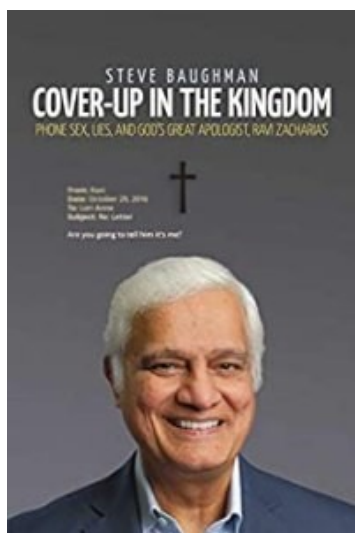


God is Big Business

The New Testament warns repeatedly that the end of the church age will be characterized by apostasy and spiritual confusion rather than faithfulness to the truth (i.e. Mat. 24:3-4, 11, 24; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:13; 4:3-4; 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 3-4). [1]

The above quote is from a recent report written by David Cloud of Way of Life Literature, in which he exposes the apostasy and failures of "worship pastor," Darlene Zschech and the rest of the folks associated with Hillsong. Does your church use some of their music? If so, your church is paying a royalty to Hillsong, which also means your church is supporting the doctrinal errors embedded within Hillsong's systemic apostasy.

Over the past week, I've been researching numerous organizations within Christendom including Ravi Zacharias and the abject failure surrounding him and his so-called "ministry." I thought I was done writing about Ravi, but there is so much there that demands attention and a biblical response.



I just finished reading attorney [Steve Baughman's](#) book called "*Cover-Up in the Kingdom...*" The most fascinating thing about this book is that it is written by an *atheist*, who addressed the issues fairly and did not use the book to poke fun at God or Christianity in general. Baughman's objective was to bring the facts of Ravi's putrid hidden lifestyle to the fore. I find it incredibly sad that an atheist had to do this, apparently because precious few within Christendom were willing to do so. This does not mean that Christians did not try to bring the explosive evidence to the fore. Some did but they were cut off at the pass and frankly, those cutting them off were either the board of [Ravi Zacharias International Ministries \(RZIM\)](#), or others outside that organization, in separate churches or religious orgs who felt the need to support and go to bat for Ravi against the allegations. Why?

Baughman's book is filled with one concrete form of documentation after another. Only a blind person would fail to see the reality and there are plenty of blind people apparently within Christendom. I watched a brief video on YouTube the other day produced by a young man who was effusive in his praise regarding what he felt the board at RZIM was *now* doing. We had a few polite exchanges in the comment section. His perspective is that, as far as he knows, the board did not attempt to cover up or sweep under the rug the allegations against Ravi. I pointed to Steve Baughman's book as one just source where Baughman shows that at the very least, those on the RZIM board did attempt to negate all allegations against their dear leader, Ravi.

I also pointed to the folks at [Ministry Watch](#), who have posted numerous articles on the Ravi debacle and even published an article titled "*The Way Back...*" related to what they believe RZIM can do to regain some measure of integrity. I am of a different opinion. I believe RZIM should take a two-fold approach. First, they should seek out every victim of Ravi's sexual predation,

offer them some type of generous public settlement without any form of Non-Disclosure Act (and also remove the NDA from Lori Anne and Brad from Canada who were dragged through the mud by RZIM and the press), and, second, RZIM should simply return any remaining monies to donors and then *close its doors forever*.

As can be expected, there are plenty of professing Christians who continue to state that we should not "judge." After all, we are all fallen creatures saved only by God's grace extended to us. That of course is true, but this idea of "not judging" is increasingly becoming the battle cry of those within Christendom who choose to only emphasize God's grace as though God has nothing to do with holiness and therefore does not require it of those who follow Him. True, we are not to judge another person's *heart* condition or their *motivation* for doing something. That, however, does *not* preclude us from judging another's words or actions on their face. In fact, we are called in many places to do this (John 7:24; 1 Cor 11:5-13; Rom 12:9; 2 Tim 2:16-17; 3 John 1:9-10, etc.). We are called to make correct judgments and of course, our judgment should always begin with ourselves, but this does not mean we should never judge the words or actions of someone else who claims to be a Christian. In fact, we *must* do this, comparing those words and actions to our highest authority - Scripture.

The idea that Christians are simply supposed to throw judgment (discernment) to the wind and embrace everything and everybody is anathema and unscriptural. With respect to what light the Bible may shed on Ravi's *actions*, let's also turn to the Bible.

1 John 3 deals with the practice of sinning for the Christian.

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Mark those words. What is John telling us? Very simply, first, he is *not* speaking about some form of sinless perfection that we attain in this life. This is a fallacy of the "holiness" movement, which by the way, Dr. Harry Ironside deals with in detail in his book "Holiness the False & the True." No, John the apostle is telling us a very simple, but powerful truth and it not only applies to all Christians but to those even who *claim* to be Christian.

John is saying that if we "abide" in Him (which means to have *fellowship* with Him in our daily lives), we will not "sin." The force of what John is saying here means simply that if we are in fellowship with God in Christ, it is impossible for us to *continue practicing sin*. It is that simple. So, for instance, the person who "earned" a living by theft prior to becoming a Christian must no longer do that after becoming a Christian. Theft should no longer be part of that person's life.

But suppose the thief continued stealing after becoming a Christian? John says that is impossible (v 9). Why? Because the authentic Christian has been baptized into the true Church of Jesus; His Body. The Holy Spirit takes up residence within the authentic believer, sealing that person and working within them to guide them into everything that is holy and right. If the thief who stole before being a Christian tries to continue that lifestyle, they will fall under God's discipline and chastisement, redirecting them to right living.

If the Holy Spirit is unable to persuade the Christian to do what is right, God may then opt to remove that person from this life. This is what Paul referenced in his letters to the Corinthian church. Christians would do very well to take note of what the Bible says about continuing in sin.

So looking at the words of John in 1 John 3, it becomes clear then that if we are truly born of God (v 9), we will no longer live to practice sin. This does not mean we will never sin because we will sin from time to time. However, we will not endeavor to design our life so that we not only make occasion to sin, but do everything we can to cover it over and keep it hidden.

What about Ravi? It seems clear based on what has come out (and I'm sure more will rise to the surface), that Ravi not only *actively* sinned as a lifestyle, but did everything he could to cover it up and did so for decades. When one of his first victims - Lori Anne of Canada - essentially told him via his "secure" Blackberry (that he had invited her to use for communication with him), that she could no longer deal with her guilt and she believed she must tell her husband, Ravi's reaction to her was that if she went through with that, he would essentially commit suicide.

These are not the words of an authentic Christian who had already spent years lying about his credentials (he had no earned doctorates and lied about teaching at Oxford, etc.) and covering that trail as best as possible. After that, Ravi moved onto another form of practicing sin, one that was sexual deviancy. Here was a man married to one woman, of whom he said he loved with all his heart. Yet, he was the one who asked Lori Anne for explicit photographs of her to be sent to his Blackberry.

Moreover, Ravi was part owner of at least one massage parlor in the Atlanta area (possibly two), he also supported a number of massage therapists in Asia, paying rent on their condos. Why does

a "man of God" need massage parlors? Supposedly he had a bad back. Did he ever hear of a doctor or chiropractor?

In other words, my main point is that in every possible way, Ravi Zacharias not only did what he could to enjoy a lifestyle of sinful practices, but he also did what he could to cover up that lifestyle. Unfortunately, too many sought to help him to do, thereby enabling him to continue victimizing women. Only God knows how many women victims are scattered throughout the world. My understanding is that Ravi was not a member of any local church or at least did not regularly attend any church. In short, there was really no oversight and he obviously had no accountability to anyone.

Let me close this article by asking some important questions regarding the unparalleled growth of apostasy in the visible church today.

1. Why are so many "ministries" named after the person who started it?
2. Why are these "ministries" able to bring in *millions per year?
3. Why are leaders continually protected?
4. Why are their devout (sycophant) followers hold leaders up as nearly perfect and don't allow others to offer critiques?
5. Why are there many positions in these "ministries" that are full-time, with paychecks in some cases that reach into the six figure incomes?
6. Why do such leaders often have multiple homes, many cars, big vacations, etc.?
7. Why are the boards filled with family and close friends and the CEO is likely a son or daughter?

In short, in cases like Ravi Zacharias, the leaders are "cash cows" for that "ministry" and that's all that matters. Truth doesn't matter. Accountability is non-existent. If it "helps" the Kingdom then let it be is the attitude.

I firmly believe the fallout will become far worse as time progresses. How dare we, the church, take time to criticize political leaders when our own house needs cleansing! How dare we seek to cover over the sins of the famous and greedy under the guise or belief that "Well, in spite of Ravi's sins, undoubtedly some good occurred for God's Kingdom."

[1] https://www.wayoflife.org/database/darlene_zschech_and_praise.html

*Ravi's "ministry" is said to have brought in nearly \$50 *million* in one year according to public records