

IT IS TIME TO PROTECT CHILDREN. IT IS TIME TO STOP BEING A SILENTLAMB!

The bottom line is after much effort to try and change Watchtower policy from within I found I could no longer "wait on the Lord", I do not believe the Lord wants or would allow one child to be hurt, much less the many that have suffered and been molested as a result of Watchtower policy. The only way in my opinion is to go public and by doing so with public outcry, force Jehovah's Witnesses to do right by the children. This effort is truly a gift to all children of Jehovah's Witnesses to be able to live their young lives with a fair chance of not being molested. I encourage one and all to write, call, e-mail and through the media, let the Watchtower Organization know this policy must change, children are being hurt, policy must be changed now.

If you need assistance we can be reached at:

Silentlams

PO Box 311,

Calvert City, KY 42029

www.silentlams.org

1-877-WTABUSE (982-2873)

Do Jehovah's Witnesses Protect Child Molesters?



I Believe They Do

My name is Bill Bowen, after living as a Jehovah's Witness for over 43 years and serving in several managerial, teaching and administrative positions within the organization, I recently discovered a problem that would not go away and due to my personal efforts from within I had to make a decision as to whether it ethically and morally could be allowed to be hidden by a Watchtower agenda. This problem can be identified as the protection of pedophiles within the Jehovah's Witness community. I recently resigned as presiding overseer of my congregation as a way of protest to force action in addressing this problem and protect children.

When Witness officials have chosen to respond to the media about this question, they offer misinformation and tell uninformed Jehovah's Witnesses that this is not a problem. An example of how the Watchtower responds when asked about this problem is in a statement made to news media on January 5, 2001, by JR Brown of Watchtower Public Relations Department, he released this written statement when asked about this problem:

"We do not condone the actions of those who exploit children by this terrible crime and such persons are disfellowshipped (excommunicated) from the congregation. A known child molester does not qualify for appointment as a church elder or for any other position of responsibility in any congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses."

Is this statement true? Notice a comment made in an internal letter to "All Body Of Elders" dated 6-1-01:

"There is one exception to the above direction: The elders may have written to the branch office and given full details about a former child abuser who is currently serving as an elder or ministerial servant. In such a case, if the branch office has decided that he can be appointed or continue serving in a position of trust because the sin occurred many years ago and because he has lived an exemplary life since then, his name should not appear on the List, nor is it necessary to pass on information about the brother's past sin if he moves to another congregation unless contrary instructions have been given by the branch."

Not only is a child molester not disfellowshipped in many cases but some are used as leaders within the organization with complete anonymity, as this internal communiqué brings out. Why would

misleading information be given to the public on this matter? The Watchtower has developed a position toward molested children that is harmful. This is done through a church policy that dictates that local elders involve themselves first when molestation issues arise. They use an ancient old law edict that requires two eyewitnesses before a matter can be established. The elders who investigate have no experience with pedophiles or child molestation as a rule. When the pedophile denies the charge the elders then bring pressure to bear on the victim to produce eyewitnesses to prove the allegation. In effect the victim is accused of lying unless he/she can prove they are telling the truth by producing an additional witness who watched it happen. As you can guess in 90% of the cases the victim cannot, and as a result is told since he/she cannot prove their case the victim is required to view the pedophile as an innocent man. Hence, the victim cannot warn others or speak about the matter to anyone, otherwise he/she will be guilty of slander and this could result in being "disfellowshipped" from the congregation. "Disfellowshipped" means complete cutting off from family and all friends who are in the faith until you agree to live by the above guidelines. In many cases victims are encouraged not to go the authorities as it will bring reproach on God and make the church look bad. When a victim presses charges anyway he/she is on their own with absolutely no help or support from the elders. The elders will claim ecclesiastical privilege to get out of offering any corroborating testimony and anyone in the church is discouraged from helping for the reasons offered above. The pedophile on the other hand is given great sympathy as a falsely accused person and often

has the full support of the church. This results in a pedophile refuge mentality in the Watchtower organization; pedophiles can freely move about, discreetly molest children and have the protection of church leadership to keep charges from being established.

I believe, rather than the church involving itself in determining whether an accused person is innocent or guilty of molestation, the first step the church should take is to notify the local authorities that will investigate whether the accusation has merit. Then if found guilty in a court of law, the pedophile will be publicly identified and punished. This protects the innocent and could help give closure to the victim. Until that day happens, the lambs have been silenced, the victimized little ones, who look to their Jehovah's Witness leadership for protection, but instead are crushed and ostracized by an organizational policy when they need help the most.

I have formed an organization to publicly expose Jehovah's Witnesses for hurting children. It is call silentlambs, please review our website at www.silentlambs.org. Therein, you will find the testimony of hundreds of victims of molestation whose experiences agree with my conclusions. Our organization is endeavoring to reach out to those who suffer as silentlambs, who are afraid to speak out because of the threats and sanctions their religion may place against them. **Silentlambs** is a **(501,C,3) non-profit organization** solely dedicated to victims of child molestation who so desperately need a voice. The first step to expose this great wrong that has been wrought on so many innocent children is to **SPEAK OUT.**