

# Breaking the Silence

## **BREAKING** the *SILENCE*

Struggling to forgive  
one who abused you?

You are not alone  
There is help for you

*"I can do all things through  
Christ who strengthens me"*

*Phil 4:13*



# Breaking the Silence Breakin

## What is Abuse?

*To abuse someone is to intentionally or unconsciously injure or damage him/her physically, psychologically/emotionally, or sexually with the purpose to intimidate, dominate, control and/or exercise power. Abuse can be isolated or habitual, premeditated or spontaneous. The one who inflicts the abuse is typically called the **abuser**, the one who is abused is typically called the **victim**.*

## Types of Abuse:

### **Physical:**

actions which cause humiliation, physical pain or injury, such as kicking , pushing, or punching.

### **Psychological/Emotional:**

actions which cause loss of self-esteem, and/or loss of self-determination, such as name calling, isolation, or criticizing.

### **Sexual:**

actions of a sexual nature that are unwelcome, uncomfortable, or forced; this includes rape.

### **Child Abuse:**

all of the above definitions, as well as neglect. This includes not providing for a child's basic needs such as food and clothing, and abandonment.

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## Abuse Is Wrong Because...

### **It destroys the body**

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

I Corinthians 3: 16, 17

### **It robs children of their innocence**

“But whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

Matthew 18:6

### **It lowers self-esteem**

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it might benefit those who listen.”

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

### **It warps the perception about God**

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons [and daughters] of God.”

I John 3:1

### **It is not God's plan for families**

“... The Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts.”

*Counsels on Health*, p.101

### **It is not God's plan for our lives**

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.’”

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

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## Forgiveness is a Choice

- Christ modeled forgiveness at the cross. (Luke 23:34)
- God invites us to forgive others as He forgave us. (Eph. 4:31,32)
- Forgiveness enables us to break out of our prison of hate. (Gal 5:1)
- Forgiveness enables us to stop mentally replaying a bitter past. (Jer.31:34)
- Forgiveness enables God to heal our brokenness. (Psalm 147:30)
- Forgiveness allows the Holy Spirit to replace anger in our heart. (Gal. 5:22)

## Forgiveness... is Not

- Condoning — forgiveness is not justification for wrongdoing.
- Reconciliation — to forgive does not mean you must re-establish an intimate relationship.
- Minimizing.— forgiveness does not lessen the offense.
- Pardoning — forgiveness does not suggest that the offender is released from the legal or relational consequences of his or her action.
- Response.— forgiveness is our God-given initiative, not predicated on the abuser's confession and repentance.

## Promises and How-to's from God's Heart to Yours

- "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me."  
John 14:1 (NASB)
- "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."  
John 14:27 (NASB)
- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to . . .set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18 (KJV)
- "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)
- "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you." Psalm 55:22 (NASB)

## Touch of Mercy

- “When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice.”  
*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 333
- “We are not forgiven because we forgive, but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God.”  
*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 251
- “We ourselves are erring, and need Christ's pity and forgiveness, and just as we wish Him to deal with us, He bids us deal with one another.”  
*Desire of Ages*, p. 441
- “I have endured your sorrows, experienced your struggles, encountered your temptations. I know your tears; I also have wept. The griefs that lie too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live. ‘The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.’” (Isa. 54:10).

*Lift Him Up*, p. 205

## Touch of Grace

Colossians 3:13 “...bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.” (NKJV)

This is difficult, but important. If you refuse to forgive, you will be hurting only yourself. Remember that you did not deserve forgiveness, but Jesus forgave you by grace; likewise, an abuser does not deserve your forgiveness, but you can choose to forgive anyway. When you forgive, you are not saying the hurt isn't real, or that it even didn't matter, or that you will put yourself in a position where you might be harmed again. Leave your hurt with God, and allow Him to comfort you and heal you.

Touch Points of Hope: God's Answers for Your Daily Needs, p.4



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