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From: Michael Loftis [<mailto:mloftis=abwe.org@mcsv149.net>] **On Behalf Of** Michael Loftis

To: [ABWE Missionaries past/present]

Sent: Sat, April 9, 2011 11:59:22 AM

Subject: FW: Message from Dr. Loftis

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Beloved Missionary Family:

Thank you for your faithful service for Jesus Christ and your prayers for us. We need them now more than ever.

Perhaps you are aware of reports about past incidents related to a former ABWE missionary, which I would like to address. On March 15, I was informed by our staff of a blog authored by an ABWE adult MK telling of her abuse by a former ABWE missionary doctor in Bangladesh, Dr. Donn Ketcham. Other MKs have joined the blog to share their own stories of abuse or suspected abuse by the same individual. The pain of these young women and their families is heart wrenching.

When the mission was first informed of a single accusation of sexual abuse in 1989, Donn Ketcham was immediately confronted by his administrator. He confessed to ABWE leaders his abuse of a minor along with other immoral relationships and was terminated by the ABWE Board. The Ketchams' supporting churches were informed of his dismissal for moral failure. However, Donn Ketcham did not truthfully disclose the details of the moral failure to his sending church, although he had agreed to do so. Unfortunately, no report was filed at that time with authorities in the State of Michigan where he resided.

In 2002, at an MK retreat, Jo Beth and I were approached by several young women who shared their suspicions of abuse by Donn Ketcham. ABWE immediately offered to help these women, including providing financial assistance for counseling and other personal needs. I also made a

request for an investigation into the matter. While nothing can wipe away what happened to these women, some women from the 2002 retreat have recently shared that they appreciated the counseling they received, funded by ABWE, and as a result have experienced healing in their lives.

Several other actions have been taken in recent days:

- Our Board and Administration have issued a public apology to the young women and their families for the pain that has been caused by all of this.
- On March 29, ABWE filed a report with the Michigan Bureau of Health Professionals. Their investigative division notified us that an investigation has been initiated based on our report.
- On April 5, ABWE contacted the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (a child abuse crime-reporting entity).
- Additionally, the Board will pursue an independent, third-party investigation to determine the extent of this abuse, ABWE's handling of the matter, and a future course of action.
- The Board has recently appointed a Commission to recommend an independent, third-party investigator. I am requesting that all ABWE personnel fully cooperate with the independent investigation.

At this time I do not believe there was an intentional cover-up by our administration in the past or the present. It is my prayer that an independent investigation will make that clear. I would ask for your patience for the investigation to be completed before you make any judgments in the matter. Once completed, the Board will review the investigator's report for facts regarding the mission administration's actions.

The most important response we can make together at this time is to pray. Pray for the young women who were terribly wronged by the actions of Donn Ketcham. Pray for God's healing and blessing in their lives. Pray for Donn to confess his sin and ask forgiveness of those he has wronged. Pray for our mission leadership as we desire reconciliation with our adult MKs. Pray as we undergo a season of testing such as we have never known. Pray for wisdom for our Board as they will soon select an independent investigator.

Our Board and Administration are doing everything we can to work through this matter with integrity and compassion. Jo Beth and I are heartbroken for the pain and trauma this situation has brought about in the lives of our MKs and families.

I believe in the integrity of our current missionary field administrators. They are godly, committed men and women who have consistently and courageously confronted sin in our ranks whenever it became known. They continue to share in caring for our missionary family as well as communicating with our sending and supporting churches through this trial. They deserve your support and your prayers.

In the 84 years since ABWE was founded, our missionary family has lost both men and women to moral failure. All such sin is indefensible and inexcusable. Yet this is why we hold on to the gospel while still throbbing with the pain and destruction of sin. That destruction in our lives and that of others around the world is the very reason we continue to follow Christ's command, "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.*" (Mark 16:15)

The sins of one man and their shameful consequences are horrendous. Yet, they do not negate the decades of sacrifice and faithful gospel ministry of thousands of missionaries, churches, and local partners serving Christ around the world.

Jo Beth and I would love to visit personally with each of you about this matter; regrettably that is logistically impossible at the moment. Please remember that we are praying for you and ask that you do the same for the mission. We believe, along with our Board, leadership team, and staff, that God will bring ABWE through this more purified and better prepared to prevent and deal with such sin more effectively in the future. Please contact your field administrator with any questions you may have.

Kneeling with you at the foot of the cross,

Michael G. Loftis (President)

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