



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

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Round Two: Gregory Matthews

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Due to the abrogation of the confidentiality agreement by Harold Lance, the following communications are provided for your perusal.

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----- Original Message -----

From: Gregory Matthews
To: Bob Pickle, G. Arthur Joy
CC: Harold Lance, Linda Shelton, Deb Young, Ron Christman, Walt Thompson, Danny Shelton
Subject: RE: Comments re the process
Date: Mon, 4 Dec 2006 02:57:04 -0700

Gentlepeople:

I plan on making a detailed response later today.

I have been thinking it through, as I want to spend some time in reflecting on it before I make my response. It may come in the next couple of hours, or so. We shall see.

Gregory Matthews

- Abuse of Power
- Ethical
- Allegations
- Financial
- Allegations
- Correspondence
- Untruths
- Alleged Illegal
- Activities

- Danny's Apologists
- Leonard Westphal
- Litigation, etc.
- Letters of Support
- News Releases
- Contact Us

----- Original Message -----

From:
To: Bob Pickle
CC: G. Arthur Joy, Harold Lance, Linda Shelton, Gregory Matthews
Subject: My response, # 1, Gregory Matthews
Date: Mon, 4 Dec 2006 08:32:33 -0700

**Response to ASI
HL 061203**

Added on 4/1/2007
Furniture

Added on 3/28/2007
Defy the Board
Board Action

Added on 3/22/2007
Book Deals
Emails
Financial Aff.

Added on 3/20/2007
The Lost Bet

Added on 3/17/2007
Walt Admits: No
Evidence

Added on 3/16/2007
Pregnancy Test

Added on 3/15/2007
Dan & Brandy
Abused You?

Must Read:
Mom in Pain #1

Introduction:

Overall I was encouraged by the outreach that Harold Lance has made to us. It is a good start. It reflects a good tone (spirit). In many ways it reflects where I am. Of course, I am going to think a document is good when it agrees with me. J

It seems to agree with my assessment of what must be accomplished if ASI can establish a panel that can achieve some degree of resolution. If he has read what I have previously posted on the Internet, he knows that I have stated that the following are the critical issues that the respective parties must agree upon if this panel is to be effective:

1. They must agree upon the issues to be considered.
2. They must agree upon the aim of the panel, or to put it another way, what the expected results are.
3. They must agree upon the process.

NOTE: In my previous public posts, I have expanded upon the above slightly.

In my understanding of what Harold has written, he also sees the above as critical issues.

I have reflected upon his document overnight. Without detracting from what I consider to be an excellent document, I will suggest that it contains a number of issues that need further clarification, and agreement by the parties. It is my intention in my response to identify those and to comment upon them. Any references that I may make to "critical issues," unless otherwise identified, will reference the three listed above. To identify my point for discussion, I will quote from Harold's document with a "Re:" followed by either the quotation, or a brief summary of a point in his document.

Discussion:

a) Re: ". . . request to ASI [by 3-ABN] that it establish a commission to evaluate and determine Danny's' [sic] legal and moral right to remarry."

This falls under my critical issue # 1.

This request seems to limit the issues that are to be considered by this commission. Perhaps that is O.K., if the respective parties agree to this. In my mind, the marital issues, which have some importance, are much less important than other issues. Again, what do the respective parties want, and agree to?

A larger issue is that this wording restricts the marital issues to Danny and Linda, their divorce, and Danny's remarriage. I will suggest that the marital issues are much larger than this focus. Danny has been charged, rightly or wrongly, I do not know, with sexual misconduct, during the time that he was married to Linda, and following the divorce, prior to his marriage to Brandi. These issues are clearly marital issues, yet they lie outside of the narrow focus as requested by 3-ABN.

I acknowledge that this commission cannot be expected to consider every one of the issues that are considered important by everyone. But, I think it is important that this commission issue a statement of such limitations, and that therefore interested parties are free to pursue redress in other venues, to include the civil authorities. After all, God established civil government, and directed all of us to submit to its rule, when not in conflict with God. This all is related to my critical issue # 2.

b) Re: "ASI has no jurisdiction. . . [and is without] authority to make orders and awards that disputants are required to follow."

I agree wholeheartedly with the above. ASI is very limited in what it can accomplish. To place what Harold then states in words of my own: ASI can only make findings of fact, and recommendations. Again, this is related to my critical issue # 2. With this perspective, ASI cannot require binding resolution. There must be an acknowledgement that the parties are free to reject, and to see other venues for resolution. If any of the parties should do so, the findings of fact, and recommendations of the Commission would play a role as to how the SDA public perceived this situation. From this perspective, I believe that the parties would carefully consider such findings and recommendations, before rejecting them. I believe that this would be helpful.

c) Re: The Biblical appropriateness of the divorce and the

remarriage.

We are on uncertain ground with this one, as important as it is. Regardless of the CHURCH MANUAL, we as a denomination do not agree with what constitutes Biblical grounds, and remarriage following divorce. In my personal opinion, as applied to this situation Biblical grounds must be limited to sexual misconduct, and what is commonly considered to be adultery. This presents us with a problem. Danny and 3-ABN (Dr. Thompson) have clearly stated, many times, that they have no proof that Linda violated what I have just laid out above. From this standpoint, by the thinking of some, with this admission from Danny and 3-ABN, the Commission can only find that Linda did not provide Danny with Biblical grounds for divorce. I agree with that position, until it is proven to me that she did commit adultery.

NOTE: In my mind, and that of many conservative SDAs so-called "spiritual adultery" and adultery in one's thoughts are not Biblical grounds. ASI will clearly, in my mind be off the conservative platform if it suggests any such do constitute Biblical grounds. Any such opinion coming from it will highly disturb its conservative base of support.

In my thinking, the worst that Linda might be charged with (I do not say she should be charged with such.) is what is professionally known as "transference." I will say more about transference later. But, such to me is not Biblical grounds for divorce. Transference takes place in many settings (counselor & counselee, physician & patient, pastor & member, lawyer & client, and more.) It is a fact of life. Under some constructs it is a valid, positive effect that is necessary for helping relationships to take place.

There is also another issue here that is raised due to the fact that the SDA church is divided in regard to what are Biblical grounds for divorce and remarriage. It is a fundamental issue under law that people be treated equally. It is likely that people are not treated equally in this issue, and are treated according to the congregation in which they find themselves. The ASI Committee should consider not only Biblical grounds, the CHURCH MANUAL, but also the typical way that people are treated today in SDA congregations. I.e. They should not treat either Danny or Linda more strictly than they would be treated in the typical

local congregation. This is required by basic fairness.

Retention in a position of spiritual leadership is an appropriate consideration. I.e. A person might be retained in church membership, yet removed from a position of major ministry. When such is done, there is an obligation to treat all in the same manner. E.g. If Linda is to be examined as to her conduct, and whether or not she should be retained in a position of spiritual leadership, so also should Danny be examined. And, her treatment should also be examined in relation to other people who may also have been charged with sexual misconduct.

d) Re: Issues of Danny and Linda's employment:

ASI can only recommend. It cannot enforce. ASI potentially could recommend that Danny be relieved from all employment at 3-ABN, if this was thought to be appropriate. However, it is a stretch of the imagination to believe that such would happen if ASI were to recommend it.

As to Linda: Realistically, she could not effectively return to 3-ABN unless there was a major change in leadership to include the Board. She simply would not be allowed to effectively work there, and would likely be marginalized.

e) Re: Issues regarding Linda's membership:

Linda is presently a member, in good standing, in a SDA Church recognized by a recognized SDA Conference. Her membership should not be an issue.

Should ASI consider how she was treated by her church of former membership? Perhaps? Maybe? I am not certain? What would be accomplished? Within the denominational rules that are supposed to govern such, local congregations have the authority, right or wrong. Perhaps the best that could be said might be to say that the relationship between Linda, the local congregation, the Conference and its leadership, and 3-ABN, was of such a nature that denominational rules in existence did not provide the guidance that was needed, and that therefore issues of potential ethical conflicts arise out of this situation.

NOTE: I am not attempting to prejudge the case, or to

suggest that there is only one conclusion that the Committee may make. I think that there are many aspects of this case that present very hard questions and I am not certain that ASI can resolve them. Perhaps, however, they can raise issues that may be resolved for future situations should they rise again.

f) Re: Fundamentals as outlined by Mr. Lance:

He has listed a number which are of value.

g) Re: Selection of the Panel, # 10:

More is involved than just selecting people who are fair, intelligent, spiritual, and without preconceived opinion. I will suggest that the panel should have members who may have expertise in some areas. E.g. If the panel is to consider that "transference" is a factor in the development of the problems (I do not say it was.), the panel should have someone on it that can be considered some kind of expert on transference and its meaning in a relationship as in question here.

If the ethical standards of Dr. A. come into question, the panel should have someone on it who can discuss the professional ethical standards for a person in Dr. A's position in Norway, where he lives. There may be some common ethical standards that are present everywhere. But, ethical standards are often determined in part by local law and culture. I.e. If it is unethical for a physician in the US to give a specific gift to a patient, one cannot say that such would be unethical in Norway.

h) Re: Items A - F, on page 3, in regard to legal practices that Mr. Lance does not think apply.

I think a so-called "judge," or someone who can direct the panel, might be helpful under some situations, if carefully chosen.

I also believe that there may be situations where it might be helpful to take depositions, such as dealing with women who have charged someone with sexual misconduct.

The issue of a record is important. There must be enough detail to provide a historical record for the future.

i) Re: Balance between privacy and openness.

There is a clear place for privacy. Women who accuse someone of sexual misconduct must have some expectation of privacy. Society in general recognizes such.

However, society distinguishes between common people and public figures. Danny and Linda are both public figures. Both have been accused publicly of major sins. Neither rightly has the expectation of privacy that a common person might have. In any case, with the publication of their alleged sins for the world to read, privacy is not the answer at this time. In fairness to both of them, a final report should report findings on the accusations that have been made against them. As public figures, the SDA public needs to know such findings. If this is not done, these issues will not go away. They will remain in public view and under public discussion.

j) One final note, although not brought up in this document by Mr. Lance: ASI must accept the decision of the respective parties as to who represents that party before ASI. ASI cannot automatically exclude anyone.

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