here that ***reliance*** on procedures is not only fallible—for the manifold reasons we saw in chapters 1, 4, 7 & 8—but, at least by the time a fellowship has got its house in order, is *faithless too.* Reliance instead on God's word, and on His specific direction, is *infallible.* (Once a church is properly in line with Scripture, I don't believe rigid procedures are ideal, as they inevitably reduce the freedom of the Spirit. But nowadays a fellowship needs to be exceptionally sound before it can safely drop them all.)

How do we 'manage' folks in our church whose pedophilic leanings are *not* known—or those who could develop them? The first step is to remember that the Bible urges us to be wise rather than naïve. The next step is to recognize that all of us are capable of falling into sin of one type or another. This means that each of us, if we have any sense, will appreciate our brothers and sisters watching our backs—i.e. looking out for our welfare by keeping abreast of our walk with the Lord—so as to help us identify and correct issues before they grow.

This will seem a weird concept to some readers, so here's an analogy to reassure them. All members of a properly functioning *physical* family keep a "weather eye" on the *physical* health and condition of the others, so it's entirely reasonable for members of a ***spiritual*** family to *keep such a "weather eye" on each other's* ***spiritual*** *health and condition*. (As a matter of fact, our spiritual health is much more crucial than our physical health, so it's even more vital that they provide this service. And it's for everyone's benefit, because spiritual sickness can spread to other parts of the church body like a cancer. See 2 Tim. 2:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:4-7; Gal. 5:7-9; Matt. 16:11-12 and Luke 12:1.)[211]

We are members of a single body. And we are called to care for each other, because "if one member suffers, **all** the members suffer with it" (1 Cor. 12:26a). If one part gets sick, it affects the whole. It is not sensible to claim that another believer's spiritual condition is none of our business, ***or vice versa***.[212] We all impact each other, so we are all *accountable* to each other. We truly need to get into the habit of keeping tabs on our own *and each other's* spiritual health, so that we can spot early signs of any 'departure from the faith' (see 1 Tim. 4:1) or 'falling from grace' (Gal. 5:4) or 'turning aside after Satan' (see 1 Tim. 5:15). It is certainly true that we are called to *think* the best of one another. But that is just not the same thing *at all* as ***assuming*** the best of one another. We need to be wise. We must **always** keep an open mind and **never** discount the possibility of the ***worst***. (If, as some folks claim, it is impossible for true Christians—even those who've been led into doctrinal error—to backslide into sin, then a number of warnings in the Epistles look to be nonsensical.)

The less Christ-like a person's character, the more care we need to take regarding their access to youngsters. All the more so if there's any reason to think they're more liable than the average person to have pedophilic leanings. And I mean *any* reason. For the sake of every single person affected, we cannot afford to wait for a potential abuser to get close to *proving* it. We cannot allow a repeat of the case of 'Pastor Jack Schaap', a *married*, ***54***-year old elder at a church in Indiana, who was found to have had sex with a girl of 16 he was supposedly counseling.[213]

When trying to discern someone's spiritual condition, it is helpful to spend time with them outside of 'normal' scenarios, so

you can observe their behavior in other situations. One good way to know a person is, as the old proverb has it, to travel with them. That way you will get to view their unrehearsed responses to the various different problems and stimuli that crop up unexpectedly on any journey. Alternatively, seek to be in their company when they are tired or stressed, or at other times when their self-control is reduced and they more clearly reveal their heart. We *must* get past the veneer that so many people hide behind in public.

Note: I need to warn against leaving the aforementioned monitoring to elders. Even the most discerning and diligent set of elders will often be too busy to keep good tabs on everyone, especially in any fellowship comprising more than a handful of members. More importantly, elders are *fallible*. Joe Barron, the elder we met in chapter 8 who endeavored to solicit sex from a 13-year-old girl online, demonstrates this. Not ***one*** of the other ***39*** elders at Barron's church discerned his real nature. Or, take Kerry McJunkins. He molested a number of boys including one as young as ten. An elder at McJunkins' fellowship completely failed to spot what he was really like, despite spending a huge amount of time with him—and despite McJunkins abusing two sons *of that very elder*. Another elder was so undiscerning that he wrote a Christian book with him. It was the *congregants,* not the elders, who had the discernment to realize McJunkins was a long way away from being the person he claimed to be. (Extra reasons why it is seriously unwise to leave monitoring to elders have appeared in previous chapters.)

If you suspect a person to have greater access to children than is sensible given their spiritual condition, alert a trustworthy person in authority.[214]

Final Thoughts

This book has attempted to expose a number of 'proof-texts'—i.e. single verses taken out of context to make Scripture appear to teach something it doesn't—but there are still others which people may wheel out to negate one or more aspects of this book. If the reader is not familiar enough with the Bible to

realize these verses are being mis-applied, feel free to drop me a line if I haven't already dealt with them in the "Q&A" section of preying.org.

If the reader should lovingly challenge a fellowship over its errors, and the response received back is: "Do not criticize our church—**at least we're bringing people in.**", the reader may want to consider replying with: "Okay, but what are those people **doing to your children?**"[215] And if anyone tries to side-step your concerns about their behavior by saying, "How many people have **you** converted in the last month?" you may want to consider pointing out that their response is *so* unbiblical[216] as to indicate that their 'converts' will pose an unusually high risk to children. And if any folks dismiss your gentle correction on the basis that they think it "divisive", you may like to consider notifying them that churches can easily be *blown apart* due to unbiblical teachings leading to child abuse.[217]

The Lord has said, "**I** will build my church" (Matt. 16:18a). I would not be the first person to observe that we must avoid allowing ourselves to imagine we know better than God when it comes to this process. We must follow His pure word and leave the results to Him. We have no right to introduce our own methods or preconceived ideas as to how things should go. God has not put the wrong instructions in His word.

In several different ways, this book is a challenging read. God bless you for staying with it until the end.

To find out how you can support my work, please see preying.org.

ENDNOTES

PREFACE

[1] Howard N. Snyder, Ph.D, *Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement: Victim, Incident, and Offender Characteristics*, National Center for Juvenile Justice, July 2000, U.S. Department of Justice, as cited by childlurespreven tion.com.

[2] Adam Lusher, 'UK has 250,000 paedophiles, says police study', *Daily Telegraph* (London), Dec. 31st 2000. Available online.

[3] J. Hopper, (1998), *Child Sexual Abuse: Statistics, Research, Resources*, Boston, MA, Boston University School of Medicine, as cited by childlurespreven tion.com. (It is widely accepted that boys under-report abuse even more frequently than girls. One reason is that, if the abuse was committed by a male, the boy worries that his peers will "question his sexuality". Other reasons are discussed later.)

[4] Reformation.com, the (anti-evangelical) website in question, isn't always available, so the list it holds has been copied to the website associated with this book. See preying.org/Reformation for it. The great majority of the abusers on that list would be 'evangelical' in the broad sense of the term. The list has 838 entries, a small percentage of which do not involve child molestation. The *confirmed* cases run into the hundreds. Someone has added a handful of post-2003 cases to the list, but the original compilers stopped at that year.

[5] Another such list is at fisheaters.com/clergysexabuse.html. (I don't support the site's agenda.)

[6] One helpful source regarding evangelicalism is www.bishop-accountability.org/AbuseTracker. This site looks at Catholicism too.

[7] An independent study confirmed that the rate of disclosure was no higher than 3%. For details, and further shocking statistics, plus some tips on prevention, see childlurespreven tion.com.

[8] For some cases of abuse in the Contemplative fold, see Jeremy Weber, 'C. J. Mahaney, Joshua Harris Resign from Gospel Coalition after SGM Abuse Conviction', May 19th 2014. Online.

[9] Clay Jones, interviewed by Bill Cooper of *christianet.com*, July 26th 2007.

[10] ***My disclaimer**, largely drawn from the work of Christa Brown:* This book offers my personal perspective and is for informational

purposes only. It should not be construed as providing either legal or health advice. You are responsible for any actions you may take based on information you obtain from this book. In using information provided in this book, you agree to hold both its author and publisher harmless and blameless in all circumstances. Use of this book constitutes your understanding and acceptance of these terms. **(Some information in this book will be upsetting for abuse survivors. If you are an abuse survivor prone to serious suicidal thoughts, you are asked not to read the cases of molestation cited in this book. Please also be prayerful and careful as you read other parts.)**

[11] *Kenosha News*, July 17th 1994, as cited by reformation.com.
[12] Jean Guccione and Richard Winton, '24 Child Molesters Released', *Los Angeles Times*, July 24th 2003. Despite having pleaded "no contest", Sabala had to be released due to a despicably unjust High Court ruling on delayed prosecutions.
[13] Judging by the set of abuse cases collected by Jocelyn Zichterman, many types of Baptist church have been hit. (I oppose her agenda. I only inserted this endnote because the Baptist denomination is more splintered than others and I needed to point out that child molestation appears to be an issue across large sections of the Baptist world, as it seems to be throughout every hue of church in every *other* denomination.)
[14] 'Abominations', posted March 8th 2006, at aboms.com/archives/003712.html.
[15] Tasker had pleaded guilty to some of the charges. He appealed against the others and was found not guilty on *some* of them. More data can be found at clergyabuseaustralia.org/perpsqz.htm. This site is of value to any fellowship with links to Australia.
[16] 'Apocalyptic Movements Abuse', eurekaencyclopedia.com.
[17] *Telegraph Journal*, Saint John, N.B., Canada, March 6th 1992, as cited by reformation.com.
[18] Rebecca Buerkle *et al*, 'Tony Alamo: Evangelist guilty on all 10 counts', *Today's THV*. (Online.) Alamo's website offers a few reasons to doubt aspects of the court case, but the site also tries to defend the idea of adult men marrying 9-year-old girls.
[19] Tony Leyva *et al*. See Mike Echols, *Brother Tony's Boys: The Largest Case of Child Prostitution in U.S. History: The True Story*.

CHAPTER 1
[20] Quoted in Diane Roblin-Lee, *Who is the Predator?* (byDesignMedia, 2010).

[21] Rebecca Andrews, *Policing Innocence* (Authentic Media, 2008), p. 185.
[22] Details are given at 'MAKO/File Online - # Geoffrey Robert Dobbs', mako.org.au.
[23] Harry Keeble, *Baby X* (Pocket Books, 2010), p. 63.
[24] Jason Schreiber, 'Victim's emotional scars often last a lifetime', *The Union Leader*, Jan. 27th 2002.
[25] *Ibid*.
[26] Diane Roblin-Lee, *Why All the Fuss?* (byDesignMedia, 2009). The apostle Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I **thought** as a child" (1 Cor. 13:11a). This shows that children don't process things the same way adults do.
[27] For further examples of abused children not thinking the same way as adults, see lighthousetrails.com/Laughtermarch2003.pdf (e.g. pages 104-106) or visit preying.org.
[28] William Finn Bennett, 'Child sex abuse reaches far beyond Catholic Church, experts say', *The Californian* (an edition of the *North County Times*). This article is available online.
[29] Annie Laurie Gaylor, *Betrayal of Trust: Clergy Abuse of Children* (1988). Note: By including some excerpts from this document, please do not imagine I support it or its author.
[30] Diana Russell Survey, 1978, as cited in 'Child Molester Statistics', www.yellodyno.com/html/child_molester_stats.html.
[31] *Ibid*.
[32] God's word tells us to be "wise unto that which is good" but "**simple** concerning evil" (Rom. 16:19), so I don't believe He wants His People to study, in detail, the methods used to commit evil acts—unless it's an unavoidable part of one's job—presumably because it can cause temptation. (The website for the book you are reading, preying.org, lists some indicators that grooming is taking place.)
[33] Another useful analogy would be a chess grandmaster, steadily luring an amateurish opponent into a trap.
[34] Keeble, *Baby X*, p. 175.
[35] Since pedophilic 'love' isn't biblical, it can't be God-given. Hence it isn't *true* love, but a subtle satanic counterfeit. (The enemy can make people think they 'love' something, but it is a false love.)
[36] Such clothing tempts a pedophile to lust, but it is also interpreted by him as the child wanting, and deliberately *inviting*, such attention.
[37] Signs of possible sexual abuse include: * Sudden reluctance to go someplace or be with someone; * Inappropriate displays of affection; * Sexual acting out; * Sudden use of sexual terms or new names for body parts; * Discomfort with, or rejection of, typical family

affection; * Sleep problems: insomnia, nightmares, refusal to sleep alone, bed-wetting, infantile behaviors; * Extreme clinging or other signs of fearfulness; * A sudden change in personality. [Source: Coalition for Children Inc., as cited in Bennett, *op. cit.*]. To this summary of indicators, I would add: eating disorders, reduced coordination, reduced confidence, and a general diminution of focus on life and goal-setting. A more complete set is given at preying.org.

[38] Keeble, *Baby X*, p. 66.

[39] *Ibid*, p. 33.

[40] *Ibid*, p. 219.

[41] If a father, uncle, brother, cousin or grandfather is prepared to abuse a *biological* relative, they will have few qualms about abusing *unrelated* children, as endnote 59 explains.

[42] Reformation.com (its list is now at preying.org/Reformation).

[43] CCPAS, 'Help... sexual offenders and church attendance', (2005, updated 2011), p.10. [Note: Regrettably, I cannot endorse CCPAS. It is simply too compromised in too many ways. It acts like an arm of the state rather than a Christian ministry. It is appallingly naïve about several matters, especially the nature of 'Social Services' in the UK. And it consistently obscures the importance of churches getting their doctrines and spiritual practices in line with God's word. I develop this last point as my book progresses.] There are a number of reasons why genuine abuse cases reported to the authorities may not reach court. For example, over-stressed social workers can ignore a child's testimony in order to avoid an excessive workload [Keeble, *Baby X*, p. 39]. Where a report does reach the police, but is old, it can end up being 'lost' due to confusion about jurisdiction [*Ibid*, p. 161]. (Flaws in inter-agency communications can also have this effect.) There are several other reasons (e.g. see next endnote).

[44] An offender can escape conviction through technicalities, or clever defense lawyers, or gullible jurors. More malevolently, if the offender is part of the 'Establishment' (if, say, he's a high-ranking politician, civil servant, or policeman), the authorities will often try to extricate him. To obtain details of some possible cases of this, simply do a web search for "Franklin Cover Up" (USA), or "Renata Auger" (Canada), or "Westminster Paedophile Dossier" (UK), or "Casa Pia Orphanage" (Portugal), or "Mark Dutroux" (Belgium), or "Kathryn Bolkovac" (U.N. in Bosnia; see also U.N. in East Timor, Haiti, Liberia etc).

[45] The UK has a 'Sex Offenders Register' to simplify checks. But if a pedophile keeps his subsequent acts of abuse undetected for long enough, his name will be taken off it (unless a previous conviction was so serious that his name was put on it for life).

[46] There is also the chance of a dangerous miscommunication here.
[47] Roblin-Lee, *Who is the Predator?*
[48] Susan Hogan-Albach, 'Sex offender back in pulpit', *Chicago Sun Times*, Aug. 20th 2007, as at stopbaptistpredators.org. (I absolutely reject Hannah's immensely weak euphemism, "slept with".) Chapter 5 of this book discusses 'situational offenders'.
[49] CCPAS Press Release, March 20th 2008.
[50] *Ibid*.
[51] Bruce Schneier, 'Guilty Until Proven Innocent?', *IEEE Security & Privacy,* Vol. 1, No. 3, May/June 2003. Available online.
[52] The scope for error is increased still further by mistakes at the *church's* end. In the UK, the forms used by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) are "so complicated that 240,000 applications are wrongly filled in by organisations confused by them" [*Daily Telegraph* (London), July 5th 2008, p. 1]. Even if this were not the case, the CRB is far from a "slick and omniscient fact-checking machine". Rather, it consists of workers who are both underpaid and overwhelmed [Keeble, *Baby X*, p. 191].
[53] Reuters, 'Pedophile allowed to work in kindergarten', Nov. 15th 2007. Available online.
[54] Annie Laurie Gaylor, *The Scandal of Pedophilia in the Church*, (1992).
[55] Never allow a male to babysit your children alone these days, especially if he was the one to propose the idea, unless the Lord makes it ***abundantly*** clear to you that it is His will.
[56] Sky News, 'Postman Who Groomed Kids Online Is Jailed', Sep. 24th 2010. This article is available online.
[57] With social networking sites, there are many dangers that arise from giving out too much personal data which evildoers could catch sight of. One further risk is sexualization. Facebook is really problematic here, and permits users to join at 13. Facebook also requires no proof of age, thus children who are even younger can join. See preying.org's Q&A page for other hazards with such sites.
[58] When elders want to know God's will on this sort of matter, they simply need to seek Him in prayer until they receive a *confirmed* witness one way or the other. A 'yes' is established by two God-given indicators, as per Judges 6:36ff, and a 'no' by three such witnesses, *a la* Matthew 26:39-44 and 2 Corinthians 12:8-9.
[59] Where a member of an extended family is not biologically related to the child, the risk of incest is magnified because the God-given disinclination resulting from genetic similarity is not present.

[60] "In L. Halliday's research on over 1,000 subjects, ... **fifty-seven percent** [of the abuse] was committed by family members and **28** percent involved friends" [Roblin-Lee, *Who is the Predator?*].
[61] If children are ever in a position to stumble across porn of even a mild kind, whether the images are on a poster in a shop window, in a magazine left in a hotel room or park, or on a DVD at the house of a friend, it can cause real scars. ***No*** set of church rules can protect against this. (Porn is sometimes *deliberately* left for children to find, e.g. by perverts visiting playgrounds or working in toy factories.)
[62] On top of the major issues raised in those chapters, fixed rules also restrict the Holy Spirit—which is not going to bless our children. (As we've already seen, no rules would be able to stop an attendee from molesting children in the *local community* either.)

CHAPTER 2
[63] Terms like "commandments", "testimonies", "precepts" and "statutes" are all aspects of the scriptures, as confirmed in places like 1 Kings 2:3 and 2 Kings 23:3, c.f. 2 Kings 22:13.
[64] If a tradition concerns how we ***relate to the spiritual realm***, then omission from the Bible means we *must* reject that tradition, for God would never leave such a crucial point out of His infallible word if it was a sound one (2 Tim. 3:16-17). "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:6; Deu. 12:32).
[65] Some Bible translations are not God-ordained and contain irreconcilable, faith-destroying contradictions. For more details, plus an introduction to the whole topic of Bible versions, see the series of articles entitled *The Bible Versions Debate*, freely downloadable from the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org. (Note: I can't guarantee the rendering of any verse-reference in this book if the text is taken from a Bible version other than the one used to produce this book.)
[66] This principle is explained in the articles entitled *Beware False Balances*, available from the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org. (Here's another angle, drawn from the fact that God's word is Jesus Christ in written form: Christ never *forced* us to accept Him for who He is. Indeed, He often hid the truth about Himself, to allow those who were determined to reject Him to think they were justified in doing so (Matt. 16:20; Mark 3:11-12; 8:29-30 etc). Thus, we should expect the Bible not to *force* us to accept it for what it is, but to include some aspects which, on the surface, seem to point in another direction.)
[67] See chapter 1, plus sections 5.7 and 5.8, of the 'World' volume of *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide*. Bayith.org has outlet information.

CHAPTER 3

[68] Dana Willhoit, 'Youth Minister Arrested on Sex Charges', *The Ledger*, Nov. 4th 2007. Available online.
[69] Keeble, *Baby X*, p. 33.
[70] Kathryn Joyce, 'By Grace Alone', *The American Prospect*, May/June 2014. Online.
[71] In chapter 9 we'll see more reasons for believing that Christians *can* determine if someone is genuinely saved or not. But, in order to access biblical *proof*, see Part 4 of the book *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: Church*. Visit bayith.org for further details.
[72] For guidance on how to identify a true believer, see the article *Godless Godliness?* in the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.
[73] The biblical hallmarks of true conversion are discussed in Part 3 of *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: World*. See bayith.org to access it.
[74] Gaylor, *Scandal*.
[75] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 111.

CHAPTER 4

[76] A treatise on this, plus a summary of the Gospel, is given in Part 3 of the book *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: World*. See bayith.org.
[77] Fuller coverage can be obtained from Parts 1 and 2 of the book *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: World*. Downloadable at bayith.org.
[78] A watered-down gospel not only has the potential to leave people thinking they're saved when they aren't, but can also fail to release them from their past—a past which, today, is likely to include some form of *demon-receiving* activity (such as occultism, New Age practices, or the use of hallucinogenic drugs). The net result is that they are left excessively prone to demonic influence, which is hardly going to help them treat our children aright.
[79] See this book's website (preying.org) for more details.
[80] I commend to readers the article 'Was Muhammed a Pedophile? An Examination of Muhammed's Relationship with a Nine-Year-Old Girl', by David Wood, as presented at www.answering-islam.org.
[81] A popular course within evangelical circles, and which is often run for entire congregations, legitimizes several famous pedophiles.
[82] Anton Mifsud, 'Profile of the Child Molester', *Child* magazine*, The Times* (Malta), March 10th 2012, p. 9.
[83] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 7.
[84] Ken Wooden, 'A Profile of the Child Molester'. Online.
[85] *Daily Interlake*, Nov. 22nd 2002, as cited by reformation.com. Children are prone to molesting younger children (see chapter 5).

Their very age means they are upsettingly well placed to access other youngsters, both within and outside of formal youth-work situations.
[86] Ken Wooden, *op. cit.*, as at childlurespreven tion.com. A figure of "around 10%" has been confirmed by a policewoman whose job it is to analyze images of child sexual abuse.
[87] The churches with the least-sound elders are the ones in need of the greatest safeguards. Sadly though, these are often the churches most likely to have the *minimum* safeguards, either because the deluded elders suppose themselves to be highly discerning and able to spot a pedophile a mile off, or because they fear that the introduction of a large number of man-made safeguards will expose their *lack* of discernment—i.e. their gross ***in***ability to spot potential abusers.
[88] CCPAS Press Release, April 13th 2006.
[89] Ken Wooden, *op. cit.*, as at childlurespreven tion.com.
[90] *Washington Post*, Sep. 24th 1988, as cited by reformation.com.
[91] *New York Times*, March 29th 1989, as cited by reformation.com.

CHAPTER 5
[92] A man finds a "mane" of hair particularly attractive on a girl. "If a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her" (1 Cor. 11:15a).
[93] Life-expectancy was probably a factor behind such a low age of consent. But the main reason was that, in Jewish tradition, a girl became a woman when she reached 12.5 years (this was the Hebraic understanding of "the flower of her age" (1 Cor. 7:36) [*Maimon. Hilchot Ishot*, c. 2. sect. 2, as cited by John Gill]). This situation was viable because Jewish culture provided girls of that age with the necessary mental and societal resources. (Reaching puberty is ***not*** the be-all-and-end-all. Apart from anything else, puberty does not automatically mean a girl's body is mature enough to cope well with pregnancy.) The reason Scripture doesn't say much else on the matter of the age of consent is because it is *self-evidently* wrong to ask people to make adult decisions when they are too young to do so. It is for this reason that sensible folks don't allow children to vote, or drive on the road, or carry hand grenades. (To give genuine consent, a person must have the ability to grasp all the likely ramifications of giving that consent. When it comes to sexual activity, youngsters are less well placed than in times gone by, and UK law recognizes that it is *impossible* for a child under 13 to give "consent".)
[94] The rule of thumb is that an adult male should only want a mate who is at least 7 years older than half his age. Otherwise there is too great a mismatch, e.g. emotionally or experientially. This is another reason why it is unnatural for adults to seek relationships with

children. (For the reasons given in this book, it is foolish for any modern society to set its age of consent at less than 16. (Some do.) When a nation leaves its 16-year-olds poorly prepared to make wise choices about sex, the age of consent may need to be higher. But this must be balanced with the risks that come from expecting youngsters to remain virgins for years after their sex-drive has revved up.)
[95] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 137.
[96] *Ibid*, p. 62.
[97] *Ibid*, p. 156.
[98] If a man looks at *any* image out of *indulgence* rather than necessity, the Bible warns that he is 'sowing to his flesh' and "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. 6:7-8). There is a big difference between a man's *wants* and his *needs*. (Other salutary verses include 1 Cor. 9:27; 1 Pet. 4:18 and Rom. 8:5-6.)
[99] Confusingly, the word 'sexualization' can either mean 'to give or acquire sexual associations [i.e. to ***appear*** sexual]' **or** 'to make or become sexual or sexually aware'. I use it here in the former sense.
[100] For problems with school sex education today, see the 'Sex Ed' part of the Education page, in the 'Rubies' portion of bayith.org.
[101] Roblin-Lee, *Who is the Predator?* Normally, what is sometimes termed a "higher brain function" would inhibit adult men from registering young teenage girls as being of physical interest. But if circumstances arise which *force* a man to take notice of young girls, e.g. if such a girl repeatedly acts in a suggestive or provocative way, this can badly dent his natural inclination to ignore them sexually.
[102] In a similar vein, a man is designed to *protect* and *provide for* his woman. But some Western women today want to be self-sufficient and they hide their vulnerabilities. This self-reliance is off-putting to most men. Western society also diminishes a man's significance and has stripped him of a number of God-ordained freedoms. In such circumstances, the chance to manipulate, dominate, and even control another human is one more temptation which can drive men towards young girls. (For valuable information on 'political correctness', see the webpage entitled *Political Correctness and Identity Politics* in the 'Political Cultural and Social Issues' section of bayith.org.)
[103] Just because pedophilia exists in a few corners of the *animal* kingdom doesn't mean it is natural for *mankind* (see preying.org)!
[104] Smaller family sizes today, combined with sickly communities, mean boys are less likely to understand the mind-set of young girls.
[105] Roblin-Lee, *The Porn Factor* (byDesignMedia, 2009).
[106] *Ibid*. Men who are bored with adult porn can be led towards images of children via several paths. One problem is that countless

mothers today seem happy for their daughters to appear more grown-up than they are. Children's beauty pageants demonstrate this, as young girls are encouraged to dress and act like adults. (A case in point, of a fake chest and rear being flaunted by a *four*-year old, is documented in *Metro* (London), Sep. 2nd 2011, p. 41. And make-up can cause a girl's face to look a lot more adult than it is—I've seen a *10*-year-old's face transformed by make-up to look adult—and it can also make the girl appear interested in 'adult activities'.)

[107] There is good evidence that molestation as a child can generate a desire to abuse others. And since other children are the easiest targets of that echoed abuse, they are often the ones to suffer.

[108] If a man goes to prostitutes, and about 1 in 10 do, he will usually want less sullied ones. Since many prostitutes start 'working' before reaching 16, and since reports say it is often quite straightforward to procure 'working girls' who are younger still (tragically, children who run away from home because their parents fail to protect them from abuse can often end up in this situation), the risk of such men becoming pedophilic is obvious [UK Home Office, July 2004, 'Paying the Price: a consultation paper on prostitution'. Online.].

[109] A man is more prone to sexual temptation if he is tired, or if he has a full bladder, or even if he is just physically warmer than normal—e.g. merely due to it being a bright summer's day. Other aphrodisiacs include exercise and almost *any* form of excitement.

[110] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 108.

[111] For some of the other reasons to believe practicing homosexuals are bringing themselves under demonic influence, see *Comparing the Lifestyles of Homosexual Couples to Married Couples*, by Dr. Timothy J. Dailey. Online. (Obviously I don't necessarily endorse the websites hosting the articles I cite.) NOTE: Any man, homosexual or otherwise, who gets heavily involved in Freemasonry or in any other manifestation of the Babylonian Religion, will inevitably become ever more supportive of deviant forms of sex, ultimately leading to a pedophilic interest in boys. [This observation was drawn from my own studies and also from the 6-part online sermon *Child Porn / Pedophilia Pandemic…,* by Dr. Scott A. Johnson. (I don't agree with every aspect of these talks. Also, please be aware that some things in them are highly distressing and aren't suitable for those who are young or of a delicate disposition.).] This unspeakable side-effect of Masonry is one reason why it is so crucial for churches to proclaim an unadulterated Gospel message and to ensure deep conversions and the removal of all spiritual 'grave clothes' from a new believer (as pictured physically in John 11:44). This worrying effect of Masonry

is also relevant because many people in the higher ranks of the Church of Scotland, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Salvation Army—and presumably other evangelical denominations—are Masons. (See endrtimes.blogspot.com/2012/09/first-plumbline-apologetics-salvation.html for proof regarding the Salvation Army.)
[112] Where a heterosexual male cannot access any females of *any* age, he may end up abusing boys instead. (Note: A boy who is molested by a male is quite likely to abuse boys himself. See endnote 153.)
[113] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 164.
[114] *Ibid*, p. 161.
[115] John Asbury, 'Morena valley woman to serve two life terms in abuse case', *Inland News*, Sep. 18th 2009. Online.
[116] To illustrate this moral slide: "Today's 'PG-13' [movie] ratings equate to the 'R' ratings of the early 1990s" [Roblin-Lee, *Why All the Fuss?*]. Or consider this modern headline: 'One in **three** teenage girls have faced "sexual violence" from a boy they knew', Graeme Wilson, *The Sun* (London), March 5th 2012. This figure certainly wasn't the case when I was a child, when there were none of today's computer games that "increase desensitization and aggression".
[117] The lack of genetic connection leads to a much greater likelihood of molestation. Furthermore, there is a "high correlation between the breakdown of the family institution and sexual abuse of ... children. With more single parent homes and two working parent homes, children are in more danger of being abused by stepfathers, live-in boyfriends, day care providers, older children..." (Lighthouse Trails, Oct. 12th 2012, *email on file*).

CHAPTER 6
[118] Roblin-Lee, *Who is the Predator?*
[119] "Dr. Gene Abel [an expert on the topic] estimates that between 1% and 5% of our population molest young children [CNN Specials Transcript #454-Thieves of Childhood]."
[120] To describe God as 'fun-loving' is also dangerous because many pedophiles would characterize what they do as "fun". (Any reader who still thinks God is a "fun-loving, partying" God needs to recall what happened on the cross. See also Luke 12:5; Psalm 89:7; Isaiah 8:13 etc. The book of Job is another antidote to this error.) The Gospel makes no sense if God is "fun-loving". This is just one reason why Christians need to be reminded regularly of the true Gospel.
[121] If the reader agrees with this quote, I urge them to read Malachi 2:17. Note: All these excerpts are drawn from actual materials within evangelicalism, as are many other such quotes in this book.

[122] Use of relative words like "immoral" is unhelpful because some people foolishly think pedophile activity can be moral. Redefining "righteousness" to mean "right relationships" rather than "obeying the Bible" is unwise for the same reason. Even some *evangelical ministers* have argued that pedophilia can be right. (The late Ralph Underwager, a Lutheran, was one such. Underwager also concocted "false memory syndrome" and pretended to be an "expert witness" to help protect molesters in criminal trials.) As Alexis de Tocqueville discovered in the 1830s, crime rates drop when the sermons in our churches "flame with righteousness".
[123] Ministers who commit gross sin today are sometimes rapidly returned to positions of authority, despite passages like Titus 1:6-7; 1 Timothy 3:2, 10; and 2 Corinthians 7:2.
[124] The New Age movement says there are no propositional truths, i.e. that there are no absolutes (even though this itself is an absolute). This teaching implies that something can be true for *one* congregant but not for another. A latent pedophile could reason, "It may well be wrong for *certain* folks to abuse children, but this doesn't mean it is wrong for *everyone*". Regrettably, more than a few evangelical churches today have significant ties to the New Age movement.

CHAPTER 7
[125] Clay Jones, *op. cit*.
[126] In increasing numbers of countries, it is illegal to cover up child abuse. Romans 13:1-6 and 1 Peter 2:13-14 both teach that we are subject to the laws of the land in this type of situation.
[127] Robert Enstad, '2 Sentenced For Roles in Abuse Cases', *Chicago Tribune*, March 9th 1993. Online. (In the Bible, the word "pastor" refers to a ministry, not to a position within a church's hierarchy.)
[128] *New York Times*, March 29th 1989, as cited by reformation.com.
[129] Jane O. Hansen, *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, April 30th 1988, p. B/01, as cited by reformation.com.
[130] Susan Lazaruk, '77-year old pedophile sentenced to 11 years', *Windspeaker*, Vol. 13, Iss. 2, p. 3. Available online.
[131] For more details, see J.H. Allen, biblestudy.org/basicart/why-does-god-hate-practices-of-the-nicolaitans.html.
[132] Nicolaitanism also results in members watching the elders enjoying dominion. Members may become envious of this. Thus they may abuse a child because it allows them to feel powerful.
[133] For a more detailed look, see the Q&A section of preying.org.
[134] Nowhere does the Bible say a person must be a congregant at any particular physical assembly in order to be saved. The true Church is

'invisible' in this sense. The scriptural definition of a Christian is simply any person who has the Spirit of Christ indwelling them (see Rom. 8). They don't need to be a member of *any* denomination, or to attend a specific type of fellowship. It is cultic to insist otherwise.
[135] *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, Oregon, May 8th 1987, as cited by reformation.com. See also the differing ways Murrill Boitnott treated a minister and his victims (see Joanne Cavanaugh, 'Left By The Wayside', *The Miami Herald*, April 10th 1994. Online.).
[136] God has an extremely good reason for permitting even the most upright child to be abused, *without the child being to blame in any way*. I spell this reason out at preying.org/Why.
[137] It is tempting to follow a man instead of God, as it means we don't have to humble ourselves as much, or fear God as much, or control our thought life as much. In other words, it is easier on our "old man". But it is a road to hell.
[138] It is true that the phrase "the LORD's anointed" in 1 Samuel chapters 24 & 26 refers to a single person, King Saul. But again the context is actual physical harm rather than mere criticism or reproof, because David repeatedly criticized and reproved Saul. Nor is *disobedience* in view, because David disobeyed Saul. In fact, David correctly had a man put to death for *obeying* Saul (2 Sam. 1:5-15). Also, beware of assuming that every elder *is* "the Lord's anointed".
[139] The Israelites identified five types of miracle that only the Messiah could do, e.g. raise to life a man who'd died more than 3 days before.
[140] Serial killer Robert Hansen was a "friendly", respected Lutheran who was widely considered to be an impeccable family man.
[141] Gaylor, *Scandal*. Surely a true believer would sacrifice his own life, or at least get himself castrated, rather than rape a 5-year-old?
[142] There is a very sensible reason why the Bible has this feature. (For details, see the talk transcripts called *Beware False Balances* in the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.) This means there are even Bible verses folks can twist to 'justify' *molestation* (e.g. Eccl. 3:1).
[143] Sound Christians are open to correction, as per the article entitled *Full of Grace and Truth* in the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.

CHAPTER 8
[144] For cases where 'evangelicals' have stolen children, search for "abduct" and "kidnap" in preying.org/Reformation. The U.S. Department of Justice says 58,200 American children have been abducted by people other than family members in the space of just *one year* [missingkids.com]. (An abuser may be untraceable if he was not attending your church, or if he gave a false name to the church.)

[145] Abusers who've drugged their victims include Robert Halverstadt and Mark Kline (both as documented at preying.org/Reformation).
[146] *Washington Post*, Dec. 10th 1989, as cited by reformation.com. Other examples include Trevor Alexander & wife, and Marcus Ray Bellew & wife. For details, see preying.org/Reformation.
[147] *Rapid City Journal*, July 28th, 29th, 31st and Aug. 1st 1992, all as cited by reformation.com. Other examples include David Earl King and his adopted son; and Mary Lou Gallup and her husband and son. See preying.org/Reformation for some background on both cases.
[148] Pereda N. *et al*, 'The prevalence of child sexual abuse in community and student samples: A meta-analysis', *Clinical Psychology Review*, June 2009. Available online.
[149] Some folks have been taught a mortally erroneous stance on revivalism. To access details, see the Q&A section of preying.org.
[150] Typically, lonely unbelievers attend church for the social side, but there are other reasons too. See the Q&A section of preying.org.
[151] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 85.
[152] For yet worse types of molestation, see pages 103 & 133 of lighthousetrails.com/Laughtermarch2003.pdf, or read up on the case of Sandra Cantu (pictured below). A visit to preying.org/Reformation will elicit others (e.g. search for the phrases "Adam Brown" or "Bunbury Supreme Court"), as will research into the schools for indigenous children around the globe. Some 'evangelicals' are false brothers who are actually 'ministers of Satan' (2 Cor. 11:13-15) and who are therefore capable of the most unimaginably sick things. (They also tend to be experts at keeping victims silent.)

Sandra Cantu (2001–2009). The full details surrounding her abuse and killing, at the age of just eight, at the hands of a professing evangelical are too appalling to relate in this book.

[153] See the report *What Causes Homosexual Desire and Can it be Changed?*, downloadable from the website of the Family Research Institute at: familyresearchinst.org/category/pamphlets. Homosexual child abuse can lead to a vicious circle, as documented in the report *Child Molestation and Homosexuality* on the same website.
[154] See Gregory Reid, *The Color of Pain: Boys Who Are Sexually Abused and the Men They Become* (Lighthouse Trails, 2010).
[155] Roblin-Lee, *Why All the Fuss?*
[156] Diane Roblin-Lee, *Predators in Pews and Pulpits* (byDesignMedia, 2009), p. 8.
[157] Quoted in Michael Pearl, 'Avoiding Vacuums', Aug. 2010, on the website nogreaterjoy.org.
[158] *Ibid*.
[159] *Ibid*.
[160] *Ibid*.
[161] *Ibid*.
[162] Joyce, 'By Grace Alone'.
[163] Ernest Luning, 'Focus on the Family narrator arrested for luring teenage girl for sex on Net', *The Colorado Independent*, April 6th 2009. Available online.
[164] Perry Bulwer, 'Child sacrifice: a review of the documentary All God's Children', Dec. 24th 2009. This article is online. (Please Note: I don't support Bulwer's agenda.)
[165] 'Teen Challenge: Sex abuse and sexual predators', *Daily Kos*, May 2nd 2008. Online.
[166] The 'others' include **New Tribes Missions**: fandaeagles.com (see also Joyce, 'By Grace Alone') and even **Mission Aviation Fellowship**: *National & International Religion Report*, Oct. 19th 1992, as cited by reformation.com.
[167] *Associated Press*, June 12th 1999, as cited by reformation.com.
[168] Some of the details here were drawn from wayoflife.org.
[169] For a list of Houston's known victims, including six 10-year-old boys in New Zealand and an 8-year-old he abused for five years, see the entry 'Pastor Frank Houston. part 1. Frank's *[sic]* Houston's pedophile activities', Sept. 13th 2012, at donaldelley.wordpress.com. (The 14-year-long failure of Hillsong's overseers to alert congregants to the truth has surely made it harder to identify all the victims.)
[170] See: Jamie Ross, 'Couple Say Pastor Was a Predator', *Courthouse News Service*, Sep. 19th 2012. (Online.) C.f. Ephesians 5!
[171] Jennifer Leclaire, 'Pastor David Yonggi Cho Sentenced to 3 Years for Embezzling $12 Million', *CharismaOnline.com*, Feb. 24th 2014.

[172] 'Texas Megachurch Minister Busted in Internet Sex Sting', *Associated Press*, May 16th 2008. (See wnd.com/2008/05/64583/.)
[173] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 139.
[174] 'Youth Internet Safety Survey', U.S. Department of Justice, 2001, as cited at safefamilies.org/sfStats.php. A useful page of statistics.
[175] Rebecca Atkinson, 'Watch out for these social networking scams', *Yahoo! Finance*. See endnote 57 for additional threats.
[176] Joshua F. Finer, 'The Real Dangers to Kids Online and How to Avoid Them'. This article is available online.
[177] Andrews, *Policing*, p. 140. (Even *godly* girls can dress in a provocative way, either through ignorance of its effect or because they think they must do so to compete for the attention of modern Western boys. This also explains the high rates of 'sexting', a risky activity for various reasons.)
[178] With the existence of removable media, plus the ability of computers to play DVDs, a child should never be allowed a computer in their room *even if the machine has no web access*. (Nor should they have a television in their room.)
[179] Andrews, *Policing*, pp. 149-153.
[180] Finer, *op. cit*. If, despite the health concerns, you decide to have Wifi at home, it is very important to be password-protected. (Take care when using *public* Wifi hotspots, as these can give pedophiles access to your device and your private data. For more details of the hazards, and some safety measures, see Corey O'Donnell, 'Hidden dangers of free public Wifi', *ZDNet*, Oct. 4th 2006. Online.)
[181] Radiation from cell phones is carcinogenic. And using the phone's screen or keyboard 'on the go' can prove a fatal distraction.

CHAPTER 9
[182] Prof. Richard I. Lanyon, 'Theory and Treatment in Child Molestation', 1986, as quoted in Gaylor, *Betrayal*.
[183] Janet Fife-Yeoman, 'Frank Houston tried to buy forgiveness from victim in deal drawn up on McDonald's napkin', *The Daily Telegraph* (Australia), Oct. 11th 2014. Online.
[184] The child should <u>*never*</u> have been required to confront their abuser. For the correct procedure, see preying.org/What.
[185] Dr. Kelly Bonewell, 'The Ways of Adultery: The Motivations, Consequences and Prevention', July 28th 2009. Online.
[186] For example, a Plymouth Brethren case dates back to 1959 [www.preying.org/Reformation].
[187] To get more on this matter, see the articles *Good to Go?* and *Godless Godliness?*, both in the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.

Important Note: The full test of a man's salvation also involves comparing his outlook with every part of the first epistle of John.
[188] The social activities, along with the anecdotes in the sermons, may tend to be 'middle-class'. But, "God hath chosen the … **base** things of the world, and things which are **despised**, … yea, and things which are **not**, to bring to nought things that are" (1 Cor. 1:27-28).
[189] The elders may also suggest that a *wealthy* church must be a godly church, but see Revelation 3:16-18 or 2 Corinthians 12:10.
[190] For proof that earthly principles cannot safely be applied to spiritual activities—e.g. evangelism, or translating the Bible—see Part 3a in the series of articles entitled *The Bible Versions Debate*, downloadable from the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.
[191] Banning congregants from analyzing what elders are teaching or doing is highly unbiblical. See pages 28, 82-84, 120-121 & 126-130.
[192] Bob Allen, 'Second Former Minister From Austin Southern Baptist Church Convicted of Molestation', *Ethics Daily*, Dec. 21st 2007. Online. (If a sizeable fellowship has engendered a molester, there is obviously a fair chance it has created *more* than one.)
[193] Gaylor, *Scandal*.
[194] Annie Laurie Gaylor, 'Churches Challenged to Reform in Face of Black Collar Crimes', *Freethought Today*, May 1990.
[195] *Milwaukee Journal*, Apr. 23rd 1986, as cited by Reformation.com. As others have urged, we must never downplay child molestation—else we are, among other things, "invalidating the pain and betrayal of victims". (Some believers imagine their lack of anger towards the molester is due to the Holy Spirit, but in truth it is the product of an *unclean* spirit, especially when accompanied by anger at the *victim*.)
[196] Gaylor, *Betrayal*. In the case of Marie Surprenant, rape resulted in paralysis which not only means she cannot walk but also causes scoliosis, so she "needs rods in her back and surgery every six months". For the ravaging effects of *pregnancy* on an immature body, see David Wood, *op. cit.*, as cited in endnote 79.
[197] Larry Fish, 'Clergyman convicted of boy's murder…', May 8th 2004. (Available online.) Also, recall Robert Lowe from page 16.
[198] 'Andras Pandy' (United Protestant Church of Belgium), skcentral.com. One of Pandy's victims was a 13-year-old girl.
[199] Rader was the "BTK" killer. His usual method of murder was strangulation. He was planning other killings when he was caught.
[200] *Washington Post,* April 24th 1987, as cited by reformation.com.
[201] For proof that conversion to a Christian worldview does not mean a person has actually given their life to God, see the article *The Powers Behind the Alpha Course: Part 3 - The Powerful Spirit* in the

'Rubies' section of bayith.org. (Even if a person *is* truly saved as a result of someone's preaching, it still doesn't guarantee that the preacher himself is a genuine Christian.)

[202] Whatever people think of *me*, truth is independent of the person bringing it. And this book demonstrably had God's hand on it. The enemy therefore hates it and doesn't want it read (Matt. 5:10-12).

CHAPTER 10

[203] Churches also need to correct the additional errors discussed at preying.org.

[204] If a church discovers a man-made threat, e.g. the risk of a pedophile attack, it needs to throw itself on the Lord by getting in line with His word. If it concentrates on *procedures* instead, it is acting out of fear of man, and Proverbs 29:25 says this will lead to trouble: "The fear of man bringeth a **snare**: but whoso putteth his trust in the **LORD** shall be safe". The fact that God will watch over us *if we trust in Him* is repeated throughout Scripture, but we are not putting our trust in the God of the Bible if we aren't trusting—i.e. seeking to adhere fully to—His written word.

[205] See for instance Proverbs 3:1-7. (If, when it comes to any project, we trust in ourselves rather than in God, He will cause us to regret it. I speak from personal experience, albeit not related to pedophilia.)

[206] For further help on this, see *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide: World* (see preying.org for outlets). If you prayerfully believe God wants you to leave your current fellowship, then you should go. If your elders required you to take a vow of loyalty to them, they were acting unbiblically. (No man has the right to control your conscience.) The covenant you made is therefore null and void in God's eyes. See the Q&A section of preying.org for more about all of this.

[207] Put briefly, the biblical hallmarks of a sound conversion include: evident brokenness/humility; a reverence for the Almighty; a real gratitude for Christ and Calvary; a deep sense of inner cleanliness—i.e. of having a clear conscience and being 'right' with God; a strong feeling of peace; an obvious joy at being saved; and a desire to be forgiven by any souls against whom they have trespassed.

[208] Recommended discipling material is provided in the two-volume book *Alpha—the Unofficial Guide*. See the 'Honey' section of bayith.org for details.

[209] Regarding one's choice of Bible version, please see endnote 65.

[210] If a pedophilic member of your church is given the opportunity to spend time with, or near, children without causing suspicion, he will doubtless take it. And no matter how innocent his behavior towards

them may be, the simple act of being in the company of children he finds attractive will stir up the uncleanness in him. Even if he commits no abuse at all, the constant temptation—and the inevitable thought-life which results—will hurt his ability to serve the Lord. (For more about the extent to which unclean spirits can affect believers, see the Q&A section of preying.org.)

[211] If anyone doesn't appreciate you looking out for their welfare by keeping an eye on their walk, this *itself* is a sign that their walk is dodgy. You might want to remind such a person that the Bible says, "Confess your faults one to another" (Jas. 5:16a). We <u>need</u> to know the general condition of the believers around us so that we can obey verses like Galatians 6:1 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6 (see also Gal. 5:9) and so that we can make wise decisions about other practicalities of church life. (For advice on how to *rightly* bring, and receive, correction, see the article *Full of Grace and Truth* in the 'Rubies' section of bayith.org.)

[212] We are *all* "members **one of another**" (Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:25).

[213] Stoyan Zaimov, 'Jack Schaap of First Baptist Hammond Facing 10 Years in Prison for Teen Affair', *The Christian Post*, Sep. 19th 2012. (Available online.)

[214] As required by John 7:51, always 'hear a person out' before making *firm* judgments about the significance of any apparent faults in them. And try to know your Bible before judging any questionable behavior that seems inconsistent with what you know of the person's manner and lifestyle. Additionally, always check your facts to avoid slandering anyone. See the Q&A page at preying.org for more.

[215] An alternative answer is: "the ends do not justify the means".

[216] Even if we assume that this person is producing *genuine* converts (which seems unlikely if he is so unsound as to have shot back with such a red herring of a response), it is entirely possible to convert a lot of people and *still* need aspects of one's doctrine or lifestyle correcting. It is Pharisaical for anyone to reject criticism on the basis that it is from someone 'beneath' them (John 9:34). Besides, some Christians are gifted in areas other than evangelism. Note too that conversions are *not* the test of orthodoxy—else Noah must have been spectacularly unsound, whereas the Bible says he was one of the finest of God's servants in the whole Old Testament (Eze. 14:14, 20).

[217] Churches blown apart by child molestation include Harvest Time Assembly of God in Brentwood, Family Life Church in Park Hills, and Ambassador Baptist Church in London.