

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month – It IS your business!

By Bonnie Nicholas 10/2005

The intersection of Christian Faith and relationship violence is complex. For many survivors of domestic violence, church has been a place of refuge or a place that perpetrates abuse, a place of safety, or a place of fear, a place to find support, or a place to find condemnation. Faith itself becomes a crisis. Believing in a loving, all-powerful God in the face of abuse is not an easy thing. The church is one body – the body of Christ. When one part suffers, the whole body suffers. As members of Christ's body, it's time to face this issue, to increase our awareness, to learn what is true; so that we can become Christ's healing presence, a light of hope shining in the darkness of a culture that tolerates and even encourages relationship violence.

Relationship violence is a pattern of learned behavior in which one person uses force to control another person in an intimate relationship. This behavior may include a cycle of emotional, physical, sexual, and/or spiritual abuse. Abuse occurs in all kinds of families, crossing lines of socio-economic status, race and religion. Women and children are most vulnerable to being victimized by this kind of violence.

The problem is pervasive. For a statistical summary visit: http://www.ncadv.org/files/DV_Facts.pdf . The statistics go on and on and they are absolutely staggering. God has called us to be instruments of his righteousness and justice in the world. There are many ways for those interested in ending domestic abuse to get involved. Listen, perhaps he is calling you into this arena.