



November 27, 2001

Eileen Gray

[REDACTED]
Panorama City, CA 91352

Dear Eileen,

We received your letter concerning your decision to remove your membership from Grace Church. I brought that request to our Elder Board, and the elders have asked me to respond.

As our church bylaws and guidelines state, we don't automatically remove someone from membership when we believe that we have a responsibility to help that individual resolve issues in his/her life. In this situation, we definitely do believe that we should maintain our role in helping you and David reconcile. For that reason we are leaving your membership status intact.

Eileen, we care deeply about your family. We strongly believe that it is time for you to remove the restraining order and to end the separation from your husband. Though you and David may still need to grow in various areas of your lives, there are no longer sufficient reasons for the two of you to stay apart. We therefore are requesting that you forgive David, allow him to move back home, and once again follow his leadership as Scripture teaches.

As I said in our last meeting, it has become more apparent that you are making your decisions based upon emotions, personal hurt, and disappointment. I also pointed out that you cannot truly progress in your marriage the way the Lord intends by living apart. You can't build the kind of trust in David that you desire this way. More importantly, you won't be able to be the kind of wife that pleases the Lord. It is now time to trust God to use your marriage to David to make you more like Christ. This is a more significant level of trust than simply trusting God to change your husband.

I stated that you are at a crossroads, and I still believe that to be true. It's a crossroads related to your own relationship with the Lord, a crossroads in your relationship to your husband, and a crossroads related to your role as a mother. Your children are at a point in this situation where it is becoming more important that the family reconcile. Any difficulties they have with what has happened in the past will be overcome more quickly when a normal family environment is restored.

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So I am asking you, on behalf of the elders, to end the separation and reunite your family. David is likewise asking that you reconcile, and worship with him at Grace Church. The Lord will therefore bless you as you seek to honor Him by honoring your husband's desire to be with you and to lead his family. There's also great blessing from the Lord for honoring the spiritual leaders He has placed in your life.

I'm praying that you'll place personal desires and concerns aside, step out in faith, and trust God.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carey Hardy', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Carey Hardy



January 21, 2002

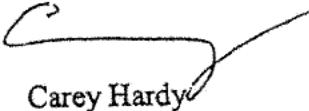
Eileen,

I tried to call you today to inquire about the possibility of meeting with you tomorrow. Since I have not been able to make direct contact with you, I thought the next best thing would be to pass on this letter to you via the school. The elders have asked that Bill Shannon and I, along with a third person, hear from you as to what steps you are taking to reconcile your family, and what your current desires are concerning David.

Tuesday afternoon (1/22) at 3:00 would seem to be a good time for this. The "extended care" program of the school is willing to watch your children while we meet.

We believe this meeting is necessary from both a church and a school standpoint. Please call Patti (██████████) to confirm your willingness to get together with us. If there is a better time tomorrow, we will try our best to work it out.

Thank you.


Carey Hardy



March 13, 2002

Eileen Gray

[REDACTED]
Panorama City, CA 91352

Dear Eileen,

The Elders at Grace Community Church have asked that I write once again to express our deep concern for the present state of your family. You are still a member of our church, and it grieves us greatly to see what little progress has been made toward total restoration and reconciliation.

The more we contemplate the decision making process you have followed that has resulted in your separation from David, the more concerned we become. In the beginning, we were convinced you wanted to please the Lord by protecting your children and seeking counseling from God's Word for your marriage. But now it is becoming more and more apparent that you do not have a goal of seeing your family restored. In fact, you are continually making decisions that only move David further from your life.

The issues involved are not nearly as complex as might appear on the surface. Scripture addresses any concern you have about David's thinking (as well as any concern he has about yours). Though your husband has made mistakes and sinned, there is a biblical pathway for him to follow. And that same biblical pathway exists for you as well in dealing with your sin. Since you are refusing to forgive David and allow him to return home where he can put biblical change into action, we are left with nothing to conclude but that you want something else besides what Scripture teaches.

The Lord has made it clear that if someone says they love Him, they will obey His commandments. Yet when we have exhorted you to do that, you have resisted and sought to find someone else to blame. You have rejected the clear teaching in Scripture (and therefore God's answer) for the problems in your marriage and have seemingly embraced worldly philosophies and opinions. God calls upon you to forgive David, reconcile with him, and follow his leadership in your family; you have chosen to hold bitterness in your heart towards him. The path you have chosen is not only displeasing to Christ, it is also harmful to your children. They obviously need their father in the home—that is God's design for them. Refusing to meet their God-given need in this regard will only prolong the time it takes your children to recover from what has happened in the past.

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Panorama City, CA

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It has become obvious, after much counseling and much observation by various skilled and knowledgeable individuals, that David is not a "mental case." He doesn't need a "psychological evaluation." He is a sinner who can, by God's grace, change and grow. That same possibility is true for you, too, as you submit to the clear teaching of God's Word.


I plead with you to examine your thinking in the light of biblical truth, and to make choices that prove a humble, willing heart to obey the Lord. Psalm 1 is an appropriate passage in this regard:

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Eileen, God will bless you and your family as you choose to trust the Lord and reject worldly thinking.

Though you are ignoring the shepherding role in your life that God requires from our church, we must still choose to follow the mandate of Matthew 18, verse 17, if you persist in preventing the restoration of your family. That grieves us greatly when we consider the implications in your own life and relationship to the Lord, and also how this will affect your relationship with our church members and with our school. But we must be obedient to the Lord. So once again the other elders and I plead with you to soften your heart toward David, and take some tangible, biblical steps toward reconciliation.

For Christ's Sake,



Carey Hardy



April 30, 2002

Eileen Gray

[REDACTED]
Panorama City, CA 91352

Dear Eileen,

It is with great sorrow in our hearts that we send you this letter. According to our Lord's instructions in Matthew, chapter eighteen, the elders at Grace Church must express to the church body your unwillingness to reconcile with your husband. You have had ample time to forgive David and to make definite steps toward reuniting your family. Instead, it is apparent that you are steadfast in your desire to keep David from returning home.

David has expressed sorrow for any past wrongdoing towards you or the children, has repented of his sin towards God, and has taken practical steps toward change. Yet, you continue to demonstrate hardness of heart towards your husband and refuse to live out the biblical mandates for the wife as found in Ephesians, chapter five. You have yet to provide any biblical justification for your anger towards your husband, and you still reject the counsel of the elders and others who are concerned for your well-being.

The obvious fact remains: God wants both you and David to fulfill the scriptural mandates for your roles in the family, and the only way the two of you can do that is for you to live together in harmony. Eileen, we exhort you once again to trust the Lord in this, repent of your stubbornness, and allow David to return home.

The Bible is full of promises of God's blessings for those who humble themselves before Him. And it is also clear in its warnings of discipline for those who say they know Him but refuse to obey Him. Eileen, put the past behind you and choose to prove your love for God by loving your husband.

If you desire to meet with us to express your willingness to repent, we stand ready to help. If we don't hear from you in this regard, however, we must proceed with the Lord's instructions and convey your sin to the church at the next communion service on Sunday May 19, 2002.

On behalf of the elders,

Carey Hardy
Associate Pastor



August 8, 2002

Eileen Gray

██████████
Panorama City, CA 91352

Dear Eileen,

Once again we find ourselves expressing grief over what's happened to your family. But in spite of the failures on David's part as a husband and a father, it has become increasingly apparent that the greatest reason for the turmoil in the lives of your children, in the life of your husband, and in your own life is your refusal to forgive David, to support him in his attempts to change his thinking and behavior, and to reconcile with him.

Because of your refusal to repent and abandon the path you have chosen, and because of your refusal to embrace biblical counsel from those God has placed in your life, the elders have concluded that you have no genuine desire to see your family restored. We therefore have no option other than to be obedient to our Lord's teaching and remove you from our fellowship (Matt. 18:17). We will announce this to our church body on Sunday, August 18.

We still firmly believe that God will forgive you of your stubbornness toward Him and His Word if you will humble yourself before Him, confess your sin, and take steps to end the terrible disorder you have brought to your family. If you choose to reject God's gracious provision of forgiveness, He has promised to honor the decision we have made (Matt. 18:18).

Please take to heart the Lord's invitation in Matt. 11:28-30:

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.

His way is right, and His way is best. He stands ready to forgive and give you strength to obey.

On behalf of the elders,

Carey Hardy
Associate Pastor