



Upon returning from our Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Dallas this past week I felt compelled to write each of you in light of the motion that was passed by our Convention that your Board revisit the original proposal you gave to Dr. Paige Patterson.

You and your board face a variety of tough situations throughout your tenure and I'm sure this recent scenario with Dr. Patterson has been one of the most challenging to date, if not the most challenging. And my wife Stephanie and I have been praying for you.

I must say that I join the many across our Convention who are a bit taken back with the latest action by the Executive Committee of your board towards Dr. Patterson and his family. I want to share with you a few things that prayerfully will help you process this situation with Dr. Patterson with more clarity as you revisit your original proposal.

As a pastor I have had to make tough decisions with staff and their families. I have tried to err on the side of grace. Time, and time again I have faced scenarios that put me in a situation that I did not choose to be in nor did I see any reason to show any grace. However, the Lord prompted me to be gracious in finances and details of a staff member as they left our team.

Even if the staff member themselves didn't deserve anything from our church I always tried to be generous for the sake of their family. Additionally, I know that most in the church would never know all the details and yet when I shared with them that we were gracious toward the family it has usually been a positive way for others in my church to absorb the change even if they didn't agree with it.

As I've talked with pastors from around our Convention, many of them, if not most, simply want to know that we have treated Dr. Patterson and his family with dignity. Even as many do not agree with your actions, knowing that Dr. Patterson and his family have been treated with a certain amount of dignity can help our Convention move forward with a lesser amount of collateral damage.

Just this past week I was having coffee with a friend of mine who is a Division One College coach. He is a strong believer and out of the blue he begins asking me about the situation with Dr. Patterson. He couldn't believe that he was dismissed with such abruptness and no compensation. He said that kind of reaction was to be expected in his line of work (although even in that world there are numerous instances where financial help is extended even in bitter disputes) but he thought that our Christian faith and practice would call us to demonstrate a bit more grace and generosity. In fact he said, even more so in the sphere of Christian ministry which is our Seminary environment.

Finally, on a more personal note, as Stephanie and I watched all of this unfold, we are reminded of a very painful time in our own ministry. We left our first pastorate after an incredible

struggle for power and control. I was 29, pastoring a larger church and it became increasingly clear that no matter the baptisms, no matter the people joining, no matter the ministry vision, there was a group of people in that church who wanted us gone. It was the darkest season in our lives. We felt rejection, pain, and we faced uncertainty financially and had no idea how God might use us, if ever.

There was no moral failing. There was no preaching of false doctrine. It was what thousands of pastors face every year: power and control issues. And so, there we were, with four children our youngest was two weeks old. My ministry was publicly questioned in front of an entire city.

Do you know how many Baptist churches reached out to help us? None. One pastor called to get the "scoop." Never heard from him again. Another pastor called to tell me that I needed counseling and that I should get different mentors in my life. Not one Baptist church reached out to my family to help. But the Non-Denominational church down the road did reach out. That pastor called me the next day and offered to take care of us financially and logistically with our children in their private school. He and I have been friends for these past 15 years.

Do you know who the two Baptist pastors were that did walk us through those dark days? Dr. Paige Patterson and Dr. Ronnie Floyd. They didn't live in our city but they never wavered in their support of my family and me. They didn't have to. They could have said, "Brad, you are young, immature, and you had your chance." They never did. On every level they walked my family and me through those dark days and never wavered. Never.

I've learned a lot of lessons through all of that pain. Too many things to discuss and share in a letter like this. But I will say this, may it never be said of us that we left a brother feeling alone and abandoned if we can help it. I'm sure you have your reasons. I'm sure you have your arguments. But I'm coming to you as a brother in Christ and fellow minister of the gospel that what I and many other pastors are simply asking for is that Dr. Patterson and his family be treated with dignity.

I believe if your board will revisit the original proposal to the Patterson family and find some ways to help them transition with dignity, that will go a long way in healing for our Convention regarding this very difficult scenario.

If I can be of any assistance in this matter, please feel free to contact me personally. My cell - [REDACTED]

Thank you for your time, prayer and consideration in this matter.

Committed To Christ,



Dr. Brad Jurkovich