

## **Concerning Sexual Abuse/Assault**

### **Vicki Gofrth Parnell 1-16-25**

**2 Corinthians 13:1** This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

\*\*\*Note: Concerning Daystar... There have been more than two or three witnesses that came forth in the Baby Lamb incident so according to the Word of God this matter is an established word, a fact.

The Bible takes sexual abuse seriously. What should we do as Christians. Here is my Biblical understanding. Please pray about this in Jesus Christ's Name and try, test, and discern it according to the Word of God.

\*\*\*(1) We should report it because it is the law (in the case of minors) and we must submit to the government God has placed over us to execute his justice.

### **Romans 13:1-5**

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

\*\*\*(2) It should be reported because as God's children we are charged to stand up for the oppressed and vulnerable. We need to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves.

### **Proverbs 31:8-9**

8 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

### **Psalms 82:2-4**

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

### **Isaiah 1:16-17**

16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

**1 John 3:17-18**

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

\*\*\*(3) By reporting the Sexual Assault it will act to discourages other would-be offenders.

**1 Timothy 5:20-22**

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

**Ephesians 5:3-13**

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

**7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather reprove them.**

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

**13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.**

In some states Sexual assault is a Class A misdemeanor if you fail to report sexual abuse. So by reporting such an occurrence is a means by which we submit to God's authority by submitting to the government He has placed over us. It is the way that we place the punishment of the offender in God's hands instead of our own. In my understanding, in reporting these things it also keeps us from ourselves being guilty and punishable under the law for remaining silent.

\*\*\*(4) It should be reported because reporting the offender provides them with a chance to see their sin for what it is and repent.

### **James 5:19-20**

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

### **Galatians 6:1-2**

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Most people understand that if someone is willing to commit a sexual assault or abuse and treat another human being made in God's image as their own personal object of gratification, that they're life has to be deep in sin. From a biblical standpoint in cases like these one can argue that refraining from reporting their crime shows a lack of love for the person in sin. If none dares to speak up and shields the victimizer from seeing the consequences of their actions when it's reported to the authorities then this action can keep them from seeing the horrible sin they have committed. There must be an acknowledgment of the sins committed before true repentance can be found. That can only be found through Jesus Christ's forgiveness.

It is also needful for the victim to understand that reporting the abuse isn't only the right thing to do but it's the loving thing to do for that soul.

### **Other related passages of Scripture that are misused and misinterpreted in my understanding for sexual abuse and assault.**

#### **Matthew 18:15-17**

In this passage we learn that if a brother or sister in Jesus Christ sins or transgresses against us we're to go to them alone. This does not apply to sexual abuse/assault. We can understand from the content that Jesus Christ is speaking of a situation where the one offended and the offender are equal, on equal ground. That's not the case when sexual abuse or assault occurs.

- (1) Given the nature of the sin (the abuse/attack) going to the person alone could result in more negative and abusive behavior. Even possible allowing another incident to occur.
- (2) There is an imbalance of power between a victim and a victimizer in cases of sexual abuse and assault and the possibility of the victim going to the accuser in hopes of being heard as an equal are almost non-existent unless the victimizer has truly repented for what they have done.

- (3) There are at times when dealing with sexual assault/abuse that the other steps of going with others and then going before the church should be taken, especially if the offender is in a leadership position within the church. This is because church discipline is vital to the church's health and the offender's repentance. (Only in adherence to the Word of God should discipline in the church be done and therefore not abusing its power.) But it should never prevent the reporting of the crime(s) committed.

### **1 Corinthians 5**

This chapter refers to sexual immorality or fornication in the church and the expelling of a Christian brother. This chapter's context is obviously talking about consenting adults. Sexual abuse or assault is a crime. But this chapter doesn't supersede Paul's instructions of Romans 13 of submitting to those in governing authority. This is why it's vital and necessary for us to study the Word of God as we are instructed in 2 Timothy 2:15 bringing it all together for such situations and not just a single passage to determine what course of action we're to take that honors God.

### **1 Corinthians 6:1-8**

These verses instruct believers to avoid lawsuits. It doesn't apply to sexual abuse or assault. When you study this passage fully you will understand Paul is referring to the things that we would consider as civil matters and not criminal. For a person to say that a sexual abuse or assault should be handled inside the church and not reported to the authorities is a misinterpretation of this passage. In addition it would be ignoring Paul's instructions in the previous chapter 5 in which he gave stronger instructions against sexual immorality/fornication.

### **Deuteronomy 22:25-29**

This passage speaks of sexual assault on a woman/virgin and the punishment or restitution that had to be made for such an offense. But I wanted to point out that in this instance it is not needed for there to be two or three witnesses. The woman's own account is believed. It says in verse 27 "and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her," This reveals to us there were not any witnesses but yet instructions were given for restitution.

In all things and in every situation first and foremost seek Jesus Christ for how you need to proceed. Each person, each situation can be different. This is how Biblically these things need to be addressed but with the understanding that if something should occur that goes against His Holy Word then we are to obey God over men in all things. Please try, test and discern thi in Jesus Christ's Name. Should more understanding from the Word of God be forthcoming then it will be addressed and added at that time. God bless. Stay under the Blood of Jesus Christ always.

Vicki Goforth Parnell