



How to Pray for... **ABUSE WITHIN MARRIAGE**



Around the world, one in three women report experiencing violence in their home.* As we travel around training and asking questions, this statistic seems conservative. In India, we gathered twenty educated Christian men and asked if beating one's wife is sometimes okay. Every one of them raised their hands in agreement. In Uganda, a group of Christian leaders explained that it is necessary to beat women because they're just like children, demanding things all day. In Southeast Asia, pastors and deacons were stunned to learn that beating their wives was not pleasing to God. In country after country, on every continent, we hear similar stories and reasoning for abusing women. Sadly we also hear an increasing number of stories of women beating their husbands. It's heartbreaking.

Of course, Christians are not the only perpetrators of domestic violence. These men and women are simply following the norms of their cultures because they have never yet learned how the Bible applies to their relationships with their own spouse. Without the truth of the whole gospel, they are left believing the lie that women are servants to be controlled or possessions to be used and the lie that conflict must be solved by violence.

**(WHO 11-2016)*

Please pray with us...

- For abusers, both men and women, that the truth of Scripture would set them free and heal their marriages. Pray that they would understand that their spouse is made in the image of God, with great value. Pray that they would love, respect, and submit to one another (Ephesians 5). Pray that they learn to resolve conflict without violence and that their changed marriages would be a powerful witness to others.
- For those experiencing abuse, please pray Psalm 20:1—May the Lord answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. Pray for them to know their own value, to find support and solutions, and for abusive relationships to be miraculously healed.
- For children, who often witness violence in the home, please pray that God would protect their hearts and minds. Pray that they, too, would know the truth and not perpetuate the cycle of violence in the next generation.
- Pray for wellsprings of repentance, forgiveness, restoration, and love to flow through families who have been caught in abuse.
- Pray for churches in the Majority World to know the truth, to stand against domestic violence, to offer shelter to those who are experiencing it, and to model healthy marriage to their cultures.
- Pray for governments to make and uphold just laws that protect vulnerable people from violence in their homes.

In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Ephesians 5:28-33



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