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Those who highlight child sex abuse in the Jehovah's Witness church may be non-believers telling lies, a church senior says.

In one of many interesting exchanges at a royal commission into child sex abuse on Friday, a member of the group's governing body was asked if he disagreed with those who say efforts to highlight and deal with abuse within the church are engaged in "apostate lies".



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Geoffrey Jackson, a member of the church's powerful seven-member governing body in New York, said the question is a broad one because sometimes people making those accusations make many others as well.

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"But let me assure you, the person making the accusation is not the main thing," Mr Jackson said.

"The main thing is, is there some basis to the accusation."

Angus Stewart SC, counsel assisting the commission, asked Mr Jackson if he understood that efforts by the commission to deal with abuse within the organisation were not necessarily an attack on the organisation or its system of beliefs.

Mr Jackson said he accepted the commission's efforts were genuine and well-intentioned, and the governing body hoped something would come of its inquiries that would help the church and everyone else.

He stressed the church wanted to treat abuse survivors in a loving way, but said he had not been involved in any discussions within the governing body about apologising to them.

Mr Jackson, who started his ministry in Tasmania in the 1970s, is in Australia for family reasons.

He was summoned to give evidence at the hearing into the Australian church's handling of sex abuse allegations and did so by video link from Toowoomba Magistrates Court in Queensland.

The Australian branch of the church abides by doctrine decided by the governing body.

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