

# Former Southern Baptist Josh Buice quits G3 Conference

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(RNS)—An influential Calvinist pastor who quit the Southern Baptist Convention after claiming it was too woke and liberal has been suspended by his church for causing controversy online, running fake social media accounts that criticized his church’s elders and other pastors from a conference he ran.

Josh Buice, founder of the G3 Conference and pastor of Pray’s Mill Baptist Church in Douglasville, Ga., was placed on indefinite leave last week after church leaders “uncovered irrefutable evidence that Dr. Buice has, for the past three years, operated at least four anonymous social media accounts, two anonymous email addresses, and two Substack platforms.”

“These accounts were used to publicly and anonymously slander numerous Christian leaders, including faithful pastors (some of whom have spoken at G3 conferences), several PMBC elders, and others,” according to a statement from the church.

“These actions were not only sinful in nature but deeply divisive, causing unnecessary suspicion and strife within the body of Christ, and particularly within the eldership of PMBC.”

Buice has also resigned as president of G3, which was founded in 2019 and brought in \$2.3 million in revenue for the 2023 calendar year, according to its public IRS financial disclosures.

# **Annual GC3 Conference canceled**

The group grew out of a conference Buice started in 2013. Its name stands for “Gospel, Grace, Glory.” The group claimed its annual conference drew 6,500 people in 2021, according to the G3 website.

The board of G3 has canceled the group’s annual conference, which had been planned for September, and promised full refunds. Organizers of the conference previously apologized for charging nearly \$1,000 for a Legacy Pass to the conference, which would have allowed attendees to eat a meal with speakers and have special access.

Buice was an outspoken leader among the so-called “theobros”—a set of often-bearded Calvinist preachers and speakers known for their conservative beliefs, especially about the role of women in the church, and their criticism of other evangelicals whose faith is less strict.

He was one of the organizers of the 2018 “Statement on Social Justice,” which warned liberal ideas about race—in particular, critical race theory—and women’s leadership had infiltrated evangelical churches.

## **Critic of Russell Moore and Beth Moore**

The statement was issued a few months after a number of high-profile evangelical leaders had gathered in Memphis to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of civil rights leader and pastor Martin Luther King Jr. and to denounce racism in the modern church.

Buice especially criticized former Southern Baptist ethicist Russell Moore and Bible teacher Beth Moore (not related) for allegedly promoting liberal ideas in the church, as well as former SBC President Ed Litton for alleged

sermon plagiarism.

He also apparently had been running anonymous social media accounts that criticized other pastors from his own movement and elders at Pray's Mill Church, according to the statement from the church. The church did not give any details about those accounts in their statement.

Buice previously had criticized such anonymous accounts.

"Dr. Buice had been asked on multiple occasions over the past two years whether he had any connection to these anonymous accounts. In each case, he denied any knowledge of them," the church said in their statement.

Buice also initially denied, at a meeting on May 4, having anything to do with the anonymous accounts, according to the church statement, but then admitted his involvement.

"Since then, Josh has acknowledged his sin, expressed sorrow, and asked for forgiveness," according to the church's statement. "His desire is to personally ask forgiveness of every person he has slandered or lied to."

Leaders of G3 said the ministry would continue to publish material on its website.

"As we look to the ministry's future, we will prioritize the publication of helpful biblical content that strengthens the church and avoids the dangerous celebrity culture that has unfortunately come to characterize so much of modern evangelicalism."