In this parable a man had been beaten, robbed, and left to die. Bloody and dirty this man was in desperate need of help. His very life was in the balance.

How did the priest, Levite, and the Samaritan love his neighbor? What were their actions when they discovered this wounded man?

A Priest
- Saw the messy, dirty, bloody man
- Passed by on the other side

A Levite
- Saw the messy, dirty, bloody man
- Passed by on the other side
In too many incidences, the church pushes for reconciliation in the relationship without proof of consistent change by the perpetrator just because he seems repentant. The preservation of life and safety is more important than reconciliation. If a victim goes back into the relationship too soon, the perpetrator will often be more abusive and all accountability will stop.

When a woman who experiences domestic violence comes to the church, she needs to be viewed as the beaten, bleeding, and deeply wounded person found in the parable. Stopping the “bleeding” is critical for her to live. Standing up against evil, holding the abuser accountable, believing her, and taking action against the abuse is essential. Just seeing the wounded is not enough. It is the beginning of walking the difficult journey with her. Are we in the church willing to get our hands dirty and take a risk or will we further oppress and re-victimize the victim?

As the body of Christ, the choice is ours to be like the Samaritan or the priest and Levite. Are we going to be part of setting the captives free or putting them in more bondage? The Lord is watching and will judge our choices.

“Rescue those who are unjustly sentenced to death; don’t stand back and let them die. Don’t try to avoid responsibility by saying you didn’t know about it. For God knows all, hears, and he sees you. He keeps watch over your soul, and he knows you knew! And he will judge all people according to what they have done.”

Proverbs 24:11-12, NLT

By Paula Silva
Letters/E-Mail

Dear FOCUS:

I'm not in a physical abusive relationship but a very mentally abusive relationship. I am in extreme pain inside. I don't know what to do. . . I just don't know what to do. My 4 year old cries and cries and tells me to call someone to take us away cuz Daddy's being mean again. He doesn't hurt anybody physically but can make an otherwise wonderful day turn into a nightmare in a matter of seconds. He has an uncontrolled temper.....always has. I've been married for 23 years and raised 2 other children in that atmosphere. I know how he is and how he always_controlled at times in tears and pain beyond what I can tell you in this e-mail. I can't help this alone. I don't know what to do anymore. I use to talk to my Mom, who felt I should stay in the relationship because my husband is so good to us. She heard the stories but never really believed. . . Please, can anybody talk to me?

—Email

Editor’s note: Emails like these come to us all the time. We begin ministering by listening and affirming who she is and the courage it took to reach out for help. Often women want to know that they are not crazy in what they are perceiving. How should the church reach out to her, a neighbor?

Words That Heal

“Your righteousness reaches to the skies, O God, you who have done great things. Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up. You will increase my honor and comfort me once again. . .”

“My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long, for those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion.”

Psalm 71: 19-21, 24 NIV

FOCUS Support Groups

- Conway, AR
  Sundays 3 p.m.
- Brandon, FL
  The second and fourth Saturday of each month
- Eustis, FL
  Saturdays 10 a.m. to Noon.
- Bolingbrook, IL
  Monday - 5:30-7:00 p.m.
  Saturday - 2:00-3:30 p.m.
- Naperville, IL
  Thursday evenings 7-8 p.m.
- Glen Ellyn, IL
  Third Monday of every month
- Wheaton, IL
  The first & third Saturday 9:30 a.m.
- Wood Dale, IL
  Second Thursday at 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.
- Lexington, KY
  Saturdays at 9 a.m.
- Akron, OH
  The second and fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
- Findlay, OH
  The second Thursday of every month 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Olmsted Falls, OH
  Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
- Wheaton, IL
  The first & third Saturday 9:30 a.m.
- Wood Dale, IL
  Second Thursday at 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.
- Lexington, KY
  Saturdays at 9 a.m.
- Akron, OH
  The second and fourth Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m.
- Findlay, OH
  The second Thursday of every month 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Olmsted Falls, OH
  Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
- Felton, PA
  The second Thursday of each month 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Knoxville, TN
  Tuesday at 7 p.m.
- Lynnwood, WA
  Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Weston, WI
  Thursdays 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

If you are interested in information about a particular support group or would like to start a support group in your area, contact Paula Silva at 630-595-7023 or paula@focusministries1.org.
Emotionally destructive relationships are not always evident to those on the outside. Deep wounds are created which over time will destroy the victim of the relationship. Why would the perpetrator inflict these wounds?

The answer lies within the heart of an emotionally destructive person. Emotionally destructive relationships are not always evident to those on the outside. Deep wounds are created which over time will destroy the victim of the relationship. Why would the perpetrator inflict these wounds?

The Lazy Heart
Proverbs 18:9 NIV
“One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys.”
♥ They use anger as a tool to get what they want.
♥ Entitlement thinking fuels the angry heart.
♥ The angry heart allows anger to become dominant in their life.

The Evil Heart
Proverbs 21:10 NIV
“The wicked craves evil; his neighbor gets no mercy from him.”
♥ The evil heart shows no remorse and delights in doing evil.
♥ They enjoy seeing someone suffer and do not regret the pain and hurt they inflict on others.
♥ They are deceptive and often disguise their actions to appear as good.

The Fearful Heart
Proverbs 29:25 NIV
“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.”
♥ Because they are afraid their fears will come true, they control others.
♥ They are afraid of rejection, conflict, being hurt, not loved, loss, and seeing the truth.

The Proud Heart
Proverbs 16:18 NIV
“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.”
♥ The proud person is his own god.
♥ Their life is centered on themselves
♥ “I’m wrong,” “I need help,” and “I don’t know” are not in their vocabulary.
♥ The proud person refuses to be held accountable for his/her actions.
♥ They are blinded to their own sin yet clearly see the faults in others.
♥ The proud person determines reality and truth based on what they believe and not necessarily what is biblical or factual.
♥ Pride fuels the angry heart.

The Selfish Heart
Philippians 3:19 NIV
“Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.”
♥ The selfish heart is a taker not a giver.
♥ Their needs, wants, desires, and rights take precedence over anyone else’s.
♥ Because it is all about them, the selfish heart cannot love well.
♥ To avoid consequences for their actions, deception will be part of their pattern of behavior.

The Angry Heart
Proverbs 29:22 NIV
“An angry man stirs up dissension, a hot-tempered one commits many sins.”
♥ They use anger as a tool to get what they want.
♥ Entitlement thinking fuels the angry heart.
♥ The angry heart allows anger to become dominant in their life.

The Envious Heart
James 3:16 NIV
“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”
♥ Envy is always destructive.
♥ Comparison thinking rules the envious heart.
♥ The envious heart transforms the person into a critical, bitter, hateful, and resentful person who despises the good in others.

The Selfish Heart
Philippians 3:19 NIV
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♥ To avoid consequences for their actions, deception will be part of their pattern of behavior.

The Lazy Heart
Proverbs 18:9 NIV
“One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys.”
♥ The lazy heart has no meaningful purpose in their life and lives for the moment.
♥ There is no motivation to change. “You’ll just have to accept me the way I am.”
♥ They want the good things in life, but put forth no effort to work for it.

The Evil Heart
Proverbs 21:10 NIV
“The wicked craves evil; his neighbor gets no mercy from him.”
♥ The evil heart shows no remorse and delights in doing evil.
♥ They enjoy seeing someone suffer and do not regret the pain and hurt they inflict on others.
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By Paula Silva
Book Review

THE EMOTIONALLY DESTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP: Seeing It! Stopping It! Surviving It!  
*By Leslie Vernick*

Just because there are no visible bruises or broken bones does not mean the person is not in a destructive relationship. By reading this book you will discover

- Ways to identify emotionally destructive relationships
- Themes of the heart that play a role in these types of relationships
- Choices that one can make to stop the effects of the destruction
- Steps to move beyond the emotional effects to healing

**FOCUS Ministries**

Domestic Violence Training for Churches/Groups/Organizations

**Topics:**
- What is Domestic Violence?—A Closer Look at Verbal, Emotional, Sexual, Physical, and Spiritual Abuse
- Characteristics of an Abuser/Why Does He Do That?
- Recognizing a Victim of Domestic Violence
- Why Women Stay or Leave/Developing a Safety Plan
- How Does Domestic Violence Affect the Family Especially Children
- Teen Dating Violence
- What Can the Church Do?
- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling
- Signs that the Abuser Has Changed
- Church Safety Plan/Risks
- Becoming an Anchor in the Storm/How to Help Someone in an Abusive Relationship

**Development of Domestic Violence Program in Churches**
- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling Victims and Abusers
- Development of Domestic Violence Policies and Procedures for Churches
- Step By Step Approach for Churches to Address the Issue of Domestic Violence
- Training for support group leaders

**Other Topics:**
- Behind Closed Doors: Hope for Women in Difficult Relationships
- Unmasking Relationships
- What Color is Your Elephant?
- Shhh...Don’t Tell

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Your Invitation

Invite your friends, family, coworkers, and members of your church. Reserve a table and/or be a sponsor.

Support FOCUS Ministries as we minister to women and families experiencing domestic violence by providing emotional, spiritual, and physical needs. Reservations can be made online or by calling 630-595-7023.

Give a voice to the children, the hidden victims of domestic violence.

Behind the Mask

FOCUS Ministries Fundraiser Luncheon and Silent Auction
10:30 A.M.—3:00 P.M.

Diplomat West
681 W. North Ave.
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Leslie Vernick
Renown author/speaker and counselor
www.LeslieVernick.com

Anita Lustrea
host of Midday Connection
www.MiddayConnection.org

Rachel Mohn
Speaker
www.panicdotes.net

Marie Barlow Martin
Christian singer/songwriter
www.MarieBarlow.com

Reservations at www.focusministries1.org or call 630-595-7023

Save the Date
October 17, 2009

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Prayer Requests & Urgent Needs

Urgent Needs:
- Silent auction items are needed for our Behind the Mask fundraiser.
- Volunteers are needed for our fundraiser in Oct.
- Professional grant writer and fundraiser
- An office space to accommodate the increasing need for the ministry

Praises:
- Guest on WORD FM and WGBN radio
- FOCUS Ministries is featured in the Today’s Christian Woman Magazine, March/April 2009

Prayer Requests:
- Pray for God to provide the three and a half million dollars to purchase a church building in Elmhurst, IL. This would be a great facility for our FOCUS Women’s Center. It would enable us to expand our services and provide more trainings, seminars, and conferences.
- Pray for funds to be able to hire Brenda Spivey as vice president of FOCUS Ministries.
- Pray for the development of our teen/tween curriculum
- Pray for woman and families who contact our FOCUS Women’s Center. We have had to turn away women who have come to us with physical needs because of the lack of funds.
- Pray for pastors’ wives that are being abused.
- Pray for individuals, churches, and businesses to commit to monthly giving.
- Pray for all the FOCUS support group leaders in the U.S.
- Pray for houses in IL, to be donated for use as transitional homes.
- Pray for more invitations from churches to train pastors, staff, and congregations about domestic violence.

Upcoming Events

- June 30, 2009—Guest on WGBN radio
- July 8, 15 & 22, 2009—Speaking at God’s Heritage Full Gospel Ministries, Maywood, IL
- July 14, 2009—Guest on WORD FM radio
- July 23, 2009—Podcast on DV
- Sept. 16-19, 2009—Exhibitor at the American Association of Christian Counselors World Conference, Nashville, TN
- Sept. 25, 2009—Breakout session speaker at NACCFA Conference, IL
- ★Oct. 17, 2009—Behind the Mask Fundraiser Luncheon, Diplomat West, Elmhurst, IL, Guest speaker, Leslie Vernick, Singer, Marie Barlow Martin, Anita Lustrea, host of Midday Connection, and Rachel Mohn, www.panicdotes.net. Tickets can be purchased online focusministries1.org or 630-595-7023.

If you would like the FOCUS team to come to your church for a women’s retreat (“A Woman’s Journey To God”), seminar on domestic violence, or other speaking engagement, please contact us as soon as possible as our calendar for 2009 is quickly filling up!

Contact Paula at 630-595-7023 or contactus@focusministries1.org.
Ways You Can Help FOCUS Ministries

★ Join with us in ministering to women and families who experience domestic violence by participating in our Exercise-a-thon. Choose any exercise (run, bike, walk, skip, jump rope, swim, play tennis, baseball, football, lift weights, etc.), set your own goal, raise pledges, and take action against domestic violence! Just print off the FOCUS Exercise-a-thon form on our website, fill in your name and address by the participant’s name, raise support, exercise, and then send in the completed form with the funds raised by November 15. Checks are to be made out to FOCUS Ministries and sent to P.O. Box 2014, Elmhurst, IL 60126. A tax deductible receipt will be given. If you have questions, please email at contacts@focusministries1.org. We want to thank you for your support of this ministry.

★ Make GoodSearch your search engine for the internet. Choose FOCUS Ministries as the ministry you support. FOCUS Ministries receives a penny for every search you do. It does not cost you anything.

★ When purchasing anything from Amazon.com, go to our website first, www.focusministries1.org, click on the Amazon.com icon, and Amazon will donate a small percentage of your purchased amount. This does not cost you anything.

★ Please Choose FOCUS as your favorite charity at iGive.com. You can help FOCUS Ministries when you make online purchases! For more information, please see: Help FOCUS at iGive.com on our website, www.focusministries1.org.

Endorsements:

“These women are called, prepared, and surrendered to their crucial ministry. The stamp of God is on their lives and work. It’s my prayer that God will use their gifts across the world to draw thousands of women to the hope that Christ provides. This is one ministry I’m sold on.”

Dr. Larry Crabb, New Way Ministries

“I commend FOCUS Ministries for helping the church in its battle against domestic abuse. After seeing the response to a message I preached on this topic, I’ve come to realize that domestic abuse is much more common in our churches than we would like to admit. The materials and interaction I’ve had with FOCUS Ministries was helpful and very much needed. I pray that God will use FOCUS to awaken all of us to the reality of abuse as well as bring hope and healing to the victims.”

Dr. Erwin W. Lutzer
Senior Pastor, The Moody Church, Chicago, IL

O Lord, You Alone Are My Hope! Psalm 71:5 NLT