



## ***An Attempt to Mend a Broken Network & Save the Cause of Christ from Reproach***

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## **Judy Woods: "I was There"**

[Judy Woods was one of Tommy's staunch supporters, and thus she sided against the alleged victims. It was a very divisive issue at the Ezra Church of God, and some of those who were involved back then have not known about her change of position, and may appreciate reading her letter below.]

### **Judy Woods tells us what it was like for her**

January 18, 2007

Dear sir:

The subject I am about to approach absolutely boggles my mind! I cannot comprehend, even to this day, how one person, Tommy Shelton, with his deviate behavior, and all the while declaring that it was not true, could almost destroy our little church. We are, now, a handful of people at Ezra Church of God, that have sat here for decades with a black cloud over our head that seems as if it can never be removed. This type of situation only happens somewhere else, not here!

Why did we, as a congregation, allow it to come to this? Why did I not see what was happening, after all I was Sunday School superintendent? I was in a position where I could observe many of his interactions with the young people. Also, why did the young victims not report the fact that they were being molested to their parents or some authority figure? I know that one young person did go to city hall and made a statement to the police, but nothing happened! Did someone intervene on Tommy's behalf? I don't have the answers to these questions!

As I look back, I quickly realize that hindsight is 20/20. It was a time of chaos that overwhelmed me. I had Sunday School teachers quitting because of the accusations that were running rampant. Many had believed such accusations and left the church. Our church was literally falling apart! At this time, I decided to stand with the pastor. Did I ever question his innocence at this time. Yes, only to switch back to no almost immediately. The fact is that at this point I simply chose not to believe the accusations for, you see, I didn't want to believe them. After all, he was preaching holiness and musically talented. How could there be a dark side?

But, what is probably the key factor is Tommy has a way with words that can convince you that black is white. Any situation that arose that didn't seem

Must Read:  
Mom in Pain #1

kosher, I went directly to Tommy and questioned him on such. He always had an answer that made me say to myself, why did I ever ask!

But, I still had many questions along the way. One young man stood out in particular. He and Tommy were caught alone in a certain residence. Tommy lied and said that it was his son there. Not so! This same teenager would go along on family vacations with the Sheltons. Tommy would also tutor this boy in his office in the evenings.

In the past, other teenagers were used to drive him different places; for example, he would go to a recording studio quite regularly in Flora, IL, and, most always with a young driver.

These are just a few examples of what went on at Ezra.

In situations where Tommy needed to stand and fight for himself, he was always incapacitated, mostly nerve issues-- nervous breakdown, removing himself to California to escape the "heat," even admitting himself to a mental hospital in Centralia. Others in the congregation would try to fight his battles!

During his entire pastorate at Ezra, I stood by him and tried to help him even though I had questions. I suppose I was naive and blinded to a certain extent as to what was really going on.

What about today? Scripture says, "Be sure your sin will find you out." This is exactly what happened when the pieces of the puzzle fit perfectly into place leaving no doubt in my mind that Tommy is guilty of molesting teenagers.

The young man that has already been mentioned came to my house and told me exactly what Tommy did to him. This was during all the chaos at the church. No, at this point, I did not believe him. I confronted Tommy as to what he said. Tommy blamed the boy's parents for forcing him to tell this. Tommy told me that when the boy turns 21 years old, he would come back and tell me the "truth." I haven't seen the boy since!

Some years have now passed, and I spoke to a mother of another of Tommy's victims. She was talking about her son and Tommy. I ask her if her son had ever said what Tommy did to him. She proceeded to tell me what he said--- which turned out to be exactly what the young man said that had come to my house some years before. This was the piece of the puzzle that completed the picture of guilt. These two boys were not in any way connected--not by age, locale or friendship!

My feelings, today, are of betrayal, being lied to over and over, and just, in general, being "used." But how I "feel" does not compare to the torment, agony, and embarrassment that the victims must endure for a lifetime! Only God knows how many victims there are!

By the way, this is not the end of the saga. Since the ruination of Ezra, which included many victims, Tommy has continued to pursue young men to victimize, one of which is Roger, a relative. He then moved on to the Community Church of God in Dunn Loring, VA, leaving more victims there! Only God knows just how many victims there are! This type of behavior must be stopped!

A big "thank you" to the SDA and the CCG for your pursuit of the truth. Please be persistent in your efforts. Tommy must be held accountable for his actions!

The thought that the situation at Ezra had been dealt with 30 years ago, is simply not true! We will know Tommy has repented of his sin when he bows on his knees before each of his victims and begs their forgiveness. Then he must stand before the congregations at Ezra and Dunn Loring and apologize for the agonizing devastation he has caused each church!

I close with some advice directed at Tommy----why don't you stand up and be a man for once in your life! Admit to what you've done and are doing! Stop the cop-out of a nervous breakdown, etc., when you're cornered! Stop hiding behind your fancy lawyer, which I am certain has never been told the real truth. If he had been, he would never have written the (2) threatening letters in an effort to protect a child molester. Stop hiding behind your wife and Danny, who have become your enablers, or, in other words, accessories! Your wife should never have allowed such behavior! Danny should never have put you on staff at 3ABN, nor should he have allowed you on camera, except it does show the world what a child molester looks like! Real godly sorrow and heartfelt repentance are in order, without which hell awaits! Then, after you've done all this, extreme long-term counseling would be the next step!

Perhaps, if all this were accomplished, maybe the black cloud over Ezra would slowly begin to dissipate!

Thank you,  
*Judith C. Woods*

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JANUARY 18, 2007

DEAR SIR:

THE SUBJECT I AM ABOUT TO APPROACH ABSOLUTELY BOGGLES MY MIND. I CANNOT COMPREHEND, EVEN TO THIS DAY, HOW ONE PERSON, TOMMY SHELTON, WITH HIS DEVILIC BEHAVIOR, AND ALL THE WHILE DECLARING THAT IT WAS NOT TRUE, COULD ALMOST DESTROY OUR LITTLE CHURCH. WE ARE, NOW, A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE AT EZRA CHURCH OF GOD, THAT HAVE SAT HERE FOR DECADES WITH A BLACK CLOUD OVER OUR HEAD THAT SEEMS AS IF IT CAN NEVER BE REMOVED. THIS TYPE OF SITUATION ONLY HAPPENS SOMEWHERE ELSE, NOT HERE!

WHY DID WE, AS A CONGREGATION, ALLOW IT TO COME TO THIS? WHY DID I NOT SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING, AFTER ALL I WAS SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT? I WAS IN A POSITION WHERE I COULD OBSERVE MANY OF HIS INTERACTIONS WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE. ALSO, WHY DID THE YOUNG VICTIMS NOT REPORT THE FACT THAT THEY WERE BEING MOLESTED TO THEIR PARENTS OR SOME AUTHORITY FIGURE? I KNOW THAT ONE YOUNG PERSON DID GO TO CITY HALL AND MADE A STATEMENT TO THE POLICE, BUT NOTHING HAPPENED! DID SOMEONE INTERVENE ON TOMMY'S BEHALF? I DON'T HAVE THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS!

AS I LOOK BACK, I QUICKLY REALIZE THAT HINDSIGHT IS 20/20. IT WAS A TIME OF CHAOS THAT OVERWHELMED ME. I HAD SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS QUITTING BECAUSE OF THE ACCUSATIONS THAT WERE RUNNING RAMPANT. MANY HAD BELIEVED SUCH ACCUSATIONS AND LEFT THE CHURCH. OUR CHURCH WAS LITERALLY FALLING APART! AT THIS TIME, I DECIDED TO STAND WITH THE PASTOR, DID I EVER QUESTION HIS INNOCENCE AT THIS TIME, YES, ONLY TO SWITCH BACK TO NO ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. THE FACT IS THAT AT THIS POINT I SIMPLY CHOSE NOT TO BELIEVE THE ACCUSATIONS FOR, YOU SEE, I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE THEM. AFTER ALL, HE WAS PREACHING HOLINESS AND MUSICALLY TALENTED. HOW COULD THERE BE A DARK SIDE?

BUT, WHAT IS PROBABLY THE KEY FACTOR IS TOMMY HAS A WAY WITH WORDS THAT CAN CONVINCE YOU THAT BLACK IS WHITE. ANY SITUATION THAT AROSE THAT DIDN'T SEEM KOSHER, I WENT DIRECTLY TO TOMMY AND QUESTIONED HIM ON SUCH. HE ALWAYS HAD AN ANSWER THAT MADE ME SAY TO MYSELF, WHY DID I EVER ASK?

BUT, I STILL HAD MANY QUESTIONS ALONG THE WAY. ONE YOUNG MAN STOOD OUT IN PARTICULAR. HE AND TOMMY WERE CAUGHT ALONE IN A CERTAIN RESIDENCE. TOMMY LIED AND SAID THAT IT WAS HIS SON THERE. NOT SO? THIS

SAME TEENAGER WOULD GO ALONG ON FAMILY VACATIONS WITH THE SHELTONS. TOMMY WOULD ALSO TUTOR THIS BOY IN HIS OFFICE IN THE EVENINGS.

IN THE PAST, OTHER TEENAGERS WERE USED TO DRIVE HIM DIFFERENT PLACES. FOR EXAMPLE HE WOULD GO TO A RECORDING STUDIO QUITE REGULARLY IN FLORIDA, IL, AND, MOST ALWAYS WITH A YOUNG DRIVER.

THESE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF WHAT WENT ON AT EZRA.

IN SITUATIONS WHERE TOMMY NEEDED TO STAND AND FIGHT FOR HIMSELF, HE WAS ALWAYS INCAPACITATED, MOSTLY NERVE ISSUES-- NERVOUS BREAKDOWN, REMOVING HIMSELF TO CALIFORNIA TO ESCAPE THE "HEAT", EVEN ADMITTING HIMSELF TO A MENTAL HOSPITAL IN CENTRALIA. OTHERS IN THE CONGREGATION WOULD TRY TO FIGHT HIS BATTLES!

DURING HIS ENTIRE PASTORATE AT EZRA, I STOOD BY HIM AND TRIED TO HELP HIM EVEN THOUGH I HAD QUESTIONS. I SUPPOSE I WAS NAIVE AND BLINDED TO A CERTAIN EXTENT AS TO WHAT WAS REALLY GOING ON.

WHAT ABOUT TODAY? SCRIPTURE SAYS, "BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT". THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE FIT PERFECTLY INTO PLACE LEAVING NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT TOMMY IS GUILTY OF MOLESTING TEENAGERS.

THE YOUNG MAN THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN MENTIONED, CAME TO MY HOUSE AND TOLD ME EXACTLY WHAT TOMMY DID TO HIM. THIS WAS DURING ALL THE CHAOS AT THE CHURCH. NO, AT THIS POINT, I DID NOT BELIEVE HIM. I CONFRONTED TOMMY AS TO WHAT HE SAID. TOMMY BLAMED THE BOY'S PARENTS FOR FORCING HIM TO TELL THIS. TOMMY TOLD ME THAT WHEN THE BOY TURNS 21 YEARS OLD, HE WOULD COME BACK AND TELL ME THE "TRUTH". I HAVEN'T SEEN THE BOY SINCE!

SOME YEARS HAVE NOW PASSED, AND I SPOKE TO A MOTHER OF ANOTHER OF TOMMY'S VICTIMS. SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT HER SON AND TOMMY. I ASK HER IF HER SON HAD EVER SAID WHAT TOMMY DID TO HIM. SHE PROCEEDED TO TELL ME WHAT HE SAID-- WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE EXACTLY WHAT THE YOUNG MAN SAID THAT HAD COME TO MY HOUSE SOME YEARS BEFORE. THIS WAS THE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE THAT COMPLETED THE PICTURE OF GUILT. THESE TWO BOYS WERE NOT IN ANY WAY CONNECTED--NOT BY AGE, LOCAL OR FRIENDSHIP!

MY FEELINGS, TODAY, ARE OF BETRAYAL, BEING LIED TO OVER AND OVER, AND, JUST IN GENERAL, BEING "USED". BUT HOW I "FEEL" DOES NOT COMPARE TO THE TORMENT, AGONY, AND EMBARRASSMENT THAT THE VICTIMS MUST

ENDURE FOR A LIFETIME! ONLY GOD KNOWS HOW MANY VICTIMS THERE ARE!

BY THE WAY, THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE SAGA. SINCE THE RUINATION OF EZRA, WHICH INCLUDED MANY VICTIMS, TOMMY HAS CONTINUED TO PURSUE YOUNG MEN TO VICTIMIZE, ONE OF WHICH IS ROGER, A RELATIVE. HE THEN MOVED ON TO THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GOD IN DUNN LORING, VA, LEAVING MORE VICTIMS THERE! ONLY GOD KNOWS JUST HOW MANY VICTIMS THERE ARE! THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR MUST BE STOPPED!

A BIG "THANK-YOU" TO THE SDA AND THE CCG FOR YOUR PURSUIT OF THE TRUTH. PLEASE BE PERSISTENT IN YOUR EFFORTS. TOMMY MUST BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR HIS ACTIONS!

THE THOUGHT THAT THE SITUATION AT EZRA HAD BEEN DEALT WITH 30 YEARS AGO, IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE! WE WILL KNOW TOMMY HAS REPENTED OF HIS SIN WHEN HE BOWS ON HIS KNEES BEFORE EACH OF HIS VICTIMS AND BEGS THEIR FORGIVENESS. THEN HE MUST STAND BEFORE THE CONGREGATIONS AT EZRA AND DUNN LORING AND APOLOGIZE FOR THE AGONIZING DEVASTATION HE HAS CAUSED EACH CHURCH!

I CLOSE WITH SOME ADVICE DIRECTED AT TOMMY---WHY DON'T YOU STAND UP AND BE A MAN FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE! ADMIT TO WHAT YOU'VE DONE AND ARE DOWN! STOP THE COP-OUT OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN, ETC., WHEN YOU'RE CORNERED! STOP HIDING BEHIND YOUR FANCY LAWYER, WHICH I AM CERTAIN HAS NEVER BEEN TOLD THE REAL TRUTH. IF HE HAD BEEN, HE WOULD NEVER HAVE WRITTEN THE (2) THREATENING LETTERS IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT A CHILD MOLESTER. STOP HIDING BEHIND YOUR WIFE AND DANNY, WHO HAVE BECOME YOUR ENABLERS, OR, IN OTHER WORDS, ACCESSORIES! YOUR WIFE SHOULD NEVER HAVE ALLOWED SUCH BEHAVIOR! DANNY SHOULD NEVER HAVE PUT YOU ON STAFF AT JABN, NOR SHOULD HE HAVE ALLOWED YOU ON CAMERA, EXCEPT IT DOES SHOW THE WORLD WHAT A CHILD MOLESTER LOOKS LIKE! REAL GODLY SORROW AND HEARTFELT REPENTANCE ARE IN ORDER, WITHOUT WHICH HELL AWAITS! THEN, AFTER YOU'VE DONE ALL THIS, EXTREME LONG-TERM COUNSELING WOULD BE THE NEXT STEP!

PERHAPS, IF ALL THIS WERE ACCOMPLISHED, MAYBE THE BLACK CLOUD OVER EZRA WOULD SLOWLY BEGIN TO DISAPPEAR!

*Thank you,  
Judy C. Woods*

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***"Truth invites examination & needs no defense.  
Lies hide in darkness & blame everyone else."***