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February 27, 2008

Mr. Benjamin Cole
Emmanuel Baptist Church
2505 West Garriott
Enid, Oklahoma 73703

Sent Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested

Re: SBC Outpost Blog of February 27, 2007
Title: "Breaking News: Patterson won't take oath . . ."

Dear Mr. Cole:

Please be advised that the undersigned represents Dr. Paige Patterson. I have reviewed the above-referenced blog and can tell you, based upon my representation of print and electronic media clients since 1966, that it is defamatory. As Dr. Patterson's attorney in the deposition that was taken this past Monday, he did not refuse to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" concerning the testimony that he gave in the deposition, which the court reporter's transcript of the deposition will verify. In fact, he did expressly affirm to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" in an accepted manner that would subject him to sanctions of the court, if he failed to do so. He also agreed to sign the deposition before a notary prior to its delivery to the attorneys.

It is your false statement concerning what Dr. Patterson did not do that makes this defamatory. A very similar false statement to what appears in your blog was found defamatory in a United States Supreme Court opinion. If you check with any attorney with reasonable experience in media law, you will find no disagreement with my statement of the law as applied to the false statement in the blog.

For your information, Dr. Sheri Klouda, at the beginning of her deposition, declined to take an oath, the same as Dr. Patterson, for the same biblical reason that Dr. Patterson gave. She affirmed to the court reporter that she would give truthful answers, the same as Dr. Patterson had done the day before.

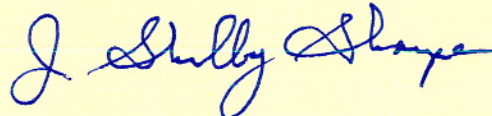
Do not interpret this letter as a threat to bring a lawsuit against you. Dr. Patterson has the conviction that 1 Corinthians 6:1-7 precludes such action being brought by one Christian against another Christian.

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The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the defamation that you have published and urge you not to engage in similar conduct in the future. Usually, when a defamation is published, the publisher publishes a retraction. I will leave it to you to ask the Lord if a retraction is in order.

Your right to criticize Dr. Patterson is not an issue of this letter. I do believe that when you appear before the Lord Jesus Christ and give an account of your stewardship in this life, He will not tell you "Well done, good and faithful servant," for making defamatory remarks as a part of criticism since the Bible clearly condemns false statements. I trust that your future publications will not contain defamatory statements of Dr. Patterson.

Very truly yours,



J. Shelby Sharpe

JSS:rj

cc: Dr. Paige Patterson