

Sexual abuse The most heinous abuse of children is sexual. Pedophilia has become a serious problem. Both boys and girls are being molested, and many are raped. Rape destroys the purity of the child, corrupts his morals and can even cause pregnancy or venereal disease. It is most despicable when committed by a parent or trusted relative, friend, clergyman or teacher. Rape and incest are violations of the 7th Commandment *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* (Ex. 20:14)

Traumatic effects The mental wounds of abuse last a lifetime and often result in a person having difficulty in being a well adjusted adult. Victims of child abuse run a high risk of repeating the offense on their children. The victim feels great anger and hatred towards the offender. The Bible says *..avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* (Romans 12:19) The victim can even feel anger against God. Many feel that maybe they themselves are to blame. For many it can lead to mental disorders and even suicide. Jesus said, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Matt. 11:28) When a person experiences God's forgiveness for his personal sins, then they will be able to forgive those who have abused them.

Forgiveness for offenders No act of child abuse will go unnoticed or unpunished by God (Ps. 139:1-4) *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* (Ps. 15:3) *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil* (Eccl. 12:14) To escape the wrath, judgment and eternal condemnation in hell, the offender must first seek forgiveness from the Lord and sin is foremost against God. (Ps. 51:4) There must be godly repentance *Godly sorrow (that) worketh repentance to salvation.* (2 Cor. 7:10) The offender who has experienced the forgiveness of God must also seek the forgiveness of the child he has abused.

Salvation need by all Everyone is a sinner. *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* (Romans 3:23) We all have broken God's moral law (The 10 Commandments) in thought, word, and deed. God must punish these sins because He is just and holy. God has made only one provision for the payment of our sin debt to Him by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes we are healed.* (1 Peter 2:24) Through the virgin birth God the Son became the sinless God/Man. Jesus lived a sinless life and was crucified and died for our sins and He physically arose from the dead three days later. (1 Cor. 15:3,4) We must be born again (John 3:3) When God makes us spiritually alive so that we can place our faith in the Person and works of Jesus and truly repent of our sins we can be free from the penalty and power of sin.

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Marriage and the family In the garden of Eden on the 6th day of creation, God created Adam and Eve and He instituted marriage. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh* (Gen.2:24) Then *..God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replentish the earth..*(Gen. 1:28) God has designed the home as the place where children can be raised in a loving and caring environment where father and mother assume their respective roles in raising the children. Anything that disrupts God's design for the family meets with His disdain especially divorce and gay marriages. Unfortunately there is a growing trend of disobedience in many areas that are destructive to the family.

In the Bible we read that *in the last days perilous times shall come* (2 Tim. 3:1) A sure sign that we are living in these evil last days is the increase of child abuse.

God's gift of children Children are a gift from our Creator. *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* As parents, we have been given an awesome responsibility by God to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* (Eph. 6:4) We must give an account to the Lord on judgment day as to how well we have performed these duties. Each child is a unique creation of God (Ps. 139) and created in the likeness and image of God (Gen. 1:26) That child is an eternal being with a body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23) and they will live forever either in Heaven or Hell. Many children will become members of God's eternal family.

Causes of abuse Alcohol, drug abuse, and pornography , and illicit sex outside of marriage bonds are related to much of the child abuse. Refusing to acknowledge that children are a unique gift from God and not a chance biological phenomena of evolution results in a low value of human life which leads to abuse.

Abuse in the womb It is possible for a mother to abuse her child even before he/she is ever born. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, venereal disease, and improper pre-natal care can cause damage to the unborn child.

Unwanted children With the increase of sexual immorality there is also an increase of the number of unwanted children. It may be that the pregnancy was unplanned however with our sovereign Creator there are no 'accidents'. It has been said that God is the supreme author of planned parenthood. The Lord could have easily prevented conception as He has done many times especially in the Old Testament. Many unwanted children are aborted or abandoned. A child that is unwanted will soon learn this and this fact alone will lower a child's self-esteem. Frequently unwanted children are abused both mentally and physically.

Abuse through favoritism A child can be abused because a brother or sister is favored by the parents. Often the child is told 'why can't you be like your brother or sister?' The favoritism of Joseph by Jacob over his brothers

created great hatred among his brothers who tried to kill him. (Gen. Ch. 37) Obviously Jacob had not learned the damage of favoritism that he experienced as a child (Gen. 25:28) as his own twin brother wanted to kill him over the results of parental favoritism. (Gen. 27:41) Children should be loved and treated alike by parents.

Verbal abuse Proverbs 18:21 reveals that *death and life are in the power of the tongue..* The parent who says to his child 'you will never amount to anything or I wish you were never born' is programming him for failure. Even worse is 'tongue lashing' a child with curse words. This results in bitterness and an inability for the child to obey the Fifth Commandment which is *Honour thy father and mother* (Ex. 20:12) The Lord tells us to *provoke not your children to wrath.* (Eph. 6:4)

Abuse of the mind We live in *this present evil world* (Gal. 1:4) and *..that in the last days perilous times shall come.* (1 Tim 3:1) Satan seeks to blind the minds (2 Cor. 4:4) which he does through T.V. books, magazines, pornography, rock music, internet, etc. Parents are to protect their children by restricting them from such evil influences. Adam and Eve disobeyed God in their quest to know both good and evil and brought sin, death and destruction to mankind. (Gen. Ch. 2,3) Unfortunately the average child is wise unto evil but simple unto good. Parents that neglect the teaching of the Bible in the home and to not bring them to Sunday school and church and permit unrestricted access to the influences of this evil world are guilty of abuse

Abuse through permissiveness Most parents don't realize that when they fail to properly enforce discipline in the home, they are communicating to their children that they don't love them. *He that spareth his rod hateth his son..* (Prov. 13:24) Parents that truly love their children will discipline them (Heb. 12:6) Letting a child have his own way against the parents good judgment is shirking parental duty and is a subtle form of child abuse.

Child abuse through neglect God has given mothers the responsibility to care for their children (Titus 2:1-5) The tragedy in our day is that children are being raised by everyone but their mothers. Many children are being raised by day-care workers, preschool teachers, or baby sitters. Even worse yet, many children come home to an empty house to be raised by the TV or neighborhood children. All of this is in the name of mom's career. Biblically, mom's career is to be in the home (Titus 2:5) The god of material things is a greater love in mom's heart than her love for her Creator and her children.

Child abuse through desertion The Bible says if a man *..provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel* ((1 Tim. 5:8) Many men are walking away from their wives and children to indulge themselves in *..the pleasures of sin for a season* (Heb. 11:25). Single parent homes are a norm today. The 7th Commandment *Thou shalt not commit adultery* (Ex. 20:14) forbids adultery and all other forms of illicit sexual immorality.