

Member's meeting Albuquerque, December 3, 2014

Pastor Donovan Medina: (Lead Pastor – Abq)

I think maybe we can get a little more specific, uh, MH Church is soon going to be closing. We are working through conflict. We are working through controversy. Uh This is a common question many of us have had and I'd love to be able to ask you in front of everyone right now. As an executive elder, um, how did you contribute to, how were you involved um in any of it while you were at MH? I'm happy to answer that publically,

Pastor Dave Bruskas:

I'm happy to answer that privately maybe if you have more questions if we don't answer them now I'll be happy to answer that privately maybe if you have more questions if we don't answer them now I'll stay as late as you want me to tonight and I'll answer those privately if you like. Let me start w/ the cultural things that I contributed to that we as leaders have to own that we contributed to. When the BOA announced Pastor Mark's resignation, they announced through examination that there were 3 categories of persistent sin in Pastor Mark's life. Uh, one was arrogance, one was domineering leadership, one was harshness, harsh words, harsh actions. I think we would be remiss to not think those are deeply entrenched in our culture. We need to repent of those. Um, I think there, I know personally some of our leaders felt that somehow MH Church was special, that God's grace was upon us because we were doing things right, and I think we see now in hindsight God's grace was upon us in spite of us. And so there's an area ofJesus warns us not to lead like the gentiles do. Don't lord authority over people. And, I think we had, and I participated in it a very common means of leadership that was very heavy handed and domineering and I think that there are ways that we as we move forward have to realize that those things are still systemic and we need to be very open to each other and to you that we continue to grow in those categories. And, then the angry words and harsh words I don't feel....I can't think of any specific incident when I acted out in that way. But, I'm and I don't know of any specific incident where I had a crisis of conscience where, like "that was really wrong..." but I didn't speak into it. Where I am grieved at

times is “what happened in front of me that I didn’t have a conscience about....that I need to have a conscience for?”

And so those are the broader things – 3 things, and I am sorry to be speaking in trilogy, that is really bazaar (laughter), I will change that, I promise. I’ll try to give you broad categories so I don’t keep you here all night (laughter) this way. Three things specifically that I feel really personally grieved about. One is the Result Source. When the Result Source decision was made MH operated really informally and so I remember I had just become an executive elder...and I remember there’s a....Seattle’s like Albuquerque. There’s a west side and there’s an east side . They have enormous lakes, we have the mighty Rio Grande, right? (laughter) And so, driving w/ Pastor Jamie Munson, he’s the lead pastor, across the 5-20 (?) Bridge, he says to me, He’s driving and I’m in the passenger side and he says: Hey, there’s a way in which we can, uh-we can, we can, we can, we can with the sales we expect these books, from Real Marriage, from Pastor Mark, there’s a way we can get on the NYT best-seller list. He said, “what do you think about that?” And I said, I asked him a few questions. I asked him is it financially, is it financially legit? He said yes, and I said, is it legit from a marketing perspective? Does it have integrity? He said yes, and I never asked another question about it. And that was the extent of any conversation that happened around the Result Source. Once I found out what it entailed, um, I was grieved by that. We had a BOE, we had a BOE know (?) about that, and um I want to believe, maybe I’m being naïve or optimistic, I really want to believe if I would have known exactly all about it at the time I would have said, no, we’re not going to do this, this is wrong, this is this is this is manipulative and inappropriate. This is wrong, it’s wrong, it’s flat out wrong.

Um, the Second thing I really participated in , that I really grieve to this day is the Strange Fire incident. The original plan was Pastor Mark was going to go to a near coffee shop, nearby the Strange Fire Conference and we were going to put that on twitter that, Hey! There is an alternative to cessationism if you want to come hear about it. Uh, come join us, and in the process of doing that, uh, we decided to go on campus, not really decided, we just, Mark started to go there, and I wish I had said, Enough! I felt like when we went onto the campus of Grace

Community Church, we had really crossed a line. That, that was, we were uninvited, that, that, was rude, that was wrong. [TECH ISSUES w/ the MIC] Nobody is more disappointed in my return [to Albuquerque] than the guys in the back. They know how destructive I am to technology, right? Thank you, Love you guys too, great is your reward in heaven, but for now, it's a lot of suffering. Um, the Strange Fire uh, I feel like if I would have said something to Mark, hey this is wrong we have to stop here, I think he would have listened to me, and I didn't say anything, and that's wrong, and I will and uh you can hold me accountable. I will definitely apologize to John MacArthur for that, for that experience. I can't apologize for Pastor Mark, only Mark can, but that was wrong.

Then the 3rd thing that uh I feel really complicit in, in the early days of being an executive elder we very much had a highly performance driven culture. What I did at Mars Hill, were two things; I led lead pastors and I helped develop and work alongside those that were doing central ministries. I think people have this perception that Dave and Mark and Sutton sat behind and made all these collaborative decisions. That was not the case at all. Those are really my areas of focus. Those are the things I worked on. But early on the lead pastors, I really believe I was a part of this thought that, Hey! You need to grow your church lead pastor; if you don't...we'll find someone who will! And, that's so opposite of Jesus, that's so ungodly, that's so sinful, that's so wrong, so I apologized to the guys that were lead pastors at the time. I think we began to make changes of really being about health, of being about what can we do as leaders to promote health in the church? But, uh, those those are the things that personally I feel responsible for, and I'm sorry, I'm really sorry, I want you to know that., because I know those things hurt you. I know those things made it difficult for you to be on mission here in Albuquerque, and I really am terribly sorry for that.

Donovan Medina: Thank you Dave for sharing and just being vulnerable w/ everyone in the room. Guys, this has, this has been a sobering experience as a church. There is no doubt about that. Um, before we go on to any more questions, I'd like us to take time to pray....