

## **A Joint Statement on the Allegations Against Mike Bickle – Mar. 7, 2024 – Updated**

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As elders in the Body, our hearts are broken by the allegations of spiritual and emotional devastation caused by the scandal surrounding Mike Bickle and IHOPKC. Some of us have called for an independent judicial council to hear all the evidence and responses and then render a decision. The situation is too large for the IHOPKC leadership, who have lost credibility in the eyes of many, and external leaders are needed to help judge the situation impartially. We will continue to press for this independent judicial council to be constituted. However, since this has still not happened, despite major steps being taken to bring these leaders together, even involving some members of this team, we believe a statement is now in order.

From the time that the charges were first brought against Mike, while addressing this scandal on different levels within our own circles of ministry and in various public settings, we have been waiting for proper investigations to take place and all charges to be known before making final, definitive statements. Some of us have also been working behind the scenes over these months to help ensure that a proper investigation takes place. But since this process has dragged on for so long, we can wait no longer and feel a sacred responsibility to make this unequivocal, joint statement.

The careful considerations that brought us to prepare this statement include:

1. We have reviewed the testimony of Jane Doe and found it to be credible. IHOPKC has also admitted to its validity.
2. We have reviewed the testimony of Tammy Woods and found it to be credible, and Mike Bickle has not issued a denial of this testimony.
3. The investigation conducted by Rosalee McNamara of the Lathrop GPM Law Firm for IHOPKC has confirmed some of the allegations.
4. Mike has publicly admitted to some of the allegations, at least in part in a general and non-specific sense.
5. Some members of this team have personally attempted to approach Mike to ask for full disclosure, but at present, after several attempts, he has not agreed to meet, nor has he categorically denied the growing number of charges coming against him.
6. Some members of this team have been deeply involved in meetings with leaders of both the Advocacy group and IHOPKC leadership to hear their hearts and concerns.

First, we are deeply grieved for those who have presented testimony that they were manipulated and sexually abused by Mike Bickle. We can think of few sins more damaging and destructive than that of manipulative, clergy sexual abuse, all the more in the case of a minor. We are also deeply grieved for those whose personal faith has been shattered and whose worlds have been turned upside down because of the alleged agonizing events. This is a spiritual tragedy of international proportions, affecting millions of believers worldwide and bringing great dishonor to the name of Jesus as well as disgrace to the reputation of the Spirit.

Second, after considering the reports we have reviewed, we must state categorically that he is, sadly, unfit to lead a ministry. Even with full repentance and personal restoration in the Lord, he

is disqualified from public ministry. (Restoration to full fellowship is of course possible.) Mike himself, in his statement of December 12, 2023, acknowledged that his stepping down from ministry “may be long and it may even be permanent,” and that was before the most serious charges against him had even been raised.

We say this with agony of heart, as Mike has been a dear friend to some of us and a respected co-worker for years, and it is hard to believe that the man we knew was capable of leading such a double life. Yet we cannot deny the evidence that spans many decades and which continues to accumulate, some of which has been confirmed and some of which awaits a formal investigation and the adjudication of a panel of elders.

We also write these words aware of our own shortcomings and failings – as Solomon said, each of us knows the affliction of our own hearts (1 Kings 8:38) – walking in the fear of the Lord as daily recipients of His mercy. But there are lines that cannot be crossed without severe consequences, and tragically, it appears that Mike has crossed these lines time and again.

Third, while we know that many fine believers and leaders have served at IHOPKC and are part of the related, global prayer movement we recognize that the evidence points to some dangerous cult-like tendencies that emerged over the years that need to be addressed and adjusted. There has also been a lack of a formal structure of accountability for those serving in various capacities at IHOPKC, overseen by local elders, resulting in a failure to deal properly with serious sexual sins, and not just pertaining to Mike.

We do not deny that the broad outline of the IHOPKC history was credible, but it appears that, in some ways, it has crossed over into areas of spiritual elitism. IHOPKC has also admitted that its structure was woefully deficient in handling serious sin allegations and now professes to be changing its whole structure to address this.

We acknowledge that many faithful intercessors and worshippers ministered before the Lord over the years in IHOPKC with purity of heart, great sacrifice, and authentic passion for His purposes who were totally unaware of what was transpiring behind the scenes. We want you comforted and encouraged. Your hours of prayers and devotion were heard, regarded, and honored by God.

Fourth, we recognize and grieve over the lack of accountability structures in the larger, independent, charismatic church world, where there are no real courts of appeal, few, if any, boards of city-wide or trans-local elders to consult, and no formal structures in which serious allegations can be heard and adjudicated. We have been aware of this need for many years, and it is our hope that now, at last, a united, biblically based, Spirit-led effort can be made to address this gaping hole in our midst.

Fifth, we recognize that many younger believers now feel disillusioned with our generation of leaders, feeling let down by us or, worse still, perceiving us to be part of the “old guard” that is determined to protect our interests or, even worse, enabling serious clergy misconduct. This, too, breaks our hearts, as we have spent decades investing in the younger generations – right until this day, considering it a sacred privilege – and we carry a fatherly (or motherly) burden for your wellbeing. God Himself knows!

We, like you, are jealous for the name of Jesus and the kingdom of God, jealous for the health of the Church, jealous for righteousness and justice along with mercy and compassion, jealous to see

the Spirit poured out mightily worldwide. We, like you, have spent hours on our faces, weeping for the lost, crying out for revival, interceding for the purposes of God.

We can also say to you – to Millennial and Gen Z believers (and now, to Gen Alpha believers too) – that we carry you in our hearts. In the words of Paul, “For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.” (1 Thessalonians 2:19–20) Where we have failed to provide clear voices during this crisis or have let you down in any way, please forgive us. And know that we are committed to you for life.

Having said this, we decry the exalting of people and personalities. There are no superstars in the Body, only servants. And no matter how much fame or public influence any of us may have, we are all utter wretches outside of God’s transforming grace and there is not a single thing we can do of eternal value that has not been birthed and empowered by the Spirit. Apart from the Lord, we can do nothing and we are nothing (John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 3:5-9).

It is one thing to give honor and respect to spiritual leaders who walk worthy of God’s high calling. It is another thing to turn servants into celebrities and to look to them as if they were in a different category from the rest of the Body. This is not only dangerous, but it is another form of spiritual idolatry.

At the same time, we encourage you to guard against cynicism or skepticism. Even though in the coming days there will be further public exposure as God cleanses His church, scandals like this current one are not the norm. Ministry leaders engaging in the manipulative sexual abuse of those under their care are the rare exception to the rule. Most pastors and leaders are neither famous nor rich, let alone sexual predators, laboring quietly behind the scenes and doing their best to serve their flocks. As they prove worthy of honor and respect, they can earn your trust. We know of denominations and apostolic streams that have good government and have had no major leadership scandals.

Most importantly and above all, be assured that the Lord is utterly and completely faithful, trustworthy beyond imagination, and an ever-present help in times of trouble. We urge you not to let anyone or anything steal your crown (see Revelation 3:11) or rob your faith, remembering that Jesus never failed any of us. It is not in His nature to do so! Take refuge in Him, pour out your hearts to Him, and lean on Him with all your being. He will see you through.

Please keep praying for those who have been sinned against, along with all those who have been hurt, and pray also for IHOP, for Mike and his wife and family, and for the church globally that has been impacted. God desires to bring repentance, cleansing, healing, and restoration to all.

Know that we are praying for you and we are here to serve you, believing that somehow, God will bring good out of evil and light out of darkness, for the purification and healing of His people and for His honor and glory. May the name of Jesus be exalted and may His hurting people be made whole.

Lord, we cry for Your mercy! We, desperately need Your help in this hour.

“Heal us, LORD, and we will be healed; save us and we will be saved, for You are the one we praise.” (See Jeremiah 17:14)