

Abuse

Did you know that roughly 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys has been sexually abused, raped, or molested? If those statistics seem alarmingly high, it's because many sexual abuse victims shroud their abuse in secrecy.

The temptation is to bottle up the suffering. To pretend it didn't happen. To try to forget it. But left untreated, the mental, emotional, and spiritual pain of sexual abuse will never heal. It will fester like an open wound in the soul. You may be able to forget about it for a time, but inevitably the hurt will resurface. Something will remind you of the abuse, and once again, you will be enslaved by those memories.

A life shrouded in secrecy, shame, and unhealed wounds is not the life God intended for you. He wants you to walk in freedom. To understand that Jesus died on the cross not only to save you from your sins, but also to give you an abundant life on earth. Jesus' death on the cross sets you free from the pain and despair of your past.

In [John 10:10](#), Jesus says, "the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may

have life, and have it to the full.” Sexual abuse was a tool that the enemy intended to use to cripple you — to steal your joy, kill your hope, and destroy your trust in God and other people. But God can heal and redeem even the deepest hurts.

Being Set Free from the Shame

Shame is one of the top emotions that plagues victims of molestation and sexual abuse.

- *I should have _____.*
- *I shouldn't have _____.*
- *I'm damaged.*
- *I can't tell anyone about this.*
- *I'll never be able to get over it.*
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These are all lies Satan wants you to believe so you will stay in bondage to what was done to you. But the shame of sexual abuse is not yours to bear. It was not your fault.

In [Matthew 11:28](#), Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” The first step to finding healing from sexual abuse is to go to Jesus and lay it at His feet — the pain, the anger, the shame, the bitterness, all of it.

As hard as it may be, this requires you to acknowledge your abuse. And, it often involves opening up to

someone about what happened to you. You were not meant to hide your suffering in the darkness. [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#) says, “You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.”

One of the best ways to bring light to the darkness is through counseling. Whether you choose to reach out to a professional counselor, seek pastoral care from the church, or both, it’s important to talk about your pain with someone who can pray for you and help you through the healing process.

[James 5:16](#) says that when we confess our sins — including the sins committed against us — to each other and pray for one another, we will be healed. Talking about what was done to you will open the door for Jesus to heal your heart from the pain of sexual abuse.

Take Your Time

Complete healing doesn’t happen overnight. But day-by-day, as you walk with Jesus and lean on other people for support and encouragement, you will find that the wounds of your abuse will lose their grip on your heart.

With Jesus, you will be able to move forward with joy, hope, peace, strength, and confidence. You will be able to reclaim everything that was taken from you by the sin of another. What Satan meant to harm you, God will be able to use to grow you into a stronger person, and for the good of others ([Genesis 50:20](#)). He will make beauty from the ashes of your abuse ([Isaiah 61:3](#)). His grace is sufficient.



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