

June 26, 2014

I am a licensed professional counselor in private practice who volunteers as an advocate for victims of clergy sexual misconduct. For the past several years I have been in contact with a young woman who was violated by Samuel Pipim in 2011 and have learned of other victims. Samuel Pipim has never confessed to his abuse of these victims and therefore I oppose his rebaptism, which I received news of this past week.

Apparently a pastor from another state traveled to a Ghanaian church in Ohio to perform the rite. I believe Pipim's membership is still in Ann Arbor, Michigan, which is pastored by Christian Hodet.

The Adventist Church puts membership and all its ancillary aspects—baptism and church discipline such as censure and disfellowshipment—at the discretion of the local church. This practice furnishes an important protection against centralization of power; but it can be abused. Perpetrators of abuse often travel to foreign countries to obtain membership at a local church that is likely to be ignorant of their past. This rebaptism has a similar look to me, although it occurred here in the US.

I decided to issue this statement in order to give details about the reasons for my position that Pipim was not an appropriate candidate for rebaptism. I will be sending this statement to various groups across the SDA gamut.

The following is my history with the Pipim case.

In May of 2011, I read Sam Pipim's "confession" on his website. Shortly afterward I was assigned as a counselor to his victim, a girl from Botswana we have given the pseudonym Nandipa. A ministry called The Hope of Survivors, for whom I volunteer, assigned her to me. I learned that:

- Pipim abused Nandipa in January of 2011 by luring this 20 year-old woman into his hotel room under the pretense of counseling, then violating her twice in spite of her protests. She did not want sex with Samuel Pipim. She wanted his counsel, and because of his ability to

play-act as a spiritual leader, she believed he would give her godly counsel.

- Nandipa reported the abuse to the conference brethren in Botswana, and when they demanded evidence, she recorded a phone conversation with Pipim that validated that unwanted sex had occurred. They accepted this proof.
- It seems quite evident that Pipim's online "confession" came on the tails of his realization that he'd been caught, because it came shortly after Nandipa convinced the brethren in Botswana of what he'd done.
- Appropriately, the Ann Arbor SDA church disfellowshipped Pipim, and between the conference and the union he lost his license and ordination.
- From this point until May of 2012- The Hope of Survivors, myself, and others tried to disseminate the truth about what had happened in Botswana. During that time Pipim tried to rebuild his public image by writing books and continuing to interact with young people.
- In May of 2012 I learned that Pipim was scheduled to be rebaptized in June. This led several individuals, including myself, to up the ante in an effort to prevent the rebaptism, which would give what we believed to be an unrepentant offender access to more victims. I agreed with Adventist Today to do an [interview](#) about the case.

In addition to the interview, we wrote letters to leadership to prevent the rebaptism.

- On June 8 of 2012 I learned that, due to another testimony coming forth, Pipim had been forced to confess to another victim and the rebaptism had been cancelled.
- On June 22 of 2012 I and one other victim advocate received two short emails from the pseudonymous Jane Deerfield, who had read my article in Adventist Today, with the brief message to, "Please tell the victim that I believe her. Samuel Pipim sexually violated me when I was a college student 12 years ago. There are astonishing similarities in our stories."
- Now that we knew of at least three victims, and saw a pattern of "astonishing similarities" between them, our conviction that Pipim was a pathological, serial sex offender, deepened. We labored long and hard

to convince as many as we could that they should not invite him to their churches to speak or support his sham of a “ministry” in any way.

- In October of 2012 the Michigan conference issued a [statement](#) that, “Because of our expanded knowledge of [his] moral failures [plural] we strongly advise our colleagues ... to not support Samuel Pipim’s ministry such as speaking invitations, the use of his materials or any ministry activity.”

The reason for my opposition to Samuel Pipim’s rebaptism has nothing to do with being judgmental or unforgiving or wanting to “cast the first stone” and everything to do with wanting to protect the integrity and reputation of my church, and protect the purity of young women the world over (for he travels internationally). The world is watching us. They will not fault us for perpetrators in our midst—all churches have them. They will fault us for loose dealings with them and for turning a blind eye to evidence that they are an ongoing threat.

Samuel Pipim has never confessed the abuse detailed above. He confessed a “moral fall” in May of 2012, but apparently only after knowing he’d been caught. He thus gave the impression of a one-time “affair.” The careful research several of us have done has unearthed a much more troubling story of serial abuse of the vulnerable. If I’m wrong and he has in fact confessed to at least three cases of abuse, please correct me.

We should bear in mind that:

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty. *Steps to Christ*, p. 38.

From what I know, Samuel Pipim has never engaged in this work of specific confession. He has led his following to believe a lie about him and has never corrected that lie. Beyond the confession he owes to the victims (to date not

issued) he owes to his followers an admission that he has fabricated a much more flattering picture of himself than was true. For these reasons I stand by my conviction that Samuel Pipim is a wolf in sheep's clothing and should not be a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

You have made evil and lustful practices appear harmless, and some have been led away with their own lust and enticed because they had not moral courage to rebuke you, a minister, for your iniquitous practices. There have been not a few who have sacrificed conscience, peace of mind, and the favor of God, because a man whom the people have set as a watchman on the walls of Zion has been their tempter--a wolf in sheep's clothing. Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce p. 116 and 117.

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