

Sexual harassment: Government leaders have a higher calling to act

From Hollywood to the halls of government in both D.C. and Des Moines, allegations of sexual harassment and abuse lodged against powerful leaders have dominated the news of late.

The FAMILY LEADER has consistently condemned sexual harassment and abuse, regardless of a leader's political party or position. Any harassment or abuse is utterly inconsistent with Christ-like leadership.

Furthermore, government leaders must neither tolerate nor trivialize sexual harassment and, in fact, are called to a much higher standard. For the Bible declares government is God's designed institution of justice, and those who serve in it are called His "ministers" (Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2). Like ministers in the Church, God's ministers of government serve not only the people, but also the Lord. When sexual harassment and abuse mar the halls of government, the Lord's ministers of government must rise to their God-given calling and lead by example against this dehumanizing injustice.

The matter struck close to home in July 2017, when a jury found an Iowa Senate staffer's allegations of a toxic work environment caused by sexual harassment to be founded. The case resulted in a \$1.75-million settlement at taxpayer expense, while at the federal level, millions more have been spent settling cases against U.S. congressmen.

It is imperative, therefore, that the leadership of the Iowa Senate, government, and federal government establish clear precedent that this type of behavior will no longer be tolerated. Furthermore, they must show a humble, sober attitude that reflects the seriousness of the injustice done.

For the way our elected leaders respond to sexual harassment and abuse will set the tone for how Americans respond, not only within government, but well beyond the Capitol walls.