

# Clarification Statement

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In light of claims made by family and others, I would like to state that I and my fellow Baptists are victims of misrepresentation. We hate violence toward women.

It seems that the intent was that I would be caught off guard so that I would look guilty. In our initial phone conversation, the producer for *60 Minutes* deceived me about the purpose of the interview. He said he wanted to talk about a particular sermon I had preached. When I reluctantly relented, he gave me six questions that I could expect. However the interview turned out to be a trap. Only as the cameras rolled did I learn that I had been betrayed. It shocked me that I was being questioned about an intensely-personal family matter. Not knowing what the interviewer was getting at with some of his questions, I stumbled to answer some questions clearly. I could not know that this interview was going to be my one chance to defend against a barrage of lies.

You'll recall that the presenter asked me, 'What does the Bible say about calling in the *real* authorities?' This was followed by a shocked pause where I was trying to sort out whether he grasped that we are non-denominational. We don't have a head office authority. The clarification question, "You're talking about...?" was answered by 'the police.' My first thought was to point out the obvious answer to his exact question: the word *police* is not found in the Bible. So to answer his question literally, I responded, 'The Scripture doesn't say to ring the police.' The audio was cut at that point and no opportunity was given to clarify. I was completely blindsided by this line of questioning and could not prepare a measured response.

I therefore wish to clarify now that I have always taught that the police are to be obeyed and respected (Romans 13). If one knows of a crime and has information which might be of material assistance in apprehending or convicting the offender, the police must be contacted (My gratitude to one of our deacons, a former policeman, for referring me to the Crimes Act 1900 of NSW Sect 316.1).

I assure you that I have always believed that rape and child abuse are crimes.

I do not teach, practise or condone any sort of violence in a marriage. Like most preachers, I preach that husbands must serve, respect and honour their wives (Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3).

To suggest that we teach that women must submit to their husband's every whim is incorrect. I have never heard a Baptist suggest it.

We do NOT believe submission to one's husband entitles him to force his wife into some kind of sexual slavery; rather, we believe that for a husband to love his wife means that he lives to serve and please her (1 Corinthians 7:33).

Rape and child abuse are not the fault of the victim. There is NEVER an excuse to harm a woman, no matter how much a man may feel provoked.

Any woman who is being battered or abused by her husband should get to a safe place and ring the police.

We have never had an allegation of sexual abuse in the history of the Illawarra Community Baptist Church. Our church's 'Child Protection Policy and Procedures' document has been in place since 2007 and makes clear that in the case of an allegation, the police are to be contacted immediately.

The estrangement between Mum and me took place months before the two incidents between her and Dad. Therefore it is incorrect to say that I have turned on my mother because of her recent allegations toward Dad.

I do love my mother deeply. I will always thank God that she led me to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who saved me on 23 August, 1977. I have a deep relationship with God because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross for my sins, and because He rose from the dead.