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November 5, 2006

My Dear New Life Church Family,

I am so sorry. I am sorry for the disappointment, the betrayal, and the hurt. I am sorry for the horrible example I have set for you.

I have an overwhelming, all-consuming sadness in my heart for the pain that you and I and my family have experienced over the past few days. I am so sorry for the circumstances that have caused shame and embarrassment to all of you.

I asked that this note be read to you this morning so I could clarify my heart's condition to you. The last four days have been so difficult for me, my family and all of you, and I have further confused the situation with some of the things I've said during interviews with reporters who would catch me coming or going from my home. But I alone am responsible for the confusion caused by my inconsistent statements. The fact is, I am guilty of sexual immorality, and I take responsibility for the entire problem.

I am a deceiver and a liar. There is a part of my life that is so repulsive and dark that I've been warring against it all of my adult life. For extended periods of time, I would enjoy victory and rejoice in freedom. Then, from time to time, the dirt that I thought was gone would resurface, and I would find myself thinking thoughts and experiencing desires that were contrary to everything I believe and teach.

Through the years, I've sought assistance in a variety of ways, with none of them proving to be effective in me. Then, because of pride, I began deceiving those I love the most because I didn't want to hurt or disappoint them.

The public person I was wasn't a lie; it was just incomplete. When I stopped communicating about my problems, the darkness increased and finally dominated me. As a result, I did things that were contrary to everything I believe.

The accusations that have been leveled against me are not all true, but enough of them are true that I have been appropriately and lovingly removed from ministry. Our church's overseers have required me to submit to the oversight of Dr. James Dobson, Pastor Jack Hayford, and Pastor Tommy Barnett. Those men will perform a thorough analysis of my mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical life. They will guide me through a program with the goal of healing and restoration for my life, my marriage, and my family.

I created this entire situation. The things that I did opened the door for additional allegations. But I am responsible; I alone need to be disciplined and corrected. An example must be set.

It is important that you know how much I love and appreciate my wife, Gayle. What I did should never reflect in a negative way on her relationship with me. She has been and

continues to be incredible. The problem was not with her, my children, or any of you. It was created 100% by me.

I have been permanently removed from the office of Senior Pastor of New Life Church. Until a new senior pastor is chosen, our Associate Senior Pastor, Ross Parsley, will assume all of the responsibilities of the office. On the day he accepted this new role, he and his wife, Aimee, had a new baby boy. A new life in the midst of this circumstance—I consider that confluence of events to be prophetic. Please commit to join with Pastor Ross and the others in church leadership to make their service to you easy and without burden. They are fine leaders. You are blessed.

I appreciate your loving and forgiving nature, and I humbly ask you to do a few things:

1. Please stay faithful to God through service and giving.
2. Please forgive me. I am so embarrassed and ashamed. I caused this and I have no excuse. I am a sinner. I have fallen. I desperately need to be forgiven and healed.
3. Please forgive my accuser. He is revealing the deception and sensuality that was in my life. Those sins, and others, need to be dealt with harshly. So, forgive him and, actually, thank God for him. I am trusting that his actions will make me, my wife and family, and ultimately all of you, stronger. He didn't violate you; I did.
4. Please stay faithful to each other. Perform your functions well. Encourage each other and rejoice in God's faithfulness. Our church body is a beautiful body, and like every family, our strength is tested and proven in the midst of adversity. Because of the negative publicity I've created with my foolishness, we can now demonstrate to the world how our sick and wounded can be healed, and how even disappointed and betrayed church bodies can prosper and rejoice.

Gayle and I need to be gone for a while. We will never return to a leadership role at New Life Church. In our hearts, we will always be members of this body. We love you as our family. I know this situation will put you to the test. I'm sorry I've created the test, but please rise to this challenge and demonstrate the incredible grace that is available to all of us.

Ted Haggard