

## Dan Sumpter – Exit Statement

Todd, please include these statements as a part of my exit interview. These are my responses to the questions asked re: reasons for leaving and “additional information you feel could make a difference...”

I am available for questions and give permission to Greg to bring any of my concerns to the elders. I love pastor James deeply and hope to be friends forever. I am attempting to provide something that we can all look at, evaluate, and handle in love, in order to make corrections toward our best, most God-honoring future. It is not my intent that any of this be made public. This is for James, HR, and the Elders only.

1. I have become increasingly impacted by fear in my working relationship with James. Fear of disapproval, criticism, and anger - fear of seeing things differently & not agreeing. I have become exceedingly unhealthy in my anxiety over potential failure and the resulting conflict that arises. As stated in my letter of resignation to Luke & James on January 14th, *“I am growing exceedingly discouraged when earnest, researched, effort is met with frustration and disapproval.”*
2. I am concerned about the labeling of how we pay James from WITW- it is leaving ample room for discrepancies and deceit. I have heard 3 different descriptions from 3 different people (Luke, James & Stephen) both publicly and privately regarding James’ income from WITW. Additionally, I have heard it repeatedly stated by James that he takes no royalties from the books sold through WITW - I have discovered that to be a lie. I have unknowingly misrepresented James’ financial benefit from WITW to hundreds of donors, because that benefit was misrepresented to me by James.
3. I am overwhelmingly concerned with the stories I’m hearing of Pastor James’ battle over WITW’s money since going on sabbatical— and the things he’s asking internal employees to do on his behalf. I love our church and I love Luke and was compelled to pause my initial resignation (on January 14th) to help them both. But it has become obvious to me that Pastor James’ intentions are based in his personal financial security over the church’s. I can no longer be associated with this behavior in any way.
4. I am embarrassed by James’ public reputation. I graduated with some of the most elite music & production students in Christian higher education. Many of them have landed major jobs in the biggest churches in America. Over the years, I have tried to hire some of them and they won’t come here because of experiences they’ve had with James at outside events: yelling at production people backstage and reckless behavior around other leaders at events. As the Executive Director of WITW (for only 6 months), I was confronted with several stories outside our church (within the broadcast industry) that made me realize that my reputation was going to be soon entangled with his. It is time for me to separate and bear consequences of my own decisions, not his.
5. The WITW transition to digital was too fast. We were constantly reacting to the moves that James needed to make to avoid further criticism. I understand the long term strategy of digital, but cannot get past the pace. The discussion to trigger-pulled happened in about 2 days. I sent out termination letters that were written for me to forward to radio executives. After sending a few, I began extracting sentences that I didn’t want coming from me - especially ones directly critical of their diminishing industry and “dying demographic.” This was an industry I’d hoped to keep working in and worried that I was starting to look like an adversary. I fully believed in a digital future and gave my heart and soul to it’s growth, but I also repeatedly stated that we have yet to maximize our full potential on radio & TV and had asked for the opportunity to do so. This pressure seemed to come from PR more than from exclusively industry trends.
6. The WITW downsizing has emotionally devastated me. When I spoke with James the day of him deciding on his “indefinite sabbatical,” we decided that WITW would go down to it’s simplest form: James and 1-2 employees without the need to ask for money for 6-12 months. I understand that as the dust was settling he was trying to figure out what WITW’s future could or should be. So it has at times fluctuated a bit in his / my mind of how simple or robust it would eventually be. This is important to note, and I am documenting it here, because several WITW employees are now expressing a feeling of deception & betrayal when they read the Change Partner email that went out from James

on January 23rd. I had originally written a draft of that email with Sharon and was told that James thought it was completely wrong. It was then rewritten with words like “an exciting time for the ministry” and “we need you now more than ever” - I wish I would have spoken up then and said “this doesn’t sound like the latest version of WITW we talked about”, but instead I said the email was good - and in part felt that it actually was because it was finally providing clarity to all the donors who were asking us questions about WITW’s future. I couldn’t keep up with all messaging & transitions happening in a 2 week period and did my best to release 28 people in the healthiest way possible. I feel terrible for any sense these employees have of being misled as they try to reconcile all the decisions made and communications given throughout the first 3 weeks of January.