

HEALING FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

by Rich Murphy

Sexual abuse is rampant in our society. I've heard statistics that say 80% of the women in America have been sexually abused sometime in their lives. Personally, I think that it's a much higher number than that. I would have to say that there are very few women today who haven't been sexually abused sometime in their lives.

God's definition of sexual abuse is anytime a woman has been pressured, forced, or coerced into any sexual act. Kissing, especially passionate kissing is definitely a sexual act. Considering that most of the teenage girls today think that if a boy takes them out and spends money on them they should go to bed with him, that means that "date rape" is accounting for the sexual problems of the next generation of marriages.

I just wanted to say that there is hope for a woman who has been sexually abused in the past. God can and will heal every wound, when we let Him!

Steps for dealing with sexual abuse:

1 - Forgive. Forgiveness isn't an act of the heart, it's an act of the will. Many times, we've heard people say "I just can't forgive, I want to, but I can't." Yes, you can. You may not feel like forgiving, but you can make a decision to forgive. Trust God to take care of the feelings.

There are several people that need to be forgiven:

- the abuser (or abusers as the case may be)
- whoever should have protected you (i.e. parents)
- yourself (many women who have been abused blame themselves. It's not your fault, you're the victim)
- God (He didn't abuse you, nor did He want you to be abused. You were abused because of sin)

2 - Deal with the spiritual realm. It is clear in the Bible that there are demons that harass and oppress us. I'm not talking about possession here, I'm talking about oppression. When a man abuses a woman sexually, it's in part because he's driven by a spirit of lust. That spirit transfers onto the women, often affecting her in a negative way, causing her to be negative towards sex.

The best picture I can give of oppression is a spirit sitting on your shoulder, speaking thoughts into your mind. Remember in the cartoons, when a person had to make a decision, and a little demon would appear on one side, talking to them, while an angel

would appear on the other side? This is a good picture of oppression. However, the things they are speaking aren't necessarily about decisions of what we do, they are usually trying to destroy our lives.

Jesus gave us authority over demons. We can command them away from our lives, in His name. There are usually three demons that we know about which have to be dealt with:

- Lust, or anti-lust
- Fear (many women who have been abused are afraid of men)
- Shame (many women who have been abused feel it's their fault)

3 - Pray for emotional healing. There is only One who is able to provide emotional healing, and that's God. Emotional healing is a step by step process, and can take time. However, God has promised us healing, and that means in all areas of our lives.

4 - Renew your mind. We have been given the mind of Christ, but we don't always accept that gift. Often, we are satisfied with our own thoughts, instead of taking His.

How does one renew their mind? With the Word of God. Whatever problem a believer has, they can find scriptures that speak to that area. Meditate on those verses, and ask God to give you revelation of them. This will work to change your thought process from one that the problems have created into one that falls in line with God's will.

5 - Learn to trust again. Most women who've been abused have trouble trusting their husbands. Basically, a man abused them, and so they don't trust any man. As part of the renewing of your mind, realize that your husband isn't the one who abused you. Therefore, you can trust him.