

The Letter of the Unrepentant: A Public Response to Lyle Schultz

When abuse is minimized, victims ignored, and loyalty demanded... what remains is not Christ, but control.

[Jonathan McLernon](#) May 12, 2025

Introduction: Beyond Outrage

My first response when reading this was: “*Are you kidding me?*”

But that quickly faded into something more sobering: “*Of course that’s what he’d write.*”

Lyle Schultz is a senior overseer in the Two by Two church. Decades in the ministry. Countless meetings and conventions. And now, in the middle of the largest abuse scandal our fellowship has ever seen, so bad that the FBI is investigating...

And he writes this letter.

He’s not just speaking for himself. He’s speaking the language of the system: **defensive, dismissive, and cloaked in spiritual platitudes.**

This is the language of spiritual insulation. This reads like someone writing from the safety of unchecked authority.

It sounds so rehearsed that it no longer even registers as tone-deaf within its own walls.

He speaks like a man who has **never had to answer hard questions**, never had to account for his stewardship, never had to consider whether his comfortable circuit of meetings, flights, and hosted meals (**all funded by others**) might carry a sacred responsibility.

I don’t know if I’m beyond outrage... but I am beyond expecting these men to change.

So let’s take his letter line by line. Not to nitpick, but to shine light on a deeper issue.

And more importantly, let’s contrast each part with what **Spirit-led, Scripture-rooted leadership** might actually look like.

I’m not writing this because I enjoy being critical or because I want to stir up controversy. I’m writing this because silence has failed us.

Because the ministry won’t self-correct. Because if we don’t name what’s broken and contrast it with what is holy and Christlike, we leave the next generation to inherit the same disease.

1. The Grand Travelogue

Excerpt from the Letter:

“I flew direct from Bangalore to Canada via Paris... landing in Deer Lake, Newfoundland... It was special to spend time with Dale and Steve... I had never before visited Newfoundland... I had only very briefly been in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick once before... It was arranged for me to rejoin Larry Greenaway in Regina...”

What This Reveals:

There’s not a single note of humility in the way this is presented, just a casual retelling of international travel and multi-region ministry tours, funded by donations.

There is no acknowledgment that these trips are paid for by the sacrificial offerings of others. No mention of the scandal. No shared grief.

Just personal updates and praise for fellow workers, while the fellowship burns behind them.

This reads more like a retiree's newsletter than a letter from a spiritual leader shepherding people through crisis. Enjoying all the perks with none of the accountability.

What a Spirit-Led Response Might Look Like:

"Since returning from India, my heart has been burdened. I've had many sleepless nights thinking about the pain that has surfaced within our fellowship.

Before I speak of my travels, I want to say this clearly: I grieve for the victims. I grieve that we, as ministers, failed to protect them.

Wherever I've been, whether Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Regina, I've carried the weight of that sorrow with me, and I know I must own part of it."

True shepherds don't gloss over crisis. They stop and tend to the bleeding.

2. Defensive Framing of "Dissidents"

Excerpt from the Letter:

"It was good to hear reports of your convention season passing without any serious interference from dissident people... There is a movement sweeping the world to undermine confidence in the ministry and fellowship that Jesus established..."

What This Reveals:

This isn't just tone-deaf. It's spiritually abusive.

To call survivors and advocates for accountability "dissidents" is to mirror the very tactics of corrupt religious systems throughout history.

Label the wounded as enemies to preserve the power of the unrepentant.

He paints truth-tellers as troublemakers, rather than asking why the truth needed to be told in the first place.

This is **deflection and scapegoating**. Deflect the betrayal committed by leaders, and place blame on those exposing the truth.

This echoes the spirit of the Pharisees. Protecting power while silencing prophets.

What a Spirit-Led Response Might Look Like:

"There have been voices rising in grief and anger across the world. I've heard some of those voices. And while it's hard to be confronted, I know we must listen.

Some of what's being shared is painful to hear. But instead of dismissing these voices, we must discern what God might be saying through them.

To stand with the wounded is to stand with Christ, because that's where we'll find him."

Jesus didn't silence the bleeding woman. He turned toward her.

Spirit-led ministry doesn't fear hard truth, it leans into it with humility.

3. Casual Acknowledgment of Abuse... then Deflection

Excerpt from the Letter:

“Unfortunately, there have been some disappointing and unwholesome things happen amongst us. There always has been and always will be as long as human nature is part of the equation...”

What This Reveals:

This is classic spiritual deflection. *“Some bad things happened, but that’s just human nature.”*

This kind of language minimizes evil by framing it as inevitable. It doesn’t call sin by name. It offers no confession. No accountability.

Just vague acknowledgment followed by a shrug and “business as usual”.

This is **minimization masquerading as spirituality**.

To call generational sexual abuse, rape, and cover-up merely “unwholesome things” is to protect the image of the institution instead of speaking the truth.

And it’s not just dishonest... it’s **condescending**.

As if grown adults are too delicate to hear the words that victims had no choice but to live through.

As if shielding our ears is somehow more important than confronting evil.

Jesus never softened the truth to preserve appearances.

And He never minimized sin, **especially** when it harmed the vulnerable.

Imagine saying this to a survivor of abuse. “That’s just human nature.”

What a Spirit-Led Response Might Look Like:

“There has been terrible sin living in our midst. Grievous, deliberate, calculated evil.

Abuse was committed. And we didn’t act to protect the most vulnerable among us.

For that, I’m deeply sorry. I can no longer pretend this is just the reality of a fallen world. The voices of the victims are crying for justice.

It was our silence, our inaction, and our obsession with control that allowed it to flourish.”

Real repentance doesn’t hide behind generalities. It names the wrong, and it kneels in sorrow, broken-hearted and a burning desire to make it right.

4. “Support Your Leaders” (No Matter What)

Excerpt from the Letter:

“Prabhakar and Saju and their helpers are under a lot of pressure as they guide the staff through these perilous times and I urge each one of you to stand by them and give them your wholehearted support. That is the right and godly thing to do.”

What This Reveals:

Blind allegiance masquerading as faithfulness.

The implication is clear: if you love God, you will support these men *without question*, even if they’ve mishandled or minimized abuse.

This is how spiritual institutions shield power... by binding “godliness” to loyalty rather than to righteousness.

It’s also manipulative. It weaponizes spirituality to silence discernment. And it pressures sincere believers into complicity by labeling questioning as rebellion.

What a Spirit-Led Response Might Look Like:

“Our leaders are under pressure, but more importantly, they are under the eye of God. Support does not mean silence. Faithfulness does not mean blind loyalty.”

I urge you to stand for truth, even if it means asking hard questions. The most godly thing we can do right now is seek the truth, even if it leads us to uncomfortable places.”

A leader secure in God’s authority invites accountability. They don’t fear it, they welcome it as protection from self-deception and corruption.

A Christlike leader never demands loyalty to men. He calls people to loyalty to Christ.

5. A Call to “Accept What Cannot Be Changed”

Excerpt from the Letter:

“...give you the grace to accept the things you cannot change and to change the things that He shows you need to be changed in your service, attitude and spirit...”

What This Reveals:

This might be the most insidious line of the entire letter. On the surface, it sounds gentle. But this isn’t a call to lament injustice or confront sin.

It’s a call to submission.

To compliance. To keeping your head down and your spirit “quiet.”

And to be clear, what is it that he’s subtly telling us *cannot* be changed?

The structure. The secrecy. The leadership.

What a Spirit-Led Response Might Look Like:

“Some things must be changed. And if we truly follow Christ, we will not be afraid of reform.”

We have grown comfortable in our form, and in doing so, we have become complacent and allowed evil to flourish.

Our salvation does NOT reside in our form, but in Christ alone.

We must pray not for the grace to passively accept what is broken, but for the courage to confront what grieves the heart of God.”

Jesus didn’t die so we could preserve traditions. He died so we could be made new creatures in him.

And sometimes, the most faithful act is not acceptance, but holy defiance.

6. Zero Mention of Victims or Repentance

What Lyle didn’t say:

There is **not one single mention** of survivors. No apology. No grief. No call for justice. No invitation to report. No hint of repentance.

Why it’s un-Christlike:

This is perhaps the most damning omission. Jesus **always** moved toward the broken.

He called out wolves. He wept with the grieving.

He said, "Let the little children come."

When image is guarded but the innocent are not, we've wandered far from Christ.

This is a **complete inversion of the gospel**.

What a Christlike response would look like:

"To every survivor who has been harmed, I am so sorry. I failed you. We failed you. We cannot undo what was done, but we can repent, remove abusers, support healing, and rebuild this fellowship on truth, not appearances.

If we don't do this, we are no longer serving Christ."

Closing Reflections: From Broken System to Broken Bread

Let's be honest: Lyle's letter is not surprising. It's disappointing, yes. But not surprising.

It is the product of a man raised in a system that worships form over repentance, loyalty over truth, and silence over integrity.

And while I no longer expect anything different from men so deeply steeped in this culture, I still believe we must name what's broken if we ever hope to offer anything whole.

So let me say this:

If I'm going to cast my lot with anyone, it won't be with the Pharisees defending a failed system.

It will be with the wounded in the temple, and at the foot of the cross.

The ones Jesus turned toward after cleansing the temple. The ones the Pharisees left behind.

And as I move forward, writing, wrestling, reconstructing, I want to do more than just critique what was. I want to help point to what could be.

Make no mistake: I'm not trying to portray myself as a hero. I'm simply holding myself to the bare minimum of what should be expected if we dare to call ourselves followers of Jesus.

It should never be considered heroic to stand for truth.

It should not be rare or remarkable to advocate for victims.

And it should *not* be controversial to demand that self-appointed leaders root out corruption, complacency, and evil in their midst.

What's Next?

If Lyle's letter shows us anything, it's that the old guard still thinks they can suppress this reckoning with gentle words and vague warnings.

But they're wrong.

A new wave has risen up. One that's not afraid to wrestle with truth.

One that refuses to equate peace with passivity.

One that stands with survivors and fights for righteousness, no matter the cost.

If you're part of that wave, stay strong.

And if you're still undecided, still on the fence, still wondering whether to speak up, just know this:

You're not crazy.

You're not alone.

And you never needed their permission to stand for truth.

I know where I stand.