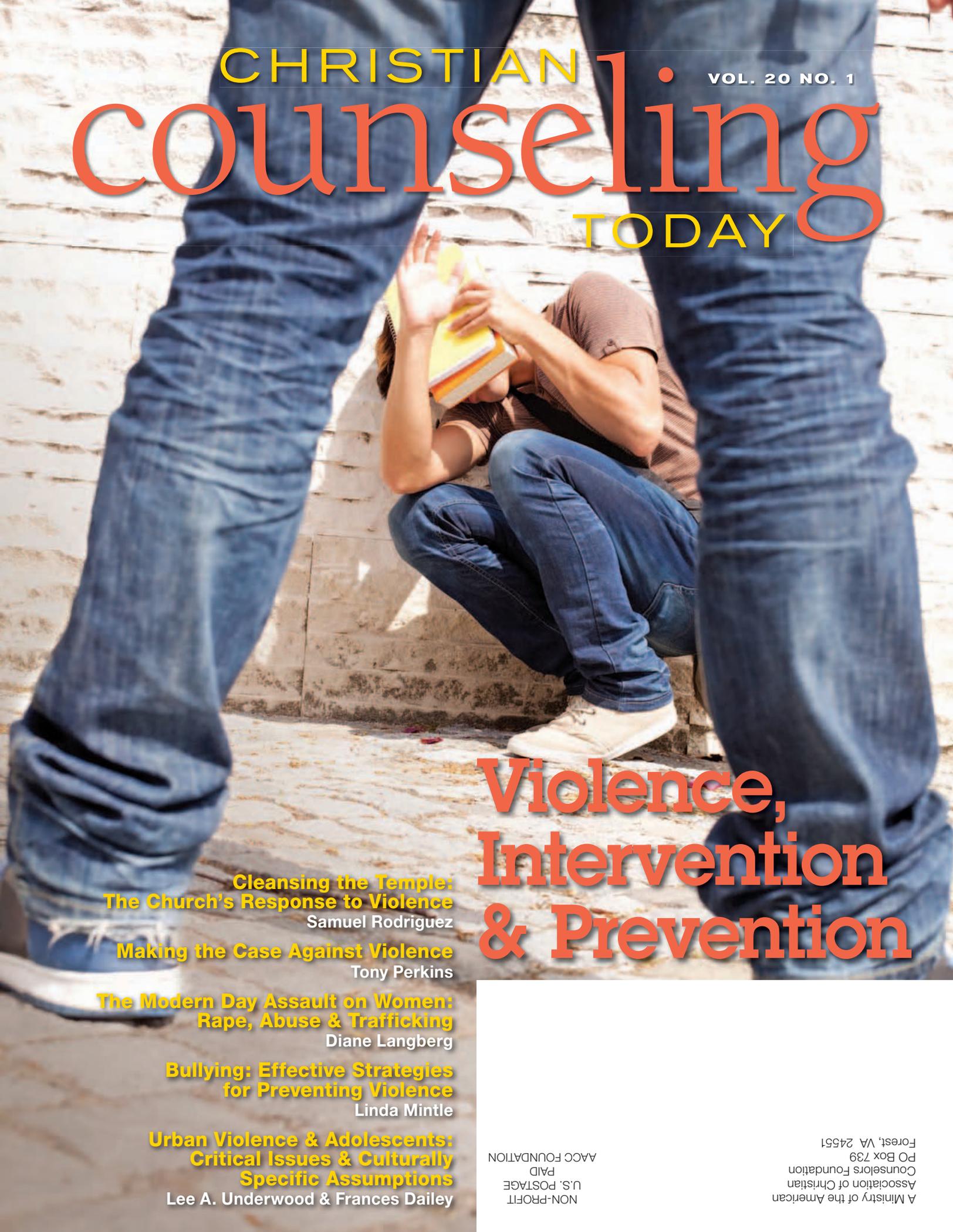


CHRISTIAN

VOL. 20 NO. 1

counseling TODAY



Violence, Intervention & Prevention

**Cleansing the Temple:
The Church's Response to Violence**
Samuel Rodriguez

Making the Case Against Violence
Tony Perkins

**The Modern Day Assault on Women:
Rape, Abuse & Trafficking**
Diane Langberg

**Bullying: Effective Strategies
for Preventing Violence**
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**Urban Violence & Adolescents:
Critical Issues & Culturally
Specific Assumptions**
Lee A. Underwood & Frances Dailey

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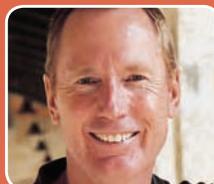
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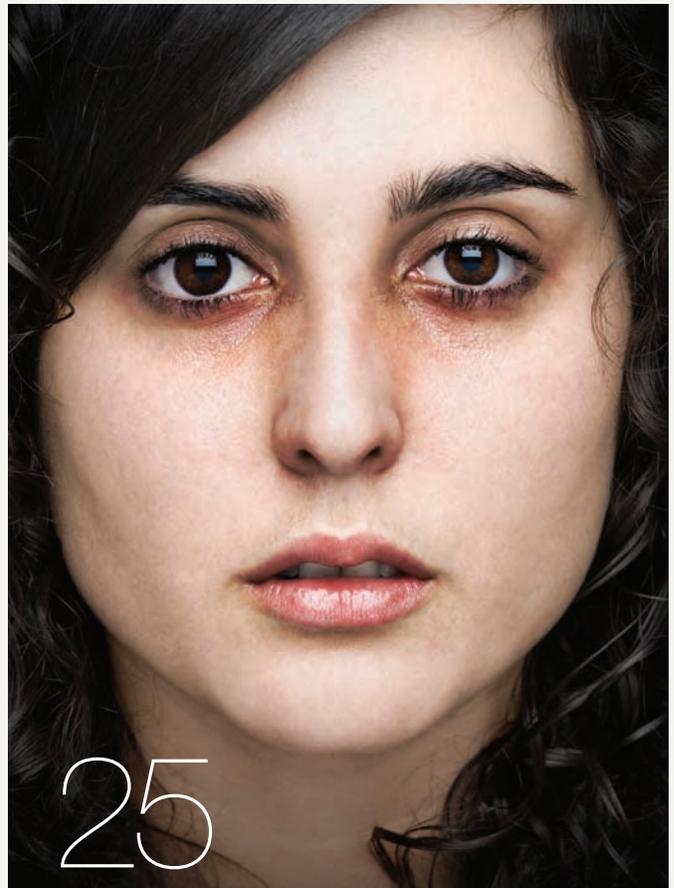
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- 18 Making the Case Against Violence** by *Tony Perkins*. The horrific loss of children in Newtown, Connecticut, is etched into the nation's collective psyche and Tony Perkins draws several parallels out of Scripture in order to attach some semblance of meaning to the tragedy. With the backdrop of the Christmas story, the sanctity of human life and recent research findings are reviewed.
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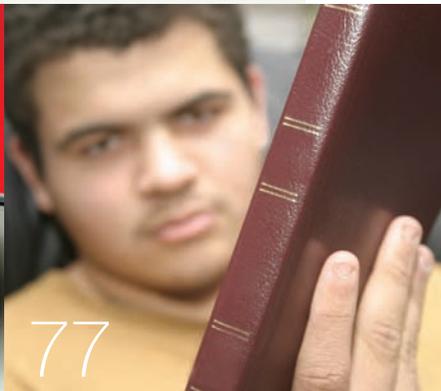
by Linda Mintle. Bullying in all its forms—face-to-face and within expanding technology environments—continues to rear its ugly face, sometimes with dire consequences. Relationship author, Linda Mintle, defines the behavior, identifies attributes, and examines some of the more effective treatment programs available.

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Tim Clinton, Ed.D., LPC, LMFT, is President of *AACC*, Executive Director of the Center for Counseling and Family Studies/Professor of Counseling and Pastoral Care at *Liberty University*, and co-founder of *Light Counseling, Inc.*, a clinical practice serving children, adolescents, and adults. He is the author of several books, including *God Attachment* (Howard Books), *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling* (Harvest House), and his most recent, *Break Through* (Worthy Publishing).

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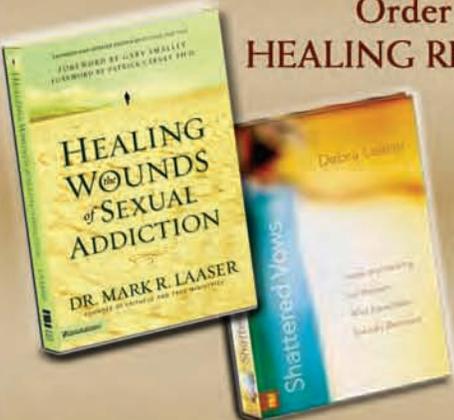
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Defining Violence (vahy-uh-luh-ns): What then Shall We Do?

Violence is something that rears its ugly head far too often in life and its impact is evident all around us—in our homes, our schools, our places of business, our communities and, yes, even in our churches and houses of worship. For many, the tragic loss of life during the recent mass killings in Newtown, Connecticut—where 20 innocent children and six adults were brutally murdered—still lingers with a sense of disbelief and numb awareness. Yet, daily news cycles, not to mention history, are replete with stories that seem to defy the very fiber and dignity of God’s creation—the Jewish Holocaust of Hitler’s reign; despotic regimes like those of Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, and now that of Bashar al-Assad in Syria; the 9-11 terrorist attacks and cowardly suicide bombings; the abuse and trafficking of defenseless children; a bruised and battered spouse; random and intentional killing for power, control or dominance; names like Columbine, Virginia Tech and Sandy Hook; the rape and mutilation of women; and unfiltered hatred merely over someone’s skin color, gender identity, religious beliefs, or political affiliation... just to name a few.

When the horrific images, the unimaginable pain and the heart-rending realities follow each vicious act, they cross every racial, cultural, educational and socioeconomic barrier. Since violence can take multiple forms, defining the construct, identifying triggers, and understanding its nuances can be challenging. Take a moment and slowly read through the following list of words. They illustrate the complexity of the task at hand, as well as the rise and fall of one’s emotional state: abusive, aggressive, assaulting,

attacking, barbaric, bashing, battering, beating, belting, bloodshed, bludgeoning, bruising, brutality, clubbing, combative, barbarity, brutality, bullying, callousness, coercion, crippling, cruelty, cutting, damaging, destroying, devastation, duress, explosive, fighting, flogging, fury, hammering, harmful, hateful, heartless, hurtful, inflicting, inhuman, injurious, invading, maiming, maliciousness, mayhem, mutilating, mauling, murderous, offensive, onslaught, pelting, pommeling, pounding, pummeling, rage, rampage, rape, riot, roughness, rupture, ruthless, sadistic, savaging, shooting, slapping, smashing, stabbing, strangling, striking, terrorizing, thrashing, threaten, thug-gery, torture, tromping, tumultuous, turbulent, vehement, vengeful, viciousness, whipping....

The Prophet Jeremiah said, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9, KJV). However, this is exactly what counselors, researchers, teachers, law enforcement personnel, etc. are all trying to do... understand the heart, as well as the intent and motivation behind an act of violence, especially when it appears to be particularly senseless and devoid of any regard for one’s fellow human being. Safety, well-being, prevention, and treatment are all critically important factors in today’s culture of violence—a culture increasingly fueled by media outlets and often bereft of common decency.

The fallen nature of man lends itself to the atrocities that evil can command within the soul and stir its depravity to the surface. Sometimes things are done in the Name of God, but are clearly not from the Spirit of God. Satan is the “father of lies” (John 8:44), the “evil

one” (1 John 2:13), the “lord of death” (Hebrews 2:14), and the “angel of the abyss” (Revelation 9:11). Jesus said he was a thief who “comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10). He seeks to steal the joy of others, kill their bodies, minds and hearts, and destroy the image of a holy and loving God. However, the enemy of our souls must also find willing vessels to carry out his wicked plans, those who are complicit in the partnership of violence. Therein lies the interest and focus of the mental health community. How do we predict and prepare for the next chapter in a twisted and violent drama that plays itself out in the daily news? Is accurate forecasting even possible?

This issue of *CCT* takes on the vital task, attempting to address these concerns and a growing dilemma when it comes to assessing and treating excessive anger and violence. Perhaps now, more than ever, there is a greater sense of urgency to do so. Several articles look at particularly troubling areas. Barry Lord explores the power and control issues involved in domestic violence. Diane Langberg focuses on the numerous risks and threats women face all over the world, while Lee Underwood tackles the twin concerns of urban and adolescent violence. In terms of assessment and treatment interventions, Eric Scalise discusses various therapeutic factors and protocols. Lynnette Hoy directs the reader to issues of anger and rage. Linda Mintle outlines strategies to employ in tackling the ongoing dynamic of bullying, and Gary Sibly provides an overview for assessing and preventing self-directed violence and suicide. Finally, National Research Council President, Tony Perkins, offers an inside look at the subject through the lens of



The likelihood for anyone to experience one or more incidents of violence at some point in their lifetime is extremely high. Some of us have been devastated and broken, wondering where God was in the moment.

the Bible and the sanctity of human life and Samuel Rodriguez develops a godly orientation and relevant spiritual principles regarding the Church's role in today's society.

Violence is the intentional use of force, power and/or coercion against an individual, group or community, usually resulting in some form of harm, injury or deprivation. The intentionality typically carries with it a complete disregard for the rights of others or the consequences of the behavior. Many believe violence is preventable; however, the nature of mankind cannot be summarily

dismissed or simply put into black and white protocols and intervention strategies. The likelihood for anyone to experience one or more incidents of violence at some point in their lifetime is extremely high. Some of us have been devastated and broken, wondering where God was in the moment.

One day, the Prince of Peace will return and, with Him, justice, the restoration of order, the final defeat of evil, and the healing of the nations will take place. The Apostle John was given a brief glimpse into the glory that awaits those who are redeemed and love God: "And

I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write, for these words are faithful and true'" (Revelation 21:3-5). ✘

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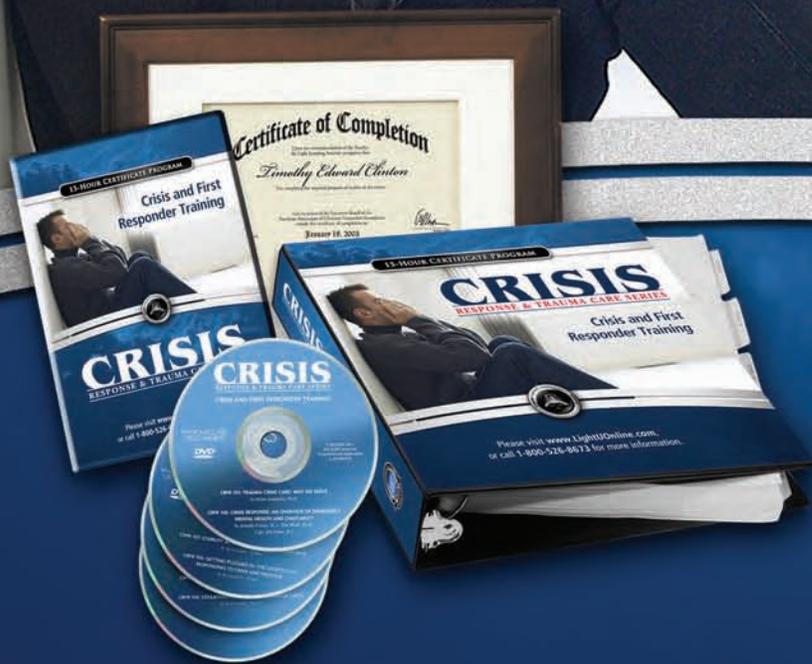
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Danny Holland, M.A. '11
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cleansing the temple THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE

The Spirit of Herod

Herod still lives! Via the conduit of biblical allusions and metaphorical application, the tragedies of Newtown, Connecticut, the Colorado theater massacre, and other egregious violations of our communal serenity demonstrate that in the 21st century, the spirit of Herod is alive.

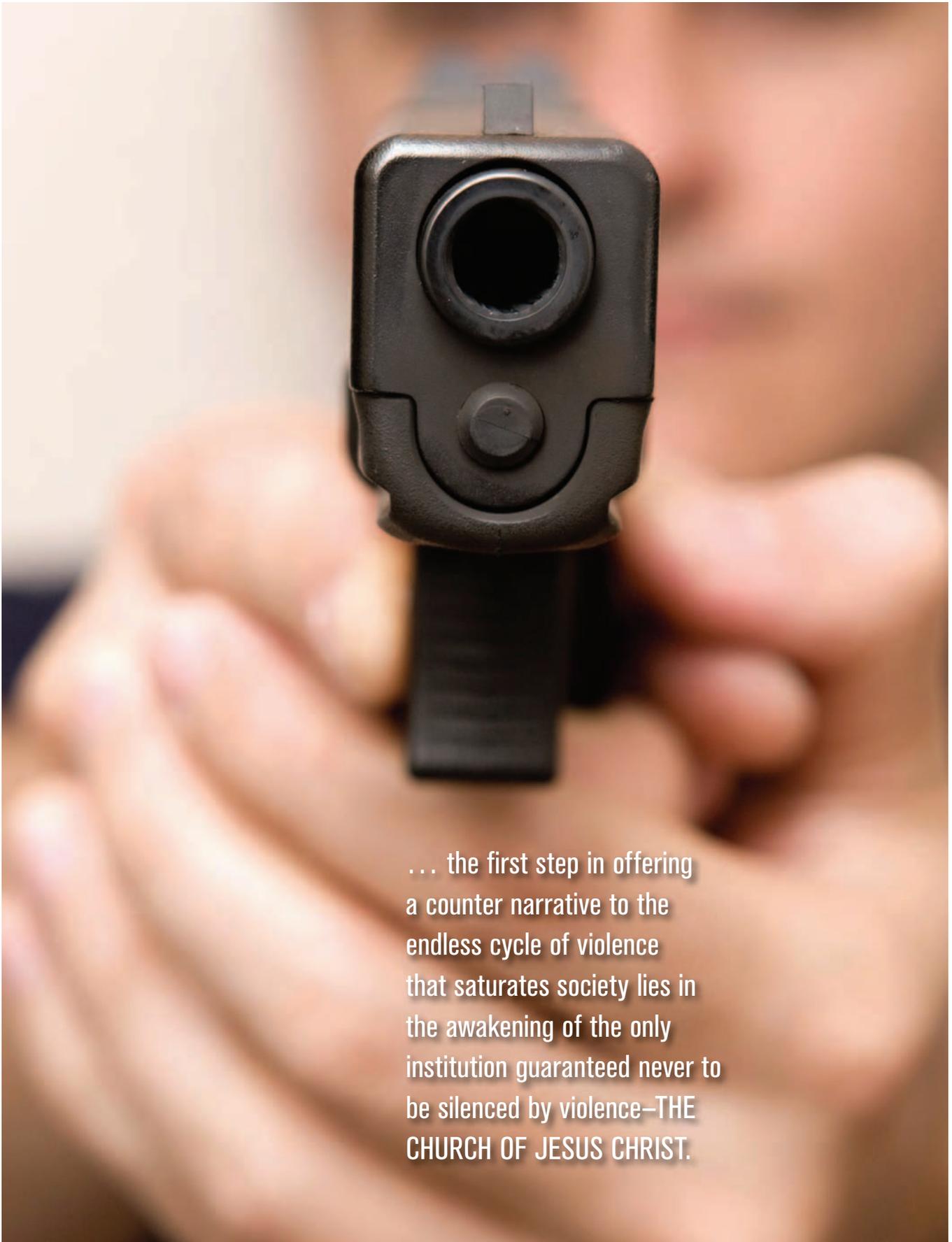
Accordingly, in the New Testament, the biblical narratives include the presence of four different Herods. The first Herod (the Great) murdered all the children in Bethlehem, attempting to destroy the Christ after His birth. The second Herod (Archelaus) ruled Judea and Jerusalem with an iron fist when Jesus was growing up in Nazareth. The third Herod (Antipas) had John the Baptist beheaded and later presided over part of Jesus' trial when He was arrested. The fourth Herod (Agrippa I) persecuted the first century church, had the Apostle James executed and Peter arrested. Each embodied an unbridled commitment to mindless violence.

To that respect, within a biblical context, the spirit of Herod remains active. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that in the midst of this pathetic reality of violence, there also exists a prophetic supposition

of hope. In other words, a Spirit more powerful than the spirit of Herod is present with us today. As followers of Jesus Christ, we must declare that the most powerful Spirit alive today is not the one who persecutes, prosecutes and executes, but the One who redeems, restores and resurrects. In spite of media-exacerbated saturation that supports a culture of violence, the most powerful Spirit alive today is the Holy Spirit of Almighty God.

Yet, as followers of Jesus, as Christians, we cannot deny or ignore the culture of violence that permeates all aspects of society today. Therefore, we must address the following queries. What is an appropriate and biblical response to violence in our culture? What place, if any, should "righteous indignation" have for Christians? What about Jesus becoming angry and cleansing the temple on two different occasions? What does God have to say about working with, ministering to, and

SAMUEL RODRIGUEZ



... the first step in offering a counter narrative to the endless cycle of violence that saturates society lies in the awakening of the only institution guaranteed never to be silenced by violence—THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST.



forgiving those who have committed acts of violence?

The Prophetic vs. the Pathetic

Let us begin with the biblical response to violence in today's culture and society. In order for the Church to respond, we must embrace the biblical impetus and the moral imperative to challenge and influence culture. Parenthetically, we must capture, once again, our prophetic mantle.

Comparatively speaking, there exists a fine line between the prophetic and the pathetic. Prophetic, defined as truth telling, requires the Church to recognize the most important problem in America is not moral relativism, cultural decadency, or spiritual apathy. The number one problem in America stems out of the unfortunate posture of a lukewarm church.

The Church, once the most catalytic and influential institution within our communities, stands guilty of sacrificing biblical truth on the altar of political expediency. To a great degree, we have abandoned our prophetic truth-telling mantle and ontologically-derived purpose. Hence, the first step in offering a counter narrative to the endless cycle of violence that saturates society lies in the awakening of the only institution guaranteed never to be silenced by violence—the Church of Jesus Christ.

A Culture of Violence from the Womb to the Tomb

Accordingly, we must frame the biblical argument that the current, unprecedented culture of violence permeating this generation begins with society's tolerance for the foundational justification of abject violence—abortion. As we reconcile conviction and compassion, we cannot deny the fact that the level of violence in our communities stands directly proportional to the loss of innocent lives by disregarding the unborn. Violence in America begins with abortion. Violence in our streets, schools, homes and culture begins with violence in the womb.

For that matter, the antidote to the current climate of violence begins with the redemptive prescription embodied in the advancement of a culture that elevates life. Let us be clear. Violent trends can only stand thwarted when we frame the optics of life through the filter of our own Constitution. Everything begins with life.

For without life, one cannot embrace liberty... and without liberty, it is impossible to pursue happiness.

A Firewall Against Mindless Violence: the Imago Dei

Moreover, the Church's response must include the reintroduction of an idea that revolutionized the Roman Empire... and the world for that matter. Early Christendom built the initial firewall against unbridled violence in society when it proposed the concept of the Imago Dei—the image of God. We carry a responsibility to assist those who suffer from spiritual and cultural myopia with the corrective lens of seeing God's image in every human being.

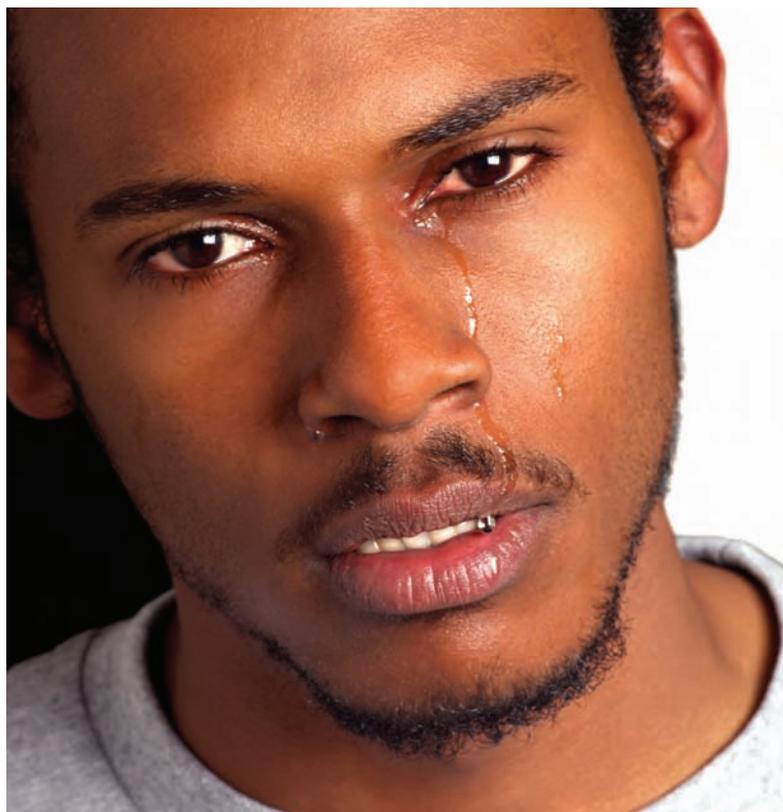
The image of God lives in His creation of man: black and white, red, brown and yellow, rich and poor, straight and gay, conservative and liberal, citizen and undocumented. Our challenge is to see the image of God in every human being, including those with whom we disagree. Our challenge is to see the image of God even in those who persecute and slander us. Our challenge is to see the image of God in those who oppose us. Our challenge is to see the image of God in the suffering, the marginalized, the

oppressed, and the hurting. Our challenge is to see the image of God in friend and foe, acquaintance and stranger, strong and weak, oppressor and liberator.

Recognizing the image of God in those around us serves as a significant deterrent to acts of violence. In practically every post-violent and episodically-researched analysis, the perpetrator alludes to the lack of humanity in the action taken. In other words, the violent offender objectifies the victim in a matter that extrapolates any notion of humanity, significance or spiritual value. Diluting the image of God in a person enables the culprit to engage in acts of aggression with minimal conviction and a conscious devoid of respect or compassion.

A church committed not just to engaging the culture, but also reforming it, must contextualize the narrative of a worldview that is committed to recognizing the image of God in every human being. By recognizing the image of God in every human being, we must model the Habitus Christus or the habits of Christ toward our fellow man. Such actions reconcile sanctification with service, conviction with compassion, and holiness with humility. Violent acts stand limited in the presence of a culture that champions the

... the violent offender objectifies the victim in a matter that extrapolates any notion of humanity, significance or spiritual value. **DILUTING THE IMAGE OF GOD** in a person enables the culprit to engage in acts of aggression with minimal conviction and a conscious devoid of respect or compassion.





dignity and sanctity of life and recognizes the image of God in each and every person.

Righteous Indignation and Rhetorical Violence

“And ‘don’t sin by letting anger control you.’ Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry...” (Ephesians 4:26, NLT). Yet, as Christians, we must demonstrate a sense of righteous indignation in the face of injustice. Saints, silence is not an option when in 2013 America men abandon their roles as fathers, our children are slaughtered, pornography marries technology, God is mocked, pushers are more admired than preachers, school grounds look like battle-grounds, and our neighbors sit paralyzed by the Gate called Beautiful begging for change. Silence is not option when violence not only captivates our actions, but also our thoughts and hearts.

For that matter, we must push back against what some call “rhetorical violence”—an indulgence in a language that is meant to inflict emotional pain. We have all heard this saying since we were school kids knocking around in the playground: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” The intent behind this saying is a good one, to be sure. We say it to steel young minds and hearts against the inevitable bruises of childhood and adolescence. Even the coolest kids get called names. The vulnerable, the socially awkward among them, suffer incalculable verbal and emotional abuse.

As hard as we might try, did any of us ever believe name-calling never hurt? Even today—now that we are older, hopefully wiser, having experienced the heartaches of everyday life more fully than we may have as kids—is “words will never hurt me” a maxim we can stand behind? The Lamb’s agenda says, “No.” Words do hurt, and we should not be the ones inflicting pain from and through them.

Most of those doing the bullying, however, are unknown beyond their own limited circles. In the age of social media—an age in which everyone has instant access to the public and where many of the most vocal hide behind a phony identity—the

The Church's role includes reforming the culture and equipping Christ followers to minister **HEALING TO THE VICTIM**, while simultaneously providing **DELIVERANCE TO THE PERPETRATOR**. The born again Church must empower believers with the knowledge that the violence in our communities stems from a spiritual deficiency and not just a sociocultural breach.

language has grown more violent, more vulgar, more hardcore and rhetorically pornographic. Well-known or not, the actions of the name-callers prove a singular truth: names do hurt—and not just those on the receiving end.

To paraphrase another old aphorism: what we say about others reveals more about ourselves than the people we are talking about. This is especially true for Christians, who encounter any number of verses in the Bible that ask for restraint in speech. “The wise in heart are called discerning,” says Proverbs 16:21, “and gracious words promote instruction.”

Jesus, as we know, tended to be a bit more direct. In Matthew 12:36-37, He said, “But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Today, given the electro-charged public square in which we live and work, our words can cause enormous damage to any number of people within seconds of leaving our mouths... or keyboards. Once gone, there is no pulling them back, no erasing them. They may live in the cyber-sphere forever. We should not add useless wind to this electronic maelstrom, but instead lead by example. We should measure our language, especially in assessing our critics. Derogatory terms for other human beings, regardless of how widely their views differ from ours—or, more importantly, from the truths of Scripture—should not pass through our lips.

“... For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of,” said Jesus in Matthew 12:34. What He meant was that it is far more than a failure of tone when we marginalize or malign those with whom we disagree. The solution is not just “nicer” words, but a transformed perspective—a more acute vision—one that sees all human beings, including opponents, through the eyes of our *proponent*, Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, we must repudiate all vestiges of articulated terror. Let a generation arise that will dare to speak to both the heathen and the Pharisees. Let a generation arise that is committed to turning the table of the moneychanger in the temple and writing on the ground while still saying, “He without sin, throw the first stone.”

Righteous indignation compels us to marry truth with love and conviction with compassion. It enables us to redeem the narrative of prophetic Christianity by establishing a firewall against the spirit of violence—a spirit that can be quenched when we speak with civility and reach out with charity.

Turning the Tables and Healing the Hearts

The question arises: Did not Jesus turn the tables in a violent act or, in the best case scenario, a demonstration of anger? Jesus, without a doubt, exhibited righteous indignation when He revealed the religious hypocrisy and apathy captured in the actions of the moneychangers and dove sellers. Yet, the revolutionary and catalytic message of turning the other cheek best frames the loving and graceful metric of authentic Christ following. For example, when Jesus rebuked Peter for engaging his sword and cutting off the ear from a participant attempting to arrest Him, our Lord exhibited a heart for a non-violent, righteous civil posture poised to transform the world.

The Church's role includes reforming the culture and equipping Christ followers to minister healing to the victim, while simultaneously providing deliverance to the perpetrator. The born again Church must empower believers with the knowledge that the violence in our communities stems from a spiritual deficiency and not just a sociocultural breach. In addition, we cannot negate the reality of mental illness that serves as the facilitative womb for so many of these horrific acts. Therefore, when politicians attempt to provide political solutions to a problem with a clear spiritual dimension, let us not hold our silence. Understandably, building a firewall against Herod stems not from the agenda of the donkey or the elephant, but from the agenda of the Lamb.

For at the end of day, the Church's role in addressing the spiral of violence requires spiritual fortitude, prophetic courage, a biblical impetus, and an anointing to reiterate the words of a young shepherd boy as he confronted a giant threatening with violent acts: “... You come against me with a sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty...” (1 Samuel 17:45). ✠



REV. SAMUEL RODRIGUEZ, JR., M.A., serves as President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (The Hispanic National Association of Evangelicals), America's largest Hispanic Christian organization. CNN recently named him “The Leader of the Hispanic Evangelical Movement,” and in 2010, Rev. Rodriguez was the recipient of the “Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Award” presented by the Congress of Racial Equality.

MAKING THE CASE AGAINST *violence*

Violence in the wake of the terrible killings of 27 persons in Newtown, Connecticut, is a topic of national conversation. Americans suffer what seems, at times, a daily catalog of murder and hostage-taking in what should be our sweet land of liberty.

The Newtown killings were the next step in the escalation of horror. Twenty children in a kindergarten were among the victims of this monstrous deed. The fact that the murders occurred just days before Christmas heightened our sense of tragedy. Who would think of murdering children? Who would think of doing it just before our celebration of the birth of Jesus?

This time, the Internet and various media outlets gave us images of a little church in Newtown where memorial services were conducted for the victims. Candlelight vigils have become a ritual in too many towns, but they do teach us that in such times, people turn to God, to a power beyond and above any government.

Like millions of others, I went to church and joined my fellow Christians in prayer for the heartbroken families. I hugged my wife and our own five children a little tighter, a little longer... grateful to God for these incomparable gifts.

TONY PERKINS

If the mere vision of Tiny Tim's empty place at the Christmas table was enough to soften the heart of Ebenezer Scrooge in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, certainly the cold reality of 27 empty places at 27 Christmas tables would soften hearts here in America. Surely, we as a people can take a stand against these sudden and seemingly random outbreaks of murderous violence.

I found solace in an unusual place that Christmas tide. Last fall, the U.S. Postal Service issued its usual assortment of holiday stamps, but this year was different. It was almost as if someone in the bureaucracy of the federal government had a premonition that we would need a special message of comfort and hope. The 2012 religious stamp is titled, "Holy Family (Forever)." It shows the Virgin Mary cradling the Christ child and riding a donkey. She is accompanied by her husband, Joseph. He is leading the donkey on their flight into Egypt. Above this young married couple, a bright star shines. The stamp does not offer the usual commercial Christmas images. No presents, no stockings, no nutcrackers. This stamp





Candlelight vigils have become a ritual in too many towns, but they do teach us that in such times, people turn to God, to a power beyond and above any government.

illustrates the Gospel message of hope in the face of mortal dangers to mother and child.

Why must they flee their home? In the Book of Matthew, we learn why. Chapter 2, verses 13-18 tell the story in the sparsest of detail. History reveals that Herod was a Roman satrap, relying on Caesar's legions for his security and power. Herod was frustrated when the Magi failed to come back to his palace to tell him where they had located the infant, Jesus. He had said he wanted to join them in worshipping the Christ child. It would not be the last time a ruler lied so blatantly to visiting dignitaries.

Those deeply-learned Magi located the house where Joseph, Mary and the young Jesus were living. They worshiped the Christ child and presented Him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Warned in a dream that Herod wanted to kill the Child, these Wise Men took another route homeward.

For centuries, that desperate flight into Egypt by Jesus, Mary and Joseph has been commemorated in art and literature, in story and song. The 19th century French painter, Luc Olivier Merson, gave us an interesting image of rest along the way. Jesus and His mother sleep contentedly in this version, sheltered in the arms of the great Egyptian Sphinx. Joseph, their guardian, rests protectively on the sands nearby. An earlier rendering of this story by Albrecht Dürer, a German painter, shows how keenly Christians of all denominations have followed this compelling story. Many acknowledge Dürer as the great artist of the Reformation.

When Herod realized he had been tricked, he was—in the words of the King James Version—"wroth." Scripture tells us Herod's wrath took the form of an order to kill all the infants under two years of age in Bethlehem and the surrounding region. Most Protestant Bible scholars believe this deplorable crime was carried out upon a few score innocents. However, our friends in the Greek Orthodox community believe Herod's wrath resulted in as many as 14,000 deaths. Scripture does not give us an exact number. If it was even one child, it was one too many. This violent decree was later called the "Slaughter of the Innocents" and is still commemorated in late December by many church bodies.

Coming between the festive holidays of Christmas and New Year's Day, this slaughter is a sobering reminder of the cost to mankind of



welcoming the Savior. When we see the mothers and fathers of Newtown, and too many towns, weeping for their lost, innocent children, we are reminded of Rachel weeping for her children in Ramah (Matthew 2:18). She refuses to be consoled for they are no more. What we learn in this story is that violence was a part of the world into which our Prince of Peace was born. King Herod feared the newborn King of the Jews so much he was willing to commit mass murder in order to preserve his own, all-too-shaky throne. Scripture teaches us so much in the compass of but a few spare lines. Yes, there is murder in the world. Yes, this particular act was evil. Yet, the Bible does not dwell on it. There is no 24/7 coverage. There is no deep and penetrating reporting on Herod—what he thinks, what he feels, what his motives are.

Today, some spiritually-troubled young men are willing to commit mass murder, like that at Newtown, because reason has fled its throne in their own minds. Our friend, former Secretary of Education under President Ronald Reagan, Bill Bennett, challenged NBC television news after the Virginia Tech shootings of 2007. The network acceded to the shooter's dying demand—that his accusatory "video" be broadcast for the nation and world to see. We might have learned something, NBC spokespeople countered. It was a matter of *public interest*. Bennett rejoined, "We learned that the killer was possessed by fantasies that the world was conspiring against him. We learned that he was filled with violent rage and was

seeking people on whom to take out his hatreds." Bennett finally asked NBC, "Was anyone in any doubt of any of this before you showed that video?"

By treating Herod's murderous episode in such brief, unanalyzed fashion, isn't the Bible teaching to us *not* to do what NBC did? What so many cable outlets and newsmagazines do? Why should any killer have the gratification of knowing his last violent actions will be projected throughout the world, especially when the sheer horror of the acts themselves is sufficient to induce shock and pain?

If we cannot persuade print reporters and TV journalists to read the Bible, might we offer them the classic Russian novel, *Crime and Punishment*? In this unforgettable story, author, Fyodor Dostoevsky, takes us inside the murderer's mind. We learn there that evil has an attraction. Napoleon, the flawed Emperor of France and killer of millions, had to start somewhere, concludes the troubled, young protagonist, Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov. In the novel, this young college dropout is descending into madness. Highly intelligent, he believes that he is one of history's Great Men. As such, he, like Napoleon and Muhammed, is not bound by normal men's morality. Raskolnikov kills his landlady with an axe because he thinks of her as miserly, because he resents her disapproval of his slovenly ways, and simply because he can. He wants to bring off a perfect crime as the overture to a career of greatness.

Dostoevsky does not portray Raskolnikov as a monster, though his careful plan to split an old woman's skull with an axe is surely monstrous. No, Dostoevsky shows us this handsome young man as devoted to his aged mother and his beloved sister. But where's poppa? The Russians helpfully provide us with the father's name. Romanovich—the patronymic— informs us that *Roman* was Rodion's father. He is not there.

An absent father is another common denominator for so many of these tortured young killers. The vast majority of the mass murderers of recent years are fatherless young men. We see them in our prisons. Three-quarters of teen rapists and two-thirds of teen murderers living in our prisons have grown up without the love, protection and guidance of fathers.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the late U.S. Senator, was a liberal scholar and researcher. In 1965, he raised an alarm about the rise of fatherlessness in the black community. His report, in the then-proper usage, warned of a crisis in the Negro Family. Young Pat Moynihan worried as the out-of-wedlock birthrate among black Americans rose dangerously to 26%. Fifty years later, the black out-of-wedlock birthrate is greater than 70% and the rate for Americans of all races is 42%.

Most of these mass murders are committed by young white men. We see the racial differences in our inner cities where hospital emergency rooms grimly refer to each weekend's admissions as "the rod and gun club." Many of the victims of gunshot and stabbing wounds in this weekend's toll of the dead and maimed were *last* weekend's perpetrators. Overall, though, when we look at crimes of violence, certain patterns emerge. Fatherless young white men, especially those who are also unchurched, are about as likely to commit violent crimes as are fatherless young black, Hispanic, and Asian-Americans.

Dr. Patrick Fagan has mined these data points for years. The results of his and his colleagues' research are available online at no cost. Pat heads up Family Research Council's highly regarded Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI). MARRI has issued an important study of assaults. Here is one key finding of this recent study: "Examining current religious attendance and structure of family of origin, 11% of adults who worship weekly and grew up in intact families have committed assault. By contrast, 25% of adults who never attend religious services and come from all other family structures have at some point assaulted someone. Between these two extremes are those who never worship and grew up in intact families (15%) and those who attend religious services weekly, but grew up in all other family structures (22%)."

MARRI analyzes and interprets the data in a rigorously non-partisan and non-biased fashion. Also, MARRI does not claim that those from intact married families who worship regularly never commit an assault. Yet, the differences are stark. For the purposes of government, they should command attention. What the MARRI findings do suggest is that government should not be suppressing religious freedom and thereby discouraging regular religious worship. Furthermore, government's policies should not discourage family formation where a father and mother perform the vital task of raising the next generation.

Family Research Council's former president, Gary Bauer, was confronted on a Washington radio call-in show by a black college student. Bauer was speaking of the Los Angeles riots then taking place. "If I saw that verdict in the Rodney King case, rendered by an all-white jury, I'd riot, too," the young man said.

Gary retorted: "There are sympathy riots going on in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Why don't you start a riot here in Washington, D.C.?"

There was a pause. Then, the caller said: "My father would kill me."

In the wake of the Newtown murders, I told a broadcast news anchor that even more than a policeman in every school to protect our children, we need a dad in every home. Some on the left and the right scoffed at this notion. MARRI backs up my case.

I must make one final observation: We recently marked the mournful 40th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. There is no greater example of violence in America than abortion. Some 55 million unborn children have been cruelly killed under the lethal legal regime of *Roe*. On the same day the nation reacted in shock to the death of 27 in Newtown, 33 unborn children died in Connecticut. That has been the average daily toll in the Constitution State *every day* since January 22, 1973. To visualize our daily national toll of death, we can imagine a color parade at one of our military service academies. Approximately 3,000 midshipmen or cadets march by the reviewing stands. Male and female, young, from every part of the country, from every faith community and ethnic origin, the brigade marches by. Marching nine abreast, it takes 11 minutes for the entire company to pass in review. This is the daily toll of abortion in America. This is why President Reagan publicly termed abortion "a wound in America's soul."

That holiday postage stamp not only says "Christmas" and "USA," it also says "Forever." Nothing so threatens America's *Forever* as the deliberate and legal killing of the most vulnerable human beings among us. No healing conversation about violence in America can take place without considering these truths. Until we face these realities, our town will be Newtown. ✘



TONY PERKINS is president of the Family Research Council headquartered in Washington, D.C.



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THE MODERN DAY ASSAULT ON WOMEN

Rape, Abuse and Trafficking

IT IS A DANGEROUS WORLD OUT THERE, AND PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS IF YOU ARE FEMALE. Consider some of the risks in the life of a girl on planet earth. In parts of the world, your life is in danger shortly after conception because boys are more desirable and sex selective abortions occur. When technology is not available and you manage to be born anyway, you may be abandoned or killed at birth. Demographics worldwide suggest 100 million females are simply missing. If allowed to live, the odds are you will be among the poorest of the poor, neglected and uneducated. In some cultures, while you are being denied education, you may also have your genitals mutilated or have your breasts ironed in your mother's vain attempt to disfigure you so you will not be raped before age 13. In other countries, you may be shot or have acid thrown in your face for attempting to go to school or be stoned to death because you were raped.

DIANE LANGBERG



If you manage to stay alive, you may be forced to marry while still a child. Eventually, you will be pregnant and risk being one of the 600,000 females who die during childbirth annually. Amnesty International, a non-governmental organization focused on human rights, says that one in three females will be beaten or coerced into sex during her lifetime. Violence is a major health and development issue for millions of girls worldwide. Domestic violence, incest, dowry violence, and acid and honor killings all destroy lives. Young girls are especially susceptible to HIV, and in some countries the infection rates for this population are three to six times higher than for boys (Stephen Lewis, "Lend a Hand," *Globe and Mail*, 5 May 2000). Women now represent 50% of the millions of people living who are infected with HIV/AIDS. Beyond these sobering statistics, there is the widespread sex trafficking of girls and women which is utterly destroying close to one million females annually as they are moved across nation or state boundaries and sold into virtual slavery. In order to supply this insidious global sex trade, a woman or girl is sold somewhere in the developing world every 10 minutes. Sex trafficking is a brutal and large-scale destructive force of girls and women today.

Russian novelist, Dostoevsky, in *The Brothers Karamazov*, describes peasant women who were generally assumed to be malingering or demon-possessed: "I learned with astonishment from medical specialists that it is, in fact, instead a terrible illness... especially prevalent among us in Russia, and is due to the hard lot of peasant women. It is a disease... arising from exhausting toil too soon after hard, abnormal and unassisted labor in childbirth, and from the hopeless misery of beatings... *which some women were not able to endure like others*" (p. 39). Indeed, as Scripture says, "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty" (Psalm 74:20).

If we think specifically about the United States, most studies suggest that one in four females is sexually abused by the age of 18. So this is not just an "out there" problem. If you browse the Web for sites related to sexual abuse among Christian women, you will quickly discover that little girls in Christian faith-oriented homes have been abused by so-called Christian fathers, uncles, teachers and pastors. Rape, one of the most underreported of all crimes, is believed to devastate one in five women in this country. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 17 million women live in poverty with some groups of females reaching 25%. About five million domestic abuse victimizations occur each year among American women 18 and older. Estimates indicate that a woman is battered every 15 seconds and more than three women are murdered daily by their husbands or boyfriends. Pregnant women, the most vulnerable of all, are more likely to be victims of homicide than to die of any other cause. Battering is now the leading cause of injury in women 15-44... more than rape, mugging and car accidents combined. Statistically, it

is far more dangerous for women to go home than to walk city streets alone at night. In the U.S., where there are many laws protecting women on the books, being born female is still somewhat of a risk. The life of a girl, for many, is bereft of safety, nurture, protection, education, civil rights and a future.

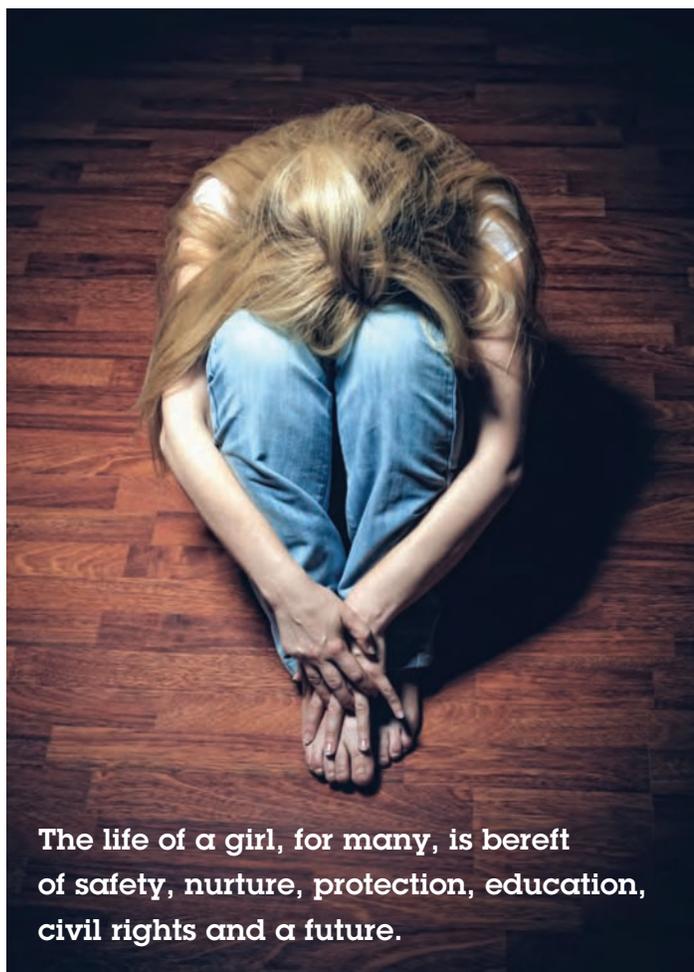
Overwhelming? Frightening? Unbelievable? How are we to think about these realities and respond? We start with this: the Apostle Paul indicates the whole creation groans. Wherever creation groans, the only method of healing its deep wounds and assuaging its convulsive grief is by planting the children of God down in its midst. Wherever men and women of God live, *there* is some measure of healing the world's wounds and soothing its great sorrow. The weeping of girls and women in the dark and cruel places of this earth is heard and healed by the living presence of the Word of God in the lives of those *who incarnate what they preach*. You—counselors, caregivers and pastors—are such people.

A Good Response

What can you do? First, intercede for the females in your life and around the globe. Second, know and face the facts. You

have just read some that may be quite alarming, but they are simply an overview. What are the facts in your geographical location or even in your church? Many of these are hidden, but if we just scratch the surface, they are easily seen. Sexual abuse and rape victims are sitting in our pews every Sunday. We have domestic violence in Christian homes. We have the sex trafficking of young girls in our towns and cities. We must face what we find no matter how ugly it is. These things are hidden because they disturb and overwhelm us. However, to turn from these evils, to pretend or deny them, is to be complicit in them. As Elie Wiesel, a survivor of the Holocaust said when he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, “I swore never to be silent wherever and whenever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”¹

Third, having confronted the facts, we must then study them. We must enter into the groaning of other lives with knowledge and humility. We must be perennial students because no matter how much we study, we will never fully know. Humility must be our garb because each groaning soul is unique and our call is to serve—not fix, not redeem,





resources

BOOKS

- *Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse*, Diane Langberg, Xulon, 2003
- *On the Threshold of Hope: Opening the Door for Hope and Healing from Sexual Abuse*, Diane Langberg, Tyndale, 1999
- *Restoring the Shattered Self: A Christian Counselor's Guide to Complex Trauma*, Heather Gingrich, IVP (out soon)
- *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman, Harper Collins, 1992
- *Good News about Injustice*, Gary Haugen, IVP, 1999
- *Prostitution, Trafficking and Traumatic Stress*, Melissa Farley, Haworth Press, 2003
- *Predators*, Anna Salter, Basic Books, 2003
- *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn, Vintage Books, 2009

ORGANIZATIONS

- International Justice Mission: ijm.org
- GRACE: netgrace.org
- Initiative Against Sex Trafficking: iast.net
- The Trauma Center at JRI: traumacenter.org
- Global Trauma Recovery Institute: globaltraumarecovery.org

not tell. Resources are increasing almost daily (see sidebar above). We must study and learn how to provide good care and treatment or we will further injure those who are already wounded. We must read the research, follow ethical guidelines, and have the humility to consult with others.

Fourth, we must be wise as serpents. We must understand something about perpetrators. Psalm 10 says, "He sits in the lurking places of the villages; in the hiding places he kills the innocent; his eyes stealthily watch for the unfortunate..." As a Christian community, I fear we have failed to grasp that our houses of worship, organizations and institutions have been the lurking places in the village. Girls and women have been unsafe in God's house!

Predators typically live double lives—a powerful strategy. Success, socially responsible behavior in public, politeness, etc. all cause people to put down their guards and allow others unfettered access to their lives. Such subtlety makes it easier for a predator to assault the innocent. How

could it be possible for such a nice person or leader in Christian circles to do such a thing? It seems unbelievable. However, decades of research show we cannot reliably tell who is lying. We think we can; we comfort ourselves with the idea that we can. We think when people do not look us in the eyes or fidget or seem nervous, that they are not telling the truth. The fact is many such reactions can be trained away. Accomplishments and good performance do not make one incapable of bad actions.

Think back on the circumstances for many women worldwide—their vulnerability is staggering. Vulnerability increases exponentially when the perpetrator has power within the system—money, the promise of a job, political power, a church leader, physical size, weapons. And of course, some of those statistics are due to desperate, hopeless or ignorant women who hurt, or mutilate, or kill or sell themselves or their own daughters because they know of nothing else to do.

Finally, we must enter into the places of groaning. Those of you who have counseled abused, trafficked or violated females know it can be a long, hard road. Treatment of trauma and, particularly, complex trauma, is not quick and its toll on counselors can be significant. Good training, good oversight and good self-care are vital if we are to remain focused and vigilant and not wound those already so broken by evil.

Mary Magdalene was a vulnerable, imprisoned and tortured female with no place to go. The Word of God Incarnate set her free and she, still known as the woman from whom seven demons had gone out, has proclaimed to the world that we follow a resurrected God who can take a trashed female and restore the former desolations into a voice announcing the Light and Life of the world. ✠



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Endnote

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BULLYING: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING VIOLENCE

“We are all either BULLIES, BULLIED or BYSTANDERS.”

RICHARD GROSS, M.D., AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

When I was an experimental psychology major, I was required to work in the university's animal lab and conduct various operant learning experiences. I quickly discovered that when my assigned rat was exposed to stress, he became highly aggressive. With today's technology, I would be able to follow that observation with a brain scan and see altered brain activity that might help explain the aggression.

Bullies, when stressed, become aggressive just like the rats in the lab. Bullying is a learned behavior, a way to respond to stress by gaining power over another person, and it alters brain chemistry. For some aggressive youths, the reward and pleasure centers of the brain light up and possibly disrupt the empathy response.¹ This was confirmed when researchers at the University of Chicago scanned the brains of aggressive youths using functional magnetic imaging and noticed that aggressive teens enjoyed inflicting pain.²

LINDA MINTLE





Neuroscientist, Martin Teicher, has studied the impact of verbal abuse on the victims of bullies.³ Children, with no history of parental abuse, who were bullied suffered more symptoms of depression, anxiety and other psychiatric disorders than children who were not. Teicher also observed meaningful changes in brain structure. Bullying changes the brains of both perpetrators and victims.

In 2010, the American Psychological Association (APA) published a report in which researchers reviewed 153 studies on bullying over the past 30 years.⁴ Here are their conclusions:

- Bullies and victims share similar traits. Both lack social problem-solving skills and feel awkward and uncomfortable among their peers. When poor academic skills are added to the mix, a bully, rather than a victim, is more likely to emerge. Inclusion in either category is associated with school dropout, poor psychosocial adjustment, and criminal activity among others.

- Bullies evidence certain traits: 1) Negative attitudes and beliefs about others; 2) Negative self-image; 3) Come from families with conflict and poor parenting (e.g., overly permissive); 4) Negative school perceptions; and 5) Negatively influenced by peers.

- Victims are usually aggressive, lack social skills, think negative thoughts, have deficient problem-solving skills, isolate, are rejected by peers, and come from negative family, school or community environments.

- The bully-victim profile (someone who bullies and is bullied) includes: 1) Negative attitudes and beliefs about self and others; 2) Social interaction difficulties; 3) Problem-solving skills are lacking; 4) Poor academic performance; 5) Rejected and isolated by peers; and 6) Negatively influenced by people with whom the person interacts.

- Age becomes a factor when we talk about how bullies and victims act out their aggression. Results indicate that younger bullies express their aggression in more disruptive ways and older bullies are more depressed, isolated and withdrawn. In elementary school, bullying increases, peaks in middle school and declines in high school. However, verbal abuse remains constant throughout schooling.

Other studies look at the multiple motivations of bullies. Some individuals do it out of boredom

and crave excitement. Others want to feel powerful and fit in to a peer group. Still others may be responding to family problems because they are victims of abuse themselves. Some feel persecuted and threatened by their peers. Others are hot-headed, impulsive, with low frustration tolerance and unable to regulate anger. The victim's experience may be involved when the rules are misunderstood. Whatever the motivation, bullies take out their problems on other people and need new ways to react to stress.⁵

Based on the above profiles, interventions should target at-risk behaviors and environments, rather than simply removing the bully from the environment. Most effective interventions are whole-school strategies with multiple disciplines and complementary components.⁶

Parents: In-home behavioral parent training is recommended. The goal is to create a safe family environment where problems can be discussed and situations role-played. Parents must pay attention to what is going on at home. To effectively supervise their children, parenting style is also an important consideration.

- Are parents modeling ways to handle aggressive people and stand up for oneself in a way that is respectful, yet firm?
- Are parents dealing with family conflict in a manner that engages problem-solving and repairs conflict in healthy ways?
- Are parents helping their children feel more academically prepared and getting them any needed tutoring or summer help in order to do better during the school year?
- Do parents explain the importance of having a core group of friends who will support their children in standing up to a bully? There is strength in numbers and engaging bystanders in “the swarm.”
- Do parents incorporate consequences that are not physically abusive or manipulative?
- Do parents eliminate racial and ethnic slurs used to demean others?
- Do parents provide consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior and consider sibling behavior as possible role models?
- Do parents know the warning signs (e.g., torn clothes, bruises, loss of appetite, mood changes, reluctance to go to school, etc.)?

When children are victims, parents can help process their feelings about the bullying by not minimizing the behavior. Children often need help to regulate negative emotions and know what to do with such feelings. Emotional regulation is key to avoiding serious mental health problems. Parents can encourage their children to build trust in people who do have good character and talk about what it takes to build healthy peer relationships. Role-playing future ways to handle a bully also builds confidence and esteem. Most important is addressing a child's identity in Christ. No person has the power to define who a child is—God has already declared him or her fearfully and wonderfully made.

Schools/Peers: Traditional methods of classroom discussion, role-playing and detention are largely ineffective. Schools must look at interventions that involve teachers, administrators, social workers, and counselors with the goal of changing the school culture. First, they must respond and recognize when someone is being bullied and take appropriate action. School administrators must devise a safe reporting system to call out bullies and the various forms of bullying (e.g., direct, verbal, indirect, sexual harassment, etc.). Rather than taking a zero tolerance approach, educators do better with what is referred to as graduated sanctions. This approach

BULLIES AND VICTIMS SHARE SIMILAR TRAITS. BOTH LACK SOCIAL PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS AND FEEL AWKWARD AND UNCOMFORTABLE AMONG THEIR PEERS. WHEN POOR ACADEMIC SKILLS ARE ADDED TO THE MIX, A BULLY, RATHER THAN A VICTIM, IS MORE LIKELY TO EMERGE.

allows for targeted consequences that modify the bullying behavior.

Interventions to shape a positive school culture should begin early in elementary schools. Building a positive social culture in the school is a main goal. Affirming relationships go a long way to prevent bullying and heal those who have been bullied. For example, you can encourage students like Hannah who offers practical ways to make positive changes, “If you see someone being bullied, you could ask that person to sit with you at lunch and talk about what he or she is feeling. Afterward, you could slip a kind note in his or her locker and then help get the bully to leave. It will definitely make the person feel a whole lot better!”

Another goal is to build character in all students throughout the year. All children should be involved in anti-bullying strategies because research shows that the role of bystanders is important in curbing bullying. Schools must discuss how to handle diversity, competition and performing well, as these three factors correlate with bullying. Other helps include peer mentoring and counseling. Because we know from studies that bullies view their school climates as inferior, it would help to get these students involved in meaningful activities to create a greater sense of “buy-in” to the school (e.g., shop classes, theater arts, work study, sports, etc.). Schools must also provide academic help for those who are struggling since this is another known risk factor.



Digital Abuse: This new frontier includes behaviors like sexting, cyber-bullying and digital dating abuse. It includes all the ways people use digital platforms to harass, humiliate, torment, threaten or attempt to control others. Law enforcement only gets involved when there is evidence of a crime or a tangible risk to someone's physical safety, so parents and school personnel must monitor the use of technology. Parents may want to install tracking or filtering software, use Internet contracts to spell out the terms of social media and online activities, and remove privileges for infractions. It also helps to discuss the real hurt a person can cause to another even when he or she does not see an immediate reaction and remains anonymous.

Evidenced-based Programs

Several programs and interventions have been proven to work. Due to space limitations, only a few are noted below.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

This program is based on 35 years of research and designed to promote the reduction and prevention of bullying behavior and victimization problems. It is an ecological model (addresses the inter-relationships between personal and environmental factors) that attends to individual children who are bullying and being bullied, the families, the teachers and students within the classroom, the school as a whole, and the community. The program is school-based with ongoing support provided by project staff.⁷

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

The PATHS program is a research-based violence prevention program for children in grades K–6. The focus is to provide positive pro-social skills and non-violent solutions to social problems.

Strengthening Families Program (SFP)

The SFP gives families the necessary skills to increase resilience and reduce risk factors for substance abuse, depression, violence and aggression, delinquency and school failure.

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

FFT is a well-documented, short-term, strength-based treatment approach for children and at-risk teens.

Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)

BSFT is a short-term, problem-focused, family-based therapeutic intervention model used for children and adolescents (ages six to 18) and their families.

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

MST is an intensive family and community-based treatment program geared for high-risk juvenile offenders (ages 12-17) and their families.

Many other programs and interventions exist to treat bullies and victims. Bullying is not a rite of passage that can be ignored. Rather, it is a serious problem with short and long-term impacts on both bullies and victims that requires effective intervention.⁸ ✖



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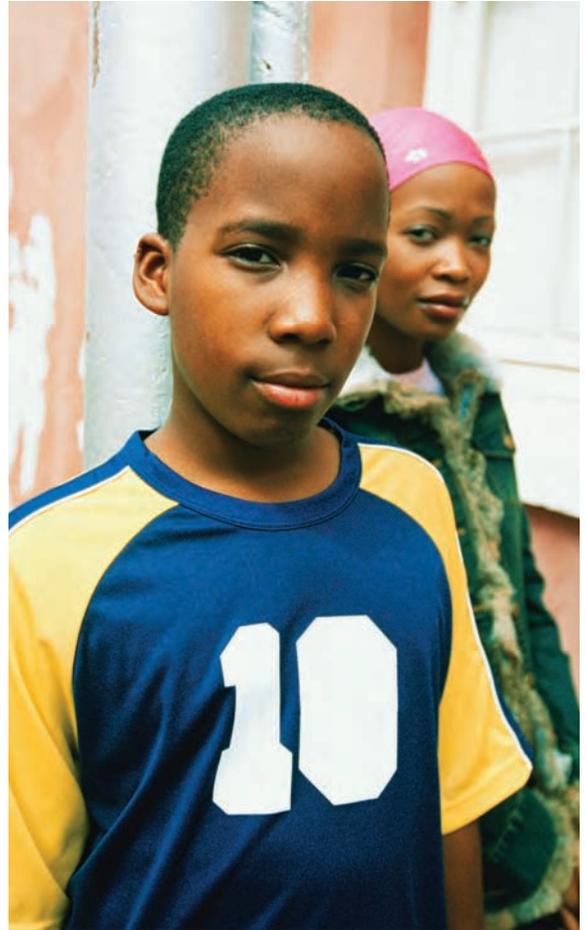
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URBAN VIOLENCE & ADOLESCENTS

Critical Issues and Culturally Specific Assumptions

Violence among America's urban adolescents represents a pervasive and significant behavioral health, juvenile justice, and public health problem for counselors and other providers (Prothrow-Stith, & Weissman, 1991; Wall & Levy, 2005). Finkelhor et al. (2009) defined violence as assaults, bullying behaviors, sexual victimization, child maltreatment by adults, and witnessing violence. According to Child Trends Databank (childtrends.databank.org), approximately 60% of children under the age of 17 have witnessed violence.

While adolescent violence is not uniquely a racial problem (Whitaker & Bastian, 1991), it disproportionately involves ethnic minority adolescents. For example, homicide is the leading cause of death among African-American (15 to 19-year-old males) and occurs at a rate nine times higher than their young white male counterparts (Gladstein, Slater-Rusonis & Heald, 1992; Eitle & Turner, 2002). These rates remain the same among African-American females whose homicide rates are 3.5 times higher than that of young white

females. In 1989, the National Crime Survey Report identified that 1.2 million adolescents, ages 12 to 19, were victims of single-offender crimes and more than 600,000 were victims of multiple-offender crimes; including robbery, simple assault, aggravated assault, and rape. These statistics are supported by Suglia et al. (2011) findings that increased exposure to violence was associated with increased stress for minorities.

Scholarly literature asserts that violence among adolescents correlates with poverty and unemployment. Within the context of poverty, many researchers support the notion that violence and delinquency co-occur with significant others, families, neighbors, and peers (Henggeler et al., 2002). The long-term negative sequelae of urban violence is extensive and impacts adolescents, as well as their families and communities; further research is needed.

Critical Issues

Although studies have examined the impact of adolescent violence in urban settings, there have been few empirically-supported prevention methodologies to curb violence. However, researchers have recognized that poverty's

Adolescent violence is not limited to ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status or geographical region; however, violence is disproportionately observed in urban areas and among young African-Americans.

LEE A. UNDERWOOD AND
FRANCES DAILEY



Urban violence, especially among adolescents, continues to be a significant concern for Christian counselors because we are called by professional and spiritual mandates to advocate for the poor in spirit, the discouraged, the orphan, and the disenfranchised.

environmental impact makes it difficult for some adolescents to engage in treatment, with the understanding that some adolescents are more difficult to treat in certain environments and are at a higher risk for violence in other environments. For example, many critical factors are at play with violent behaviors including alcohol use, illegal substance abuse, gang membership, criminal role models and accessibility to firearms. Lifestyles and worldviews, opportunities and circumstances, chronic poverty, and the presence of weapons are implicated in the escalation of violence among adolescents (Dake, Murnan & Price, 2004). Wall and Levy (2005) identified the following trends in urban violence and adolescents:

- Violence is significant and spans all races, ethnicities, classes and lifestyles.
- Most violence occurs among known individuals rather than by strangers.
- Adolescence is a time of exploration and the frequency of violence is greater than other age groups.
- Those at the greatest risk for violence are adolescents who are poor African-American males residing in urban neighborhoods.

Hence, it is essential that counselors rely on empirically-supported, culturally-relevant models and consider the impact of racism, homophobia, misogyny, family conflict, academic limitations, bullying, physical and sexual victimization (Wall & Levy, 2005). Adolescents should be treated in the most appropriate environment and counselors should spend considerable time assessing their risk levels and psychosocial needs before making treatment decisions.

Counselors are challenged with multifaceted problems arising from these adolescents' specific needs. There is an expectation that adolescent

treatment and management should be based on scientific and best practices models utilized by behavioral health and other child welfare systems. The reality is that adolescents are treated in various care systems and counselors must develop skills in all relevant contexts. Efficient care requires empirically-supported assessment, prevention, intervention strategies, and knowledge of culturally-relevant assumptions.

Culturally Specific Assumptions

Assumptions are values and beliefs about situations and circumstances. When assumptions are culturally bound, counselors improve their engagement of adolescents with different backgrounds and stories. Although there are multiple culturally-specific assumptions, please note the following:

■ **Cultural diversity is a gift.** Although diversity is often viewed as different, it is important to embrace diversity as a unique contribution to treatment interventions.

■ **Real-life experience is optimal for learning new skills.** As counselors grow, they have opportunities to engage individuals from different cultures. These experiences afford opportunities to learn new and more accurate information about adolescents.

■ **Learning is forever.** Counselors agree to standards, guidelines, and practice-related ethics that direct professional interactions. It is believed that the more counselors internalize these professional standards, the better and more effective practitioners they become.

■ **Self-awareness is ongoing.** Counselors must examine their values and beliefs about adolescents to ensure they are consistent with best practices. Counselors must also become adept at perceiving those pre-judgments to move upon or suspend effective care—self-awareness is an art that comes through practice, experience and consultation.

■ **Accept limitations and develop a growth-oriented attitude.** While accepting limitations is the first step in the growth process, counselors must commit to grow

professionally, spiritually, socially and emotionally. Growth is predicated upon practicing, experiencing and consulting with others regarding improved adolescent therapy skills.

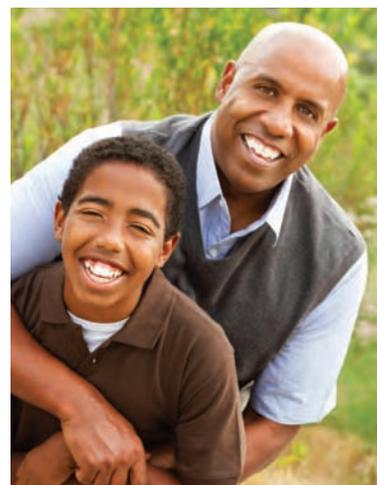
■ **Families are an integral part of the treatment process.** While families are integral to many in treatment, adolescents tend to highly value family interactions. For instance, an adolescent's repeated reference to "us," "we," and "ours" often refers to his or her thought processing and those espoused by their families (Underwood, 2009).

Summary

Urban violence, especially among adolescents, continues to be a significant concern for Christian counselors because we are called by professional and spiritual mandates to advocate for the poor in spirit, the discouraged, the orphan, and the disenfranchised. When clients are inundated with the effects of violence, physical matters of safety and spiritual concerns related to freedom resonate within us. Adolescent violence is not limited to ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status or geographical region; however, violence is disproportionately observed in urban areas and among young African-Americans. While childhood experiences, such as trauma and abuse, can significantly impact an adolescent's violent behaviors, issues of cultural inequity cannot be ignored. Adequately addressing urban violence and adolescent issues necessitates a multi-pronged approach involving the adolescent, his or her family, the school system, local churches and the greater community. ✘



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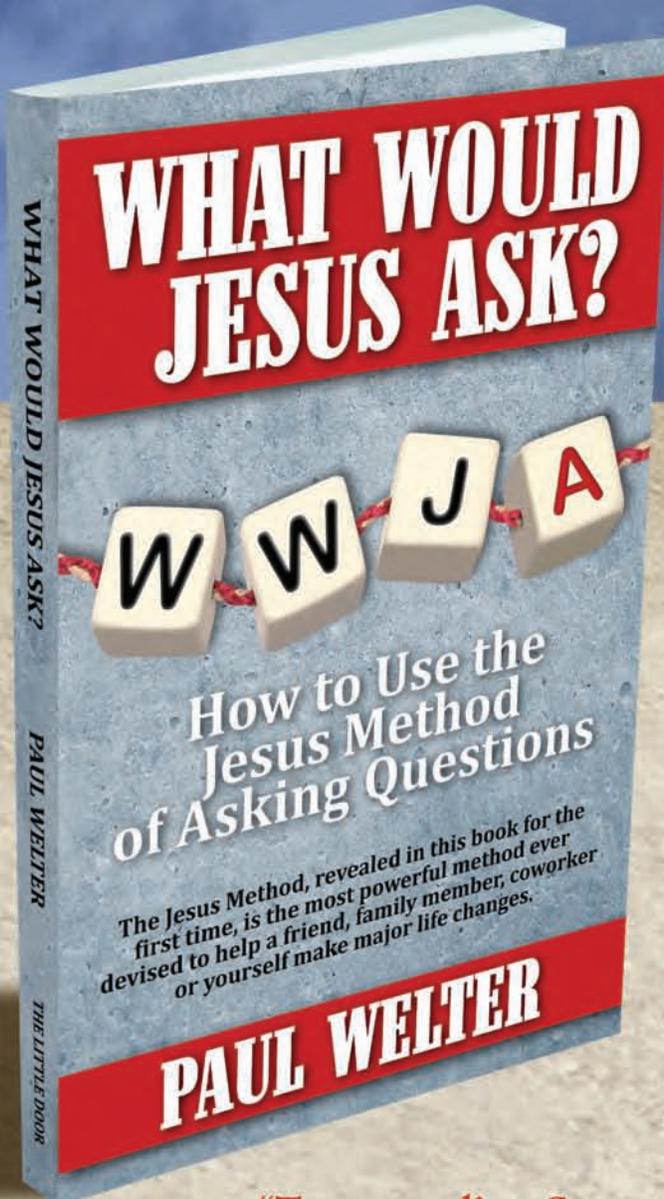
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a systematic process for assessing suicide risk:

THE SAFE-T METHOD

The last century has witnessed an explosion of effective treatments for a vast array of illnesses and death rates have dropped dramatically. Paradoxically, though, suicide rates have increased by 60% over the last 45 years.¹ Every 20 minutes, there is a completed suicide. Suicide—a self-inflicted act of violence—represents the ninth most common cause of death among adults; in youth ages 15 to 24, it is the third most common cause of death, and for 25 to 34-year-olds, it is the second leading cause of death.² There are many, many more suicide attempts—10 to 40 times more than completed suicide. Within the U.S. alone, there are nearly 650,000 attempted suicides per year,³ which translates into one suicide attempt every minute. Nearly one quarter of all mental health professionals have worked with a client who has completed a suicide. Given the expanding magnitude of the potential risk, assessing suicide is often a daily task for mental health counselors.⁴

Currently, there are no single measures that accurately and effectively assess suicide risk. Proper assessment requires a multidimensional approach that balances a wide array of relevant factors. One of the most accepted examples is the Suicide Assessment Five-step Evaluation and Triage (SAFE-T) system. The protocol was developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and based on data and recommendations provided by the

American Psychiatric Association Practice Guidelines. These steps are used at all initial evaluations with clients throughout the course of treatment and whenever the clinician suspects that suicide risk may increase.

SAFE-T⁵ is a process measure that involves balancing three aspects: risk factors, protective factors, and an assessment of the client's current state of mind with respect to suicide. The process begins with an assessment of risk for key factors through a clinical interview and from previous records. These include:

- The client's *suicide history* in terms of any past attempts or a history of self-injurious behavior. A past attempt is the number one predictor of completing a suicide in the future. This is especially true for individuals who have utilized a highly lethal method, but somehow survived against their will. The more serious the intent, the greater the future risk.
- The client's *current and past psychiatric history*, as well as their *family history* that required hospitalization. High risk individuals are likely to present with a history of mood disorders such as major depression and bipolar disorder. Other disorders of risk are psychotic disorders, alcohol and substance abuse problems, ADHD (when combined with another disorder like depression), PTSD, traumatic brain injuries (TBI), antisocial behavior, impulsivity, and aggression.



Suicide—a self-inflicted act of violence—represents the ninth most common cause of death among adults; in youth ages 15 to 24, it is the third most common cause of death, and for 25 to 34-year-olds, it is the second leading cause of death.



Within the U.S. alone, there are nearly 650,000 attempted suicides per year, which translates into one suicide attempt every minute.



- Various types of *precipitants and stressors* that may trigger a suicidal crisis. Many of these are interpersonal in nature, especially those that produce a sense of humiliation, shame or despair. Chronic pain and ongoing medical illnesses that affect the central nervous system (such as Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's, ALC, and Huntington's) are also considered risk factors. Other relevant triggers include *changes in treatment* and medication regimens or changes in treatment providers.
- *Current psychological and emotional symptoms* such as a significant loss in the clients ability to experience pleasure (anhedonia), feelings of hopelessness, intense anxiety and panic symptoms, pervasive insomnia, impulsivity, substance intoxication, and command hallucinations.

The SAFE-T balances the above-mentioned risk factors with protective factors, which can be a combination of both internal and external resources.

- *Internal resources* may include a *capacity for distress/frustration tolerance, coping skills,* and strongly held *religious beliefs.*
- *External factors* may include a sense of *responsibility to children, a positive therapeutic relationship,* and *access to trusted social support networks.*

With both risk and protective factors in mind, a clinician should conduct a more formal *suicide inquiry.* This entails a set of sensitively delivered questions assessing the client's current state of mind with respect to suicide and include the following areas:

- *Suicide ideation,* which involves the *frequency, duration, and intensity* of suicide thoughts over the last 48 hours.
- *An assessment of the client's suicide plans and behaviors* and whether the client has determined *the location and time* in which he or she would want to carry out the act. The *potential lethality* of the plan, *realistic access* to items needed to carry out the plan, and *preparatory acts* (such as

rehearsing the act mentally or behaviorally) are also important. This may include *non-suicidal, self-injurious behaviors* such as cutting and burning.

- *Assessing client intent*—the degree of motivation and extent to which the client believes the plan will be life-ending versus self-injurious. With minors, the clinician should also ask parents and guardians about evidence of suicide thoughts, plans and behaviors.

The SAFE-T provides guidelines for determining risk level and corresponding classes of interventions. These include:

- *High Risk Status* involves significant risk factors that outweigh protective factors in combination with persistent suicide ideation, a plan and/or intention. Interventions would include hospitalization, preferably voluntary admission in collaboration with the client, but involuntary if necessary.
- *Moderate Risk Status* involves a number of risk factors with very few protective factors. However, unlike the high risk category, such individuals may have suicide ideation and a plan, but no intent and no overt behavior or rehearsals. The trigger may be relatively transient and modifiable and the client has some internal resources for coping. Interventions may include hospital admission or a detailed crisis plan with a commitment from the client to call should his or her condition change for the worse.
- *Low Risk Status* involves risk factors that are less intense, transient and modifiable to problem-solving and other types of interventions. The client also possesses a number of protective factors, such as strong religious beliefs against suicide and/or a sense of obligation or commitment to the care of others. Moreover, while clients may report persistent thoughts of death, they do not report any suicide plans, intentions, behaviors or rehearsals. In such cases, interventions are focused on outpatient symptom reduction with phone numbers available in case of crisis or emergency situations.

The fifth and final step of the SAFE-T process is *documentation*. This is a very important step because it creates a permanent and legal record about the measures taken to properly assess and evaluate a client's suicidal risk. The key here is to demonstrate rationale for making clinical decisions and following a systematic, best-practices approach regarding risk factors and clinical intervention. The treatment plan should be documented on how it is designed to target current and future risk factors. For minors, documentation should reflect the roles of parents and guardians.

It is crucial that clinicians work diligently at maintaining a solid therapeutic relationship and be mindful of how suicide assessment can sometimes challenge the quality of the therapeutic alliance. This is particularly challenging with clients who may present with a moderate to high degree of risk, but who are not open to more intense interventions, especially hospital admission. Even for seasoned therapists who are treating difficult cases, effective clinical decision-making often requires ongoing consultation and collaboration with other professionals having expertise in suicide risk assessment.

A helpful resource can be found at SPRC.org where a pocket card that outlines these five steps and helps manage suicide risk in your clinical practice can be downloaded. ✕



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the rage within

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING ANGER

“An ANGRY PERSON stirs up conflict, and a HOT-TEMPERED PERSON commits many sins.”— Proverbs 29:22, NIV

A client once told me, “I can remember the day my dad punished one of us for throwing an orange in the lunchroom. There was yelling and crying, blood and bruises. I can remember the beatings in the basement. My father’s rage. The pain and the fear. As a child I can remember the glaring looks, the ‘cold shoulder’ for days when I would do something wrong. I don’t remember what the issues were, but anger brought pain, inner wounds and distance. I learned that anger was something to be feared—it was cruel, loud, cold, silent, resentful and threatening.”

All of us have experienced anger. Some of us have cringed under the rage in our families, struggled with it in our souls, felt it toward our friends. Some have shocked others with volcanoes of anger. However, rage is not just a personal enemy. Evidence abounds that we live in a mad, mad, mad, mad world. Research on anger within the United States (Hoy & Griffin, 2012) indicates that:

- 23% admit they openly express their anger
- 39% say they hold anger in or hide it

- 23% say they walk away from the situation
- 23% confess to having hit someone in anger
- 17% admit they have destroyed the property of someone who made them mad

The American Automobile Association (Mizell et al., 1996) reports that road rage is on the rise, “... at least 1,500 people a year are seriously injured or killed in senseless traffic disputes.” Everyone experiences anger, everyone expresses the emotion in some way, and most of us have tried to help others deal with it from time to time.

What is Anger?

Anger is defined as an aversive emotional state, a mood or a trait that ranges from annoyance to rage. Dr. Raymond Novaco (1994), professor of psychology and longtime researcher at the University of California-Irvine, defined anger as “a negatively-toned emotion, subjectively experienced as an aroused state of antagonism toward someone or something perceived to be a source of an aversive event” (p. 330). Rage, on the other hand, is a violent, explosive, and uncontrollable type of anger. Violence is an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape or murder.

So what are some causes for anger—especially uncontrollable anger leading to violence? Researchers have demonstrated key areas of anger provoking stimuli: interruption of goal-directed behavior; experiencing personal degradation; being treated unfairly; being the object of dishonesty or broken promises; having one’s authority or feelings being disregarded; being ignored or treated badly; and being the object of verbal or physical assault.

LYNETTE HOY



Perception of a threatening/activating event can lead to heightened anxiety and fear. Extreme, rigid or biased appraisals of events frequently prime the individual for overreaction. Anger, combined with a hostile attitude and hot self-talk, frequently results in aggression and violence. Hostile people are ready for a fight, often stubborn, impatient, hotheaded or have an “attitude.”

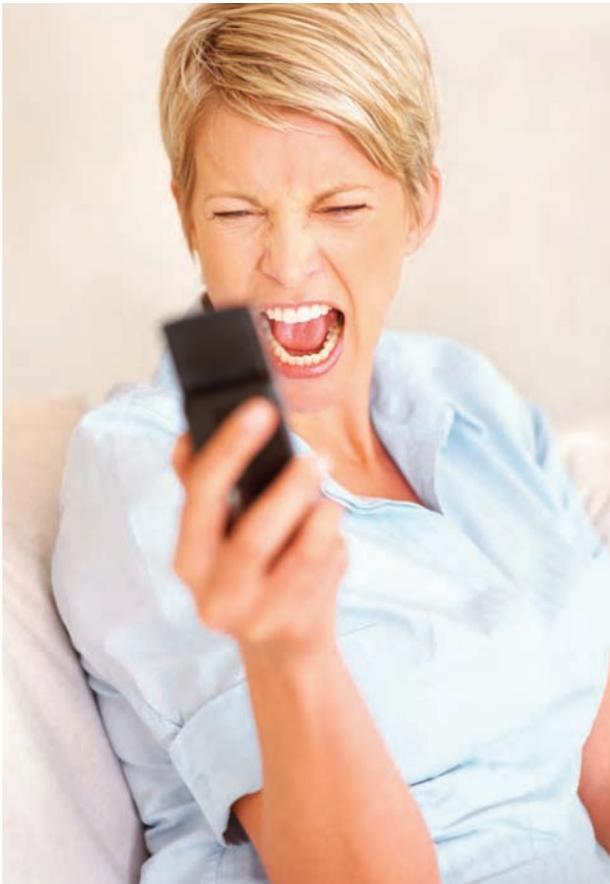
The List of Triggers for Anger is Voluminous

Anger is an emotional response to a perceived or tangible threat. Many triggers are external, but some originate as internal cognitive messages. Precipitating factors include: stress, conflict, negative self-talk and self-evaluations, irrational beliefs (entitlement, conditional assumptions, and control), skill deficits, cognitive distortions, sin, impulsivity, substance use/abuse, diet, hormones, disrespect, injustice, brain injury, physical conditions, mental health and personality disorders, having a criminal mind-set, and more.

Once anger is triggered, there is a physiological response. When the brain judges an event as potentially threatening, this activates the fight/flight response which heightens breathing, heart rate, pupil dilation, and muscle tone—all occurring within seconds. Then an adrenaline-fueled hormonal surge kicks in lasting approximately 30 minutes, where calm reasoning is often compromised because these messages bypass the cerebral cortex (thinking part of the brain) and move straight to the limbic system (feeling part of the brain). This process needs to be interrupted in order for anger arousal to be curtailed (Hoy & Griffin, 2012).

What Forms can Anger Take?

Anger can be expressed in either harmful or helpful ways. The news is replete with stories of how anger causes workplace violence, battering, abuse, road rage, “going postal,” verbal outbursts, aggression, assault and more. As one adolescent put it, “The only thing they’ll understand is a fist in the face.” Often, people believe aggressive force is the only option that has any meaningful effect. Violence, then, becomes a common way of settling disputes.



People with hidden anger can explode, become depressed or self-destructive... as one person wrote: “My father was a very violent man; in turn, my brother is. The thing about me is that I am incredibly angry and violent toward myself.”

Anger can be seen as an early warning signal that something is wrong or about to go wrong. It can provide the energy to resist emotional or physical threats, mobilize resources to set appropriate limits and boundaries, and help one overcome the fear of asserting needs and facing conflict. Anger, when managed appropriately, can be a powerful force for good. The principle here is that people can choose how to express their anger (Hoy & Griffin, 2012).

What Does the Bible have to Say about Anger and Managing its Expression?

Anger is one of the most troubling emotions for Christians! We often hear admonishments such as, “We shouldn’t ever be angry.” So what happens? We end up feeling guilty for being angry, pretend we’re not angry, numb our feelings or turn anger into depression.

The Bible is replete with examples of how God used angry people to accomplish His purposes. In Nehemiah 5:6-7, we see how this godly prophet became “very angry” because his countrymen were being exploited by the rich. He took time to ponder the situation and how to approach it. He then went on to confront the nobles and officials. We see here that not all anger is sinful; there is a righteous anger, and it would be wrong not to act on it (Hoy & Griffin, 2012).

What are some biblical admonitions for being “good and angry?”

- Be slow to anger (James 1:19).
- Be angry. Do not let it fester (Ephesians 4:26).
- Do not associate with hot-tempered people (Proverbs 22:24).
- Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
- “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful...” (Ephesians 4:29).
- “A gentle answer turns away wrath...” (Proverbs 15:1).

Pastor Ray Pritchard writes: “We all know that anger is a powerful emotion that can be used for good or for evil. Anger isn’t always wrong. We know, for instance, that anger is one of the attributes of God. Did you know that the Bible speaks over a hundred times of the anger of God? We know that God never sins, yet the Bible speaks repeatedly of His anger toward sin and disobedience. We know also that there are times when anger is justified and even righteous.”

Intervention and Treatment Guidelines

While many organizations and authors recommend various methods for treating anger, the most widely supported anger treatments include: (a) relaxation training, (b) cognitive restructuring, (c) self-instructional training as assertiveness training and aggression-replacement training, and (d) multimodal cognitive-behavioral interventions.

Using the criteria of empirically-supported treatments in clinical psychology to establish practice guidelines for the treatment of anger, a range of cognitive-behavioral interventions as outlined above would form the foundation of an evidence-based approach (DiGiuseppe & Tafrate, 2007). Anger management providers should be trained to appropriately assess those with anger control issues and know when to refer. They need to be skilled at defusing anger and hostility; proficient at motivating resistant clients and teaching empirically-supported calming and coping treatments, cognitive treatments, psycho-educational strategies, anger management physiology, emotional intelligence training, and self-empowerment strategies.

Christian approaches to anger management clearly fit the criteria above. The Bible lays out cognitive and behavioral principles for expressing anger in a godly manner such as: renewing the mind by meditating on God's Word, being slow to anger, applying empathy and problem-solving skills, speaking the truth in love, and showing respect toward others.

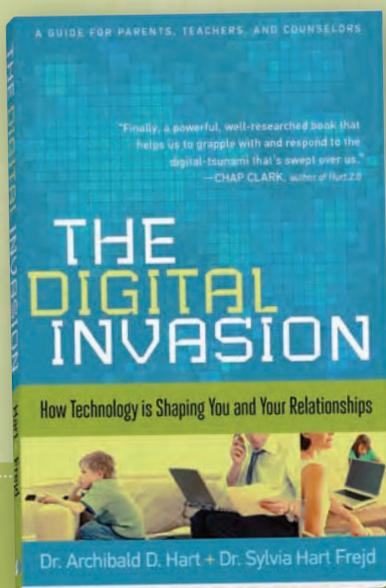
Providers and professionals seeking to offer anger management services are advised to obtain credentialing that meets the nationally recognized standards set by the National Anger Management Association (namass.org). ❖



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ASSESSING ANGER AND VIOLENCE

therapeutic factors

Many believe that in order to address serious criminal justice and mental health related issues, focusing on prevention *before* a tragedy is just as critically important as timely intervention *after* the fact. This may be especially true when it comes to predicting and treating excessive anger, violent offending and abusive behavior. What are the precipitating factors most likely to produce certain outcomes and how can individuals, families and communities not only increase awareness, but also take reasonable precautions when it comes to safety and well-being? In today's perpetual, 24-hour news cycles with their constant barrage of horrific events—violence in the workplace, violence in schools, violence in the family and in our communities—parents, educators, clinicians, and law enforcement personnel are all looking for answers to this growing problem.

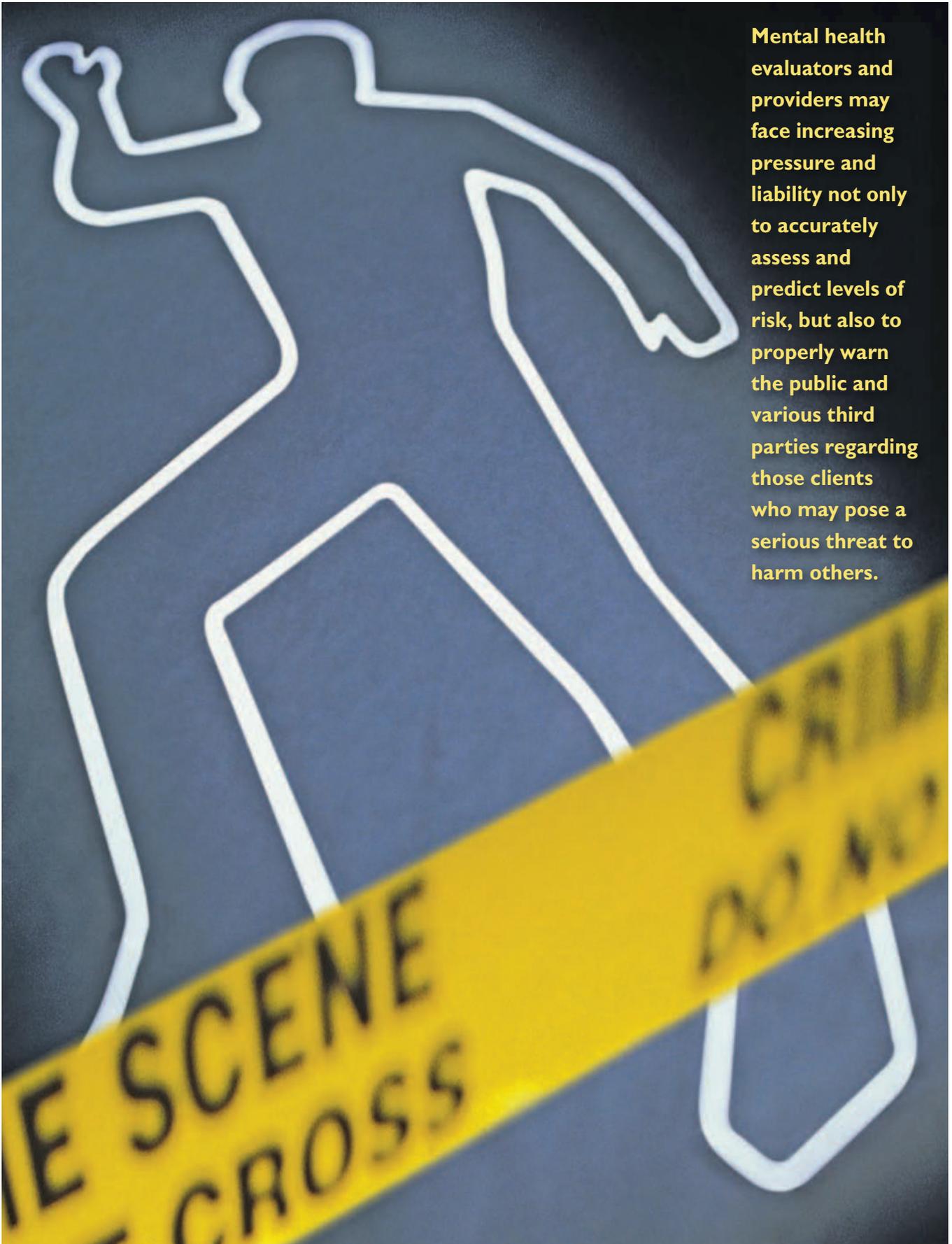
Conducting accurate risk-assessment for anger and violence may not be as simple as some believe. In a recent meta-analysis that sampled more than 24,000 participants in 13 countries, researchers concluded that the predictive accuracy of most assessment tools only provided low to moderate results, although instruments designed to predict severe violence performed slightly better than those aimed at sexual or general crime.¹ Nevertheless, evaluation for violence is widely and routinely practiced in both psychiatric settings² and within state and federal prisons that parole convicted felons.³ The fact remains, however, that the analysis is mixed and, yet, research data is frequently cited for the purpose of policy development, legislative efforts, regulatory matters and treatment protocols.⁴

Even though the general public frequently associates mental illness with violent behavior, the research is spotty at best, as most psychiatric disorders do not result in overt violence, but is only found in a smaller subset of this population. Part of the problem lies in the overuse of client self-reports and other forms of anecdotal and subjective data. The MacArthur Violence Risk Assessment Study—first commissioned in 1996—was one of the first research projects of its kind to examine the design flaws of earlier studies.⁵ Researchers utilized three sources of information: client interviews, family/

case manager interviews, and arrest/hospitalization records. Results of this and other studies seem to indicate a higher incidence rate among those who are dually-diagnosed (especially when substance use disorders are present), though multiple therapeutic factors must be taken into considerations. These include a *history of violence* (perhaps the strongest predictor), *substance use* (due to impaired judgment and cognitive distortion), *personality disorders* (especially borderline, antisocial and conduct disorders), *distortions of reality* (found in paranoid delusions and psychotic episodes), *age and gender* (younger people and men are at a higher risk), *social stress* (especially due to poverty and homelessness), *personal stress/crisis* (unemployment, divorce or significant loss), and *early exposure* (family violence, victims of abuse, and community culture).⁶

Mental health evaluators and providers may face increasing pressure and liability not

ERIC SCALISE



Mental health evaluators and providers may face increasing pressure and liability not only to accurately assess and predict levels of risk, but also to properly warn the public and various third parties regarding those clients who may pose a serious threat to harm others.

only to accurately assess and predict levels of risk, but also to properly warn the public and various third parties regarding those clients who may pose a serious threat to harm others. This “duty to warn” initially originated from a well-known 1974 case, *Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California*, where the Supreme Court of California ruled mental health clinicians had a legal and ethical responsibility to warn and protect the public from known or suspected threats by a client to endanger another person. As the risk assessment field has grown over the past several decades, for many, the primary intent has been to prevent violence more than to predict it.⁷ The following lists some of the better known and more widely utilized assessments:⁸

General Violence

- **Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG):** primarily focuses on high-risk men and looks at variables among criminal offenders and those with mental disorders.
- **Historical Clinical and Risk Management Assessment Scheme (HCR-20):** a clinical checklist that looks at historical, mental health and risk management factors.

Sexual Violence

- **Static-99:** an extension of an earlier tool called *Rapid Risk Assessment of Sexual Offense Recidivism* that assesses historical factors to create categories of potential harm.
- **Sexual Violence Risk-20 (SVR-20):** a longitudinal instrument used more as an assessment method or procedure rather than a definitive scale and is divided into three core areas (psychosocial adjustment, sexual offenses, and future plans/intent).

Family Violence

- **Danger Assessment Scale (DAS):** a checklist designed to screen for lethality in spousal assaults.
- **Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA):** used to assess risk among offenders for future spousal violence.

School Violence

- **Adolescent & Child Urgent Threat Evaluation (ACUTE):** a 27-item structured assessment that incorporates a client interview, medical records review, and a family interview.
- **Psychosocial Evaluation & Threat Risk Assessment (PETRA):** analyzes the context of psychosocial, ecological, and coping/resiliency factors to assist with identification, intervention, treatment planning and behavioral management.

There is some truth to the adage that past behavior is often a good indicator of future performance, including assessment in the potential for violent acting out. In light of numerous mass

shootings in the United States over the past decade, research efforts have increased significantly. Yet, no *single* factor has been shown that definitively leads to violence, primarily because the construct is too complex to overly simplify the determination process. These realities speak to the clinical value of completing a comprehensive biopsychosocial evaluation which provides a broad enough perspective to look across a number of different domains. Historically, this has been the method of choice; however, more empirically-based instruments are being developed. Beyond identifying specific precipitating risk factors, the level of intent and/or actual threat must also be appropriately appraised.

Effective assessment and diagnosis regarding the threat for violence may remain multifaceted and somewhat elusive, but the urgency of need and identifying rapid response protocols are clearly growing. Many sinful acts are committed in the heat of anger... for, “An angry man stirs up strife, and a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression” (Proverbs 29:22). In the end, “... they ambush their own lives. So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence; it takes away the life of its possessors” (Proverbs 1:18-19). ✨



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“STANDING IN THE GAP”

Counseling Domestic Violence Batterers

Since the start of the Iraq/Afghanistan conflict in 2003, America has lost approximately 6,800 combat personnel. As a matter of perspective, during that same timeframe, between 20,000 and 25,000 Americans were murdered by their significant others. When a woman receives treatment at a hospital E.R., one-third of the time it is directly related to domestic violence. If children are added to this statistic, the number killed in their homes and hospitalized approaches 15 times the number of losses (nearly 45,000) suffered as a result of the terrorist attacks on 9-11. It has been said that the American home is the most dangerous environment outside of riots and war zones.

BARRY LORD

Based on a survey conducted in 2010, on average, 24 people per minute in this country are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner. During the course of a year, that adds up to **MORE THAN 12 MILLION WOMEN AND MEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE.**

History

Before the 1970s, whenever family members were accused of violence toward an intimate or domestic partner, it was usually thought of as something that “just happened” in families. Except when it was too grave to disregard, police characteristically looked the other way; no one acknowledged the problem as an important societal concern. Furthermore, no significant effort was ever made to recognize the associated issues, effectively treat batterers, or offer support to their victims (Wexler, 2006).

The systematic study of domestic violence is a fairly recent development. Research of partner-related assaults in the Western world finds that 25-30% of women and 8-30% of men will experience violence at the hands of a family member. Even though family violence has only been researched as an important social concern over the past three and a half decades, we know it has existed for many centuries (Ellison & Anderson, 2001) and has been reported in nearly all societies and cultures. In many countries, until recently, various forms of violence have been considered both lawful and traditional as a means to control family members (Berry, 2000).

Beginning in the 1970s, women’s movements demanded that intimate partner violence be viewed as a serious issue requiring increased awareness in our communities, as well as support for victim services. Batterers’ groups were designed and initiated to confront the underlying attitudes supporting family violence. This concentration of attention and concern led to the advancement of women’s shelters to protect impoverished victims and mothers (Wexler, 2006). It is my experience, as well as other counselors, that to date, very few resources are primarily dedicated to help men when they become victims of domestic violence.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is a federal law aimed at ending legal and social practices that have fostered and justified the history of family violence. VAWA was first passed as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, and it was reauthorized in 2000 and 2005. The current authorization expired in 2011 (Jarratt, 2013). On February 21, 2013, the VAWA was again passed in both the U.S. Senate and Congress and was signed into law by the President on March 7, 2013. The bill renews previous legislation that set the standard for how to protect families from domestic abuse and, subsequently, prosecute abusers.

Further studies suggest family assaults are the most prevalent cause of injuries for which women need medical

care. Based on a survey conducted in 2010, on average, 24 people per minute in this country are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner. During the course of a year, that adds up to more than 12 million women and men who are victims of violence. This is only part of the story—more than one million women are raped per year and more than six million women and men are victims of stalking. These findings emphasize that sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence are important and widespread public health concerns within the United States (CDC, 2010).

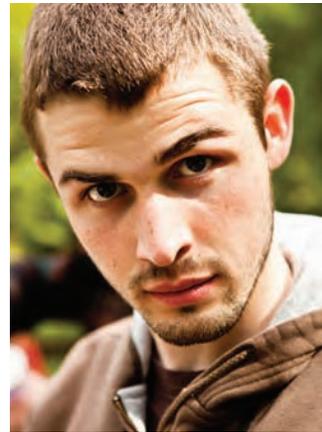
Power and Control

In order to better understand the issue of domestic violence, we must first recognize the difference between “power” and “control.” These terms are often used interchangeably, even among knowledgeable people. However, they are *not* the same thing. “Power” is a leadership concept and refers to “the ability to get someone else to accept your definition of reality as his or her own.” Power is not always taken, but it can be given. For example, my students, staff and clients will give me power to define their realities, but only to the degree that they can trust me. I am given power when my responses to them are both trustworthy and beneficial.

“Control,” on the other hand, means “the ability to get someone to do something he or she does not want to do by using force and/or fear, *no matter how slight.*” Just like power, control is not always taken, but can also be given. However, sometimes power and control issues are more poignant. If someone in an alley aimed a gun at you and said, “Give me your wallet!” . . . at what point would he or she have control over you? Control is surrendered when you hand over your wallet (e.g., in this case, when they threaten to pull the trigger). Power, on the other hand, is dependent, in part, on the use of influence. Whether in business, politics, education or the home, coercive influence almost always undermines effective leadership, but this is especially true in the home. The more power you have in a relationship, the less you need control. And the more control you use, the less power you probably have.

Statistically Speaking

Family violence is not a single event; it is a *pattern* of violence used to control a family member. On average, a woman who is a victim of spousal abuse will be abused again three times per year. Using data from the National Crime Survey from 1972 to



1982, it was determined that during a six-month period immediately following an incident of family violence, two-thirds of victims reported multiple victimizations by the same abuser 3.6 times per year (Rand & Saltzman, 2003).

Further studies suggest family assaults are the most prevalent cause of injuries for which women need medical care. “As an average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States, based on a survey conducted in 2010” (CDC, 2010).

In California, family violence has taken a devastating toll on victims and their families, as well as the community in which they live. According to the California Women’s Health Survey, around 40% of female residents experience physical intimate family violence within their lifetimes. Of that number, 75% of victims have children under the age of 18 living in the home at the time of the attack. The survey went on to say that children who are exposed to this kind of violence are faced with a greater danger of severe health problems when they mature to adulthood. They have an increased risk of such problems as obesity, unplanned pregnancies, substance abuse, heart disease, personality disorders, clinical depression, future relationship problems, and cancer (CCRWF, 2013).

A California Partnership to End Domestic Violence study showed that California law enforcement agencies received 158,547 domestic violence related calls in 2011. During the year 2010 (the most recent year where data was available), there were 157 fatalities. While all other homicides were decreasing (i.e., gang or robbery-related), domestic violence homicides increased by 20% from 2009 to 2010 (CCRWF, 2013).

Overview of Psychological Factors Regarding Violent Offenders

In a study conducted by Dr. Amy Holtzworth-Munroe in 2000, different kinds of family violence were examined and offenders described important insights into how and why violence takes place in the home. We have learned, for example, that people who commit violent behaviors have a broad mixture of motivations, triggers for violence, individual backgrounds, and personality styles, as well as how they function in a mixture of relationships (Wexler, 2006).

According to Wexler (2006), when compared to those who do not mistreat their partners, family violence offenders tend to:

- Hold attitudes of entitlement that consider the use of violence as their right.

- Ignore the causes, costs and consequences of their actions on the victims.
- Presume a greater negative meaning of behaviors by partners.
- Be less able to employ logic and reason when dealing with conflicts.
- Display greater levels of anger toward family disagreements.
- Display greater annoyance, anger and antagonism.
- Brand many forms of negative feelings, such as personal hurt, jealousy, resentment and fear, as anger.

Many other researchers and writers in the field of family violence have identified certain characteristics of batterers. James (2005) maintains that most batterers tend to display the following:

- The inability to feel and express any emotions except for anger.
- Denial of the violence and excessive dependency while, at the same time, acting possessive toward the important people in their lives.
- Unrealistic expectations toward their spouses—tending to idealize their relationships beyond what is realistic or actually happening.
- Rigid boundaries for everyone in their families, while lacking any realistic control over their own behaviors.
- The use of alcohol and illegal drugs or addictive behaviors to mask or medicate their pain.
- A history of abuse as children or witnessing violence toward family members.
- Battering their families while minimizing or denying that any problems exist.
- Cycling emotionally between aggressiveness, hostility and cruelty when they are not getting their way... to being charming, seductive and manipulative when they do.
- Impulsive, demanding, aggressive, violent, jealous and self-deprecating behavior.

Motivation for Batterer Counseling Programs

The primary concern of any treatment program is not primarily that of the batterer, but the needs of the abuse victim and his or her safety and personal autonomy. At the very least, participation in a counseling program attempts to assure that batterers no longer gain any further control over their victims. The batterer's program should not exist in isolation. The best friend of family violence is secrecy. This intervention approach is only "one element of any comprehensive community plan to stop family violence and end abusive intimidation and violent behaviors" (Broussard, 1999, p. 4).

The sad news about domestic violence is that approximately 12 million people batter their intimate partners yearly in the U.S. The good news is that approximately 300 million

do not. Some studies show that overall family abuse and injuries are actually on the decline in the American home. The Church has rarely become involved in counseling batterers. However, one church, Highland Baptist in National City, California, has taken initiative and put together a court-certified program that counsels batterers in three locations throughout San Diego County. It currently has 140+ clients who are ordered by the court or probation and parole officers to attend weekly two-hour group counseling sessions. The church board believes Christians need to stand in the gap and no longer tolerate abuse. This program is one model for what other churches could be doing. ✕



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Speak Softly and be Heard More Clearly

I really do not like being yelled at—do you? When people raise their voices at me, I get all jittery and uncomfortable. When I yell at other people and the exchange has been completed, I usually do not feel very good about myself. In fact, when our kids were growing up, we had a rule of conduct in our house called “the do not raise your voice... unless there is a fire” rule. It worked pretty well but, believe me, we had a lot of false alarms. I do know this for sure—that no matter what the situation, when the volume goes up in the course of a relationship, most of what should be communicated is lost in the loudness.

I grew up in a rather conservative church community. In some sections of the country, we would be known for things we did not do rather than for things we did. One of the characteristics among many of our preachers was loudness. Their points were often punctuated with shouts, screams, facial contortions, and sometimes even threats. It scared me, but for some reason I grew up thinking if you were not a “yeller,” then you were not a successful speaker. When I started as a young pastor, I yelled a lot myself. Then, one day, it dawned on me... I didn’t have to raise the volume anymore. I would just look at the audience and see each and every individual as someone for whom God loves unconditionally. If He was talking to them that Sunday morning, would He be stomping around? Probably not. So I began to address my congregations as though they were not deaf, but intelligent, thoughtful, interested people... and the effectiveness of my ministry increased greatly.

Speak Softly

The passage of Scripture from Proverbs



15:1 is many times overlooked, even in Christian circles, and the result of that oversight can result in the termination of a pastor, a believing couple pursuing a divorce, or an effective church folding into insignificance. Why? Because they have never mastered the practice of the “soft response.” Let me explain this important biblical truth: *“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

Have you ever tried to argue when you had laryngitis? I know it sounds silly, but when all you can do is whisper or make weird noises, you typically do not get very far. The same holds true when

others are trying to talk to you—it is difficult to sound angry in a whisper, but when you converse in anger or loudness, you will usually get an angry response. If you want to turn wrath away, if you want to communicate in a manner that is beneficial, then quiet words are almost always your best choice.

Sin Not

In Ephesians 4:26, the Apostle Paul writes, “Be angry and sin not.” Come on Paul, get real; you mean I can’t ever get mad and express myself? Of course that is not what he is referring to, but he does mean you must control your

anger so that you are not controlled by it. How?

- Do not hide your anger and thereby allow it to fester.
- Live each day and converse with no regrets.
- Deal with your anger, or it will deal with you. Ask yourself, “Where does it come from?”
- Ask God for patience. Satan just waits for unresolved issues to be blown out of control.
- Resolve the problem quickly. Paul encourages a 24-hour timeframe.
- Ask yourself, “Is the issue I’m angry about really that big of a deal?”

I am sure there are times when high energy and vocal outbursts may create a desirable result but, honestly, not most of the time. I think of so many dads who have lost the respect of their children because they could just never find the time to sit and “chat” with one another.

You can never un-say anything. The scars of anger often remain for a lifetime. Many in leadership have lost their influence because they imagined they had to be right regardless of any damage done to their relationships. Think, for yourself, of the pain you have felt as a result of a heated exchange.

Satisfy the Desires of Christ

When the Apostle Paul sent a letter to the church at Colossae, he was making the point that in Christ they had all that was needed to live a life above reproach. He wrote in chapter three, verse 12, “Bear with one another, and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other, just as the Lord has forgiven you.” In other words, you do not have to live in anger and constant chaos. You can find freedom in, and through, forgiveness. As a believer, you are called to imitate your Savior. You must let love

be the foundation. Remember, you are a representative of Christ in all you do, so never forget how much God, through Jesus Christ, has done for you. He could have reacted in anger toward you, but He did not. His response was grace, gentleness and love. As the Word says to all of us, “... Go and do likewise.”

Speak softly, my friend. Speak softly. ✕



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The Word Made Flesh: Countering Violence with God's Love

International trips always seem to include parables for me. I hear a comment or see a human picture of a truth. It is like getting a bright light turned on what I know, but in some way still a bit shadowed. I was in Brazil this past October to speak on trauma for two conferences, one in the south and one in the north. I had been there 10 years ago to present on sexual abuse and was asked to return and speak more broadly on trauma and grief by the same group of wonderful, loving people. It was a delight to see them again and experience how their work with abuse survivors had grown up and reached across most of the Brazilian states.

Unfortunately, sexual violence is a sad and all-to-common experience in Brazil. It destroys many lives. These precious people of God, many victims of abuse themselves, saw the need, sought training and rose up as the body of Christ to teach and bring healing. The organization I connected with is called Restoring People and Equipping Restorers. I heard so many stories of, "I was the result of incest or of rape or the child of a prostitute. Then I learned about Jesus, was taught and helped with my abuse, and now I am in training to help others." Their testimony declared, "I was, but *God did*, and now *I am*." It reminded me of the Apostle Paul's words, "... such were some of you; but you were washed..." (1 Corinthians 6:11). The work of God seen in the flesh again and again: rescuing, restoring, building up and equipping to go and do the same for others. I saw death become life, darkness become light and trauma become glory.

Here is the parable, the picture into truth I brought home with me. Ten years ago, this group had my two books on

sexual abuse translated into Portuguese as they could find nothing in their language to help them. The publisher gave copies to all the attendees that year. Ten years have passed and I had not really thought anymore about it. Unknowingly, I walked into a group of people who knew me by way of my books that they had read and re-read. The content had been taught in churches, small groups and secular universities. It had never occurred to me. Here is what happened—they greeted me as a longtime and well-loved friend. People I had never met reached

I pray that we, who work with the evil and sorrow of this earth, will carry His likeness in the flesh as we go.

out with love. One woman said to me, "I have loved you in my heart for 10 years because of your books, but now I love your face."

The word read, believed, followed and loved. The author, unseen, loved and brought into the heart. Lives changed. And then, the word made flesh—present in the flesh with a face, a smile, a touch, and the real sound of the voice... not just the one imagined in the mind. They were full of joy. *It was then I really understood.* The living Word of God read, believed, followed and loved. The Author of that Word loved and welcomed into our hearts. Lives truly transformed. Someday... someday, we will see His face and walk with Him and hear His voice. Oh, what joy that will be!

I also saw that deadness in the heart and disobedience to the Word would damage love and faith and relationship. To extend words of hope and healing and have them ignored or refused would break the great heart of our God, the Author of those words. Yet, how easily, even glibly, we do so. We are familiar

with the Book, yet the words cease to pierce, we miss their meaning, we fail to apply the truths to our lives, and we do not hear His great heart in the words and fail to enter into a living relationship with Him through His Word by absorbing, bowing and changing into the likeness of that Word.

To think that God actually made all of that wonderful Word flesh! He showed up living and breathing the words He had given. He spoke love and was love; He spoke truth and was truth; He spoke justice and was justice;

He taught healing and was healing. The Lord has promised we will see His blessed face. I pray that we, who work with the evil and sorrow of this earth, will carry His likeness in the flesh as we go. May we be those who incarnate that same love and truth and justice and healing. May we bow to His living Word, sharper than a two-edged sword, and allow it to pierce our hearts and lives so that our faces, our words, and our work will bring glimpses of God's wonderful face to the wounded of the earth. May we be those who will immediately recognize His face and voice because, by faith, we have been diligently following His words. ✠



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Righteousness as Radical Anger Management

I was a young professional, wearing an expensive—for me—suit, walking the sidewalks of a major city between a convention center and my hotel room. It was late at night. The sparsely lit and mostly-deserted streets did not make me feel safe. Neither did the young man walking toward me. He seemed angry. The focus of his gaze seemed to be me. I tried to be cool. I tried to remember my karate lessons.

As we passed, he said words I'll never forget.

“Relax man, I ain't no mugger or nothing.”

It was easy to ignore the use of a triple negative, but not his observation. Even after he had passed, my heart was pounding. My muscles were tense and my fists still clinched. While I was the psychologist, this young man had been able to offer an astute diagnosis of my condition. I was experiencing a flight or fight response that I expected to turn into anger and then violence... and he knew it. He could see it.

Violence is birthed in anger, and anger, in its most basic form, is simply a natural response that serves a very important function. As an emotion, anger is not necessarily right or wrong. It is a bodily reaction to thoughts and feelings and energizes us toward being able to stop, or even harm, someone who wants to obstruct our will or interfere with the path that we want to take. Anger, therefore, alerts to an obstruction to one's will.

As I was walking down that dimly lit street, thoughts and feelings were alerting my sympathetic nervous system (the system which drives fighting or fleeing) that my will to hold on to the contents of my wallet and life itself could be facing a major threat. I expected a violent confrontation, and my ill-equipped body was doing its best to get ready.



However, my thoughts and feelings had made the wrong call. My will was not in danger of being thwarted. In fact, most of the times in my life when I have felt anger and, worse yet, chosen to entertain and indulge it... I have been wrong. It has been a rare occasion in which my will actually needed to win the day and triumph over the will of another. It is not a crime for me to yield to the will of other drivers on the freeway or my wife's desire to hold the remote control. Assuming I don't have a problem with a lack of assertiveness, willingness to bless the will of another is good for spirit, heart and character. If pride is number one among vices, I believe anger is at the heart of most wrongdoing. Both typically involve the ego and its desire to call attention to itself or overrun the will of another.

Christian philosophy professor, Dallas Willard, makes a strong case for the primary importance of anger as a signal that something may be amiss in the human heart.

“When we trace wrongdoing back to its roots in the human heart, we find that in the overwhelming number of cases it involves some form of anger. Close beside anger you will find its twin brother, contempt. Jesus’ understanding of them and their role in life becomes the basis of his strategy for establishing kingdom goodness. It is the elimination of anger and contempt that he presents as the first and fundamental step toward the righteousness of the kingdom heart.”¹

In fact, in Jesus’ most famous sermon, the first illustration of kingdom *dikaismos* (righteousness) is drawn from cases in which we are displeased with our “brother” and may allow ourselves to treat him with anger or contempt. The very first illustration!

I think the key to understanding Jesus’ inside-out teaching is found in the meaning of *dikaismos*. According to an article by biblical scholar,

E.R. Achtemeier, in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*,² righteousness as understood in the Old Testament is a thoroughly Hebraic concept foreign to the Western mind—and to the minds of most Pharisees—and is at variance with the common understanding of the term. Righteousness is not “rightness,” but the fulfillment of the demands and experience of mature and loving relationships. The relationship of the Trinity is our best expression of righteousness in action.

Whereas “rightness” can quickly turn into a conflict of dueling wills, “righteousness” properly understood is about mature expression of love for another. It is more a response of willingness than willfulness. Observe the table below, which is a paraphrased expression of Dallas Willard’s overview of the contrast Jesus was making early in His famous Sermon on the Mount, to see a graphic illustration of two very different understandings of righteousness.³

At the heart of this teaching is the human heart. Jesus first announces the good news of the availability of the Kingdom and then describes what the character of an inner life—transformed to better resemble the righteousness enjoyed by the Trinity—looks like. He

starts with the need to have our insides so changed that love and not anger flows up and out of our bodies.

In the Kingdom two wills—the will of the King and my own will—are becoming one. For the human heart to beat as one with the Heart of God is the best plan for violence prevention. ✦



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Endnotes

- ¹ Willard, D. (1997). *The Divine Conspiracy*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, p. 147.
- ² Butterick, G. ed. (1962). *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4. Nashville, TN: Abington Press, p. 80.
- ³ For more detail, see Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, (HarperCollins: San Francisco, 1997) p. 146.

Situation	Old “Rightness”	New “Righteousness”
Irritation with others (Matthew 5:21–26)	Don’t murder.	Desire to help. No anger.
Sexual attraction (vv. 27–30)	No intercourse.	No cultivation of lust.
Unhappiness with marriage partner (vv. 31–32)	If you divorce, give “pink slip.”	No divorce—as then practiced.
Wanting someone to believe something (vv. 33–37)	Keep vows or oaths made to convince.	Just say how things are. No verbal manipulation.
Being personally injured (vv. 38–42)	Inflict exactly the same injury on the offender.	Don’t harm, but help the one who has hurt you.
Having an enemy (vv. 43–48)	Hate your enemy.	Love and bless your enemy, as God does.

See One, Do One, Teach One

One marker of whether you understand a concept is whether you can teach it to someone else. When learning a new procedure in medical school, the mantra was “See one, do one, teach one.” In other words, watch someone do it, do it yourself, and then teach someone else to do it. Thus, the ability to give a lecture, speak to a group or lead a discussion is a very profitable form of crystallizing your learning. However, professionals are seldom taught how to do this effectively. We are assumed to have the talents to teach since we had the capacity to learn the subject matter in the first place. Nevertheless, a different skill set is often necessary. The good news, as with any skill, is that it can be taught, acquired, practiced and honed. The following are some tips I have learned from taking classes on how to teach and speak over a 29-year career of doing it in front of a very critical audience—physicians.

- Know your topic. Prepare a minimum of two hours for every hour of actual presentation.

- Be yourself and let your personal show. If you are witty or a bit sarcastic, don't be afraid to let it show. Please do not try to imitate someone else, however. This will just frustrate you and your audience, as well as make you nervous.

- Avoid dumping excessive amounts of data on your audience. Treat the presentation like a meal. Give them a bite and allow them time to digest it. Too much, too quickly can lead to “cognitive vomiting” of the information. “Spice” your talk with appropriate examples and parables.

- Act a little like a talk show host. People enjoy hearing themselves talk. Give them the opportunity to respond to what you are saying—interacting with you and one another.



- Learning is caught, not merely taught. Give listeners an opportunity to apply your information or problem-solve based on the points you make during the talk. Discussion questions and case reviews are good examples worth considering.

- Anticipate questions and weave them into your talk. Encourage questioning. I always tell my audience that smart people ask questions because they can see the gaps in what I am saying. High-quality research always begins with asking good questions.

- Anticipate objections and embrace controversy—do not run from, avoid, or act as if it is illegitimate. When

presenting a study, I volunteer the weaknesses and limitations of the research at the beginning of the discussion.

- Set ground rules, such as ending on time. Tell participants how you want to handle questions. If a meal is involved, let them eat while listening to you and wrap up before the main entrée arrives. Let people eat in peace—unless they clearly want to talk about the topic.

- One thought, one person. Turn to your left, make a talking point to a person there. Turn to your right and make your next point with someone in the group on the other side of the room. Then look ahead and make a point with a friendly face in the crowd.

Engage every sector in the audience intellectually.

■ Say what you are going to say. Say it. Then summarize at the end. Do not have too many talking points as this can be confusing.

■ Pray for clarity and passion for your topic (John 14:26; 16:13).

■ Give your audience a copy of your handout or PowerPoint presentation so they can relax and listen. Do not clutter your resources with too much information in one talk. A talk should stimulate the appetite for more learning—which is the purpose of references.

■ Watch your body language. Keep your hands out of your pockets. Do not assume the “convict position” by placing your hands behind your back for the whole talk. Do not gesture so much that you distract your audience. Be careful about pacing back and forth, but don’t act like a statue either and stare at your

notes or the audience. Do not turn your back to the audience and stare at the screen. Interact!

■ When using a laser pointer, point, don’t wiggle it. Wiggling the laser around the screen is distracting. Do not point to every word. Use it primarily to highlight something.

■ Do not read slides in a PowerPoint presentation. The audience can read it while you highlight appropriate sections, summarize or discuss clinical relevance.

■ Do not tell professionals what to do. Make your case for what the data or your clinical experience suggests, but be careful about dictating to peers and colleagues.

■ Always give yourself a mulligan to say, “I don’t know.” Honesty is appreciated.

■ Start and end on time and give breaks if it will be a long talk. No one

should have to listen to anyone for longer than 75-90 minutes without a break.

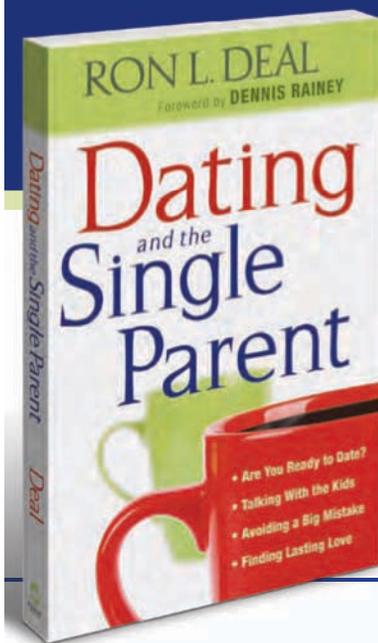
■ Ask for feedback from your audience and learn from it.

The ability to speak and teach effectively creates opportunities for professional growth and career enhancement. Remember, the process is primarily skill-based, so this is something you can work on, perhaps even utilizing the services of a coach. Proverbs 15:2 says, “The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable.” Knowledge is *what* we know; wisdom is *how* we share it. ✦



Roswell, Georgia.

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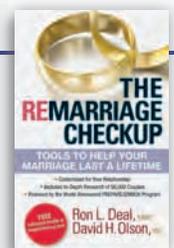
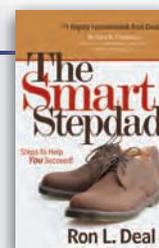
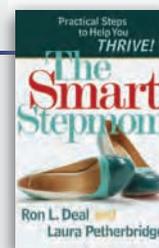
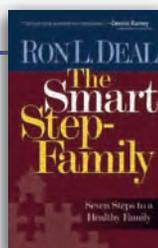
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Violence, Mental Health and Federal Government Mental Healthcare Initiatives

The tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut in December 2012, has once again brought the issue of mental healthcare to the forefront of public consciousness and dialogue. On January 16, 2013, President Obama proposed a plan to reduce gun violence that, in part, emphasizes the need for increased public access to mental healthcare as one of a number of necessary components. According to a White House press release regarding the new initiative:

“Today, less than half of children and adults with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. While the vast majority of Americans with a mental illness are not violent, several recent mass shootings have highlighted how some cases of mental illness can develop into crisis

situations if individuals do not receive proper treatment. We need to do more than just keep guns out of the hands of people with serious mental illness; we need to identify mental health issues early and help individuals get treatment they need before these dangerous situations develop.”¹

In a *USA Today* article, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary, Kathleen Sebelius, echoes this sentiment, noting, “In the (past) half century... we’ve made tremendous progress as a country when it comes to attitudes about mental health. But recent events have reminded us that we still have a long way to go to bring mental health fully out of the shadows.... In total, mental health conditions place a greater burden on our economy than cancer and heart disease; and yet more than 60% of people with mental illness do not receive help.”²

Presidential Goals and Congressional Hearings

President Obama’s proposed initiatives include investing approximately \$105 million in funding, generally: (1) to train more than 5,000 additional mental health professionals who can serve teens and young adults; and (2) to develop mental health education programs which help educators, parents and others to recognize mental illness in young people, and assure proper referrals for mental health services. In addition, the Administration is calling for approximately \$25 million to develop programming for individuals 16 to 25-years-old who are at high risk for mental illness, substance abuse and suicide; and an additional \$25 million to help school districts provide mental health, violence prevention and related services.³



In January of this year, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee responded to the Newtown tragedy by holding a hearing on mental health. The Committee heard testimony from mental health experts, including Thomas Insel, Director of the National Institute of Mental Health, who believes it is “absolutely vital” to detect and intervene early with an effective method, as the risk of violence increases the longer psychosis goes untreated.⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Pamela Hyde testified that over the past few years, states and communities have significantly reduced funding for mental health and addiction services while demand has increased. Citing the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, Ms. Hyde said that an estimated \$4.35 billion in mental health services was cut by states in the previous four years, while an additional 700,000 people sought help at public mental health facilities during the same period.⁵

SAMHSA reported in 2011, “Studies have shown that every dollar invested in evidence-based treatment yields \$2.00 to \$10.00 in savings in health costs, criminal and juvenile justice costs, and lost productivity. Yet, too many people don’t get needed help for substance abuse or mental health problems and healthcare costs continue to skyrocket.”⁶

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

According to the Obama Administration, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) will provide one of the largest expansions of mental health coverage in a generation by extending health coverage to 30 million Americans.⁷ Beginning in 2014, all new small group and individual market plans will be required to cover 10 Essential Health Benefit categories, including mental health and substance abuse disorder services and, furthermore, will be expected to cover them at parity with

other benefits. These requirements also apply to benefits provided to Medicaid beneficiaries if states choose to receive federal matching funding. States have the option to expand Medicaid to Americans under age 65 with incomes at or below 133% of the federal poverty level.

The PPACA also created the Prevention and Public Health Fund. The fund, in part, promotes wellness in partnership with states and communities. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that in fiscal year 2012, the fund provided \$35 million to integrate primary care and mental healthcare, \$10 million to recruit and train individuals in behavioral health professions, including social work and psychology, and an additional \$53 million for various mental health service programs such as screening and suicide prevention.⁸

Kaiser Health News reports that of an estimated 30 million people expected to gain insurance coverage through PPACA beginning in 2014, SAMHSA expects that approximately six to 10 million people will have an untreated mental illness or addiction.⁹ According to Kaiser, additional demand will be placed on an already overwhelmed health-care system. “Patients may experience long wait times to see a psychiatrist, for example, and may require additional investments to expand the mental health workforce.” ✕

The information is current as of the date it is written. This article is provided solely for general educational purposes and does not constitute legal advice between an attorney and a client. The law varies in different jurisdictions. Consultation with an attorney is recommended if you desire legal advice.



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Endnotes

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A Subtle Violence and What Leaders Can Do

In the book, *Boundaries for Leaders*, I tell the story about a man who owned a large company and had been grooming his son to take it over when he retired. Then, one day he was walking through the factory and saw his son angrily berating an employee, with yelling, put-downs, shaming and the like, and all of this being done in front of other employees. He signaled for his son to come up to his office.

“David,” he began, “I wear two hats around here. I am the boss *and* I am your father. Right now, I am going to put my boss hat on. *You’re fired*. You are done here. I will not have that kind of behavior in my company and will not ever tolerate employees being treated that way. I have warned you about this kind of thing before, and you are still doing it. So, I have to let you go.”

Then he said, “Now, I am going to put on my father hat.” After a moment’s pause, he continued.

“Son, I heard you just lost your job. How can I help you?”

Wow... that is serious. Think of the dinner conversation he had when he got home, to tell his wife their son was no longer the heir apparent. What motivated this father to take such a strong stand? Something very significant and very good: *the emotional climate of his company*. He knew the way his son was mistreating people and the emotional and spiritual damage it caused was a critically important dynamic. So, he had to end it.

This brings us to this edition’s topic: *violence*. You may ask, “What does the firing of a son have to do with violence?” Well, if we are only thinking about physical violence, maybe not much. However, seen from another vantage point, it becomes really applicable, especially if you believe the concept of violence is



broader than just physical. The reality is that while physical violence does exist, there is also emotional violence and a violence against the spirit that are every bit as real and destructive. This takes place every day in countless organizations and teams and is something leaders have to take seriously for several reasons.

First, it is destructive to the person who is on the receiving end of the emotional assault. We know the emotional states that such an interaction creates have to go somewhere. In some instances, the recipient is equipped well enough in his or her own personality to handle the negative confrontation and also has the support systems to work through things. In those situations, there is not much collateral damage, as the individual is able to shake it

off. However, in other situations, the outcome is not so negligible. Without the necessary resources, the person “acts in,” against him/herself, “acts out” against others (possibly at home) and, in many instances, experiences some sort of destructive consequence. Either they suffer or others do in a trickle-down effect.

Second, leaders get less of what they are wanting in the first place. Most leaders who use anger, shame or fear to motivate people to perform are thinking they are going to obtain better results by doing so. Nevertheless, neuroscience research informs us differently. When people feel threatened, strong stress hormones are released in the adrenal glands and brain that inhibit creativity, higher order thinking and

problem-solving—the very things most leaders actually want to be present in their staff and employees. So, in using this kind of emotional assault, a person is working against him/herself.

The lesson is here two-fold. As I said in the book, leaders get what they “create or allow.” In terms of an emotional climate, this principle is very applicable. The father in the example above did not want emotional violence against the spirit occurring, so he did not allow it. Leaders must make sure they are proactively confronting anyone who uses anger, guilt, shame or other forms of emotional assault when interacting with people, and not allow the behavior to continue unchallenged.

Additionally, leaders must help their key subordinates “create” the kinds of motivators that model and encourage positive spiritual well-being, emotional well-being, and higher order brain

functioning. This comes from intentional people and culture-building that focuses on building strong connections and developing others. This includes both team and individual building.

When working with leaders, one of the biggest emphases we can have is helping them see the importance of the emotional climate they are creating, as well as the destructiveness of threatening emotional climates. This principle is not just an inconsequential leadership tip, but one that should become a key focus—creating an emotional climate that leads to well-being and great performance. I am reminded of what God said in Micah 6:8: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Leaders are often trying to exact “justice” from the people they lead,

trying to get them to reach their expectations. Justice is really about achieving a standard, and I am sure David felt “justified” in berating the employee who was failing to reach that standard. However, he did so without “mercy,” which means any time leaders are trying to motivate people to reach a standard, they must also “love mercy” and not be assaultive. In putting those together, justice *and* mercy, leaders can overcome the tendency to be “violent” in the way they lead. ✦



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Violence, Intervention and Prevention

African-American Youth and Community Violence

Thomas, A.J., Carey, D., Prewitt, K.R., Romero, E., Richards, M. & Velsor-Friedrich, B. (2012). African-American Youth and Exposure to Community Violence: Supporting Change from the Inside. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, 4 (1), 54-68.

Anita Jones Thomas and her colleagues provide an example of participatory action research intended to promote social justice. In this case, the emphasis is on addressing community violence. Thomas and her colleagues sought to include at-risk, African-American adolescents in an urban setting to aid in the revision and use of curricula that reduces risk of negative sequelae from community violence.

The team conducted several focus groups at schools in urban settings. Twenty-one adolescents ranging in age from 11-15 participated in the focus groups (males = 7; females = 14). The research team held four, 90-minute sessions during an after-school program, focusing on exposure to violence (e.g., What are you worried about?) and coping strategies (e.g., How do you cope with the things you worry about?).

The data revealed major themes that include *the reality of exposure to violence, pervasiveness of violence in schools*, and a lack of available adults to discuss violence (*discussions with adults regarding violence*). This last theme also included reports of “feeling disengaged from teachers” (p. 60) that was discouraging in terms of not having access to proximal agents closest to adolescents, which the researchers believe places them “at greater risk for developing internalizing difficulties and externalizing behaviors” (p. 60).

Participants provided feedback regarding the curricula on coping



skills and civic engagement. Suggested changes to the coping skills curriculum included more emphasis on problem-solving strategies (rather than relaxation exercises, for example). There was significant interest in elements of the civic engagement curriculum, including school administrators and community leaders.

The researchers recognized that they did not sufficiently address the role of parents in preventing exposure to violence or as a protective factor for some youth. They did recognize, however, that larger, systemic issues need to be addressed to stem the effects of violence on youth in at-risk communities.

Intimate Partner Violence and Depression

Chuang, C.H., Cattoi, A.L., McCall-Hosenfeld, J.S., Camacho, F., Dyer, A.M. & Weisman, C.S. (2012). Longitudinal Association of Intimate Partner Violence and Depressive Symptoms. *Mental Health in Family Medicine*, 9, 107-114.

Cynthia Chuang and her colleagues analyzed data from the Central Pennsylvania Women’s Health Study of women aged 18-45. The two-year follow-up included 1,420 participants. Intimate partner violence was reported by 4.6% of women at baseline and was associated with depression at two-year follow-up. The strongest

predictor of depressive symptoms was baseline depression. There were additional predictors of depression, including intimate partner violence (at follow-up), lower education, lower income, and older age.

As a second step in analysis, the researchers controlled for various coping strategies and concluded that increased social support as a positive coping mechanism significantly reduced the risk of depressive symptoms at follow-up. Conversely, binge drinking/drug use as a negative coping mechanism significantly increased the risk of depression at follow-up.

As Christian counselors consider their work with couples, they will want to understand the relationship between

intimate partner violence and depression, as well as the role of both positive and negative coping mechanisms that might affect depressive symptoms over time.

Adolescents with High Incidence Disabilities

Sullivan, T.N., Helms, S.W., Bettencourt, A.F., Sutherland, K., et al. (2012). A Qualitative Study of Individual and Peer Factors Related to Effective Nonviolent versus Aggressive Responses to Problem Situations among Adolescents with High Incidence Disabilities. *Behavioral Disorders*, 37 (3), 163-178.

This was a study of teens with high incidence disabilities. Terri Sullivan and her colleagues at Virginia Commonwealth University conducted a qualitative study

of factors related to nonviolent and aggressive reactions to various problem situations facing these adolescents.

Seventy-four adolescents with high incidence disabilities participated in the study. Sixty-one percent were boys. High incidence disabilities represented in this study included learning disabilities (71% of the participants), intellectual disabilities (15%), and emotional or behavioral disorders (14%). Most participants (95%) were African-American, and participants ranged in age from 11-16.

Participants had initially participated in an assessment and semi-structured interview that helped identify various, common problem situations. They were then randomly assigned to one of several protocols with various problem-situations and responses. Participants were read the problem situation and prompted to imagine making the response. They were then queried about various factors “that would make it easier or harder for them to make the specific response in that situation” (p. 166). The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed by a team of researchers. The qualitative analyses involved open coding to identify emergent themes.

The results were organized into “individual” and “peer” themes that affected the use of nonviolent or aggressive reactions to the problem situations. Individual themes included *values and beliefs, emotional regulation and problem-solving strategies, positive self-image and confidence in addressing problems with peers, influence of perceived effectiveness of responses and potential consequences, and attributes about others or the situation.* The following were identified as peer themes: *peer support, peer victimization, and protecting image status and reputation with peers.*

The researchers observed that one finding stood out as rather unique and it had to do with “the role of self-concept in influencing nonviolent responses to problem situations” (p. 173). The findings also highlighted the risk of



peer-group marginalization or rejection on subsequent negative behaviors.

Christian counselors can benefit from understanding the importance of peer group support, as well as aiding adolescents with high incidence disabilities in managing anger and anxiety, while also fostering a positive self-concept.

Violence Reduction among Low-income Couples

Bradley, R.P.C. & Gottman, J.M. (2012). Reducing Situational Violence in Low-income Couples by Fostering Healthy Relationships. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38 (1), 187-198.

This study evaluated a psychoeducational intervention aimed at reducing intimate partner violence among low-income couples. To qualify for the study, couples had to meet several criteria, including: be in a committed relationship for a minimum of one year, be age 18 or older, have a child under the age of 12, report situational violence, and have an income below their local county median (for a family of three). Renay Cleary Bradley and John Gottman randomly assigned 115 couples to a treatment or no-treatment control group.

The results support the idea couples can be treated with a psychoeducational, group-based format that teaches and promotes skills that improve the relationship. Moreover, the results suggest “that such efforts may successfully lead to a reduction in [intimate partner violence] within this population” (p. 195). As the researchers hypothesized, there was a reduction in intimate partner violence over time as couples learned and implemented various relationship skills.

As the researchers observe, there is much more work to be done in distinguishing various types of violent couples, such as situationally-violent couples as contrasted with more characterologically-violent couples. However, these findings are encouraging for Christian counselors who work with couples in which there is intimate partner violence, particularly

as counselors consider teaching “healthy relationship and conflict management skills” (p. 196).

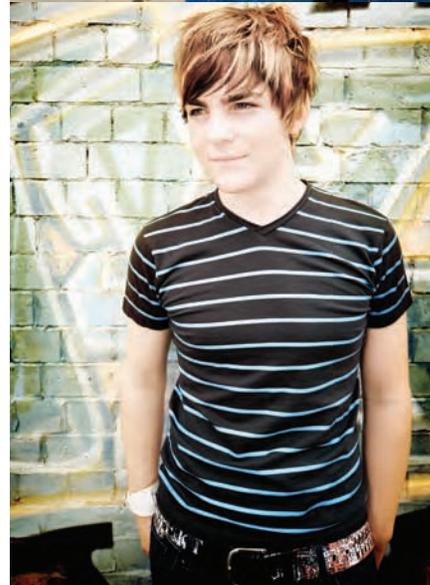
School Violence in Urban Settings

Johnston, S.L., Burke, J.G. & Gielen, A.C. (2012). Urban Students' Perceptions of the School Environment's Influence on School Violence. *Children & Schools*, 34 (2), 92-102.

Sarah Lindstrom Johnson and her colleagues used concept mapping with students to develop frameworks for reflecting the students' understanding of school environment and school violence. Two after-school organizations were tapped as sites for recruitment for this study. Twenty-seven students participated in two groups. Participants in both groups identified several (77 in one group; 55 in the other) ways they believed their school environment in some way contributed to school violence. These included examples of both social and physical environment, such as “Grand graffiti” and “Lack of supervision in certain places” (p. 97).

The ways in which school environment might contribute to school violence reflected eight cluster areas (e.g., bullying), and content analysis organized the clusters and statements into six topics: “student behaviors, norms of behavior, relationships with school staff, learning environment, school safety, and neighborhood environment” (p. 99).

The researchers who observed the findings suggest that students perceive school environment as playing a role in school violence. Differences in statements suggest school-based interventions need to be tailored to the issues identified as of particular concern in that setting. The findings support prior research on the perceived importance of supportive teachers and an interest in forging relationships with school police. The physical environment of schools was also identified as contributing to school violence. This has been referred to in the literature as “environmental



design” (p. 99) and is an emerging area of study in preventing school violence. Interestingly, the researchers observed that students did not distinguish between community violence and school violence. There is a “bidirectional flow of violence between the school and the community” that is sobering and would require “an ecological approach to both understanding and intervening in school violence” (p. 99). ✦



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A Systematic Process for Assessing Suicide Risk... – Gary Sibcy

1. The number one predictor of completing suicide is
- a. alcohol and substance use
 - b. a history of a past suicide attempt
 - c. stressors that produce shame or humiliation
 - d. emotional symptoms such as hopelessness

Making the Case Against Violence – Tony Perkins

2. A common denominator of young male killers is
- a. an absent father
 - b. being a minority in America
 - c. not attending church regularly
 - d. lower socioeconomic status

Cleansing the Temple... – Rev. Samuel Rodriguez

3. Which of the following is **not** mentioned as a cause of the Culture of Violence?
- a. abortion
 - b. loss of the Imago Dei
 - c. a silent, lukewarm church
 - d. violent movies and video games

A Subtle Violence and What Leaders Can Do – Henry Cloud

4. Neuroscience shows that when people feel threatened by leaders...
- a. strong stress hormones are released
 - b. creativity and higher order thinking are inhibited
 - c. problem solving is inhibited
 - d. all of the above

Righteousness as Radical Anger Management – Gary W. Moon

5. Righteousness properly understood is
- a. about mature expression of love for another
 - b. the quality of being right in what we do
 - c. seeking to conform to the will of the other person
 - d. all of the above

Violence, Intervention and Prevention – Mark Yarhouse

6. Violence reduction research with low-income couples showed
- a. group-based psycho-education reduced violence
 - b. individual psychotherapy proved most effective
 - c. group anger management was ineffective
 - d. relationship skills training does not work in group settings

The Modern Day Assault on Women... – Diane Langberg

7. Pregnant women are more likely to die of
- a. suicide
 - b. HIV/AIDS
 - c. homicide
 - d. birth complications

The Rage Within: Guidelines for Managing Anger – Lynette Hoy

8. Calm reasoning is compromised when angry because
- a. messages bypass the cerebral cortex
 - b. messages move straight to the limbic system
 - c. the fight/flight response is activated
 - d. all of the above

Urban Violence and Adolescents... – Lee A. Underwood and Frances Dailey

9. Most urban violence with adolescents occurs
- a. among known individuals not strangers
 - b. only among certain races and lifestyles
 - c. as often in affluence as in poverty
 - d. disproportionately higher in white males

Bullying: Effective Strategies for Preventing Violence – Linda Mintle

10. Research on aggression in youths shows
- a. bullies, when stressed, become more aggressive
 - b. aggressive teens enjoy inflicting pain
 - c. bullying is genetic, not a learned behavior
 - d. a and b

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■ **EXECUTIVE CLINICAL DIRECTOR, STATEN ISLAND, NY:** Crossroads Church wishes to hire a Director of Trauma Counseling to start and build the outreach program. CANDIDATE QUALITIES to include: 1. Committed personal Christian faith as defined at Symbolum Nicaenum; 2. Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Clinical Social Worker or Psychologist in NY; 3. Five plus years of experience; 4. Ability to supervise therapists-in-training at postgrad level; proven leadership skills; 5. Willingness to work with outside faith-based and secular non-profit entities; 6. Experience with (or willingness to learn) fundraising. Forward resume to: A. Cameron, 101 Shinnecock Road, Dover, DE 19904.

■ **DIRECTOR OF THE GRADUATE COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM / ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY:** Palm Beach Atlantic University is seeking a Program Director of the Graduate Counseling Program. The program is poised to develop a doctoral program in addition to enhancing the existing counseling program tracks. The University seeks a proven leader who has demonstrated success as both a professor and departmental chair/associate dean or dean in a university setting, and success in providing counseling services from a Christ-centered perspective. The Director position will be a 12-month administrative position with some teaching required. The Director will be charged with providing supervision to both the Orlando and West Palm Beach counseling programs. Applicants are encouraged to visit <http://www.pba.edu/faculty-administration-positions> for further information and to inquire about the application process.

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The Fight of Our Lives

Bullying. Domestic violence. Suicide. Rape. Shootings. Terrorism.... Last year, violent crime rates jumped by 18%.¹ Research estimates show that nearly 2,000 individuals are raped every single day.² Close to 40,000 Americans take their own lives by suicide each year.³ One in four women is a victim of domestic violence, and 70% of students experience bullying before they graduate from high school.⁴

In today's culture of violence, it's easy to become overwhelmed and wonder how to effectively respond as Christian professionals. The decay of modern-day society reminds me of the broken-down walls in Old Testament Jerusalem. Nehemiah reported to the king, "... Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned..." (Nehemiah 2:17), but it didn't stop there. Though Nehemiah faced great opposition, he stepped out in obedience, challenging the people, "... Do not be afraid... Remember the

Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes" (Nehemiah 4:14).

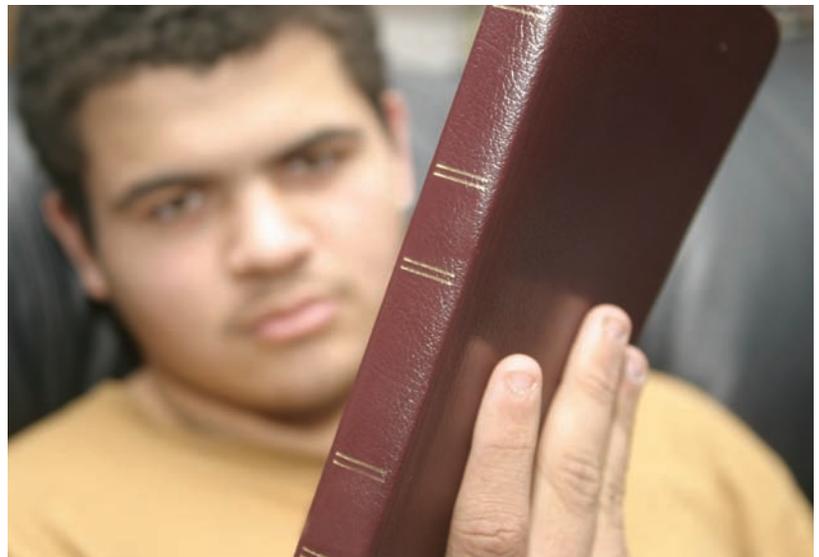
We, too, are in midst of a significant conflict. Competent practitioners understand their duty to report and take action against violence. How much more are we, as Christian counselors, commanded to take a stand against aggression and abuse in all its forms? We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39), speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), and act on behalf of the oppressed (Proverbs 31:8). This all sounds well and good in theory, but how do we actually live out the way of Christ—in our families, our communities, our professions, and modern-day culture?

The Battle of Christ and Culture

Christians differ significantly on the overt use of biblical truth in the "secular" marketplace. Some highlight

the importance of love, acceptance and tolerance, while other groups have adopted a more judgmental "attacking" stance against the non-Christian world. In his classic work, *Christ & Culture*, theologian and ethicist, H. Richard Niebuhr, describes three main approaches which shed light on how Christian professionals should respond to violence.⁵

Christ against Culture. This is the age-old "separatist" perspective. Such a mindset focuses primarily on avoiding "worldly" people and behaviors for fear of being "polluted"—rejecting both the sin and the sinner. However, by doing this, are we really living as salt and light? It's like running and hiding from our mission field, rather than engaging it with a response of compassion and grace. When we attack and avoid culture, we live like salt in a saltshaker or a light that is covered (Matthew 5:13-16). The salt has lost its saltiness and the light has lost its glow.



In today's culture of violence, it's easy to become overwhelmed and wonder how to effectively respond as Christian professionals.

Christ of Culture. This approach focuses on loving, accepting and accommodating others under the flag of “tolerance.” Yet, here, we sometimes subjugate God’s Word to cultural values. We can bend the truths of Scripture to “fit” the latest trends of society... shaky ground, indeed. This mindset undermines the real meaning of the Gospel. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor who stood up against Nazism during World War II, referred to it as cheap grace: “... the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession... grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.”⁶

Christ Transforming Culture. If we truly seek to live out Christ’s command to be salt and light, we must accept the challenge of living in a fallen and broken world. We must be willing to engage with the cultural issues of our day, including the challenges of violence and crime. Edmund Burke, often seen as the father of modern-day conservatism, wisely said, “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing,” and in this area, we have often been gravely wrong. As we look at the life of Jesus, we see that He engaged with the clashing cultures of His day—Jews, Romans, Greeks, Samaritans and more. Furthermore, He came filled with grace and truth... not one without the other. Should we do anything less?

The Apostle Paul challenges us to “... be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life...” (Philippians 2:15-16). Transforming our culture requires that we live “in the midst”—not on the sidelines—shining the light of God’s truth, rather than apologizing for it.

Our Faith Matters

Lest we forget, Christ is “a stone of

stumbling, and a rock of offense” to those who do not believe (1 Peter 2:8). When we put our stake in the ground and choose to follow Him, it’s a radical position. Living as His disciples will impact our personal and professional lives, as well as how we engage contemporary culture. The beauty in all this is that we are partnering with God in redemptive work—holy work—for His glory. “In our day, heaven and earth are on tiptoe waiting for the emergence of a Spirit-led, Spirit-intoxicated, Spirit-empowered people,”⁷ author Richard Foster reminds us.

In today’s world of compromise, we need a new breed of men and women who are willing to follow Jesus in all that they do—not just on Sunday or in our “private religious lives.” We need Christians who will stand up for truth, respond in love, and encourage our world to follow Him in every area of society. This beckons us to move from passivity, fear and defensiveness into strategic endeavors that influence culture. It begs of us to fight for what really matters. Just as the Lord said to the Israelites, so He challenges us, “... Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours, but God’s” (2 Chronicles 20:15).

As followers of Christ, we do not fight for the victory, but from a place of victory, understanding that ultimately, “We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

Faith matters... and embracing it is far more than just a personal issue. We must be concerned about influencing the next generations—our children and children’s children—to raise them in the way of Christ and help ensure that religious freedoms are protected in the marketplace. We must keep this perspective. Our fight is not just about stopping violence, but so much more—shaping a

culture grounded in Christ’s truth, love and justice.

If you have tasted of God’s love, you know “... Christ’s love compels us...” (2 Corinthians 5:14). We have been called to hope. To obedience. To action. We have been called to stand in the gap. In the words of Nehemiah, “Do not be afraid.... Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes” (Nehemiah 4:14).

I believe our time is now! “... Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14). ✕

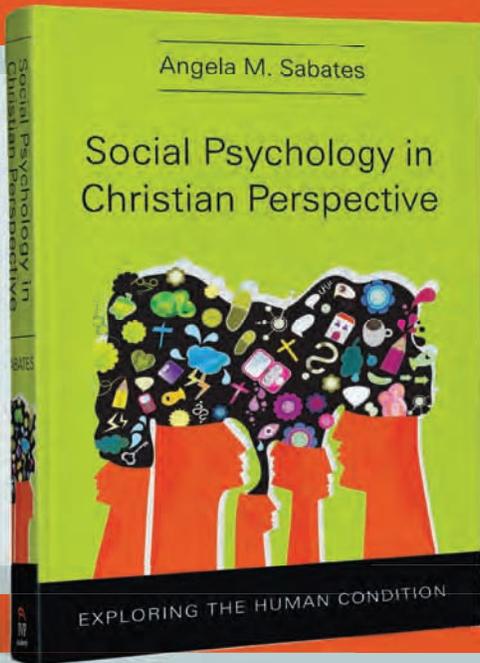
Endnotes

- 1 “Violent Crime Rises 18 Percent Nationwide” (October 17, 2012). *The Washington Times*.
- 2 National Crime Victimization Survey (2000). Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Justice.
- 3 “Facts and Figures” (2010). American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.
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- 7 Foster, R. (1995). *Richard Foster’s Treasury of Christian Discipline*. New York: Harper-Collins, p. 175.



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Care at Liberty University, and co-founder of Light Counseling, Inc., a clinical practice serving children, adolescents, and adults. He is the author of several books, including *God Attachment* (Howard Books), *The Popular Encyclopedia of Christian Counseling* (Harvest House), and his most recent, *Break Through* (Worthy Publishing).



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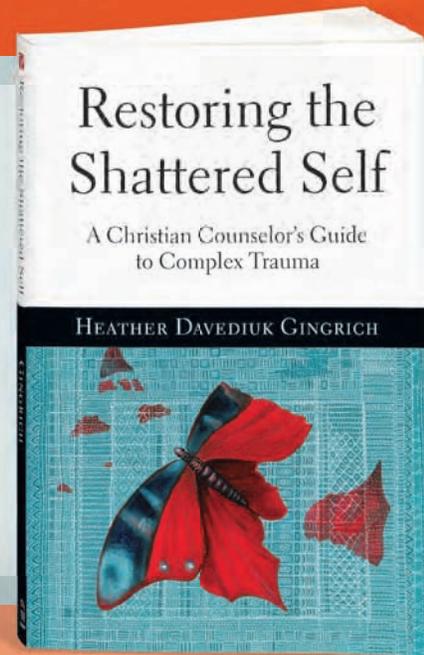
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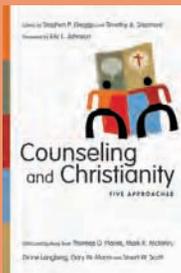
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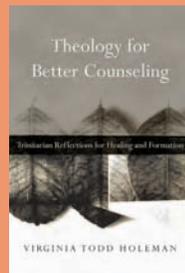
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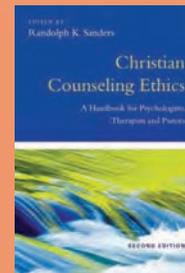
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