from mizah I Love first Grade
Dear sister Linda and
the class sorry I was
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in the whole wide world
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and the Boy hey stephen
are you riting a chiefs story
well thats it Bye guys
I Love you guys take
sister Linda and the

to sister Linda
and the class
from Micah

this is the happy
part sister sidee

Dear
class

Dear sister Linb

1/17/95 85 (1)

To whom it may concern:

I have known Rose Sleight for at least 7 years now. I have always known her to be a very loving and generous person. She always seemed very responsible and trustworthy. I have always noticed how much care and concern she has for others, not one to put herself first. I have known her to be a very responsible + loving mother. Putting her husband + Childrens needs before her own. I have known Breck Sleight for the same amount of time. The thing I notice about Breck as with most men who belong to The Living Word Church is that their wives are to be in total submission to their husbands. They are the head of the home and what they say goes. The reason I know this is because I came out of this same Church. I attended Living Word for 16 years. Each year it got worse. (A total control type of church). This is what they teach, that the wives are to be in total submission to their husband + Children in total submission to their

parents. And the Church mentors in total Submission to the Head of the Church. Power has definetly gone to their heads. They make the women feel like they cannot think for themselves. Actually they don't let them think for themselves. And if they try to speak up they put them in their place. My 1st husband and 2 of our children all attended Living Word Church together, my husband was diagnosed 12 years ago as a manic depressive, he had a severe Chemical imbalance which caused sudden mood swings. At this time the Church told me they felt he had some bad Spirit like he was possessed and ~~to~~ held a meeting where they encircled him & prayed over him as to cast out this evil Spirit. They notified me that they did this. All along it was this severe Chemical imbalance that was causing these severe manic stages.

Anyway we finally got medical help. because it got so bad. ~~We~~ were reluctant to seek medical help because of the faith doctrine the Church tought at that point.

my husband finally got the medication he needed to balance this imbalance. But he hated taking the medicine because he felt he wasn't using faith in God to heal him + relying on medication. So against the Doctor's wishes + my own, He asked to be taken off this medication. He went off it + for 10 years and rarely had a few little manic episodes, not severe enough to go back on the medicine. Belt 10 years later (We were still in this Church) He went into a severe depression. He realized that he needed to go back on the medicine again but was very upset by this because once again he felt he would not be using faith in God. (Influenced from what we had been taught).

On June 22, 1989 my husband Committed suicide. He went into such a severe depression and if had not delayed in getting help from the influence of That Church might still be alive today. He also was afraid to go back on the medicine because he would have to follow up with Counseling and Living Word taught against seeking Counseling outside of their Church.

Two years after my husband died, I finally realized what a power Game this Church was into, trying to keep their members in their little Group. They preached on not going to other churches + getting involved in other organizations. Staying in their little Group. They even told you what you could do + could not do if you wanted to go their. Yet if you tried to leave they would tell you that you were leaving the will of God + God's hand of protection would be off from you. They used fear tactics to keep you their.

Rose Sleight knew things were not right also at Living Word + tried to leave it + finally succeeded. And I know she is being harrassed the same way I was when I left Living Word.

When I was trying to get out of that Church and tried to get my kids out of Living Word Academy (the School would call my children down to the principals Office + ~~to~~ ask them all sorts of questions about me and interrigate them. They would surround me in Church + pray over me.

When I finally got strong enough to get out of there, I had to seek Counseling to be reassured that bad things were not happening to me because I left this Church. And that I was doing the best thing for myself & my four Children. It took a long time for me to get over this fear.

This Church is very manipulative.

Rose has come to me several times looking for help because her husband was abusing her, and many people from the church were putting her down & treating her as an out cast.

I know this is true about the Church treating her this way because this is the way they treat everyone who leaves, and they also had mouthed them from the pulpit and they tell the members to stay away from you. They even tell the spouse of that person that their spouse (The one that left the Church) has a rebellious spirit and that they encourage the spouse that stays at the church to keep the kids with them & bring them to church & not let them stay with the spouse that has left.

(6)

I have seen this many times for many years attending this Church. They treat you as if you were incompetent, and an unfit parent. Which is not true. I know this is what Rose is going through as I have seen many times.

I thank God I am <u>now</u> attending a Church that let you use your own mind, It has a standard but let you decide what is right or wrong for your family.

Sincerely,

Cathy M. Finniss

[redacted]

MAIDEN NAME – Cathy Zella

SCOTT STAFFORD
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 01ST[illegible]32
Qualified in Onondaga County
My Commission Expires 6/4/96

See Instruct
On Last Page

See back of this page for signature date

I was born into the Living Word family. My parents allowed God to open their eyes to see the wrong going on in the school and church when I was 12 years old, in the seventh grade. I am now fifteen. My immediate family moved to Florida to get away from the bad memories in Syracuse caused by the people at Living Word. I do have many fond memories of the good, yet they are overwhelmed by the pain that was caused to me. I know everyone that has left share simular stories and circumstances as I tell of.

This is very hard to write about, since I do not know where to start. The few months after I was thrown out of school I wrote down what I felt and what had happened, so I could clearly remember, if I ever needed to. I'll just copy what I wrote in my journal after it was over. Keep in mind, I was a 12 years old at the time.

"Now we have differet problems. My best friend, Jason Becker, was leaving Livingn Word. I didn't know what to do. I had grown up with him for my whole life.'What was I going to do now', I thought.

I was taught that if someone had left the church or school they were no longer Christians, and would eventually go to hell. My school told me this. If he had 'backslidden' I wasn't aloud to talk to him anymore. I was told he would tell me lies and I would want to leave to. I was being brainwashed since kindergarden. I thought Jason was turning his back on me, when in reality if our friendship was over it was my fault.

Well, I was in the sixth grade, he was in the seventh. On March 13th, 1991, they were leaving the school and church. That may not seem like a big deal to you, but if you were taught, and grew up the way I did, it was terrible. They were suppose to leave that Friday. My mom told me on Monday, so it would not come as such a shock to me. All day I felt heart-broken, yet

Tuesday morning Jamie, Jason's sister, couldn't hold her tears anymore. She started crying during Chapel, She was sitting in front of me. The tears started forming in my eyes, and I couldn't hold them back. I had to sit down. I sat down with my head on the cafeteria table. My friends started sitting down next to me asking me what was wrong. I couldn't answer them I was too upset. They just sat next to me putting their arms around me.

I turned around and my sister, Alicia, was crying too. Jamie was sitting on the bench with most of the 9th grade girls crying with her. Jason wasn't there that day. He was looking at Lincoln Jr. High with his parents that day. Stephanie, Jason and Jamie's older sister was crying, also.

I was crying so hard my nose started to bleed. Sarah Perkins, one of my closest friends. walked me to the bathroom. I told her everything. She had tears in her eyes and it was her birthday. I was so upset and wished Jason had been there to comfort me.

When I got back into Chapel everyone knew. The singing had stoppped, and everyone was dismissed except the people who wanted to stay and talk because they were too upset to go back to class. Jamie along with most of the 9th grade girls had stayed; Alicia, Stephanie, and Sarah had stayed to be with me.

That day went horrible. I couldn't stop crying all day. It had been the longest and hardest day of my entire life. Everyone knew they were leaving now, so they were asked too many questions. It was too much for them to handle so their dad, Dick, picked them up and they left.

When I had got home it looked as if someone had died. It was dark. My mom was sitting sadly at the dining room table. Alicia had broken out into tears saying how hard it was going to be. I just sat there and listened, holding back my tears. I didn't want to cry in front of my mom than she would get mushy. I could make it on my own I didn't need her. I walked into my bedroom layed on my bed with an awful headache.

The next day during Chapel, Bro. Bob Mazur had said that Dick was cursing them out. They said it was too terrible to repeat to us kids.

The Beckers had told me what he had said was that I love you, I love all of you. this church, this school,but it's time for us to leave. Sorry. I love you all.

Who lied? I had known them both my entire life. Who was I to believe?

For over three months I would lie in bed just crying and thinking for at least an hour and half before I could fall asleep at night.

Everbody was a mess for a while. Occasssionally a false rumor would go around school about the Beckers that I would be upset about. My parents told me I could only see Jason only once in a while. I was use to playing with him everyday. We were never found apart. We were best buddies since we were three and four years old. I silently cried for him for the next year everynight as I missed him and wished things could be back to normal concerning our friendship. I knew something was wrong and I should not feel this bad if he lived next door, but everytime I brought it up to a teacher they said the world is getting very bad and if you talk with Jason you will be pulled down with him. If you are pulled down you will not realize how you have turned your back on God. I saw Jay about once every two months as we would play basketball together. I listened to him talking and playing with his new friends wishing that could be me outside with him instead of them.

Over the summer, a lady Alicia had babysat for, was suppose to take her to Florida when their family went there for their vacation. After Alicia had spent 250 dollars on things to bring, she said since Alicia was still talking to Jamie after they left the church, they could take the chance of how that could affect their kids. Alicia was not to go with them on the trip. Alicia was 14 at the time.

In the school if people are behind on their tuition the pastor of the church kicks the kids out until the parents come in and talk to him. Well he makes the appointments at his time so the kids are out of school for over 2 weeks. He was doing this again this year. My mom said if we get kicked out we are not going back. That scared me because if we were out in the world we would be on the way to hell and not realize it.

I didn't think we would be kicked out because the pastor just said what a good example we were to the 1500 people in the church.

Well, we were one of the five families that were kicked out again. The Bugaj's only owed $200 and was kicked out, while others owed $2000 and was not kicked out. I did not understand this.

My dad wrote Pastor a nice letter stating our financial status saying we were doing the best we could getting over almost having to file bankruptcy and everything. I read the letter myself and thought how proud I should be of my dad for such a great letter.

Well over the pulpit once again he stated how terrible this letter was that my dad wrote. I sat there and listened. I could not believe my ears were hearing such lies from him. I tried to cover for him in my childish mind by saying he must have gotten things confused, but sure enough he had not. He was lying about my dad to all these people.

This was not the first time he said mean things about my family over the pulpit. My mom knew of a family who was getting physically and emotionally abused by their father. We had watched their 2 kids then 3 then 4 when their mom got deadly ill during her pregnantcy. We watched them for a month at a time. The little boy David his father got mad at the 4 year old and his balls were black and blue from his father punching him. The oldest Shannon worked with her father in the car business all day long. A heavy peice of machinery fell

continue working all day. Shannon's hands were always all chapped from doing dishes, daily housework, and working with her father. She was ten at the time. They were all scared to death from their dad, even their mom. So one day my mom went to report this to the pastor with the man's wife, he kicked my mom out of the room and yelled at the lady for comming to him about it and not respecting her husband. Nothing was done about this man and the abuse as far as I know is still going on today. The next Sunday the Pastor came off the pulpit saying how you should not meddle in other people's business. He told everyone that a lady came to him just to bad talk her husband instead of trying to work things out with him. This constantly went on. I never heard words of encouragement. It was how terrible this person or that person was.

When we sold the house in Chittenango to avoid bankrupycy we bought appliances from a man in the church. He came off the pulpit saying, 'One family just filed bankrupicy, owes money here, so what do they do? They go out and buy new appliances.'

My dad, after a Friday night service, had gone up and talked with all the pastors. They were yelling at my dad, telling him he is a jurk, everything is his fault, and where did he have writing that note. They did not give him time to answer before another Pastor began beating down on him. They told him we could stay at the school only if my mom came back to church. She would have to apologize to the congregation to tell them how wrong she was... My dad was also to give his paycheck over to the church for them to say how much money goes were. *The family where we had watched their kids had done that and received $15/wk. for food. They had 5 kids, three in diapers at the time!!! There was no way.* After an hour of taking turns screaming at my dad, when they had no idea what they were talking about, my dad brought me home. That night my dad was very confused and wanted to end his life.

The next week my sister and I were called into his office- the pastor and principle. They were both there.They told us you're not in trouble but to come in and sit down. I sat beside my sister on the couch with my arms folded in a respectful manner, shaking with fright, looking to the floor with shame. I knew this would not be a good talk. I felt very uncomfortable yet determined not to cry. The principle said nothing. He just sat in his big chair watching and listening. The Pastor began by saying I love you two and would not do anything to hurt either of you. Now look up at me. Which one is the older one now? I remember when the two of you were babies. Look at how much they have grown up. I am doing this for your good. I want you to understand this. You both are old enough to understand now, but your brother is not. What grade is your brother in now-kindergarden. We shook our heads yes.

You do know what is going on don't you? Your DAD is behind on you guys' tuition. Understand me now it takes money to run a school. With out money there is no Living Word Academy and you kids would be forced to face the outside world before you are ready for it. Your dad owes me over $4000 in back tuition, showing us recietes. *He was lying right there, yet we did not know it.* I know your daddy was out of work for a while, but I told him so many times to come in and talk to me, with an aggrivated tone in his voice. *Which he would have to take time off work doing that would not help out the family.* It is ALL your dad's fault. It is not your's, your mother's, his *pointing to the principle,* or mine. The responsibility lies on him. Know how your dad lost his job in '87, that's because he is irresponsible. *My father had become 100% disabled.* In order to teach your father responsibility I need to set some pretty tough rules. If your dad doesn't follow them, which he will be forced to because he will do anything to please his two daughters, then you will not be able to come here anymore. You don't want that do you? You have some pretty close friends here, your only friends. You wouldn't want to

leave them, would you. *By* then we were crying, the principle had handed us a Kleenex. I looked at Alicia to see her reaction to the things he was telling us. In my head I was thinking is he right? Is my dad hiding terrible things from me? Why would the Pastor lie? I love him. He wouldn't lie; he's my role model. I give him the utmost respect. *I actually bagan believing the things he was saying about my dad. You were taught since you were a baby to always respect him and do exactly what your told when you're told if he asked. If he asked anyone in the church to do something noone thinks twice; they automatically do it believing he knows what's right.*

Your mom is confused; that's why she is trying to stay away, at home and not comming to church. She can't stay away forever. She's been through a lot. I have known you mom since she was 16, but you knew that didn't you. I want you girls to help your mommy by encouraging her to go to church.

I love you two a lot. I love your parents, even your dad and brother too. You all mean a lot of me. That's why I am going to do everything that is in my power to keep you in this school, but you dad has to follow the rules.

You will be kicked out for a week, maybe two. But pray you will be able to come back; it is up to your dad. *We lost it right then. It put a sword right through our little bellys. We could not stop crying.*

Don't tell anyone about our little talk. If your parents find out you defiantly won't be able to come back and see all of your only friends. Remember Sh! It is our little secret. I don't want anyone to know. Don't even tell your friends. It's just between the four of us. Don't tell your mom. Well I guess you can tell your mom you were in here but don't tell her what it was about. DON'T TELL YOUR DAD. It's not lying, so don't worry about it, it's just our little secret. Now I don't want you leaving forgetting what the point of this was. What was the message. I spoke up saying you love us and it is dad's fault if we leave. He

said good job. You don't have to go to class yet. Get cleaned up in the bathroom.

We just sat ther crying, not knowing what to do. We loved him, but our parents more. He was our Pastor he would not be lying, but how was it dad's fault that he became disabled and couldn't walk. Was there a big secret dad knew that he was keeping from us? Why would he tell us not to tell our parents. I made up for him in my head saying how he was just trying to keep us at the school because he loved us. We hadn't owed over $4000 in tuition.

When we got to the bathroom I asked Alicia what should we do. She said well we can't tell anyone for sure. I sure don't want to leave. *We knew this was not right but didn't know what was.* She told me not to tell mom, mom would want to know what was said.

That was aFriday. My father and sister had gone to church, as I stayed home with my mom. My mom's friend teaches the fith grade. She had called my mom to see if everything was ok because Alicia had been correcting papers in the room for the teacher when Alicia was called out. My mother is a very clever woman. That night with a very upset look on her face told me Alicia told her everything. *Alicia really had not said a word to my mother.* She said she wanted to hear my side of the story. I told her I didn't have a clue what she was talking about. In a way I was glad she asked but was afraid to tell her. The Pastor just told me a while ago and we couldn't keep a secret from my parents for a little while. What would he think of me?Well after a half an hour of questions I ignorned I broke into tears not able to speak after saying he said dad was a jurk. I just layed in my mother's lap as she tried to comfort me at the time. I felt my world was falling apart. Well by the next morning my parents knew everything.

My dad said he wouldn't pull me out, because they could say we were wrong and spread rumors. He didn't want any room for that. The next Friday Alicia recieved a blue envelope.

Everyone knew what that meant. Alicia was very embarressed, but slipped it into her purse. The note read that we can not raise your kids if it does not start in the home with the parent's cooroperation with us." We were kicked out with only six weeks of school left.

That is the end of that section of the journal. Many other bad situations as this one have occured. I will be working on writing them into the computer, not to dwell on the past but to help others in the future. Maybe one day a book entitled "Overcomming The Forbidden" will be published. I want to show all of the Living Worders they are in bondage and are missing out on the real world. Break away from the family. It may be one of the hardest things in their life to accomplish, but their kids are the ones that will remember the pain if they do not.

My name is Ruth I'm 13 years old and in 7th grade. When I left living word I was mad because they wouldn't let me go in and say goodbye to my Friends. Then my Friend Rebekah called and told me that all the girls in my class were talking about me and the clothes I wore. Then that made me upset and I started crying on my bed. It also made me mad because we couldn't talk to people out of our Faith. But now that I'm going to public schools I've got more Friends and I'm a lot happier now.

that I'm out of there
and so are my two other
Friends that left.

Ruth Smith Jan 6, 1995

[redacted] [redacted]
Lansing, Michigan
[redacted] [redacted]

1-6-95 1. Abundant Life
Pastor John Carter

To: Whom It May Concern,

My Husband and I hereby testify of the following events to have actually taken place from around February of 1993 through May of 1993, leading up to our Departure from Syracuse on August 20, 1993.

Upon request of my best Girl friend, Rose Slight, may the following events be documented on her behalf.

My Husband and I + family had been members of Living Word Church on New Court St. Rd. in Syracuse for fourteen years. From (1980-1993).

During the first years was around the time I meet Rose. We became friends and have been friends ever since, She was my Maid of honor in my wedding. It was here also that I meet my husband and were married.

Over the course of time we had five children. Our first four children attended Living Word Academy. This is a privately owned Christian school directly tied in with the Church.

My Husband and I had always been responsible in paying our tuition up front for our childrens schooling every year. I have always been home with my children and have not worked since 1982. I was employed with G.M. for seven years also my husband was involved in twelv years of Sunday School, teaching the three year olds. I also, had for a time, in the beginning, taught it along side my husband until my third child was born also I would volunteer my time at the school to help out for several years. We payed our tithes every week and in all honesty felt we were a family of integrity.

My Husband worked for G.M. on Townline Rd. in Syracuse for twenty years

On December 4th 1993 H.M. made the announcement that the plant was closing its doors. As you can imagine, this was debistating to our family.

As things began to unfold and H.M. was offering transfers to the employees, amongst other options, we began praying about our options.

When my husband and I decided to transfer to Lansing Mi, we began telling our friends at church. To our shock and dismay we began to experience total rejection from our friends. On one Friday night the pastor preached off the pulpit about people taking transfers and moving out of state and not trusting God to take care of them in this community. He did everything but mention our names and yet everyone new who he was talking about. It was then that we started backing off on our attendence there. Before we had always gone four times a week, even in the worst of snow storms.

During this backing off time was when it received help from Pastor John Carter of Abundant Life Christian Fellowship on Fly Rd in East Syracuse. He had said at the time that our family was welcome to come to his church for help or that there were plenty of other churches in the area that would be just as equipped to help us through this time. It helped a lot talking to Pastor Carter over the phone several times. It felt like we were in a nightmare, and he helped to clear up some of the confusion.

On Easter Sunday of 1993 we made a decision to attend Pastor Carters church. We really felt pressured into leaving Living Word because of the rejection and lack of support that we should of had from our friends and church.

Shortly there after we received home a letter from the Principal of Living Word Academy stating that our children would not be allowed back in school until the principal heard from either parent.

My Husband called from work the next day and talked to the Principal. He asked my husband if he was attending another church?, My husband said that we were and were happy there. He preceded to tell my husband that we should take our children out of the Academy.

My husband very calmly said O.K. and the same day went from work to the school, which was right around the corner, to pick up the childrens belongings from there desks.

This was in the middle of may when they only had six weeks left of school. They had to refund some money to us because we were all payed up.

My children were very hurt by this because they could not say Good-Bye to any of there friends that they had grown up with since birth.

My Son especially had been affected. He ripped up all his D.A. Joe men and stayed in his room.

I have enclosed a copy of the letter that he wrote to his first Grade teacher and friends, telling them how he felt. This broke my heart. From this point on I had to go through the embarassement of telling Van Duyn Elementary School why my children were Kicked out of this Christian school and that they needed to finish these six weeks there.

This all came about by a Doctrine that had been instituted in the church, by the Pastor, which stated that we were placed in that church, by God, that were to stay there and were not to leave unless you have the O.K. from the Pastor. We did not go to the Pastor because our eyes had been opened and we believed he would have discouraged us from leaving.

In regard to us leaving the church, Rose had seen things going on that she did not approve of and agree with for over a period of four years.

She tried bringing it to the attention of her husband and was told to be still. She did not come to me at this time or to anyone else, but kept it to herself. It was not until she came first hand the abuse that we suffered, that gave her the encouragement and courage to leave Living Word.

We continued to attend Pastor Carters church up until the time we left Syracuse to come live in Lansing Michigan. We thank God for the love and support we received from the people there and Pastor Carter and his wife.

We are now getting on with our lives, here in Michigan and are attending a wonderful church out here. We are very happy here, and have a new beginning, and have put this behind us. Unfortunately many that have left Living Word have not ended up with such a happy ending.

In conclusion I would like to say that Rose has always been a good example as a wife and loving Mother to his children. She has been very submissive to her husband in honoring and respecting his wishes, and has spent a great deal of time in nurturing and caring for the needs of her children. She has always given the very best that she has to give.

This is one of the characteristics that I love so much about her, is that she has always been a giver and one that truly gives from the heart, not expecting anything in return

My Prayer and Concern is not only for the safety and well being of Rose as a human being, but for that of her children as well.

Thank you

Sincerely Yours,

Richard M. Smith

Patricia A. Smith

Susan Heyboer

SUSAN HEYBOER
Notary Public, Clinton County, MI
My Comm. Expires May 17, 1998
Living in Eaton

THIS LETTER IS FOR THOSE WHO HURT LIKE MYSELF.

WHEN I WAS 19 YEARS OLD, MY LIFE STARTED WITH EXCEPTING THE LORD JESES CHRIST IN MY LIFE. LIKE TODAY, THE LORD JESES CHRIST IN MY LIFE IS VERY PERSONNEL, TENDER, LOVING, AND SPECIAL.

7 YRS., IN THE SAME CHURCH I FELLOWSHIPED AT, I BEGAN TO QUESTION SOME DOCTRINE ISSUES. MY HEART HURT. I PRAYED FOR THE ANSWERS , THEN I STARTED ASKING QUESTIONS. I WAS TOLD I WAS OUT OF LINE, TO SIT DOWN , AND SUBMIT. THIS HURT EVEN MORE. I BEGAN TO CLOSE MY SELF TO DOCTRINE ISSUES. AND STARTED TO ACT LIKE A CHRISTIAN. THIS HURT BECAUSE I WASNT GROWING SPIRTUALLY ANY MORE.

I REMEMBER SOME SCRIPTURE, I WOULD ASK MYSELF. ABOUT WORKING OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION, FEAR GOD AND NOT MAN, LOVE THE LORD FIRST , AND MANY MORE .

WHERE I ASSEMBLED MY SELF FOR 16 YRS , I LEARNED QUITE A BIT , BUT I ALSO LEARNED SOME DISTURBING AWAKENINGS. THERE WERE OTHER CHRISTIANS, TO FELLOWSHIP WITH . THERE WERE OTHER CHURCHES THAT WORSHIP THE LORD ALSO. THERE WERE

OTHER ASSEMBLES TO. I ASKED THE LORD DID YOU CALL ME TO THE CHURCH I ASSEMBLED AT FOR 16 YRS. THE LORD JESUS CHRISTS ANSWER TO MYSELF WAS , YES AT A TIME. BUT NOW I HAVE SOME THING ELSE FOR YOUBOTH TODO. ITS TIME TO MOVE ON.

WHEN I HAD SHARED THIS WITH MY HUSBAND AT THAT TIME . HE SAID IM NOT LEAVING, GOD DID NOT TELL ME TO GO.

WHEN I MARRIED , AND NOW DIVORCED, I LOOK BACK . TO ALL I HAVE LEARNED . AND I PRAY AND ASK GOD FOR HIS GUIDANCE. I MADE A VOW TO HIM AND NOW IT IS BROKE , I WAS A VICTIM OF ABUSE, AND LARGELY THE PLACE I FELLOWSHIPED AT DESTROYED A PART OF THE SCRIPTURE, WHERE IT SAY , LET NOT MAN COME BETWEEN YOU BOTH. I BELEIVED THAT IF TWO PEOPLE BECOME ONE. THEY ARE SUPPOSE TO STICK TOGETHER ,SPRIITUALLY IT WAS LIKE THE CHURCH I ATTENDED FOR SO LONG; MAKES EVERY ONE BELEIVE ,ONCE YOUR SAVED AND SERVING GOD AT THAT CHURCH AND GET MARRIED THERE YOU HAVE TO STAY THERE. GOD SPOKE TO MYSELF AND TOLD ME TO SHARE IT WITH MY HUSBAND AT THAT TIME , I WASNT INTENDING TO LEAVE THE LORD ,LIKE MOST ARE TOLD THEY HAVE. OUR MARRIAGE WAS HURTING AND NEEDED HELP OUTSIDE THAT CHURCH.

I WAS MADE TO BELEIVE THAT THAT CHURCH WAS THE OWNLY PLACE TO SERVE GOD.

THAT THAT IS THE ONLY LOCAL CHURCH IN CENTRAL N.Y.

THAT GOD CALLED ME THERE , AND THAT HE DOESNT MOVE YOU ONCE YOU ARE PLACED THERE.

THAT A VOW BETWEEN TO PERSONS GETTING MARRIED, HAS TO DO WITH THE CHURCH.

I CAN'T WORK OUT MY OWN SALVATION , WITH FEAR AND TERREMBLING.

THE WOMEN IN THE CHURCH HAVE NO SAY. MEN MAKE ALL THE DECISONS.

I DID A GREAT STUDY ON THE WOMEN IN THE BIBLE. WOMEN HAVE A PLACE , BUT GOD ALSO SPECKS TO THEM. WHEN YOUR SEEKING THE TRUTH AND FASTING AND PRAYING AND HOPING FOR ANSWERS, GOD HEARS YOU, BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS SO.

I'M NOT WRITING THIS LETTER TO HURT OR MANE BUT TO ADMONISH EVERY ONE , THAT YOU ARE SPECIAL TO GOD, EVEN IF YOU ARE A WOMEN. GOD SPOKE TO MARY ON CONCEIVING A CHILD, GOD SPOKE TO MANY WOMEN , HE DID'NT HAVE TO GO THROUGH OTHERS TO DO SO. MY HUSBAND AT THAT TIME , NOR THE CHURCH CAN GET ME TO HEAVEN , ONLY GOD THROUGH HIS ON JESES CHRIST , ARE YOU SAVED NOT BY MAN.

THERE IS SO MUCH I COULD SAY , BUT CANT , BUT SOME DAY IT WILL COME OUT. THERE ARE TO MANY HURT CHRISTIANS. THAT ARE NOT CLOSE TO GOD LIKE THEY USE TO BE.

MINGLEING IN OTHERS PERSON RELATIONSHIP, WHEN THEY ARE ONE IS WRONG . CHURCH PASTERS , SHOULD BE INCOURANGING NOT SEPARETING THE MARRIAGES . THE LORD LIVES IN OUR HEARTS NOT IN A CHURCH. WHERE EVER I WENT

WITH MY HUSBAND OTHER THEN THAT CHURCH I BELEIVE FOR GOD ALMIGHTY IT WOULD OF BEEN SAVED. TALKING OFF THE POLPIT CONSTANTLY THAT GOD CALLED YOU THERE , IS HURTING PEOPLE THAT GOD HAS WORK TO DO FOR THEM OUT SIDE THAT CHURCH . TELL , ME HOW CAN ANY ONE AT THAT CHURCH HEAR FROM GOD, IF THE PASTOR IS TELLING THEM WHAT TO HEAR ALL THE TIME. I HURT FOR SO MANY SPECIAL PEOPLE OUT THERE.

BUT ONCE I LEFT , I HAD NO MORE FRIENDS , FOR 16 YRS , THOSE WERE MY FRIENDS. NOW I'M A SINNER OR A PROBLEM. WHAT A JOKE . I LOVE GOD TO. I DONT HAVE TO GO THERE TO HAVE CHRIST IN MY HEART.

THE GREATIEST DISAPPOINTMENT , WAS THE WAY THAT CHURCH HANDLED THEMSELFS BEFORE GOD, I SAY BEFORE GOD. THE PASTER HAS TO ANSWER TO GOD , I'M SAYING THE GREATIEST DISAPPOINTMENT WAS THE BREATHEN. ARE THEY THE OWNLY CHRISTIANS, NO. NO.

I SAY THE BIBLE SAYS TO LOVE, AT, ALL, TIMES. LOVE IS SOME KIND OF CONDITION THERE.

A CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT IS NOT GOOD, ALL THE TIME. ORDER IS WRITE, BUT NOT CONRTOLING SOME ONES OWN LIFE IN CHRIST. WE ARE CHRISTS , LET GOD NOT MAN.

LIFE GO'S ON , AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN YOUR GOING TO FACE THE MIGHTY GOD. I'VE PUT MOST OF WHAT I'VE SAID BEHIND MYSELF. THERE ARE PERSONS THAT ARE HURTING OUT SIDE OF THAT CHURCH. I WRITE THIS LETTER FOR THEM.

I KNOW NOW WHERE THIS LETTER WILL GO NOW, IT WILL BE REINTERPETED, TALKED IN SOME FORM TO THAT CONGREGATION, WAKE UP , CONGREGATION WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION.

WNEN THE LITTLE ONE IS MINGLED , THE MOTHER OR LOVED ONE HELPS HIM OR EVEN A TRANGER. NO CHURCH IS PERFECT, BUT THE PASTOR THERE HAS ADMITED MISTAKES OFF THE PULPIT WHEN I WAS THERE, AND THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THE GLIKES TALKED AND I'VE HEARD IT COULD HAVE BEEN HANDLED IN ANOTHER WAY.

DID ANY ONE EVER READ THE STORY OF THE LITTLE LOST SHEEP! I'M SURE WE ALL INTERPRETE IT ALL DIFFERENT . I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHEN SOMEONE SAYS THEY HAD DONE WRONG , WHY THEY DON'T AT LEAST CALL OR TRY TO TALK TO THE HURT ONE, AFTER ADMITTING THROUGH THERE CONSCIOUS THEY HAD PRABABLE GONE TO FAR TO HURT THAT PERSON.

THERE ARE A LOTS OF GOOD PERSONS OUT THERE , AND I FEEL SO SORRY FOR THEM, MANY OF THEM SAY , THEY KNOW WHATS GOING ON, BUT SAY I CAN'T GO MY KIDS ARE IN THE SCHOOL, OR I HAVE A TRIALER, OR SOMETHING ELSE. IT SEEMS THEY ARE FEARING MAN MORE THEN GOD.

Sincerely

Rose Slaughter

January 5, 1995

To whom it may concern:

In the short time I attended The Living Word church I found it to be a very controlling, almost cult like environment. The very same Bible I learn of is used in their teachings, however, one of the most important lessons in God's Word is ignored and that is the lesson of unconditional love. The only way possable to gain love and acceptance from the majority is to be a member of The Living Word Church.

The mentality there is that Salvation does not exist outside the doors of The Living Word Church. Those who do not attend The Living Word are treated as outcasts and those who have left have been unable to leave in peace.

Pride and selfishness has clouded the Truth found in God's Word. It's deception has caused many families, friends and marriages to be torn apart under the influences of that assembly. They promise protection, but in reality it is manipulative domination.

Unfortunately, all involved: those who attend The Living Word Church and those who do not, all suffer, but the children with only one attending parent are the ones who suffer most. The peers of these children often belittle the unattending parent, and are not allowed to associate with them outside of the church or the school.

I have witnessed this behavior and have been a victim of it, but I hold no ill feelings toward them because they too are victims of the lie.

over →

Rhonda R. Perkins 1/6/95

Sworn to this the 6TH
of January 1995

Henry L. Bresadola Jr.

HENRY L. BRESADOLA, JR.
Notary Public in the State of New York
Qualified in Onondaga Co. No. 4610[illegible]
My Commission Expires March 30, 19[illegible]

To Whom It May Concern

I cannot say to you that Living Word church/Academy makes you sign papers that you will disown your family, but they teach it an comment to you if you do.

When my mother left when I was 7yrs old, Brother Bob Mazer preached consistantly that God 'doesn't want unequally yoked relationships', even families. My parents never spoke, or allowed us kids contact with my mom. Mr. Mazers would often comment that he doesn't speak with his son or parents for that reason. One day my sister called me and said she found mom in the phone book and called her, I was 21.

My father decided that he was going to leave the church when I was 18. My only friends were those in the church, so I stayed. I haven't spoke to my father since. After being scolded By Brother Bob Mazer and Brian Raine for driving a college classmate to school regularly who didn't attend our church, I decided that this was ridiculous and I left the church. My father and I have lost touch so long that we've

we will say 'Hi' at family reunions.

This is hard to understand since it seems so ridiculous, but I lived it. The idea of breathing indeadly smoke looks and sounds ridiculous, but it is what people do. Living Word is a family orientated environment, AS Long AS the whole family attends the church. If not, it's so destructive and heart breaking.

If a family attends the church, and them some decide to leave, it is a tough situation to live through. If one parent is in the church, and the other isn't, how can the child emotionaly deal will being pulled in 2 directions.

Living Word Academy is the school that Living Word seperates their children from other children with. The school, which I attended for 10 years, has a church session every morning, which teaches the same lesson the church teaches. Kids are taught that family members that leave are in rebellion of God, are unequally yoked, and need to be prayed for. The child, like I was, is torn between "that's my mommy" and "the

needs to be prayed for because she is a sinner. I'm not to respect her, but instead, pray for her".

In conclusion, I understand that parents want their children to understand God, and live a clean life. Why wont <u>any</u> other christian school do? The answer is because Living Word Academy is (quote) "A better Christian School because there is more standards than other christian schools". These 'standards' ruined MY FAMILY!!! My mother is a stranger and my father and I are to drifted apart.

Sincerely
Susan Bartels
8-8-95
Susan Bartels 8-9-95

Sworn this 9th Day of August 1995
State of New York County of Onondaga
Carole A McMillan

CAROLE A. McMILLAN
Notary Public in the State of New York
Qualified in Onondaga County No. 4756060
My Commission Expires July 31, 19 97

STATE OF NEW YORK
SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

ROSEANN SLEIGHT,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

AFFIDAVIT

Index No. M-45-95
RJI No. 33-95-3016

STEVEN B. SLEIGHT,

Defendant.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA)
CITY OF SYRACUSE) ss.:

I, **DAVE CORBETT**, being duly sworn deposes and says the following:

1. That I have freely and voluntarily appeared this afternoon before Roseann Sleight's attorney, Vincent J. Finocchio, Jr., Esq. I make this voluntary statement without any promise nor payment from any party whatsoever.

2. I attended school at the Living Word Academy for eight (8) years. I now attend Henniger High School where I will be a Senior in September, 1995.

3. The school would not permit extra-curricular activities with non-church members. I now play soccer, am active on the tennis team and I used to play Lacrosse, in the Public School system.

4. I was shunned by the school/church membership once I left. That shunning has a negative effect upon myself.

5. Their attitudes and opinions had a negative effect on my

OVER

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self-esteem. Only as I have gotten older have I gotten my self-esteem back.

David Corbett

DAVE CORBETT

Sworn to before me on this
the 9th day of August, 1995.

Vincent J. Finocchio Jr

Notary Public

VINCENT J. FINOCCHIO JR.
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 4613300
Qualified in Onondaga County
Commission Expires Sept. 30, 19 97

FINOCCHIO & ENGLISH ATTORNEYS AT LAW 333 EAST ONONDAGA STREET SYRACUSE, NY

STATE OF NEW YORK
SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

ROSEANN SLEIGHT,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

AFFIDAVIT

Index No. M-45-95
RJI No. 33-95-3016

STEVEN B. SLEIGHT,

Defendant.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA)
CITY OF SYRACUSE) ss.:

I, **PATRICIA CORBETT**, being duly sworn, deposes and says the following:

1. That I have freely and voluntarily appeared this afternoon before Roseann Sleight's attorney, Vincent J. Finocchio, Jr., Esq. I make this voluntary statement without any promise nor payment from any party whatsoever.

2. I am a former teacher's assistant at the Church of the Living Word. I taught there for approximately six (6) years. My son, David, attended their school for approximately eight (8) years.

3. This school does not permit extra-curricular activities whatsoever, such as, karate, little league, pop warner football, etc., out-side of church members. This was very hard on my son.

4. I found the schools attitude and policies very narrow minded about people that were non-church members.

5. We were consistently told we could not make it in the

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outside world. We were told we would be ignored if we left their school. My son and I were shunned by their membership after we left.

6. I know, from my personal experience, once I left the school, my son was treated very differently. Since Roseann Sleight has left the church, I am sure her children are being treated differently also.

Patricia Corbett

PATRICIA CORBETT

Sworn to before me on this
the 9th day of August, 1995.

Vincent J. Finocchio Jr.

VINCENT J. FINOCCHIO JR.
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 4613300
Qualified in Onondaga County
Commission Expires Sept. 30, 19 97

FINOCCHIO & EINSTEIN ATTORNEYS AT LAW 333 East Onondaga Street

STATE OF NEW YORK
SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

ROSEANN SLEIGHT,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

AFFIDAVIT

Index No. M-45-95
RJI No. 33-95-3016

STEVEN B. SLEIGHT,

Defendant.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA)
CITY OF SYRACUSE) ss.:

I, **JAMES FARMER**, being duly sworn deposes and says the following:

1. That I have freely and voluntarily appeared this afternoon before Roseann Sleight's attorney, Vincent J. Finocchio, Jr., Esq. I make this voluntary statement without any promise nor payment from any party whatsoever.

2. I am a former member of the Church of the Living Word, and my two (2) children, Bennie and Patricia, each attended the Living Word Academy.

3. I feel that on balance, my children's experience at the Academy was negative.

4. The school does not allow extra-curricular activities with outside institutions and offers very few intramural alternatives.

5. The quality and diversity of education at the school cannot compete with the public school system.

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6. My children who are now in public schools have many more educational opportunities now, and unlike the Living Word Academy, all of the teachers are licensed and educated.

7. From my experience, I would submit that Roseann's children would have access to better opportunities outside of the Living Word Academy.

8. The Academy discourages its students from seeking higher education at colleges outside of the Syracuse area, thus further limiting their opportunities.

9. Finally, since Roseann no longer attends the Chapel of the Living Word, there is not a doubt in my mind that her children will be ostracized by, and alienated from their classmates.

JAMES FARMER

Sworn to before me on this
the 10th day of August, 1995.

Notary Public

ARTHUR L. LA VECK
Notary Public, State of New York
QUALIFIED IN ONONDAGA COUNTY
Commission Expires April 17, 1997

FINOCCHIO & [illegible] ATTORNEYS AT LAW 333 East Onondaga Street Syracuse, New York [illegible]