

Deep End

Abuse Week #1: The Abused

Weekly Summary: Despite the shocking statistics, the topic of abuse is rarely touched in the Christian community. What does God say about abuse? What does God think about abuse? What does God say to a church filled with unspoken trauma and deep wounds?

Abuse: **A pattern of behavior that uses fear and force to maintain power and control.**

Genesis 6:11-13 - Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. 12 God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. 13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

God **hates** abuse.

Psalm 11:4b-5 - He observes everyone on earth; his eyes examine them. The Lord examines the righteous, but the wicked, those who love violence, he hates with a passion.

God **loves** the abused.

Colossians 3:12 - Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved...

1 Peter 2:9 - You are...God's special possession

1 John 5:19 - We know that we are children of God...

Isaiah 53:3,7,9 - He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain...He was oppressed and afflicted...He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Jesus was abused.

Psalm 147:3 - He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 11:1a,7 - In the Lord I take refuge...For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; the upright will see his face.

Big Takeaway: Remember there is **help** and you have **hope**.

Romans 8:37 - No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Points To Ponder

- 1) Why do you suppose the church has been so relatively silent on the topic of abuse? Based on what you heard in today's message, list at least three reasons why speaking on a taboo topic like this is necessary for God's people.
- 2) Think through the suffering that Jesus endured. In what specific ways can he relate to men and women who have been abused? How is Jesus' situation both our comfort in this life and our hope for the life to come?
- 3) Jesus said, "The truth will set you free." If you have been abused or know someone who has endured abuse, what 1 truth from today's message gives comfort and hope to victims of abuse as they seek to be set free from the past and the pain?
- 4) For a Deeper Dive check out netgrace.org, which examines abuse from a Christian perspective. Let the articles and messages on the site open your eyes to both the reality of abuse and the answers that God provides in his Word and through his devoted people.

Homework: Galatians 5:13-26

922 MINISTRIES

Abuse—Resource List

I. Local Help

- A. **Your Pastors**—While your pastors are not trained/licensed counselors and should not replace a professional therapist, they are equipped to help you deal with the effects of sin on your soul, including those sins that have been committed against you. Their confidential, Christ-centered guidance can be one vital piece of your recovery and healing.
- B. **Harbor House** (www.harborhousewi.org)—Harbor House, which is less than one mile from The CORE, exists to end domestic abuse in our community. Their many resources include support groups for men and women, survivors of abuse and abusers themselves. Call their 24-hour crisis helpline at 920-832-1666.
- C. **Christian Family Solutions** (www.christianfamilysolutions.org)—CFS is a professional, Christian counseling organizations that exists to help and heal people in need. Dr. Brandon Hayes, their clinical director, told one of our pastors, “We have many counselors on staff who are trained to help individuals who have been abused. We would love to partner with you in any way we can to help the Kingdom.”

II. Websites

- A. **G.R.A.C.E.** (Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment; www.netgrace.org)—GRACE helps Christian ministries recognize, prevent, and respond to abuse in its various forms. Pastor Mike found this website to be a rich resource of videos and articles for anyone looking for biblical answers on sexual, emotional, verbal, and/or physical abuse.
- B. **Freedom for the Captives** (www.freedomforcaptives.com)—This ministry was created to help protect children from abuse in addition to empowering abuse survivors. Filled with scripture and free resources, Freedom for the Captives is a wonderful place for the members of our congregation to learn about how to make 922 a safe place for every child to worship Jesus.

III. Books

- A. **Rid of My Disgrace** by Justin and Lindsay Holcomb—This was the first book that Pastor Mike ever read on the topic of abuse and, nearly a decade later, continues to be one of his favorites. This work focuses on sexual abuse and guides the reader to the cleansing, purifying, and restoring work of Jesus.
- B. **The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma** by Bessel van der Kolk—This book, recommended by Dr. Brandon Hayes, explores the connection between various types of trauma and the way our brains ability to trust, practice self-control, and experience pleasure afterwards. This pioneering work has become a New York Times best seller.