



**Wiping the Tears: A Caring
Response to Abuse
*Recognizing Abuse/Domestic
Violence***

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Safe Harbor Ministries

www.safeharborministries.org



**God's Word and Heart
Concerning Violence**

Psalm 55 (NLT)

Jeremiah 8:21-9:1 (NLT)

A pair of hands, palms up, held out against a dark background. The hands are positioned at the top of the frame, with fingers slightly spread. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the lines on the palms. The background is dark and slightly textured, possibly a wall or a backdrop.

Why do we need to talk about abuse in the church?

**Abuse exists in every country, every
people group, every faith tradition
and every socioeconomic group.**

**Research consistently indicates that
the rates of family violence inside
and outside the church are similar.**

Some statistics about domestic violence



Domestic Violence/Abuse

A pattern of behavior where one person tries to control the thoughts, beliefs, or actions of a partner, friend, or any other person close to them.

People often think of domestic violence as physical abuse. Physical abuse includes slapping, pushing, punching, kicking, choking, using weapons and murder.



Domestic Violence/Abuse

Domestic violence also includes many other behaviors, including emotional, verbal, psychological, sexual and economic abuse.

A pattern of these behaviors used to control another person, even with no physical abuse, is domestic violence/abuse or “battering.”



It's All About Control

The core characteristic of domestic violence is control.

Batterers use abuse to gain power and control over their intimate partners.

Abuse is behavior that harms (psychologically and/or physically) or creates fear in the victim.



It's All About Control

Batterers are not “out of control” due to poor anger management, stress, or substance abuse. They use anger and abuse to get what they want.

The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that more than 90% of all domestic violence victims are female and that most abusers are male.



Warning Signs of an Abusive Relationship

Are you with someone who...

Is jealous and possessive toward you, won't let you have friends, checks up on you, or won't accept breaking up?

Tries to control you by being very bossy, giving orders, making all the decisions, or doesn't take your opinion seriously?

Is scary? You worry about how they will react to what you say or do? Threatens you or owns weapons?



Are you with someone who...

Pressures you for sex, is forceful or scary around sex? Thinks of you as a sex object? Attempts to manipulate or guilt trip you (If you really loved me you would...)? Gets too serious about the relationship too fast?

Abuses alcohol or drugs and pressures you to take them?

Blames you when they mistreat you? Says you provoked them, made them do it, pushed their buttons, led them on?



Are you with someone who...

Has a history of bad relationships and blames the other person for all the problems?

Believes that men should be powerful and in control and that women should be passive and submissive?

Has hit, choked, restrained, or physically abused you?

Your family and friends have warned you about this person or told you they were worried for your safety?

A pair of hands, one on the left and one on the right, are shown holding a piece of white paper that has been torn down the middle. The hands are positioned as if they are presenting or holding the paper. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wall or a piece of fabric. The text is overlaid on the paper and hands.

Domestic Violence Handouts

The Power and Control Wheel

The Equity/Healthy Relationship Wheel

The Cycle of Domestic Violence

Myths about Domestic Violence

The effects of domestic violence on children

A pair of hands, one on the left and one on the right, are shown holding a small, glowing object, possibly a candle or a small figurine, against a dark background. The hands are positioned as if presenting the object. The text is overlaid on this image.

Christian Women and Abuse

As a Christian wife, you can keep faith and separate yourself from violence and abuse.

Malachi 2:13-16 (NIV)

A spouse who uses abuse and violence is breaking faith and the marriage covenant.

Although God is displeased with frivolous divorce, He also hates violence and wants you to live in safety.

A pair of hands, palms up, held out against a dark background. The hands are positioned at the top of the frame, with fingers slightly spread. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the veins on the palms. The background is dark and slightly textured, possibly a fabric or a wall.

Christian Women and Abuse

You are the temple of God and should not be desecrated by abuse.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV)

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.

A close-up photograph of two hands, one larger than the other, holding a small, dark object. The hands are positioned as if they are about to release or have just released the object. The background is dark and out of focus.

Breaking Free

Break the silence and tell someone

Recognize that when you are attempting to leave an abusive relationship you are in the most danger. You must use wisdom.

Make a safety plan for you and your children.

Access resources: spiritual, psychological, medical, legal, economic, shelters, housing, support groups

A pair of hands, one larger and one smaller, are shown holding a small, dark object between them. The hands are positioned in the upper half of the frame, with the fingers gently cupping the object. The background is dark and textured, possibly a piece of fabric or a wall. The overall mood is one of care and protection.

How Can I Help?

Recognize and raise awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence and God's view about abuse.

Model loving, nonabusive relationships for others.

Teach our children and our youth healthy patterns for relationships, respect for others, and healthy ways to resolve conflict.

The background of the slide features a close-up photograph of two hands held out, palms up, in a gesture of offering or help. The hands are positioned symmetrically on either side of the center. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the skin and the creases on the palms. The overall tone is warm and supportive.

How Can I Help?

Take time to *listen* to the survivor's story, empathize with her pain, and validate her experience.

Provide practical help and spiritual support when you have the opportunity.