



UPDATE ABOUT THE SBC SEXUAL ABUSE TASK FORCE REPORT

Over much of the past year, an independent organization has been investigating how various groups within the Southern Baptist Convention have handled and reported sexual abuse allegations. This report was released on May 23, 2022. (www.sataskforce.net/downloads)

We grieve for survivors of sexual abuse and the additional trauma they have endured from groups and leaders within the SBC. We commend the courage of these survivors to share their stories and bring such heartbreaking situations into the light. Additionally, we stand behind those who are seeking to hold accountable the leaders who covered up information and failed to care for abuse survivors. At all levels of our convention, we must learn from this report and become more vigilant in preventing abuse, reporting abuse, and caring for survivors of abuse. At the same time, this is a good time to be "quick to listen, and slow to speak." We need to hear from those who are hurting and be ready to respond with love, grace, and humility.

At Emmaus, we want you to know that we are committed to preventing abuse; and if it occurs, we will report the abuse and seek to care for the victims. Over 200 volunteers at our church have gone through the required Ministry Safe Training to learn how to identify signs of abuse and protect children. (****Please take this training seriously when you are asked to participate. The training is a vital part of ministry, not an obstacle or inconvenience.*) If you have been the victim of sexual abuse, we urge you to report this abuse to the authorities, and we will work with you to seek physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

I don't yet know the full ramifications of this report for the future of the Southern Baptist Convention. However, I do know that Jesus is King; He cares deeply for the hurting and the vulnerable; and one day He will return to make all things right -- bringing justice, peace, and eternal healing. And, I know that this Sunday we will gather in the name of Jesus to worship Him, hear His Word in faith, and encourage one another as we look to the future with hope.

Humbly,

Dr. Owen Nease