

FAITH WALK ENTERPRISES

Volume 1 Issue 1

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“ IN HIS WILL”



WELCOME

Faith Walk Enterprises is pleased to present “In His Will”, an on-line quarterly newsletter designed to unveil and discuss intense issues that plague our community, and are often times ignored or seen as taboo. As a result of the stigma attached, any discussion is viewed as frightening or menacing and at best judged. These issues run the gamut from mental health, domestic violence (DV), addiction, depression, AIDS, etc. Individuals who are living with and affected by these challenges seldom look to the faith community because they are often perceived as lacking the natural resources and support to respond effectively.

The newsletter aims to serve as a spiritual hub to pro-

mote a solution-based approach to respond to these issues and to help move conscious-minded individuals toward wellness, spiritual maturity and fruitful living. This will be accomplished by providing an array of relevant information, tools, resources, biblical teachings, partnerships, etc. All families encounter problems, but healthy ones seek solutions. This is our motto for growth “no shame...no embarrassment”.

By shedding light on these issues and identifying needs and solutions, our readers will be inspired to consider their own gifts, talents and calling. Therefore, reflect on the lingering question in Isaiah 6, “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?” As it echoes in the hearts of our

readers and throughout the pews, we pray that those who are called will respond like Isaiah, “Here I am! Send me!” This response is heard infrequently, which is why there are struggling and overworked lay leaders who have become ineffective, discouraged and burnt-out to the point of leaving the church. Certainly, a response like Isaiah’s will help replenish leaders, create vibrant churches and impact the community.

We challenge readers to constantly think about the Lord and how He teaches us to live. In doing so, we will gain insight and wisdom to make decisions and live according to God’s will.

Abba’s Girlz, Inc.

Abba’s Girlz, Inc. is a God ordained ministry created for the purpose of responding to the needs of women in ministry. Under the leadership of Prophetess Chivaughn Clarke, CEO & Founder, Abba’s Girlz, Inc. provides direction, resources, support, entertainment, encouragement and network opportunities to new ministries. This is done via workshops, seminars, confer-

ences, grants, prayer, technical assistance, etc. Abba’s Girlz, Inc. facilitates in the birthing of women’s ministries that bridge the gap between the natural and spiritual needs, bringing balance to the body of Christ.

Abba’s Girlz, Inc. caters to women whose ministries are life changing, mind transforming and a present help to people in

need. They respond to the current needs of the community by offering education on self awareness and the affects of domestic violence on the family and community. They also empower parents to protect, educate and teach their children to be overcomers in a hostile society, etc. Abba’s Girlz, Inc. aims to show the world the love of Jesus Christ in action.

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Calendar of Events

11/20/10: **“A Parental Awareness Forum”** hosted by Abba’s Girlz, Inc., @ Brownsville Recreational Center, 1555, Linden Blvd. 1:00pm.

Upcoming DV Training @ Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, 230 Decatur St., Bklyn. Those who are interested may call the office for more details (718) 493-8770.



Should church be a place of fun? Should it be a place where we socialize and/or fellowship? Is church a place where we should dine out, laugh, celebrate, be entertained, etc. Do

these activities minimize the Gospel, its relevance and holiness?

Of course, church should be a place of fun! But, it's also a place of worship, prayer, refuge, hope and healing. Church is also a place of holiness, but not because of us or anything we do. It is holy because God is holy. Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2nd Corinthians 3:17). Therefore, we are not required to check our personalities at the front door.

One of the reasons why we exist at the Mount Lebanon Baptist Church is to produce an atmosphere of fellowship and fun but not at the expense of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, we exist first and foremost to promote the Gospel of Jesus in our living, preaching and worship. Also, we are mindful that whatever we do in word or deed, relaxing or having fun, to do it in a way pleasing to God (Colossians 3:17).

Fun is pervasive. It suggests that there is something that we always have to be doing or some where we're

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

always going. In today's culture, we are inundated with the world's idea of fun and entertainment. We are exposed to televisions, computers or other technological gadgets like iphones and ipads, music, dining out, bowling or theater, etc. However, if we are not careful, fun can become a fixation providing an escape from the things that God has called us to do.

In this issue, we recognize the importance of fun. However, we suggest being careful not to overrate it. We are blessed to be a blessing to others (2nd Corinthians 9:8-12). Therefore, as we bring attention to the overwhelming problem of domestic violence, a universal crisis affecting men, women and children, let's consider how we may be a blessing to those hurting and suffering. Domestic violence is something that we hear about every day in the lives of celebrities and usually ignored in our own lives and in the lives of those around us. That is, until someone has been severely hurt or killed. It is my expectation that this issue will inspire those who are called by the Lord to create ministries that respond, not only to spiritual needs, but the natural as well. In meeting the spiritual needs people will be reminded that no matter what the struggle or how overwhelming the pain, "The Joy of

the Lord is our strength" (Nehemiah ah 8:10). They will be encouraged to "Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12) and not give up. In meeting the natural needs, people will acquire education, support, guidance, resources, counseling and other services as needed. Recognizing the need for a more comprehensive approach to Domestic Violence aids in prevention.

Let us refrain from laying up for ourselves treasures on earth, but instead lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. (Matthew 6:19-21) Fun should not be eliminated, but neither should it take up all or most of our available time. It should not deplete our resources and cause us to limit our ability to express genuine concern for others as we carry God's message to them. By directing our gifts, talents and resources toward helping others, we can create a healthy balance of fulfilling our Godly responsibilities and still have time for fun and relaxation for ourselves.

By Earlene Greene

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SIGNS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Your Inner Thoughts and Feelings

Do You:

- Feel afraid of your partner much of the time?
- Avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner?
- Feel that you can't do anything right for your partner?
- Believe that you deserve to be hurt or mistreated?
- Feel emotionally numb or helpless?

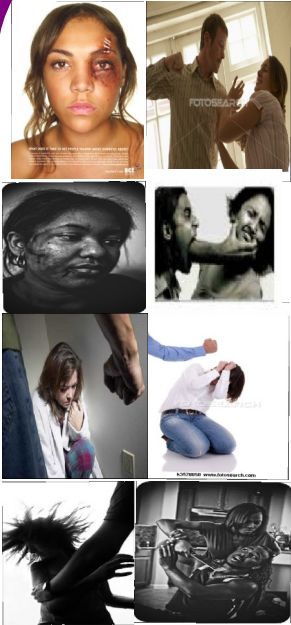
Your Partner's Belittling Behavior

Does Your Partner:

- Humiliate or yell at you?
- Criticize you and put you down?
- Treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends or family to see?
- Ignore or put down your opinions or accomplishments?
- Blame you for his/her own abusive behavior?

Go to www.helpguide.org for additional information on signs of domestic abuse

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE MANY FACES OF ABUSE



"I caught him in a lie, and he wouldn't tell the truth. I couldn't take that he kept lying to me. And he couldn't take that I wouldn't drop it. He wouldn't tell the truth and I wouldn't drop it. The truth is right here in text messages, so it escalated into him being violent towards me and ... it was ugly. I just really wanted it to stop. All I kept thinking the whole time: When is it going to stop? He had no soul in his eyes, just blank. He was clearly blacked out. There was no person when I looked at him. I was battered. I was bleeding. I was swollen in my face. It was not like a fight with each other", says Rihanna as she gave those bone chilling words in a 20/20 interview with Dianne Sawyer on November 6. This was after being assaulted by Chris Brown on the eve of the Grammy Awards in February, 2010.

From the moment singer Chris Brown beat his girlfriend Rihanna, America pre-

tended to be shocked and polarized by the story. How could Chris do that?

Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, yet the problem is often overlooked, excused, or denied. This is especially true when the abuse is psychological, rather than physical. Emotional abuse is often minimized, yet it can leave deep and lasting scars. *Domestic abuse, aka spousal abuse, occurs when one person in an intimate relationship or marriage tries to dominate and control the other person. Domestic abuse that includes physical violence is called domestic violence.

Domestic violence and abuse are used for one purpose and one purpose only: to gain and maintain total control over an individual. An abuser doesn't play fair. He/she uses fear, guilt, shame, and intimidation to overpower,

wear down and keep one under his or her thumb. Your abuser may also threaten you, hurt you, or hurt those around you. Domestic violence has many forms including physical aggression (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects), or threats thereof; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse (e.g., neglect); and economic deprivation.

FACT ABOUT ELDER ABUSE

1 out of 9 Americans over age 60 have experienced some form of elder abuse—Emotional, Psychological and Physical. Some forms include, financial exploits, isolation, neglect, threats, ridicule of personal and cultural values, etc.

A LIVING TESTIMONY By Michelle Lester

To the world outside of my apartment, he was the nicest person. Elderly ladies in the neighborhood loved and praised him every time they saw him. No one knew the truth about my relationship. I appeared to be happy and always had a smile on my face. But, this was the 'mask' that I wore. Inside my apartment, I was a scared, lonely woman who turned to alcohol for comfort. I was living in a nightmare of a relationship which consisted of constant threats, intimidation, emotional and physical abuse. My life was far from normal. The madness consisted of furniture being destroyed and threats to hurt and kill me with a kitchen knife or baseball bat. I was often thrown to the floor and personally blamed for his rage.

I knew my ex-husband for seventeen years, but we were married for eleven years. The truth is, I wasn't blind. He was always explosive and

he threw tantrums for little things. Furthermore, he drank alcohol excessively. Why did I choose this for myself? Why would any women choose to make a commitment that could result in this kind of pain and suffering? Well, in order to choose pain and suffering, you must be to some degree accustomed to it or familiar with it. In my case, I grew up as a middle child, so I was plagued with the "middle child syndrome". I lived with my single mother, and felt a sense of not belonging. I had to vie for attention. I was insecure and had low self esteem. The fact that my father wasn't around and I had no real father figures, led me to attract the wrong kind of men.

At the beginning of my physical abuse, yes, I too made excuses for him. I also convinced myself that I could help change him. Boy, was I naive! What was I thinking? Our two children were young during the period of my abuse

and although I thought I hid the abuse from them, they heard and saw what I went through. He never physically abused them but they suffered verbal and emotional abuse, which is also damaging to one's spirit. His yelling, cursing and hostility caused my children tremendous fear, pain and suffering. The agony I felt as I watched what this was doing to my babies, motivated me to get out. I could no longer live with how this was impacting them.

At one point, I started sleeping in the living room on the sofa because I finally accepted the reality that what started out as love had turned to hate. Why should I continue to live and sleep with the enemy? I wanted him dead! By this time, I was scared to leave because he convinced me that he would find me and have my children taken away. So I stayed and prayed every morning and night for God to

Story Continued on page 4

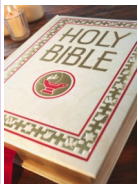
Cont'd A LIVING TESTIMONY By Michelle Lester

remove this man from my life and free me and my children from his control and sickness.

On February 19, 2005, Jesus came to my rescue. My husband came into the apartment in a fit of rage and started screaming and breaking things and calling me out of my name. "I am going to make sure you close your eyes tonight", he said. My daughter started crying and called 911. While waiting for the police, he held a knife in his hands threatening to kill me in front

of our children, but God placed a shield over us that my husband could not break through. Once the police came he was arrested and this was the beginning of my NEW LIFE! I never thought that I would leave alive, THANK YOU JESUS!

I received an order of protection for me and children. After 17yrs of abuse, I am now divorced, my children are doing well, and I am no longer a victim, but a survivor. Also, I am developing a foundation "No More Tears" to help victims of abuse.



BIBLICAL REFLECTION

"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are (1 Cor. 3:16-17)". You are valued in God's eyes; you are regarded by God as a

temple, a sacred place, Just as God does not want a temple defiled by violence, neither does God want you to be harmed. God's spirit dwells in you and makes you holy. You deserve to live without fear and without abuse. Also read: John 10:10, Ephesians 5:21-23, Colossians 3:19, 2nd Timothy 3:1-5

COMMUNITIES OF FAITH RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

An initiative of The Interfaith Center of NY and Connect Faith are challenging Religious leaders to respond to the epidemic of family and domestic violence to make their communities more safe. Churches are invited to receive training to develop skills to educate their congregations in Domestic Violence prevention as well as respond to crises when they arise. Participating churches will also receive incentives to develop their own DV initiative in their community. For more information, visit the websites at: www.connectnyc.org You may also contact Connect Faith @ 212-683-0015 Shelly MacNichols or www.interfaithcenter.org You may also contact The Interfaith Center @ 212-870-3515 Anushavan Margaryan

DID YOU KNOW?

- *One in four women in the United States reports experiencing violence by a current or former spouse or boyfriend at some point in her life.*
- *Young women age 20 to 24 also experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault, followed by those 16 to 19. 10 People age 18 and 19 experience the highest rates of stalking.*
- *Women who have experienced domestic violence are 80 percent more likely to have a stroke, 70 percent more likely to have heart disease, 60 percent more likely to have asthma and 70 percent more likely to drink heavily than women who have not experienced intimate partner violence.*
- *Sexual and domestic violence are linked to a wide range of reproductive health issues including sexually transmitted disease and HIV transmission, miscarriages, risky sexual health behavior, etc*

Go to www.endabuse.org for additional facts on domestic abuse

NEED HELP?

Safe Horizon 24 hrs. DV Hot Line 24 hrs. 800-621-4673

CONNECT'S Legal Helpline: 212-683-0605

The Healing Center (Faith Based) 718-238-5138

Day One NY (teen abuse) 800-214-4150

Call Local Precinct. Each one has a DV unit

Women In Need, Inc., 212-695-4758

National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800)799-7233.

Joyful Heart Foundation: Phone: (212) 475-2026

FAITH WALK ENTERPRISES

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Our Mission:

FAITH WALK ENTERPRISES is a Christian based organization designed to assist individuals in the development of faith, knowledge and skills directly related to one's spiritual and personal growth, professional development and financial stewardship.