

The SBC, Clergy Sexual Abuse, and Female “Pastors”

BY [SETH DUNN](#) · PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 11, 2019 · UPDATED FEBRUARY 11, 2019

“While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.” Article VI, The Church, [Baptist Faith and Message 2000](#)

Yesterday, *The Houston Chronicle* released the [first](#) of a devastating three part series entitled “Abuse of Faith: 20 years, 700 victims: Southern Baptist sexual abuse spreads as leaders resist reforms.” By now Southern Baptist public relations gurus should be in full crisis mode. Nothing brings bad press more than clergy sex abuse (just ask the Roman Catholic Church). In a cultural milieu where church attendance is on the wane, the last thing the Southern Baptist Convention needs is a public revelation that many of its member churches have cared more about preserving appearances than ousting the wicked and protecting the vulnerable. Caught up in the bad publicity *The Chronicle’s* story is generating are Paige Patterson, Paul Pressler, and Jerry Vines, who were all key players in the bitter fight to lead the SBC back from the brink of liberalism. Southern Baptists would do well not to confuse the sins and errors (real or perceived) of Patterson and company with the theological commitments they represent. Something good can come from the troubling information this story presents; namely more deliberate policies for protecting vulnerable young people and women in local churches. Something bad can come, too: a rejection of complementarian theology. You see, some of the shocking stories reported in *The Chronicle* are well-known to those who pay attention to the Baptist blogosphere, especially Watchblogs and Survivor Blogs. These publications have been more than willing (good for them) to melt down the golden calves of the SBC, namely Vines and Patterson. Unfortunately, the theological bent of some of these blogs is quite liberal and in contending for victims and calling for accountability, they also contend for the unbiblical notion of female “pastors.” It is with this in mind that I made the following tweet today:



Seth Dunn
@GSethDunn



I submit that a woman who claims to be a pastor is (theologically) just as bad as a sex offender who is hired as a pastor.

♥ 23 9:45 PM - Feb 10, 2019



💬 975 people are talking about this



Reaction to it has been downright vicious. If anyone cares to click on the link and read the endless stream of angry reactions, one will see just how deep-seated the hatred for biblical gender roles runs with many onlookers. Baptists reeling from bad publicity in the media would do well to remember that such people were just as God-hating today as they were before they read yesterday's expose in *The Chronicle* and are no less likely to darken the door of a theologically conservative church any time soon. Softening a theological stance as a reaction won't do any good. Admittedly, even conservative bible-believing Christians may be taken aback by what I wrote, given the timing of the statement.

They should think it through.

Is there any vocation more important than that of the pastor? Churches with females who claim that office essentially have no pastoral leadership. Their congregants walk this earth as sheep (or goats as the case may be) without a shepherd. They look for leadership to women who are in open rebellion against God. It sounds awful to say, but at least the wicked try to cover up instances of abuse. There are hundreds of signs out in front of hundreds of churches proudly advertising the names of their unqualified female "pastors."

What I tweeted today was not meant to trivialize or lessen the heinous nature of "men of God" who take sexual advantage of congregants. They are unqualified to fill the Christian pastorate and in many cases they belong behind bars. No, what I tweeted was meant to make the point that women who claim to be pastors are just as (theologically) bad. Female "pastors" violate no criminal laws. They don't

scare victims for life. Yet they do stand before men and women as Christ's undershepherds as pretenders and impostors. They lead sheep astray. This must not be forgotten.

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