

AVERY HOGAN PENDERGRAPH:

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak on my behalf. First, I'd like to acknowledge and accept responsibility for all of the crimes for which I'm being charged with here in Troup County. Simply put, I am guilty. I'm remorseful for the things that I have done, and I am aware that I must bear consequences and punishment for my actions.

I have always considered myself to be a good person, and I think, for the most part, others have as well, but I went astray. Instead of seeking to fulfill the positive goals I had set for my life, and using the gifts that God has given me to advance myself in a positive direction, I allowed immaturity and overindulgence, coupled with the combined addictions to Adderall, alcohol, and pornography to take me to a dark and depraved world. But these things can only help to explain my actions. These are not justifications or excuses.

During the last eighteen months of my incarceration, my sobriety has allowed me to see things clearly. Faith in God and salvation have renewed me. Leading Bible study, encouraging others and reading God's Word to others has become my daily ritual. While I have done irreparable harm to many people's lives, I ask the court to afford me the opportunity to spend time with my parents outside the walls of a prison or jail. I do not deny my guilt of any of these crimes, nor the damage that has been done. But I hope that the court will take into consideration that none of these crimes which I am here charged, involve physical acts, acts of violence, or direct interaction with any of the victims. In consideration of that fact, it is my desire to plead guilty to these charges so that the pain and difficulties of a trial will not do further harm to those I've already hurt. To those I have hurt, I just want to say to you that I -- I'm sorry. I realize the harm that I've done. And not only have I learned a valuable life lesson through all of this, but moving forward, I will use my testimony to do everything in my power to prevent other young men from following in this path. I now realize how significant the ramifications are for all of those involved. I know that I have hurt people, not just the victims of my crimes, but my family, friends, and community as well.

Dad, to you and Mom, I want to apologize for putting you through all of this. The expectations that you had for me and continue to have for me are high. And despite the situation at hand and moving forward, I plan to properly honor those expectations as I should have all along. I can never undo or reverse the damage that I have caused. All I can do at this time is what I have done, repenting of my sins, asking God to heal those I have hurt, and working each day to contribute to my environment in a productive and meaningful way. I am at your mercy. Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to address the Court.