

John Kozlowski

From: John Kozlowski <John@Kozlowski.org>
Sent: Friday, February 7, 2014 5:23 AM
To: 'Chris Bitterman'
Subject: RE: reply

Chris,

Please note that I wrote that I would ponder it some more, not that I committed to doing it. It is an encouraging thought that a third party might act as a communications channel to my wife, but that is the reason I contacted you. That seems to be a role a pastor should be willing to take on.

Another friend and I have discussed the issue with the sentiment in the direction of the wisdom of not using the professional course. I have heard a sermon on the issue that I am trying to find to re-listen to that gave some rationale for that sentiment.

There are also numerous theological issues I have had with the counselors I have known, especially at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

I am also concerned about the encroachment of worldly ways into the church and sense this is true on the counseling issue. While I didn't voice it while there it was a concern to me when Meadowview brought in a professional counseling organization into the church.

There is much empirical evidence before me on this such as what has happened subsequent to my heart attack last year. The advice was medical professionals and chemical based pharmacology. I went plant based and I am probably healthier than I have ever been.

I see this also in education, politics, business, etc. I have been intensely studying history of these areas and finding how the church has abandoned the Lord in these areas and followed the world. I so very much want my family back, but clearly do not believe that I must abandon the Lord's ways to do so.

This is why I am pondering this, and not blindly jumping in.

Respectfully,

John Kozlowski



Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: (423) 716-1066

PO Box 551, Cleveland, TN 37364-0551

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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Thursday, February 06, 2014 4:40 PM

To: John Kozlowski

Subject: Re: reply

John,

I am glad to respond. This is a painful world and our journey through it is so painful; I hope in the Lord's deliverance--not just for you, but for me as well.

My hope was that somehow the man I know would be willing to meet with you because he is excellent. However he wisely declined doing Skype sessions with someone new that he had not even met.

If you can find a good counselor (I have gone through several who were nice people, but not helpful) and allow the counselor access to DJ, I think it would be a great blessing. I will continue to pray for God's provision here.

Keep me posted,

Chris

On Wed, Feb 5, 2014 at 5:51 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

Thank you for the detailed response. I am very appreciative.

About two years ago my wife mentioned, perhaps only once, the idea of counseling. It was not offered with vigor and I was initially confused as to why she brought it up.

I have spoken to a pastor/friend who has given much counsel. Some of it cause repentance on my part in major areas. However, he was not successful in communicating with my wife. My assumption was that he was perceived as on "my team".

The idea of a third party that neither my wife or I currently know has merit and he might be someone who could actually act as an intermediary. I did actually speak with a counselor while discussing a business proposal and we touched a bit on my situation.

I have earnestly pursued with many that they would point out to me my sin. While that has been enlightening, I see your point about trained eyes.

I will ponder this some more.

Thank you again for the response. I am very encouraged you were willing to take the time.

Respectfully,

John Kozlowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:(423)716-1066)



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ShofarNexus.com • ShofarDomain.com • ShofarPortfolio.com • ShofarLeaks.com

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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 4:58 PM

To: John Kozlowski

Subject: Re: reply

John,

In His wisdom God has so designed us to need one another. Years ago when I was in great darkness, my pastor told me I should pursue counseling. I thought to myself, "I have the Bible; I have the Holy Spirit; if God wants to speak to me He will." It took me years of therapy to begin to realize that I would never...no, I **could never ever ever** have helped myself out of the trouble I was in. God used people to help me. This was a great realization for me. I recognized that God so designed the body of Christ that we CANNOT fix ourselves--we need to ask for help. I see this as part of His grace to us through the body of Christ. He resists the proud ("*I don't need counseling!*"), but gives grace to the humble ("*Will you help me?*"). Since that time I have pursued help through specialist who deal with people having my challenges. I could never have seen what I see now without the ministry of other Christians speaking into my life.

The recommendation I had for you was going to be that you begin counseling with a counselor I have used, and who has proven very helpful to me and Ginger. He is a godly, wise man, so I called him and asked him if he would be willing to see you by Skype, but he advised against it for good reasons. So I am advising you to seek out a godly counselor who can walk through these difficult waters with you. Here are several things I see as important:

1. The counselor should be a Christian.

2. The counselor should be helpful. I have gone to many counselors; not all are helpful. If the one I was going to was not helpful I stopped going to them and sought another. When I found someone who helped me, I settled in there and followed their counsel carefully.
3. The counselor should be licensed. Having someone speak into your life who is inadequately trained is a disservice to yourself. We should seek godly wisdom, and a man / woman who will not submit themselves to be under the authority and supervision of other counselors is not exercising godly wisdom. "Lay counselors" are a dime-a-dozen and in my experience that is about all they are worth because they have not put in the hard work of learning about how people's minds work; how God has wired the body electrically and chemically, what research has taught us, what the ethical issues are facing counselors...etc. A man who will not submit to learning and the acquisition of available knowledge is not going to be a good counselor, and is arrogant before he gets started.
4. You should pay for the counseling yourself . Studies show that people who pay for their own counseling heal faster than people whose counseling is sponsored by others. Furthermore, given your history, I think this is a critical point in your healing. If you are not willing to pay--you are not ready to heal. If you are not willing to *raise* the money to pay, you do not want healing very badly. I pay for my own counseling out of my pocket--insurance does not cover it. People find money for what they want.
5. Give the counselor permission to speak to your wife, and pay him for his time in doing this. This is critical to you seeing what it is like to live with you. None of us sees himself accurately. We self-protect, self-justify, project blame, and avoid responsibility...etc. no different from Adam. We cannot see what we need to see about ourselves without the help of those around us. Your counselor likely will not know you from Adam and all he/she has to go on is your perceptions. While that is good, it can be better if you will allow DJ to speak into your healing. Furthermore, it will send a message to her that you want to heal; you want to repent; you do not think you are the end of all knowledge but have humbled yourself to seek help...and many other good messages. I suspect that if you ask her to participate in your counseling by being available to speak to your counselor, it will encourage her more than any other single thing you can do right now.
6. Prepare for a long road. You did not develop your ways of thinking and living overnight and you will not see changes overnight. This road to thinking and living rightly is a long one--a good one, but a long one. There is no such thing as a quick fix. That is OK as long as you recognize that going in. This process will begin when you ask for help and will continue for many, many years. That is OK.

That is enough for now. You have my recommendation. May God guide you as He promised.

Chris

On Tue, Feb 4, 2014 at 12:54 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

Thank you for your response. I am truly appreciative.

I fully agree that it is through Christ alone that these issues will be resolved. Several miraculous events in the past 18 months have made that all the more vivid to me.

While I know I am not pure, I do not embrace your suggestion of "deliverance you will not accept". You haven't been in my shoes lately and have no idea of what has happened and how I have changed. It hurts me immensely that my wife does not know either.

This mess I have created must first be understood. Granted my views have been tainted by circumstances. There wasn't a clue in my mind that my wife would leave me. I do seek to understand.

I am willing and grateful to receive your recommendation.

Respectfully,

John Kozlowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:(423)716-1066)



PO Box 551, Cleveland, TN 37364-0551

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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 11:31 AM

To: John Kozlowski

Subject: Re: reply

John,

You asked for help...the only help I can offer is to YOU. I cannot talk about DJ's sins, the church's sins, the government's sins, PCA church's and pastor's sins, my sins for not responding quickly enough, or everyone else who is "wrong". You will only be helped when you see, face, and own *your* sins as your foundational problem. When you stop surrounding yourself with the protective wall of everyone else's sins and see your self as the one who needs the most help, then I believe we could begin to hope for progress toward ultimate reconciliation.

I cannot reveal that to you; Christ can, but I am not sure you are at that point yet. I see you right now as securely protected in a castle you have created by building walls which justify you. Inside those walls which you carefully maintain, you cry out for deliverance, define what your deliverance should look like, protect yourself from other's efforts to touch you, and strongly guard against any attack on your fortress of self-justification. So you reach out for a deliverance you will not accept, while you maintain the dungeon which imprisons you.

Would it be right for your marriage to ultimately be restored? Yes. Would it be right for your family to ultimately be restored? Yes. But I am not sure you are at a point yet to receive help. That much is obvious in your communications.

When I find myself in your self-protective stance (and I do often), my only hope is for rescue from above. I know we cannot rescue ourselves out of the mess we have created. I need Christ. I will borrow a metaphor which I find helpful. We are like a caterpillar in the midst of an encroaching ring of grass fire. We do not need Christ to *help* us because there is nothing we can do to foster our rescue. We need Him to *save* us--pure and simple--100% Him; 0% us. Your only hope is help from above. I am not saying that tritely, I mean it literally. If Jesus does not save John, all will be lost.

The good thing is that I think you see that you cannot fix your life, and that is cause for hope. At least you acknowledge the ring of fire is beyond anything you can control, fix, or remedy. That is the place I would start, and I think you are already there.

The second step is going to be a bigger one; if you are to get help toward reconciliation, you will have to come to the point to realize that this is a mess you have created. I do not think you are there, and until you are, I would not expect change. I doubt that you will come to that conclusion by yourself, I think you will need help. Your sinful condition in Adam has rendered your life a shambles, and like him, you will blame everyone else. This is the pattern of all of us, and until we are rescued by grace, we will believe our own press above everyone else's.

If you are willing, I have a recommendation which I believe could be helpful.

Chris

On Mon, Feb 3, 2014 at 5:27 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

While I am most appreciative that you are the only one in the PCA that has responded more than once, I was seeking a conversation and waiting one to three weeks for a response is not much of a conversation.

I heard my wife's voice for the first time in six months Saturday while I was attempting to speak with my kids on my birthday. Her voice remains music to my ears as I told her. However, her unwillingness to address anything directly with me, which has been true for 18 months, is a concern and a heartbreak. There appears to be something else going on that I am unaware of. This is a concern for our kids, for her, and for me.

My wife has stated in the past that I follow my convictions when enlighten. Repentance requires enlightenment. Tossing out one reference is not enlightening.

While I was at Volvo in Greensboro I did a 3 month contract in two weeks working slowly. It cost my family tens of thousands of dollars but I remain convinced my work was honoring to the Lord. I was condemned for not milking it. When I worked at a defense contractor, and effectively stole over \$100K from the taxpayers, I was condemned for speaking out. Today I am working to defeat the NSA spying and I have numerous people tell me directly that they don't want to be involved because they fear the government, but I guess they are willing to live in slavery. Perhaps Rev 21:8 reference to cowards is applicable. Things like this have impacted my views and my deeds.

I am also aware that many of my efforts were either wrongly motivated or improperly executed. The risks that I took cost my family dearly. I confess that that is true. I don't see how that justifies my wife abandoning the commitment she made to the Lord to remain one with me.

When I was new in the faith in the 80s and working with several pro-life groups, churches warmly accepted us when we spoke against surgical abortion. As I matured and learned about chemical abortion and the violation of the Lord's first command to be fruitful and multiply, the church shunned the message. It was disheartening but as time went on it also showed to be the tip of the iceberg.

While at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga I would often be part of a Wednesday night prayer. The submission to the world was overwhelming in the requests and the prayers, especially by the leadership. In a discussion with the Clerk of the Session he firmly criticized the efforts of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I contend that the church was simply offering "cheap grace" which Bonhoeffer described as the mortal enemy of our church. This was the fundamental reason I wanted my family out of that church. I will stand with Bonhoeffer's idea to "not just to bandage the victims under the wheel, but to jam a spoke in the wheel itself." Otherwise we are back to the coward question.

I could continue with the efforts and grief that have transpired since my wife left me, but there is probably little point. One of my greatest sins in this time has been depression, which I believe is a lack of trust in the Lord. It has cost me a lot of time and money and the ripple effects are clear. However last week was probably the second worst week in my life and I got through it remarkably well. The Lord has continued to show His grace toward me.

Contrary to advice I have been given by some in the church, I will not abandon my wife. I will do what I can to leave the door open to reconciliation. I harbor no ill will towards her. I will continue to seek an understanding of my past sins to know what I must do in the future, i.e. I am striving to repent of my sin. At the same time, where there has been obedience, or working in the right direction, even when costly, it is my prayer to press on with more vigor.

If you sense frustration in my words, you are interpreting it correctly. The evidence that has been set before me, some of which has been documented elsewhere, is that I am dealing with a cult or church patterned after the one in Sardis. You can ignore that or write me off because of it, but before you do I ask that you seriously consider it.

The bottom line is I love my wife and children and desire reconciliation. I seek your help in doing that.

Respectfully,

John Kozłowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:(423)716-1066)



PO Box 551, Cleveland, TN 37364-0551

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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:57 PM

To: John Kozłowski

Subject: Re: reply

John,

You wrote me and asked me to "help you understand" and to know from what to "repent". I responded to you about **you** because that is what you requested. Is it repentance from your own sins which you seek counsel on, or have I misunderstood your requests?

Chris

On Wed, Jan 22, 2014 at 5:53 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

Your statement "1 Timothy 5:8" leaves the impression that I have been just going along with life living on the work of others. This is bogus. I will give you Proverbs 18:17 as before.

Even if 1 Timothy 5:8 had merit in our case, how does it nullify Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:22-24, 1 Peter 3:1-2, Colossians 3:18, 1 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:11, etc.

I will also quote the statement I wrote previously about the PCA's position:

The PCA discussed at length the issue of marriage and divorce in 1992 and approved numerous statements on the issue. I assert that to what degree PCA members or leadership have been involved, they are **contrary to the PCA's position**.

The PCA stands against separation in marriage. Therefore I assert that this separation is in violation of the PCA General Assembly's guidance. The following is from page 228 with my emphasis added.

Indeed, separation of any kind as a means of dealing with marital difficulty and preventing divorce not only is **neither recommended nor mentioned in Scripture**, but seems to be contrary to a fundamental principle of Biblical spirituality, viz. that what **ought not to be done, ought not to be approached**.

There is also no hint of physical abuse. The most that can be argued is that my response our situation caused emotional stress. This is the only remotely related issue to abuse. However, even *abuse* is not a cause for separation. Page 229 continues with the following with my emphasis added.

The fact remains that Scripture does not address the circumstance of an abusive husband. As is the case in any other area of Biblical ethics, one cannot extract from Scripture a comprehensive statement of all possible applications of a divine law. Rather, it is left to the church to apply Biblical norms, with the direction provided by the casuistry Scripture does supply, to the untold number of situations which must be faced. It is important to acknowledge that the view that

—desertion in 1 Corinthians 7 cannot be made to refer to anything but actual departure from house and home and the view we have stated above are both extrapolations from the Scriptural statements. **No one can appeal to a Biblical statement concerning the duty or the liberty of a battered spouse.**

I contend that the actions taken, both the physical separation and the legal separation are in violation of the counsel of the PCA. I implore all who are leadership or members of the PCA to heed the General Assembly's statements, cease and desist in facilitating this separation, and actively work to restore our family.

Grabbing on to one verse, not verifying it, violating a list of others and then destroying a family does not seem befitting of the Christian character.

Respectfully,

John Kozlowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:423-716-1066)



PO Box 551, Cleveland, TN 37364-0551

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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2014 4:45 PM

To: John Kozlowski

Subject: Re: reply

1 Timothy 5:8

On Mon, Dec 30, 2013 at 7:51 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

Thank you for your reply. I must confess that after waiting for three weeks for a response my respect for you had diminished greatly. I am grateful that recovery on that is at hand.

Consider me the Ethiopian who asks “How can I, unless someone guides me?” You haven’t said what I must repent of.

If it is my effort to understand and be obedient to Christ, then no, I will not repent of that. If it is because in my efforts to be obedient I have made mistakes and caused others grief, I do acknowledge my mistakes and the sin behind them, but I will not repent of efforts to be obedient to the Lord. I lament the grief I have caused, but not the motivation.

If it is because in my efforts I took risks that caused my family to suffer, then again, I will not repent of the motivation to be obedient to the Lord, while lamenting the grief I cause my own family. Where my motivations pure? Of course not; it would be foolish to say so.

Do I believe my wife was justified in abandoning her marriage covenant? Absolutely not. I do not believe she has any scriptural justification and grieve that when I bring up scripture on this subject I get comments like my arguments are sophistry, “we have already said” without saying, or the occasional “you are right”.

Do I believe my wife and children are more harmed by being separated from me than any trouble they had with me? Yes.

Do I understand why my wife will not communicate with me? No.

Do I know why the treatment I have received is identical to what cults do? No.

Do I see the Lord’s grace in all of this? Remarkably so, but I’ll leave that for another time.

Given the above, I still set before you: “repent from what?”

Respectfully,

John Kozłowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:(423)716-1066)



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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Monday, December 30, 2013 7:04 PM

To: John Kozlowski

Subject: Re: reply

John,

There is no condemnation here...I have my own record of offenses and cannot condemn.

I truly do not believe that my talking with you would lead to anything but just talking. Hence my reply.

My response was based on the John I have watched for a decade; not on anything you would or would not say if we talked. Your actions speak consistently and there has been no change (repentance).

I do not believe that there is anything I can say that will help you. By that I do not mean that you are beyond help, but that you are not ready for help or would not receive help. If repentance was evident I would not be writing these words; I would do what I could to help. Until then we would both be wasting our time corresponding.

Your name has been in my personal prayer notebook for years, and I have asked God for your deliverance. I will continue to do so.

Chris

On Wed, Dec 11, 2013 at 6:31 PM, John Kozlowski <John@kozlowski.org> wrote:

Chris,

Thank you for your reply. It fails to address “repent from what?” I’m afraid you are treating me as condemned before hearing the case. I thought you would do better than that. May I remind you of Proverbs 18:17 “*The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.*”

I suggest that the closed door I have received is akin to the treatment of an ex-Jehovah’s Witness or Mormon. There is no contact or communication. Has the PCA turned into a cult?

I have contended from scripture. My rebuke is silence or slander, even from pastors with doctorates. Do you think this would cause some bitterness in me?

I welcome your communication. I hope you can see that your initial response disappoints me and seeds an anger that I don’t want.

Respectfully,

John Kozlowski

Email: John@Kozlowski.org • Phone: [\(423\) 716-1066](tel:(423)716-1066)



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From: Chris Bitterman [mailto:cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org]

Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2013 6:09 PM

To: John@kozlowski.org

Subject: reply

John,

You asked if I would be willing to communicate with you to help you understand. Until there is repentance explanation will not help you understand; once there is repentance explanation will not be necessary.

Chris Bitterman
Senior Pastor
Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church
cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org
www.meadowviewpca.org

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Chris Bitterman
Senior Pastor
Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church
cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org
www.meadowviewpca.org

--

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Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church
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www.meadowviewpca.org

--

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Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church
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www.meadowviewpca.org

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www.meadowviewpca.org

--

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Senior Pastor
Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church
cbitterman@meadowviewpca.org
www.meadowviewpca.org