



## Conservative Dobson Tempers Support for Haggard

By [Kevin Wayne](#)

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Haggard admits to admits to meth, massage but not to sex

Chicago, IL - Dr. James Dobson, a prominent Christian leader and outspoken opponent of gay marriage, on Friday toned down his earlier defense of a Colorado pastor accused of having an extra-marital affair with a male prostitute.

Mike Jones, 49, alleges the Rev. Ted Haggard paid him to have sex nearly every month for three years. A claim that Haggard first denied.

Haggard stepped down as president of the influential 30 million-member National Association of Evangelicals and head of the 14,000-member New Life Church pending an investigation by a four-member church panel.

Yesterday before Haggard made any admissions, Dobson told the Rocky Mountain News the accusations were an attempt to "damage his reputation as a way of influencing the outcome of Tuesday's election," when voters in Colorado will be considering a constitutional amendment that will ban same-sex "marriage."

By Friday afternoon, after New Life Church officials announced Haggard had admitted that some of the accusations are true and voice mail messages were released by Jones, Haggard changed his initial denial and now admits he bought methamphetamine and received a massage from the gay escort.

"I called him to buy some meth, but I threw it away. I bought it for myself but never used it," Haggard told a KUSA reporter.

Dobson has since issue a Dobson issued a statement urging members of his evangelical organization, Focus on the Family, to pray for Haggard.

"All of us at Focus on the Family are heartsick over the allegation, not yet confirmed, that Ted has had a private life with a homosexual for several years," Dobson said.

Dobson said Haggard "will continue to be my friend, even if the worst allegations prove accurate."

Both Dobson and Haggard are influential with Evangelicals and the Christian Right. Haggard reportedly talks regularly with President George Bush or his advisors. He was credited with encouraging Christians to vote for Mr. Bush in his 2004 re-election.