

enditnow® Emphasis Day
Resource Packet

August 22, 2020

WHEN JESUS ENDED IT!

Sermon written by Anthony R. Kent, PhD candidate
Ministerial Association Associate Secretary
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Includes seminar

THE WOUNDS OF ABUSE: Can We Do More?

Published in *Ministry*® International Journal for Pastors, November 2018

Includes handout for domestic violence

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Written by Mable C. Dunbar, PhD LPC

enditnow®

Adventists Say No to Violence

Children's Ministries, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries,
Ministerial Association, Women's Ministries, Youth Ministries



Prepared by Department of Women's Ministries
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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Seventh-day
Adventist® Church

GENERAL CONFERENCE
WORLD HEADQUARTERS





WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

April 17, 2020

Dear Directors,

Joyful greetings to each of you. We live in a world filled with uncertainties and fear. We are faced with political unrest, wars, epidemics and pandemics, loss of jobs, inability to handle the daily needs of our families and the list goes on and on. At this time many of us are still dealing with the after affects of coronavirus. All these factors impact us spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Sadly, emotional distress without a firm spiritual foundation leads to abuse in our house and society of many kinds.

This year's packet titled "When Jesus Ended It" is written by Pastor Anthony R. Kent, associate secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association.

Our prayer is that God will work through you, our leaders, and all our sisters as you minister to those in pain and share the love, joy, and peace that only comes from Jesus through the Holy Spirit. This is the time to share spiritual gifts in abundant measures.

We thank all the General Conference departments that support **enditnow**®. Your support and hard work help bring this issue of abuse to the front of consciousness throughout the worldwide Adventist Church and keep it alive. We thank you for organizing this special day in our churches each year, for the marches in the streets, and so much more.

God bless you and guide you as you send out this important packet of resources for **enditnow**® Emphasis Day.

With love and joy,

+
Heather-Dawn Small

Women's Ministries Director
"I thank God for you..." Philippians 1:3-6

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About the Author

Anthony R. Kent was elected to the General Conference in 2005. Pastor Kent's ministry experience includes pastoring local churches, church planting, public evangelism as a union and division evangelist, as well as Ministerial Secretary for the South Pacific Division.

He developed a Ministerial Internship Development and Training syllabus, and his specialty is offering continuing education and professional growth opportunities for pastors. He hosts MINISTRYinMOTION, a practical professional TV program for clergy and local church ministers.

Currently, Pastor Kent is pursuing a PhD through the University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia) in the New Testament, specifically Luke-Acts. Anthony is happily married to Debora and they have two daughters Chelsea and Georgia.

Except where noted, all Biblical texts in Pastor Kent's sermon are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved.

What's in This Packet?

- Sermon:** "When Jesus Ended It," by Pastor Anthony R. Kent, with PPT
Seminar: "The Wounds of Abuse," published in *Ministry*®, November 2018, with PPT
Handout: Individual and Community Response to Domestic Violence,
by Mable C. Dunbar, with PPT
Booklet: *The Dynamics of Domestic Violence*, by Mable C. Dunbar, PhD LPC

Program Notes

Please read through the components of the **enditnow**[®] resource packet. Be alert to ways you can adjust the materials to fit the needs of your divisions and fields. Feel free to translate, rework, and edit the resource packet *according to your division's needs*, including the best Bible version for your use. Also, you are free to adapt the packet *according to your cultural audience*. We will share the packets for French, Portuguese, and Spanish with the division women's ministries directors, when the assigned divisions have sent us a translated digital file.

The order of service suggests hymns and readings taken from the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, © 1985 that relate to the theme of the sermon as we see it. Please pick and choose elements from the outline or create your own order of service.

Our deep appreciation to you for forwarding the **enditnow**[®] Emphasis Day resource packet to your division counterparts in order to speed the process of reaching the local churches. The packet is also available on our website, women.adventist.org, under Special Days, Enditnow, 2020.

Kindly remember that our logo **enditnow**[®] **Adventists Say No to Violence** is registered and trademarked. Always print **enditnow**[®] with lower case letters, in black bold with dark red "it," no spaces. Use the registered symbol in the title and the first reference in the body of a document and in other places where it is used as the logo rather than text copy.

Seven departments of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists have joined together as a team to address the problem of interpersonal violence. Children's Ministries, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries, Ministerial Association, and Youth Ministries joined Women's Ministries in sponsoring the **enditnow**[®] **Adventists Say No to Violence** initiative. Interpersonal violence impacts everyone, and we are delighted that these ministries for young and old, men and women, children and adults, members and pastors are part of the coalition to bring awareness to this social and spiritual abuse—a tragedy in all its forms.

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Women's Ministries Department

Suggested Outline of Service

Call to worship:

The LORD upholds all who fall
And lifts up all who are bowed down.

Psalm 145:14, NIV

Hymn of praise: "Just When I Need Him Most"

512

Responsive reading: "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" from Psalm 103, NIV

711

Pastoral prayer

Pastoral prayer response: "O Thou Who Hearest"

668

Children's story: Jesus Cares for Me

Call for the offering

Special music

Scripture reading:

Luke 13:10-17, ESV

¹⁰ Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself.

¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." ¹³ And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.

¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day."

¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

¹⁷ As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Sermon: When Jesus Ended It!

Hymn of response: "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go"

77

Closing prayer

Benediction:

"The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26, NIV

Responsive Reading

711, PRAISE THE LORD, O MY SOUL

Praise the Lord, O my soul:
All my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits.

**He forgives all my sins
And heals all my diseases;
He redeems my life from the pit
And crowns me with love and compassion.
He satisfies my desires with good things,
So that my youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
Slow to anger, abounding in love. . . .
He does not treat us as our sins deserve
Or repay us according to our iniquities.

**For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
So great is his love for those who fear him;
As far as the east is from the west,
So far has he removed our transgressions from us.**

Praise the Lord, O my soul.

—From Psalm 103, NIV

Prayer Response

#668, O THOU WHO HEAREST

O Thou who hearest every heartfelt prayer,
With Thy rich grace, Lord, all our hearts prepare;
Thou art our Life, Thou art our love and light,
O let this Sabbath hour with Thee be bright. Amen.

Children's Story

JESUS CARES FOR ME

Written by Linda Mei Lin Koh, PhD
GC Children's Ministries Director

On the morning of 8 November 2013, dark clouds were gathering above the sky as the news channel forecast a strong storm approaching. Juni, his parents, and his younger sister Mimi lived in a little house by the bay, and looking out of the kitchen window, he could see big waves lapping onto the shore. The day before had been so sunny that people had laughed at the warning of an approaching storm, like in the days of Noah. No one would have believed that one of the worst typhoons in history was barreling toward the central Philippines.

Just as the family sat down for breakfast and were about to eat, the roof over the living room was suddenly wrenched off by winds reaching 310 km/hour (195 mph), one of the strongest recorded on earth. Immediately, Papa shouted for everyone to run to the ground floor, only to find that water was quickly rising inside the rooms. The typhoon had generated a massive storm surge—a wave of ocean water up to 20 or more feet deep that could submerge the city within minutes.

Juni was shaking with fear, “Mama, will we all die right now? Will our house be destroyed?”

“Let’s run, Juni,” Mama yelled to be heard over the noise of the strong wind, “Don’t worry now, Jesus will take care of us,” Mama said confidently.

Juni and Mimi dashed out of their house, running after Papa and Mama as fast as their legs could carry them to higher ground. They barely made it! Hundreds of people were also running and dashing to the higher ground.

Rain was pouring down and the winds were howling louder and louder. All of them were wet and cold. They needed to seek shelter under the hanging rocks. Fortunately, Mama had grabbed a few blankets while running out of the house, and now she put them over Juni and his little sister who were shivering with cold.

“Juni and Mimi, we are safe now,” Papa assured the children, “Jesus will take care of us. See how he has protected us now! We didn’t lose our lives,” said Papa with a smile.

“Yes, Papa, all four of us are here!” Juni smiled broadly as he leaned closer to Papa. “I don’t need to be afraid anymore, right?” echoed Juni trustingly.

“Juni, none of us need to be afraid, no matter what because the Bible asks us in 1 Peter 5:7, to “Cast all your anxiety on Him, for He cares for you,” Mama reminded Juni.

“Thank you, Jesus, for caring for us even in the storm, Amen,” Juni prayed happily. “Now I understand better when I sing the song, ‘With Christ in the Vessel We Can Smile at the Storm!’” beamed Juni.

When the storm cleared, 90 percent of the city’s buildings were destroyed. In total, Typhoon Haiyan affected a staggering 11 million people in the central Philippines. Disasters do happen, but we can still trust Jesus to lead us through.

Sermon

WHEN JESUS ENDED IT!

Written by Pastor Anthony R. Kent, PhD candidate
GC Ministerial Association Associate Secretary

Scripture Passage: Luke 13:10-17

INTRODUCTION

For eighteen years the woman had suffered. Standing up with a straight spine was a distant, faded memory. She probably longed to look into her children's faces to see their eyes sparkle but all she could see was the floor. In her small cottage, she would have liked to have stored her food on a higher shelf, but she couldn't reach a higher shelf, so she did her best to keep the rodents away from her supplies at lower levels. No doubt she longed to see a majestic blue sky with white puffy clouds gently sailing, suspended in space, or to look up into the night sky and see the stars and a full rounded moon, glowing gloriously in the heavens. Instead, her natural field of view was perpetually turned downward, confined to seeing the dry barren paths of the Middle East and the rubbish left behind by animals.

For eighteen years she had suffered with this condition. There was no relief. There was no time-out. There was no break! People had forgotten her face—they only saw the top and back of her head. Rather than being seen as a person, she was a nuisance—at best, someone to pity.

For eighteen years she had gone to the synagogue each Sabbath. It wasn't easy to go to the synagogue, because walking was difficult. And when she did arrive, there was no real welcome from the leaders. Getting there and being there was a challenge. But each Sabbath she persevered, and she went to the synagogue in faith and in hope. And then, one Sabbath a visitor was at the synagogue, and He changed everything! HE ENDED IT! He healed her, and his name is Jesus—Jesus of Nazareth!

JESUS AND HIS MISSION IN LUKE'S GOSPEL

The only account of the Sabbath healing of the bent over woman is in Luke's Gospel (Luke 13:10-17). Before we explore this amazing event, we need to invest a few moments looking at the broader context of Luke's Gospel.

Jesus is the star of Luke's Gospel—it's all about Jesus. And what a wonderful star he is! Jesus and his ministry—his whole mission—is revealed to us in Luke 4:16-30.

Turn with me in your Bibles to:

Luke 4:16-19 **[Read]**

Jesus returned to his home village of Nazareth, after being baptized by his cousin John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. The Bible is very clear that Jesus had a custom of attending the synagogue on Sabbath. Clearly, the Sabbath was important to Jesus, he didn't just occasionally visit the synagogue on Sabbath, it was his regular habit to attend.

This event at Nazareth also reveals more about Jesus' values. One of Jesus' important values is teaching. Jesus is shown by Luke as wanting people to be informed, to be aware of the big issues of life and the major issues of the age. Jesus doesn't want to keep people in the dark or in the lowlands of ignorance; his desire is that—people will be enlightened. So, Jesus freely taught the people, but what did he teach them?

Jesus taught the Scriptures! This is the first record we have of Jesus teaching, and the very first thing out of his mouth when he taught the people in Nazareth was from the Bible. Jesus quoted from Isaiah 61:1, 2. Clearly, the Bible was important to Jesus, and it was foundational to his teachings.

So far, from this event at Nazareth, we have discovered, first, that Jesus has the highest regard for the Sabbath—his life was molded around his custom of attending the synagogue each Sabbath. The second detail that emerges from the text is that teaching from the Bible, and the Bible itself, was also very significant to Jesus. The third important detail we discover from this Nazareth Sabbath teaching event is the love that Jesus has for people. Notice the emphasis of Jesus' Biblical teaching at Nazareth:

- “good news to the poor”
- “liberty to the captives”
- “recovering of sight to the blind”
- “to set at liberty those who are oppressed”
- “to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”¹

All of Jesus' teaching at Nazareth revolves around ministering to others—particularly, the impoverished, the hostages, the physically disabled, and the victims of oppression. And because the Spirit was upon Jesus, he wasn't just speaking platitudes or offering vain hope, he was empowered to act and to rescue people from dire circumstances.

In the New Testament era, women were over-represented among the poor, suffering, captives, and oppressed. Typically, women didn't have a very high place in society, in fact it's difficult to exaggerate how low their position was and how great their misery. But Jesus uplifted women! Jesus ministering to the bent-over woman of Luke 13 is just one example.

Turn with me to Luke 13:10-17 as we explore this wonderful story in more detail.

[Read Luke 13:10-17]

Jesus paused on his journey to Jerusalem at this unnamed location for Sabbath to attend the synagogue, to teach, and to heal. Luke by not naming the location nor the woman, broadens the application and significance of this event beyond this one individual woman—to all women who are in bondage, in all places, and in all subsequent eras. This beautiful story offers hope to all victims.

Luke, with the tenderness of a physician, describes the severity of her condition. She was bent over and unable to straighten up. And what's more, she had endured this for eighteen long miserable years! That was a long time to suffer!

Have you ever made a long journey in a bus or a car and had very limited space for the duration of the journey? You know what it's like to be confined, restricted, and unable to stretch-out for the length of that journey. You know what it's like to arrive at your destination and to stand tall and stretch and to feel your body coming back to life again! But this poor woman had been on this painful journey for eighteen years and there was no sight of her destination! Day and night, she was unable to straighten up—even lying on her bed at night, she was bent up. Even in her sleep, this misery never left her! Imagine her prolonged suffering!

Bible students have speculated the specific disease or ailment she was inflicted with. John Wilkinson regards spondylitis ankylopoietica as the most likely malady. Others suggest this woman, described by Luke, showed symptoms consistent with some women who have suffered from male sexual abuse or violence. This is entirely possible. Ultimately, Jesus laid the blame of her suffering upon Satan (verse 16).

¹ Luke 4:19

The essential point is that there is nothing Christ-like about sexual abuse of women—it is the work of Satan! There is nothing redeeming about inflicting violence upon women—these acts of violence are also the work of the evil one! It goes without saying that no genuine Christian man, would sexually force himself on a woman—not even his wife! No genuine Christian man would beat a woman—any woman, especially the one he promised to love as his wife! This type of behavior is totally at odds with the teaching and values of Jesus! No man who claims to have Christ residing in his heart would do anything that would belittle, bully, or cause pain to a woman—whether that pain be physical, mental, emotional or psychological pain.

When Jesus came to that synagogue on that Sabbath everything changed! He taught wonderful and beautiful things from the Bible!

Then ... out of the crowd, Jesus saw her. Even though she was bent over and probably shorter than everyone else in the building.

The Bible says that Jesus “called her” (verse 12).

It’s important to note that this woman was obedient to the call of Jesus. Though her body was disabled, faith was alive and well in her heart. We can imagine her, making her way with difficulty, as best as she could, arriving before Jesus, still stooped over. She had done exactly what Jesus had asked her to do.

Then Jesus said the most wonderful words she had ever heard in her life!

“Woman, you are freed from your disability” (verse 12)!

And then, the Bible says that Jesus touched her. We can be sure that it was an appropriate and a loving touch from the Saviour!

The Bible makes sure that we catch this next important point: “Immediately she was made straight” (verse 13)!

Jesus had ended it! Jesus had stopped her physical pain!

She was free! This was her “good news”! She was liberated from her captivity! Now she could see more than the floor! Her physical oppression was over! She was experiencing the Lord’s favor! All that Jesus had promised in his teaching at Nazareth in Luke 4:16-19 was coming true for her! Jesus’ teaching was and is real! As a result of the ministry of the Creator, her body was becoming what it was originally intended to be—healthy and upright! She could now look into people’s faces. Her joy would have been unlimited! Now she could look into the face of Jesus—the one who ended her bodily pain—and what a wonderfully kind face he had! Jesus’ face was probably the first face she saw as she stood tall for the first time in eighteen years!

And upon being miraculously healed, the very first thing she does: “She glorified God” (Luke 13:13)! Of all the Sabbath miracles in Luke, she was the first and only healed person to praise God when she was “set free from her infirmity” (verse 12, NKJV).

Just as she had done nothing to deserve her eighteen years of suffering, she had done nothing to earn, or to buy, or to deserve this healing. She was healed only by the grace of Jesus Christ! For this reason, she glorified God. And by glorifying God, she was letting the world know what she thought of Jesus!

But(!) ... while her physical pain and physical health had been restored, her psychological torment wasn’t finished.

Also in the crowd that Sabbath morning was the Synagogue Ruler. He was not impressed with what was happening in his synagogue! He was indignant! The synagogue ruler and his supporters—who remain

silently in the background—were most likely numerically small but hierarchically influential. A synagogue ruler was a powerful person because he often financed the construction of the synagogue, giving him a quasi-ownership of the synagogue. A synagogue ruler held a prestigious position in the community. His high level of authority empowered him to conduct worship and determine who participated during the Sabbath services. A synagogue ruler also most likely offered interpretations of the Torah for the people. In his indignation, the synagogue ruler blurts out: “There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day” (verse 14).

Not all synagogue rulers were negative or bad² but this one was!

His angry outburst was loaded with multiple barbs!

Clearly, he was using the Sabbath as a weapon against Jesus and against the woman. He even quoted a portion of the Sabbath commandment of the Decalogue³ in his attack upon Jesus and the recently healed woman! This is a technique often used by people who abuse others. They frequently take the words of Scripture and distort them for their evil purposes. Satan did this when tempting Jesus in the wilderness,⁴ and the apostle Peter warns in 2 Peter 3:15-16, “There are some things in them [Paul’s writings] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.”

The Bible itself warns us that people will use the writings of the apostle Paul and other portions of the Bible, and ‘twist’ them with evil intentions. Tragically, this still happens today, even in some Seventh-day Adventist churches!

The Bible is not a tool to be used to justify the abuse of women! When the Bible is correctly read, we see that it uplifts women to their rightful God-given status.

By attempting to correct Jesus, this synagogue ruler is also claiming to be holier than Jesus. His retort implies that he would never pollute the Sabbath by healing on Sabbath.

His response that there are “six days in which work ought to be done” also implies that he knew this woman or at least that he knew of her. It is difficult to imagine that if this was her first time to attend this synagogue, or if she was unknown to the synagogue ruler, that he would have said these words, because his words implied this disabled woman ‘is always around,’ ‘she’s always in the village,’ ‘everyone knows her, she isn’t hard to find.’ In other words, he was saying, “Heal her any time but NOT on Sabbath!”

Instead of celebrating this wonderful healing of Jesus when the woman’s physical pain ended, the synagogue ruler was arguing that she should never have been healed on Sabbath. Could he even be saying that Jesus should return her to her disabled condition, repent, and then heal her again on another day of the week?

Was Jesus breaking the Sabbath by healing this woman or any other person on Sabbath? No, is the only answer! Jesus did nothing on Sabbath to desecrate the holiness of the day! Ending the misery of a woman on Sabbath is not breaking the Sabbath! It’s observing the Sabbath in its truest form!

Ellen White offers us some valuable insights in *Prophets and Kings* regarding Jesus and the Sabbath:

Christ, during His earthly ministry, emphasized the binding claims of the Sabbath; in all His teaching He showed reverence for the institution He Himself had given. In His days the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men

² Jairus, Luke 8:41-56; Crispus, Acts 18:8

³ Exodus 20:9

⁴ Luke 4:9-11

rather than the character of God. Christ set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. Although followed with merciless hostility by the rabbis, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God.⁵

Ellen White is correct. Jesus is the Creator of the Sabbath; he knows how to observe his holy day! The synagogue ruler failed to recognize Jesus' true divine identity. When Luke recorded Jesus' response to the synagogue ruler, Luke helps his reading audience recall the true identity of Jesus. Notice Luke 13:15, "Then the Lord answered him ..." The Lord! This title reminds readers of Jesus' own words recorded in Luke 6:5, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus, as Lord of the Sabbath, answered this critical, demeaning synagogue ruler and his silent supporters with: "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" (Luke 13:15-16).

Jesus put this woman abuser in his rightful place! He, along with his ilk, were correctly identified as hypocrites. They were hypocrites because they showed more compassion to animals, even an unclean animal like a donkey, than they did to a woman who was a 'daughter of Abraham,' a person who was created in the image of God!

The synagogue ruler and his allies would not allow a beast to go for a few hours on Sabbath without being released and allowed to drink its fill. However, they were outraged that a woman's suffering of eighteen years was not extended for at least another day!

Yes, it is true that this woman was not in danger of dying. Jesus was not saving her from impending death by healing her on that Sabbath. But Sabbath is not just about saving life, it's about enhancing life!

It should also be said that liberating women who are victims of abuse and violence should not be limited to Sabbath only! No woman should endure abuse—be it sexual, physical, psychological, or emotional—on any day of the week. And any day of the week is a good day for abuse to end! Prevention of abuse doesn't need to be confined to Sabbath, nor to a specific Sabbath!

While this woman's physical suffering was ended by the physical healing provided by Jesus, the synagogue ruler was extending her spiritual and emotional suffering with his heartless attitudes and words. It is for this reason that some of the strongest and most direct words we have in the Bible were directed against this man who had a privileged position. The synagogue ruler had the option of rejoicing with this healed woman, but he opted to unnecessarily prolong her victimization.

Not only did Jesus come to the support of the healed woman, he aligned himself with her. By designating her as 'a daughter of Abraham,' Jesus also put Abraham on the side of the woman and himself. The synagogue ruler, by his opposition to the healing, was inferring that he would prefer to see the woman remain bound—bound by Satan. So, the synagogue ruler found himself in the unenviable position of being on the same side as Satan, in opposition to Jesus, to a 'daughter of Abraham,' and to Abraham himself.

Some may try to dismiss the importance of the "End it Now" initiative. They may resort to many reasons and excuses like this synagogue ruler. They may say that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a mission to proclaim the truth and that we mustn't be distracted by these social issues—implying that we are watering down our message with the 'social gospel.'

Notice these important words from Ellen White in *Medical Ministry*:

⁵ E. G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, 183.

True sympathy between man and his fellowman is to be the sign distinguishing those who love and fear God from those who are unmindful of His law. How great the sympathy that Christ expressed in coming to this world to give His life a sacrifice for a dying world! His religion led to the doing of genuine medical missionary work. He was a healing power. "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," He said. This is the test that the great Author of truth used to distinguish between true religion and false. God wants His medical missionaries to act with the tenderness and compassion that Christ would show were He in our world.⁶

We cannot ignore women who are being marginalized or suffering abuse and victimization. We have an ongoing duty to protect and shield any woman in these vile circumstances. I'm so pleased that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a Department of Women's Ministries that is represented at every level of our organization and should be represented in every congregation. I'm so glad that they are facilitating this very significant initiative of **endiinow**[®].

I'm so pleased that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), which operates special safe sanctuaries for women and girls who have been abused, trafficked, and sold into the most satanic circumstances.

In every place and in every congregation, we must end it now!

CONCLUSION

How did this visit of Jesus to this synagogue end?

The woman received multiple healings: physical, emotional, spiritual, and perhaps sexual.

The enduring image is of a healed woman standing straight and upright, praising God. This daughter of Abraham, who had been bent over, becomes a model for all people of all ages – showing what Jesus can do with someone who is bent over or bent out of shape by Satan.

Would you like Jesus to heal you—to re-shape your life and your future?

Perhaps there are some men here today who may be thinking about how they have treated women or a particular woman. Perhaps their attitudes toward women are not what they should be. Maybe some men here are coming to realize that they have been un-Christ-like in their treatment of women or a woman. Rather than showing Christian love, perhaps these men now see that they have been cruel and unkind. Now is the time for these men to ask Jesus for a new heart so that they will treat women the same way as Jesus treated women—with kindness, compassion, and respect.

Perhaps there are women here who identify with this bent-over woman, because they too are suffering. Just as Jesus healed her, Jesus can touch you with his pure love, re-shaping your life and your future. Jesus' words speak to you today, just as they spoke to the bent-over woman.

Listen as I read Luke 13:12 again from five versions:

"Woman, you are **freed** from your disability."⁷

"Woman, you are **loosed** from your infirmity."⁸

"Woman, you are **set free** from your ailment."⁹

"Woman, you are **healed** of your sickness."¹⁰

⁶ E. G. White, *Medical Ministry*, 251

⁷ ESV

⁸ NKJV

⁹ NSRV

¹⁰ NLT

“Woman, you’re **free!**”¹¹

That Sabbath, in that village, in that synagogue, Jesus ended that woman’s suffering. Jesus ended how that woman had been treated for eighteen years. He ended it!

Today, on this Sabbath, in [**insert your location**], in this church, Jesus wants to end it here too!

Jesus didn’t create ‘daughters of Abraham,’ ‘sisters in Christ,’ and ‘mothers of Israel’ to be abused!

It’s time to end it now!

¹¹ MSG

THE WOUNDS OF ABUSE: Can We Do More?

Published in *Ministry*® International Journal for Pastors, November 2018
Used by Permission
Written by Dr. Katia G. Reinert, GC Health Ministries Associate Director

If ever we needed informed and accountable pastors before, we surely do need them now.

Mary had something important to tell her husband, John, but she had to build up the courage to say it. Finally, she told him that she had been thinking about going back to school for further education. “Why would you even consider that?” he yelled. “You failed the last courses you took, so you’re obviously not going to make it this time. You are stupid. You’ll never last through the program, and we’re not wasting our money on that.” While the conversation resulted in no thrown punches, it produced wounds. It was a classic example of emotional abuse in marriage. The sad thing is, spouses such as Mary may have no idea they are in an abusive relationship—let alone know what to do about it.

Pastors are the spiritual leaders of their congregations and have the responsibility to model what Jesus, the Good Shepherd, would do in ministering with compassion to survivors both in their church and in the community. There is scientific evidence that survivors may talk to their pastors before they talk to anyone else about their abuse. I have seen it firsthand. My brother is a pastor, our father is a pastor, and our grandfather was a pastor. Yet Justin Holcomb and Lindsey Holcomb state that while “‘many victims believe clergy have the most potential to help them,’ in fact [clergy] are too often the least helpful and sometimes even harmful.’”¹

With their actions, pastors can either be agents of healing or unintentionally contribute to the continued perpetration of abuse, depending on how they respond. If they have a vision, they will (a) help build resilience among survivors by empowering them in their distress, and (b) assist in prevention by taking the time to learn about abuse.

TYPES OF ABUSE

Although violence affects everyone, women, children, and the elderly seem to bear the brunt of nonfatal physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. Consider the rates of various types of abuse:

- One in four adults reports having been physically abused as a child.
- One in five women reports having been sexually abused as a child.
- One in three women has been a victim of physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point in her lifetime.
- One in seventeen older adults reported abuse in the past month.²
- Women report higher rates of lifetime exposure to rape, physical violence, and stalking than do men.³

COMMON YET UNRECOGNIZED

Even though the harm of physical and sexual abuse is immediately evident, psychological abuse is less recognized and discussed—and often downplayed. Someone may say, “But he or she never hits me. Is his or her behavior really abusive?” Well—yes, it is!

Psychological abuse is not only real but has lasting consequences. The scars of physical abuse may heal quickly, but the invisible ones of emotional abuse can take longer—if they ever heal. Emotional abuse can destroy one’s self-worth and result in shame and low self-esteem. Unfortunately, the most common form of emotional abuse is verbal abuse, and it often goes unrecognized as abuse.

RECOGNIZING EMOTIONAL ABUSE

When we talk about emotional abuse, we must take into consideration a number of important questions. Would you recognize emotional abuse? How would you respond if someone psychologically abused you? What does the Bible say about it? As we consider such questions, we must make it clear that although women tend to experience higher rates of sexual and physical abuse than men, research in the United States of America suggests that in the case of emotional abuse, the rates are similar for both genders.

In a survey conducted in the United States, 8,079 men and 9,970 women responded to questions about abuse they had experienced in the previous twelve months and also their lifetime exposure to abuse. Almost one-half (just over 48 percent) of each gender reported psychological aggression through verbal aggression or coercive control during their lifetime.⁴

Differences show up in the form of emotional abuse. More women than men experience verbal or expressive aggression from their intimate partner, but both genders reported coercive control by their mate at a rate of 4 in 10 people. The truth is that both men and women perpetrate high rates of emotional or verbal abuse toward their partners.

The study also revealed the forms of emotional abuse. The most commonly reported types of verbal aggression for both genders are being called ugly, fat, crazy, or stupid and being humiliated, insulted, or ridiculed. The most frequent type of psychological aggression used for both men and women is coercive control involving the demand to know her or his whereabouts at all times.

Women more often find themselves required to report their whereabouts to their mate, while men more frequently endure insults. They also report witnessing their partner becoming angry in such a way that it seemed threatening.

THE PREVALENCE OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE AMONG CHRISTIANS

Unfortunately, Christians, including Seventh-day Adventists, are not immune to this behavior. Although we do not currently have data on emotional abuse by an intimate partner among a large sample of Adventist adults, the Adventist Health Study-2 did conduct an analysis exploring the prevalence of emotional abuse during childhood among 10,283 Seventh-day Adventist adults in North America participating in the research.⁵ In this study, 39 percent of females and 35 percent of males reported experiencing emotional abuse by their parent (father or mother) before the age of 18. Exposure to such abuse had a negative impact on their physical and mental health regardless of their age, gender, social status, income, and lifestyle choices, such as healthy eating or exercise. Being a definite concern, it raises questions about the parenting practices that may be detrimental and long lasting.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE VERSUS CONFLICT

In order to recognize an abusive relationship, it is important to differentiate between abuse and normal conflict. Conflict is common in a marriage or in other relationships and does not necessarily mean abuse. People need to have their own opinions and be free to share them. But the way one expresses his or her opinion is key.

According to an expert, “It is not emotionally abusive to break up with a partner. It is not emotionally abusive to argue with your partner. It is not emotionally abusive when someone reacts to what you have

done with hurt. People react out of their own perceptions, so their reactions do not define your behavior. It is also not emotional abuse to speak one's mind with blunt honesty. Perhaps the statement lacks tact, but it is not emotionally abusive. Again, just because someone reacts to what has been said with hurt does not mean that one has been emotionally abused."⁶

Emotional abuse, however, involves intentional dominance. The person chooses that behavior in order to have power and keep the other under control.

HOW TO HELP SOMEONE RESPOND IF THEY ARE BEING PSYCHOLOGICALLY ABUSED

It is important to confront the abuser kindly but firmly. Here are five ways someone experiencing emotional abuse can respond:

Study the emotionally abusive tactics and learn to be assertive. Abusers use abuse as a tactic to manipulate and dominate others. Focusing on the content makes one fall into the trap of trying to respond rationally, of denying accusations, and trying to explain oneself. Unfortunately, the abuser has won at that point and deflected any responsibility for the verbal abuse.

Set healthy boundaries. Even Christ felt the need to set boundaries in His life. We should do the same. God gave each one of us our own individuality, so we must not be afraid to confront abuse or to set limits as to how much we will tolerate. In some cases, we can best address verbal abuse with forceful statements such as, "Don't talk to me that way," "That's demeaning," "Don't call me names," or "Don't raise your voice at me." Should the abuser respond with, "Or what?" one can say, "I will not continue this conversation."⁷

Build your self-worth and self-respect. Abuse can slowly chip away at self-esteem. Usually, both the abuser and the victim have experienced shaming in childhood and already have impaired self-esteem. It is important for the abused person to remember that it is not their fault. The Bible contains many wonderful reminders of how precious we are. "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness. I will build you up again" (Jeremiah 31:3, NIV).

Seek help from a professional counselor. If one is in immediate danger, calling the police or a crisis number is imperative. But if the situation is not so threatening, it is important to reach out to a trusted friend or family member, therapist, pastor, volunteer with an abuse shelter, or domestic violence hotline. Confronting an abuser, especially in a long-term relationship, can be challenging. Seeking individual therapy and counseling is key.⁸ But it is not advisable to start counseling as a couple at this stage because it can be unsafe for the abused to tell the counselor the whole truth with the abuser present.

Seek comfort, healing, and wisdom from God. The Holy Spirit is our Comforter and will guide us in all wisdom and truth. He can not only warm our hearts with God's love in a healing way but also teach us what words to say to someone who is abusive. Because Jesus suffered all forms of abuse, including psychological and emotional, He understands. He says, "I know your tears; I also have wept. The griefs that lie too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touches no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live."⁹

CAN WE DO MORE?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has for years led a public health campaign against violence and abuse called **enditnow**[®] (enditnow.org). It started originally with a focus on women and girls and has moved to a more global focus on violence and abuse against anyone: male, female, young, and old. Every year the church has in its global calendar an abuse prevention day called **enditnow**[®] Emphasis Day (women.adventist.org/enditnow-day), and faith leaders from many denominations have shared how these materials have been a blessing to them also. Yet, we are often reminded of how much we still can do as pastors and church leaders to raise awareness, prevent abuse, and help survivors.

Too many still live under the unhealthy control of an intimate partner, parent, child, boss, pastor, teacher, or someone else who employs sexual, physical, or emotional abuse without recognizing it as such. Too many who do recognize it and try to get help by speaking to a pastor, church leader, or fellow member still may not find appropriate, well-informed help and, instead, may find themselves blamed for their situation or told to pray about it. Too many still remain indifferent, unaware, or unintentionally blind to the needs of survivors or perpetrators who are desperately seeking hope and healing for their brokenness.

What if every congregation had an **enditnow**® coordinator who is knowledgeable about abuse and, working with the pastor, could engage the church in prevention and assistance for those in need? What if every seminary student and pastor could receive training in basic knowledge about abuse and how best to help a survivor as well as a perpetrator? And what if in every church, pastors, leaders or members would hold an annual **enditnow**® Emphasis Day, using the resources prepared to bless not only church members but also the surrounding community?

There is so much more we can do, and every pastor, church leader, and member must assess how they can make a difference. Doing more takes leaders and members with compassion, intentionality, and a willingness to inspire and empower others. We must not grow weary but continue to make our presence felt in words and action as we learn together and bring to light forms of abuse that dehumanize others.

THE HEALTH FACTOR

Why should we do more? Many of God's children are either dying or suffering in their health and well-being as a result of violence and abuse. Health authorities tell us that 1.3 million people die worldwide each year as a result of violence in all its forms: collective (as in the case of gangs or war), self-directed (suicide), or interpersonal (such as domestic violence).¹⁰ Such deaths account for 2.5 percent of global mortality each year. During the first 15 years of the twenty-first century, about six million people perished worldwide from incidents of interpersonal violence alone.

But in addition to death, many are victims of nonfatal violence each day. They are survivors of interpersonal violence (physical, sexual, and psychological abuse or neglect). Nonfatal interpersonal violence is more common than homicide and has serious, lifelong health and social consequences. The wounds of interpersonal violence survivors may not be visible but are felt deeply and, consequently, can be crippling and long-lasting.¹¹

THE INCARNATION FACTOR

Perhaps the most important reason to do more is that we are God's hands and feet in this world, called to represent His love and healing power and serve others as He did. Jesus summons us to treat each other with love and respect when He says, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34, 35, NKJV). In a congregation of believers that share His good news, the gospel urges us to be agents of healing and support: "Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble" (1 Peter 3:8, NIV).

Therefore, it is our duty as pastors and church leaders to continue reaching out to abuse survivors with compassion—as Jesus did—doing what we can to prevent and appropriately deal with abuse and violence in all its forms. Jesus said, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10, NKJV). Can you do more?

NOTES:

- ¹ Rachel Marie Stone, “The Bible’s Unequivocal ‘No’ to Domestic Violence,” *Christianity Today*, May 22, 2014, www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/may/bibles-unequivocal-no-to-domestic-violence.html.
- ² World Health Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and United Nations Development Program, *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2014) vii,viii, who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/report/report/en/.
- ³ See Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, “Victims of Sexual Violence: Statistics,” accessed Oct. 7, 2018, www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence.
- ⁴ CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey 2010 Summary Report, accessed Mar. 2, 2018, www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf.
- ⁵ Katia G. Reinert et al., “Gender and Race Variations of the Intersection of Religious Involvement, Early Trauma and Adult Health,” *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 47, no. 4 (July 15, 2015): 318–327, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26077834. The 10,283 participants included 6,946 women and 3,333 men.
- ⁶ Andrea Mathews, “When Is It Emotional Abuse? Differentiate Between What Is Emotionally Abusive, and What Isn’t,” *Psychology Today*, Sept. 26, 2016, www.psychologytoday.com/blog/traversing-the-inner-terrain/201609/when-is-it-emotional-abuse.
- ⁷ See Darlene Lancer, “Forms of Emotional and Verbal Abuse You May Be Overlooking,” *Psychology Today*, Apr. 3, 2017, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/toxic-relationships/201704/forms-emotional-and-verbal-abuse-you-may-be-overlooking>.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), 483.
- ¹⁰ World Health Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and United Nations Development Program, *Global Status Report*, 2.
- ¹¹ See *Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014*, World Health Organization, 2, who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/status_report/2014/report/report/en/.

Handout

INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE To Domestic Violence

Written by Mable C. Dunbar, PhD LPC

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from *The Dynamics of Domestic Violence*

A booklet prepared by North American Division Women’s Ministries, 2016

“Treatment of families experiencing violence and abuse requires integrating the needs of the whole person. Thus, the importance of developing a shared understanding and cooperation between secular and religious helpers to deal with family violence cannot be emphasized too strongly.”¹²

- Educate yourself and become aware of the dynamics of domestic violence: read books, watch videos, attend workshops, seminars, etc.
- Be proactive in contacting and assisting programs in your area that provide safety, advocacy, support and other needed services for victims and perpetrators.

¹² Marie M. Fortune, “A Workshop Manual for Clergy and Other Service Providers,” published by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.

- Promote a victim-centered response to violence and access to community resources.
- Hold offenders accountable.
- Ensure all communities, including underserved populations, affected by domestic violence have a voice and access to culturally appropriate responses and resources.
- Promote a collective position on awareness of domestic violence as a community problem and a community responsibility to prevent it and an intervention protocol when it occurs.
- Establish a coordinated community response to domestic violence to include representatives from law enforcement, the school system, mental health professionals, district attorneys, child protection services, clergy, healthcare professionals, victim advocates, programs for offenders, elder abuse, politicians, and probation officers.
- Contact your local representative to ensure laws are instituted and upheld that will help to prevent domestic violence, provide safety and services for victims, and accountability of abusers.