

Education is the “key”!

My heart goes out to anyone who has suffered from abuse, whether it happened to you personally or to someone you love. I am professing, we have meeting in our home, and I'm a psychiatric nurse. I have been in the mental health field since 1980; therefore, I have heard many heart wrenching stories through the years. The psychological damage is so traumatic. I have witnessed little children have "flash backs" of the abuse. They have terror in their eyes. They relive the trauma when they see anything that reminds them of what happened to them.

I had an uncle in the work in the 1950s who molested young boys. He was put out of the work. My dear mother never told us children, I'm sure because she was too ashamed and embarrassed, and I think she believed he would not do it again. However, he ended up in jail in his 70s, never admitted his wrong, and was banned from attending meetings. His nieces and nephews applauded the workers decision for him not to attend meetings because he lacked repentance. My uncle was very self righteous. One little example was his comment about a letter being "totally worthless" unless it had a scripture mentioned in it. His activities were centered around "doing for others" that included bringing *Meals on Wheels* to the elderly, and being involved in a *Rabbit Club* (involved with children) and a *Garden Club*.

In the past, abuse situations have been "shoved under the rug" and the victims have not truly been heard, nor have their feelings been validated, which adds to their misery and shame. I am very thankful that there are more and more workers who are coming forward and tackling the abuse situation. In the past, part of the problem has been lack of education on the subject of pedophilia and sexual abuse. When someone said "I'm sorry, I won't do it again," what happened is that people want to give that person the "benefit of the doubt"; however, anyone who violates a child or a minor has something mentally wrong. They often times do not relate well to their own peers. They feel they relate better to children. Being stronger and bigger than children makes them feel more powerful. Some maybe don't want to do what they do, might have some guilt about it, but in their minds they justify it for one reason or another (which will not stand up in court!) The bottom line is, molestation of a minor is a criminal offense punishable by law.

We are to obey the laws of the land; therefore, this behavior cannot and should not be tolerated and must not be ignored! Sometimes the victims have a tendency to protect the perpetrator for one reason or another, and it is probably due to shame (with the belief that they were at fault), fear and lack of courage to come forward, afraid they will be rejected by the friends, family or workers. They also may fear losing privileges or favor. Remember, the child must be protected and validated, not the perpetrator. It does not matter how much "good" the perpetrator has done in the past. That goodness is negated by the evil that is done. I Cor. 5:1-11 tells us how to deal with incest.

We are thankful for overseers who are willing to listen, be supportive of families who have been harmed, and are willing to remove perpetrators from places of position in the fellowship. I believe God will intervene. We are diligently praying for God to raise more men like Samuel to fill up the void. Eli did not restrain nor correct nor punish his sons who were so evil. God took care of the situation without any visible intervention. Hannah's prayers were heard, not only for her own need, but God raised up Samuel to help God's people.

I marvel reading about the woman, Jael, Judges 4:21 who had the courage to kill the enemy. We would never literally kill a person like she did, but what she did was a victory for the people of God. Women and men need to have courage to report the evil to prevent other innocent children from being hurt.

I have talked to my grandchildren about not allowing anyone to touch their privates. We went to a miniature golf range recently and I instructed them to "never go to the restroom by yourself because sometimes weird people hang around these places and like to hurt children." Although, in reality, the perpetrators (more often than not) are "normal" looking people that kids love and trust. They can be ministers, teachers, doctors, therapists, family members... the list is endless. **Kids must be taught about "Good Touch, Bad Touch" and report anything that violates proper boundaries!**

We can help prevent child abuse by being educated and educating others. When it does happen, we must contact the police (as Lyle and Jerome have instructed the people of MN and MI to do). God is giving those men courage to do what is right. Good will prevail over evil..... When we pray, we must pray, believing, that God will intervene!

Love, Nana x 8 (I love my 8 grandkids and they love me!)