



**Baptist Children's Home
& Family Services**

February 14, 2003

Executive Office
Doug Devore, LSW, ACSW
Executive Director

The Honorable Judge Hill

Your Honor:

I am writing to request the court's mercy in the sentencing of Mr. Les Mason. Les is a close personal friend that I have grown to love and trust over the years. I don't condone his behavior in the incidents in question and recognize that he must be held responsible. My appeal to you, therefore, is not for forgiveness but for leniency.

In my personal interactions with Les I have found him to be genuinely contrite about his behavior. He makes no excuses and lays blame at no one else's feet but his own for his actions. In fact, from the beginning he has freely admitted his guilt in the matter and been ready to accept his punishment. In my 30 years of experience in working with children and families with similar issues I find this behavior alone, unusual.

Not to minimize his actions or take anything away from what the young ladies have experienced, but Les has already paid a high price for his behavior. He has lost his ability to ever serve as a pastor of a church, something he loved and spent his whole life preparing for. Not only that, he is now severely limited in any area in which he can be employed. He has lost his life's savings and is in debt. His reputation has been forever damaged. His life will never be the same.

In my opinion Les is not a threat to other children or the community. In fact I believe he still has a great deal to offer society. He is an intelligent, warm and caring person. Therefore, I feel it would serve nothing to imprison him but only be punitive in nature.

I pray that you would give Les the best chance to redeem himself. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Doug Devore
Executive Director

