

## Saeed Abedini Promises to Stop Venting on Social Media, Doesn't Comment on Adultery Allegations



After a whirlwind week of venting about his ex-wife Naghmeh and religious leaders, persecuted Pastor Saeed Abedini made one last public defense of his reputation Sunday but ignored recent allegations of adultery.

After today I intend to enjoy Easter with my family, and start to rebuild my life. Those who believe will believe. Those who don't never will. I don't intend on spending any more time worrying about it. I do pray God's blessings on them all, and on all of you as well," he wrote in a much more coherent post than his previous rants against his alleged "abusers" on Facebook Sunday.

"For the last year-and-a-half I sat quietly while allegations of abuse were thrown around about me by Naghmeh and her followers. Over and over again after listening to her, they would come on my page and accuse me of things they had absolutely no idea were true or not. They did not live with us, therefore they cannot know what went on in our home. Still, they spread these accusations as if it were gospel," Saeed said.

"This past week I began trying to answer some of those allegations and provide some insight into what I have been dealing with privately since my release. Again I was met with hostility and anger. I was told I needed to repent and humble myself, that I needed psychiatric help, that I shouldn't air my personal business on social media. Does anyone remember how my business first came to social media? Not by me, I was still in prison," he explained.

Saeed and Naghmeh, who have two young children, had been in the public eye since Saeed was placed under house arrest and later imprisoned for three-and-a-half years in his native Iran for participating in Christian home churches in 2012.

While imprisoned, Naghmeh made many public appearances lobbying for her then husband's freedom, including giving a speech to the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2013. She also met privately with former President Barack Obama when he visited the ex-couple's hometown in Boise, Idaho, in 2015.

In November 2015, however, Naghmeh suspended her public advocacy for Saeed, citing continued psychological and sexual abuse in her marriage along with other allegations.

Then, 10 days after Saeed's release from an Iranian prison in January 2016, Naghmeh filed for legal separation. She told Reuters that Saeed had threatened to end their marriage and that she had taken "temporary legal action to make sure our children will stay in Idaho" until the situation between them had been resolved.

In October 2016, Saeed filed for divorce from Naghmeh, which he claims Franklin Graham, president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse, had encouraged him to do.

Since last Thursday, however, when his divorce from Naghmeh was finalized, Saeed has been posting criticisms of Graham and other religious figures, claiming they used him for personal gain until media interest in his story waned.

Graham has since denied the allegation.

"It is unfortunate that Graham's efforts to secure his (Abedini's) release from an Iranian prison and provide transportation for him from Germany to America, his financial assistance to Saeed and Naghmeh ... his provision of marital counseling at no cost to them, and various offers of employment for Saeed have now been met with a bitter Facebook post about him and his ministry, Samaritan's Purse," Graham's spokesman, Mark DeMoss, said in a statement to The Christian Post last week.

In his post on Sunday, Saeed gave a more clarified assessment of his relationship with Graham, saying he got very little help or support from people in rebuilding his life [not including the assistance and support he received from Graham] after his much heralded return to the U.S. from imprisonment in Iran last January.

"Franklin Graham ? this is the most difficult. He is beloved by many, and did help me by providing a place to live. And I thank God for that because I literally had nowhere to go. Imagine coming back from prison and living in hotel rooms with your family because you have nowhere to go and no one to take you in; even temporarily. I had no family or friends in the states besides Naghmeh. My family had to go back to Iran. You cannot imagine the heartbreak and loneliness of having NO ONE," he wrote.

"Everyone assumed someone was helping, but that was not the case. I did not mean to sound ungrateful. I am personally disappointed and hurt because he knew of many of the issues going on behind the scenes and would not speak out on my behalf. If he did, a lot of this would have been avoided. It hurt that I even had to ask for help. But I did.

"Privately he supported me, and knew there were lies being spread, but would not make a stand for me publicly. Then he said I should forget my calling and take a job in fast food. That hurt most of all. ... I never intended to disparage any job or act like anything was beneath me. I don't feel that way. It was just so hurtful to be told that the calling of God on my life was now null and void. God's call is irrevocable," he said.

Sources who asked not to be named suggested to CP that Graham began withdrawing his financial support for Saeed after learning about his alleged extra-marital affairs, both before he went to prison in Iran and in Boise after his return home. One source explained that Saeed had also confessed to the allegations which are laid out in sealed divorce documents.

Saeed did not respond to questions from CP regarding the allegations when contacted for comment, and he did not address those allegations in his recent comments on Sunday.

He did, however, claim in a post on Facebook that he came under significant pressure after criticizing Graham, saying that Trinity Broadcasting Network's decision to cut ties with him was sparked by his criticism of Graham.

Source: Christian post