

Breaking the Silence

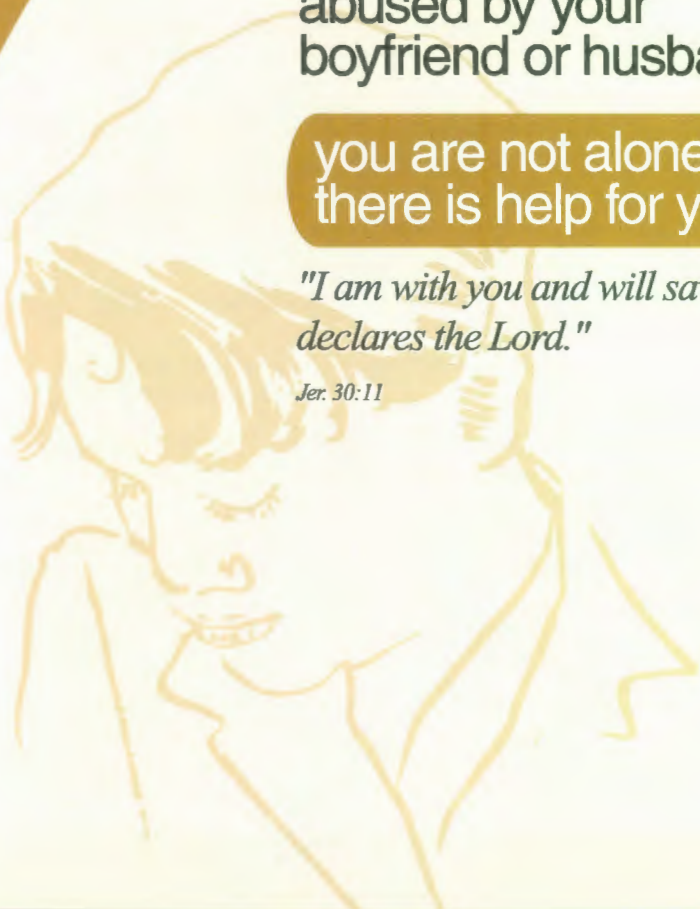
# **BREAKING** the *SILENCE*

Are you being  
abused by your  
boyfriend or husband?

you are not alone  
there is help for you

*"I am with you and will save you,  
declares the Lord."*

*Jer. 30:11*



# 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.

## 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)

## **An Abusive Relationship Includes Behaviors Such As:**

- Slapping, pushing, kicking, or hitting
- Refusing to let you have your own money or handle your own finances
- Being forced to have sex with him
- The abuser blaming you for his problems
- Feeling afraid to express your opinions or wishes
- The abuser being critical of all that you do and makes fun of your appearance
- Extreme possessiveness or jealousy
- Being ignored when you say “No”
- Threatening or swearing
- Disrespecting you, your family, or friends
- Feeling uncomfortable

## **These Common Beliefs Are Not True**

- Abuse is only a momentary loss of temper
- Husbands must abuse their wives in order to gain respect
- Abuse only happens among uneducated people or in developing countries
- A victim could always leave an abusive relationship if they really wanted to
- Men cannot be abused by women
- Victims of abuse have psychological disorders
- Abuse is caused by the use of alcohol and drugs
- High levels of stress make people abuse
- Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other
- Abuse survivors exaggerate
- Some people ask, provoke, or want to be abused
- It is a sin for Christian victims to seek to prosecute their abusers
- Some people deserve to be abused

## Help Is Available to You

Reading this brochure is a healthy step towards finding the help you need. You do not deserve to be abused. God does not want you to suffer as you are now. You are not alone; your pastor, church leaders, doctor, family members, friends, or a Christian therapist may all serve as wonderful resources for you. There is help available to you!

- **Contact the authorities**, your pastor, doctor, family member, or a friend and let them know that you have been abused.
- **Many states and countries** have laws against abuse. Find out about the laws in your area.
- **The abuse may** have left you with many emotional scars. Try to schedule regular counseling sessions with a licensed therapist.
- **You may have been hurt** physically. Get your doctor to give you a thorough examination.
- **Ask someone** you feel comfortable with to be your prayer partner, to daily pray with you, and offer encouragement whenever you feel weak or lonely.
- **Ask the Lord** to give you emotional, physical, and spiritual strength.

**“For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, ‘fear not; I will help thee.’” Isaiah 41:13**



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