

Woman of God Battered Into Submission - Part I

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by Abigail Sanchez



Too many times I will speak to a Christian woman who has been victimized by her husband and gone to her church leaders for support and counsel, and she is met with disbelief, or they are given a few bible verses about women submitting to their husbands and sent on their way; leaving these victims feeling abandoned and confused with nowhere to turn.

When she finally finds no recourse she may end up in a non-Christian organization for shelter and/or counseling. Although any Domestic Violence shelter can provide resources of various kinds, generally speaking these non-Christian shelters are devoid of a biblical worldview and offer no real hope for the victim. She then finds herself succumbing into deeper despair.

I am a minister and a chaplain, as well as a certified advocate for domestic violence victims and I encounter clients from every type of background, religion, ethnicity, education, and financial status on a daily basis. Everyday I see the destructiveness that domestic violence causes and pray to God I can help shed His light to these battered victims.

Many people think that domestic violence is only when there is physical harm involved. Of the 16 different varieties of abuse most cases of domestic violence are non physical, and can come in many different forms. It is defined by a consistent, systematic form of abuse toward another person who is blood related or a romantic interest. Domestic abuse can include and is not limited to intimidation, yelling, scare tactics, physical harm, mind games, threats, name calling, financial control, and many others. The abuser promises that he will change and sometimes does for a little while until ultimately the violence escalates. There may be weapons involved. There can be psychological mind games, like sleep deprivation of the victim, or holding the victim hostage, or many other types of abuse.

There may be a host of reasons why woman stay with their abusers including fear, financial reasons, religious and many others. For a Christian woman the shame, guilt and confusion can

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be devastating. Although they may be consistently battered physically, emotionally or any other way this woman believes she must suffer this fate, and see it as a way of bearing the cross with Christ. She believes that in order for her to be a Godly woman she must bear this burden. We are taught that a Godly woman is long suffering and waits on the Lord. To leave her husband would be a sin, and divorce is not an option since the only biblical reason for divorce is adultery.

Other women, whether Christian or not believe they should stay with the abuser because of their children. I cannot stress enough how damaging this can be to children. The longer a child is exposed to this behavior of violence the more propensity he or she will have towards emotional and psychological issues in the years to come that may affect every type of relationship in their lives, and even his or her identity as an individual. Some children even start to display physical and verbal violence as early as two years of age.

No one really knows or agrees as to the real reason why domestic violence exists. The most popular reason is that the abuser is looking for power and control. Most abusers have been abused themselves; or have lived in an abusive environment. Many abusers suffer from stress, depression and other emotional and possible medical conditions. However, I believe that the best answer to this question is a biblical one.

The bible has at least 60 plus references on violence. We find in scripture that we are warned against drinking the wine of violence (Prov. 4:14-17). We see in Proverbs that "The mouth of the wicked is covered with violence" (Prov. 10:6). We are sinful in nature and were once children of wrath (Eph. 2:2-3). We know that evil deeds come out of a diseased heart (Matt. 12:35).

We find in scripture that David prayed to be delivered from violent men who gathered for war and had sharp tongues like serpents, and poison was in their lips (Ps. 140:1-3). Abusers who are always looking for an argument or confrontation verbally abuse their victims and spit out this venom each time they insult, yell, or belittle their spouse or loved one.

In the book of Habakkuk he cries out because of the violence, strife and contention and he cried out for deliverance (Hab. 1:2). We should not be complacent toward any kind of violence. The abuser who chooses to stay and batter his victim in any way should be held accountable. In addition, although a victim should always pray for deliverance I would encourage Christian women to remember that God can change a man only when he wants to change. As we see in the book of Genesis God does not supersede the will of man. Freedom of choice is a gift He has given us. We are His temple and stewards of the life He has given us and we are responsible for keeping it pure and holy unto God, as well as safe and free from harm (1 Cor. 6:19). God will give you the strength you need to accomplish what you must (Philippians 4:13).

The Lord says in Ezekiel 8:17-18 that violence is an abomination. As Christians we should have no part of violence. We are called to live in peace whenever possible (Romans 12:18). We should have no part of violence in our homes, it is an abomination unto God. We see that in Ezekiel 12:19 God punished violence.

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The Christian woman can stay with her husband if he desires it, but this is not to be taken out of context (1 Cor. 7:13). We must remember that as a Christian we are all responsible to obey the full word of God and take other scripture into account when interpreting any scripture. This verse is not mentioning any kind of violence which is an abomination to the Lord.

I am an ordained minister, chaplain, and writer. I currently work with Domestic Violence victims and families in the State of Pennsylvania.

For more information please go to Rhema-Counseling-Ministry.blogspot.com

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