

# RAPE RECOVERY

## DEFINITIONS

### A. What Is Rape?

- Rape is sexual intercourse by threat, force or deception.<sup>1</sup>
- The Latin word for rape is rapere, which means "to seize."<sup>2</sup>

### B. What Is Statutory Rape?

- Statutory rape is sexual intercourse with a female or male under the legal age of consent, with or without force.<sup>3</sup>
- The legal age of consent varies per state.
- Consent is not an issue.

### C. What Is Aggravated Sexual Assault?

- Aggravated sexual assault is a legal term used in the prosecution of a statutory rape offense.
- The term aggravated also applies to the visible display of a weapon or the threat of death or kidnapping to anyone above statutory age.

Myth:

"Women secretly want to be raped."

Truth:

No one wants to be a victim of a violent, criminal act. No one wants to be violated either emotionally or sexually by another person.

#### D. What Is Stranger Rape?

- Stranger rape is forced sexual intercourse by one who is unknown to the victim.

Myth:

"Provocative women cause rape."

Truth:

No one causes one person to rape another. A person who appears vulnerable is the most probable victim. Regardless of how a person dresses or presents herself, no one deserves to be raped. The ultimate responsibility lies on the rapist, not on the victim.

#### E. What Is Mate Rape?

- Mate rape or spousal rape is defined as forced sexual relations by a husband.
- Many states exempt a husband from prosecution for the rape of his wife with whom he is currently living.

Myth:

"A wife must be subject to sexual relations at any time with her husband. The Bible says wives are not to deprive their husbands sexually."

1 Cor 7:4

Truth:

A wife is not a piece of property. Sexual expression was designed by God to be an act of love, not an act of violence. Forced sex is not motivated by love.

Col 3:19

#### F. What Is Acquaintance Rape?

- Over half of the rapes committed are by someone known to the victim (boyfriend, relative, coworker, neighbor, friend, spouse). These rapes are the most difficult to convince a victim to report.

—Date Rape

Three Stage Setup

Intrusion

- Perpetrator invades victim's space
  - unwanted touch
  - uncomfortable looks
  - undesirable questions
- Victim tries not to be bothered

Desensitization

- Perpetrator pushes against victim's sensitivity
  - brasher words

- bolder advances
- Victim becomes accustomed to the intrusion

### Isolation

- Perpetrator gets victim alone
- using deception
- using force
- Victim feels need to be polite
- remains passive and is ultimately raped

"I care about a young woman who said she was a victim of date rape, yet she was not aware of being raped. Is that even possible?"

Unfortunately, yes—especially with the increased availability of date rape drugs. For example, a very small amount of GHB (gamma hydroxy butyrate) slipped into a beverage quickly impairs a woman to such an extent that she loses the ability to resist unwanted sex. Usually losing total consciousness, she has no control of her body or mind; therefore she becomes powerless to protect herself against such an attack. Once under the influence of what is called "liquid ecstasy," she becomes a prime target for date rape, which for some literally leads to death. The Bible gives this warning,

Prov 26:24-25

"What can I do to prevent someone from slipping me a date rape drug?"

Someone may plan to immobilize you with a date rape drug by putting it into your beverage without your knowledge. However, if you are discerning, you can avoid being caught in a covert sexual trap by following three basic precautions.

- Be observant to make sure the beverage handed you was poured from the original container.
- Do not drink a beverage handed to you by a stranger. Never leave your drink unattended. If you need to leave your table and don't have someone you trust to watch your drink, order a new one when you get back.
- Do not date a man unless you or someone you respect can attest to his character. Prov 3:21

## CHARACTERISTICS

### A. Characteristics of an Acquaintance Rapist

Many rape victims live in fear of being raped again. Realize that those who appear most vulnerable are the most likely to be assaulted. Therefore, being aware of those around you can be your greatest protection. If someone displays a number of the following characteristics, you would be wise to avoid being in a place where he could take advantage of you.

- Does he . . .
  - appear emotionally immature?
  - ask intrusive questions about your life?
  - act aggressive or too forward?

- use the "blame game" to make you feel guilty?
- view women as adversaries?
- command your attention when you are with others?
- see women as conquests?
- demand your compliance when you say no?
- lack empathy toward others?
- exhibit seething or short-tempered anger?
- lack social consciousness?
- project a macho message about himself?
- boast about his physical prowess?
- interject "we" words to include himself?
- include himself in your activities?
- speak negatively about women in general?
- behave jealously toward you?
- seek to separate you from your friends?
- act possessive of you?
- use his charm to lower your defenses?
- invade your personal space?
- ignore your stated boundaries?
- accuse you of being too uptight?
- try to touch you inappropriately? Prov 18:15

## B. The Three Stages to Recovery 4

## #1 The Trauma Stage

For approximately two days to two weeks, the victim is in a crisis.

Ps 4:8

### Terror

- Emotionally
- extreme fear
- Physically
- flashbacks/nightmares

### Refusal

- Emotionally
- denial
- RAPE RECOVERY
  
- Physically
- memory loss, sleeplessness Anger
- Emotionally
- rage
- Physically
- inability to eat, crying

### Uncontrollable actions

- Emotionally
- overwhelmed

- Physically
- hysteria, sobbing

#### Misplaced guilt

- Emotionally
- self-blame
- Physically
- nausea, diarrhea

#### Anxiety

- Emotionally
- apprehension
- Physically
- severe muscle tension, fatigue

#### #2 The Teetering Stage

For a year or longer, perhaps until death, the victim will seesaw up and down, sometimes suppressing emotions and sometimes surfacing emotions.

Prov 29:25

- Fears of the Victim . . .
- being alone
- reactions of loved ones: rejection, abandonment
- being followed
- one's ability to judge character

- strange places
- pregnancy
- the dark
- venereal disease, AIDS
- the rape site
- intimacy with males

"How can I go on with my life since I've been raped? God seems far away."

We are all impacted by our past, but God doesn't want us impaired by our past. Rape is a sin, and God hates sin. So God hates what has happened to you. He knows your heart has been traumatized. It's natural for your heart to feel numb. The Lord is not far away from you.

Ps 34:18

### #3 The Trusting Stage

- The victim views the incident with a balanced perspective.
- Not trusting everyone, but selecting trustworthy friends
- Not trusting all circumstances, but trusting God, who is over all circumstances

Prov 3:5-6

"How can I ever trust any man again after having been raped?"

Be aware of a tendency that many people experience after trauma: they "over generalize." For you, that means ascribing one man's sin to all men. There are godly men as well as ungodly men, just as there are godly women and ungodly women.

Would you consider the apostle Paul untrustworthy? And what about Joseph, who fled when his boss' wife sought to seduce him —do you consider him untrustworthy? Many trustworthy men today have followed in the footsteps of Job, making a covenant before God to remain sexually pure.

Job 31:1

"What do I do when my wife, who was raped several years ago, continues to withdraw from me sexually? She says she even hates me at times."

If you were on a running team and then you broke your leg, you would not expect to run like you did before. Likewise, your wife has been broken and the "break" may not have been set correctly. Thus, she remains emotionally crippled and unable to respond to you as she did before. Healing requires time and the correct setting.

Ask what she needs from you and what she doesn't need from you, and then respond with compassion. Ask her to forgive you for any insensitivity on your part and to help you understand what you do that elicits feelings of hatred in her toward you. Instead of focusing on what she is withholding from you, see her as a broken creation of God whose heart needs healing.

Ps 147:3

## CAUSES OF RAPE

### A. Types of Rapists

- Revenge rapist—motivated by desire to punish
- Assault rapist—motivated by a desire to hurt, mutilate or murder
- Power rapist—motivated by a desire to control
- Erotic rapist—motivated by desire to experience increasingly perverted acts as seen in pornography

### B. Cultural Causes

Rape is a crime of violence that is reported every six minutes in the United States.

- Decline of moral values
- Disrespect for the dignity of women
- Degrading pornography
- Delinquency of the legal system to prosecute the violators and protect future victims
- Decision of victims not to report rape

### C. Root Cause

Wrong Belief:

"I can exert power and control by having sex with anyone I choose because I have a need to feel significant."

Right Belief:

Sexual expression was created by God as a picture of intimacy and relationship. My significance is based on my personal relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isa 43:1,4

Read also 2 Cor 5:17-21.

## STEPS TO SOLUTION

A. Key Verse to Memorize

Ps 34:18

B. Key Passage to Read and Reread

Ps 37

C. ABC's of Response to Rape

Assure your own safety. (Read Ps 23.)

- Relax.
- Breathe deeply.

- Repeat positive self-talk. Ps 23:1,4
- Wrap yourself in a warm blanket.

Begin a support system of help.

- Report incident to the police. (In order to preserve physical evidence, do not wash or shower.)
- Ask a friend to take you for medical care to check for injuries and/or venereal diseases.
- Seek legal advice to learn the rights of rape victims.

Prov 23:12

Call on others for emotional support.

- Call someone you trust.
- Call a rape crisis center.
- Seek professional counseling. Prov 18:24

"What can I do on behalf of my teenage daughter who was raped by an older student at school? The school principal refuses to meet with me, and the police are barely responding."

Since the principal is so unresponsive, you could appeal to a higher authority and then keep the incident constantly before the authorities until appropriate action is taken. Consider these other avenues of appeal.

- Contact the President of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Advocate before the school board and PTA for rape prevention to be addressed within the school. If you know a law enforcement officer, ask for advice as to how to proceed. Contact your local newspaper and television station if all else fails,

appealing to them to report the situation. Make sure these agencies agree to keep your daughter's identity confidential.

- Contact an attorney to be your advocate. Investigate the school's liability if the school takes no action against the boy. What happens if he rapes another student?

Note that when the apostle Paul was being treated unjustly by the Jewish Court, he appealed to Caesar's Court. Thus, appealing to a higher authority is indeed Biblical.

Acts 25:10-11

Tell Yourself the Truth

Perhaps more than any other group of people, rape victims experience an ongoing battle and frequent defeat because of the lies they believe—lies about themselves, lies about the future, lies about God. The best way to combat the lies is to continually tell yourself the truth. Assess the lies you have believed, then every single day simply determine that you will believe God's truth.

John 8:32

Lie:

"I just can't get through this."

Truth:

The Lord, your God, will walk with you all the way through to the end.

Isa 43:2

Lie:

"I don't think I'll ever quit crying."

Truth:

In time, your weeping will wane, and joy will return to your heart.

Ps 30:5

Lie:

"I will always feel dirty."

Truth:

A dirty-minded person did something despicable to you, but you are not dirty! Every day, claim your true identity in Christ—you are holy and without blemish.

Col 1:22

Lie:

"No good could ever come out of this."

Truth:

God promises that what others do for evil, He will use for good. In time, you will see this promise lived out in your life.

Rom 8:28

Lie:

"I feel totally alone. God's not even here with me."

Truth:

When you allow Christ inside your heart, you are never alone. As you wake up every morning, repeat this passage to God,

Ps 139:18

Lie:

"No one will want to marry me."

Truth:

Until the Lord brings a husband into your life, He promises to be your husband, your provider, your protector.

Isa 54:5

Lie:

"I will never want sexual intimacy. My memories are too painful."

Truth:

The Lord is able to heal all emotional hurt, no matter how severe the memories.

Jer 17:14

Lie:

"I don't have the strength to go on."

Truth:

When you don't have strength to live from day to day, the Lord Jesus will give you His strength.

Phil 4:13 Read Isa 40:28-31.

Lie:

"My life is now too damaged to ever be used by God."

Truth:

You can now have compassion for those who have experienced the same trauma. You can now reach out with true care and compassion.

2 Cor 1:4

Lie:

"I will always be consumed by fear."

Truth:

All people experience fear when their lives are truly in danger; that is normal. But the Lord will deliver you from excessive fear because of His presence within you.

Deut 31:8

Lie:

"I have no hope for the future."

Truth:

Because God is a God of hope, your future is safe in His hands.

Jer 29:11

## D. The Sacrifice of Suffering

Dr. Helen Roseveare is no stranger to terror. This medical missionary lived in the Congo for over 12 years. Then one day she experienced the trauma of her life. During a time of severe disunity between the blacks and the whites, a civil uprising erupted.

Why? Oh God, why? The why in life is the most common question of all . . . especially during a time of terror.

During a ten week siege, thousands of black natives were butchered. As a result, the whites became enemies of the blacks, and 27 missionaries were slaughtered. The remaining missionaries were taken captive, and on one horrific night Dr. Helen Roseveare was flung to the ground, kicked, beaten and raped; her teeth broken, her ribs bruised, her mouth and her nose severely gashed.

On the night of her rape, she couldn't understand why all this was happening to her. She literally wanted to die because she knew the brutality that fellow missionaries had experienced. Yet God quietly spoke to her, "Could you thank Me for trusting you with this experience even if I never tell you why?"

### RAPE RECOVERY

Helen thought, God, I thank You. I haven't a clue why or how, but I'll take it from You that You know what You're doing, that You can never make a mistake. You cannot fail. Your promise must stand true. So, God I'll thank You for trusting me with this even though I haven't any idea how anybody could ever be helped by it.

Soon afterward, Helen received the death sentence along with the other missionaries. As they were herded away in a group, she had

to lean against others to walk because her body had been so brutalized.

When the leader of the rebels spotted her, he asked, "Who made you in that mess?"

She answered, "One of your lot."

The rebel leader responded, "You're a liar."

She said, "I'll name him for you."

So, the rebel leader called a People's Court. However, before they assembled he instructed the tribesmen to yell, "She's a liar . . . she's a liar!" after her testimony.

The time came for her trial. She truthfully told this large assembly the details of the assault. Then something miraculous happened. When she finished, the voices of 800 men were heard weeping. They recognized that this was their doctor speaking. She had birthed their babies, cared for their cuts and nursed their wounds. Yet, to their dismay, one of their own had raped her.

To her amazement, over the weeks and months that ensued, a spiritual breakthrough occurred for the first time in 12 years—a breakthrough that had never occurred before. People were saved . . . hearts were touched because finally they identified with her suffering. Even the Greeks in the area wanted to know how to come into this relationship with Jesus Christ, and they were saved.

Later, back in her native country of England, Helen was a frequent guest speaker. One evening she was led by the Lord to take the rare opportunity to refer to her rape. There were two girls still left in the auditorium after she had finished speaking. One girl asked, "Can you speak to my sister? . . . Five weeks ago she was raped . . . for five weeks she has not spoken a word to anyone."

The other girl ran, sobbing uncontrollably, and flung her arms around Helen. For three hours this young victim of rape talked nonstop about the incident. Ultimately, the two who had shared the same experience parted—both with peace in their hearts. What made the difference? The young girl simply said,

"No one ever told me that I could thank Him for trusting me with the experience even if He didn't tell me why."

"Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly  
Shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why.  
The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned."

—part of a poem given to Helen Roseveare as a teenager

## Suffering

Seek, through prayer, God's supernatural help to overcome the negative consequences of rape.

1 John 5:14-15

Understand that Christians are not immune to misfortune, but are called to suffering.

1 Peter 2:21

Forgive the offender, and leave the revenge to God. (Ask God for the power of Christ to do this in you—you cannot do it yourself.)

Rom 12:19

Forgive others (family members and friends) and most of all yourself.

Col 3:13

Exchange your old identity for your new identity in the person of Christ.

Phil 3:7-9

Remember, the Lord is your Shepherd.

Ps 23

Incorporate reading and meditating on Scripture along with listening to praise music as a daily habit.

Isa 26:3

Notice and encourage others around you who are hurting. Your sensitivity and compassion for others will be a blessing to them and healing to you.

2 Cor 1:3-4

Glorify Christ by allowing His splendor to be displayed through you.

Isa 49:1-3

## E. Practical Precautions for Rape Prevention

### In The Home

Prov 28:26

- Install a reliable security system.
- Install deadbolt locks on all outside doors.
- Install a peephole in the front door.
- Do not open the door to anyone you are not expecting.
- For emergencies, have strangers wait outside. Keep the door locked and offer to make a phone call for them.
- Ask for identification from repairmen.
- Install electrical timers for lights to come on when you're not at home.
- As you drive into the garage, be alert and inspect your surroundings. Wait until the garage door fully closes before getting out of the car.
- When alone at night, do not enter your driveway if headlights are following you.
- Have a "safe room," with a deadbolt lock and a phone, inside your home.
- Keep working flashlights in several rooms of the house.
- Don't give out personal information over the phone.

Prov 14:8

### Away From Home

### Prov 3:21-23

- Trust your instincts, and exercise caution whenever you sense danger.
- Look confident and assured when walking.
- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings.
- Check the backseat of your car before getting in.
- Have your keys ready to unlock car doors quickly, and lock them again immediately as you get in.
- Park in busy, well-lit parking lots.
- Never go over to a stranger's car to answer a question.
- In elevators, make eye contact with other passengers and be alert.
- If possible, travel with a cell phone with 911 programmed.
- Don't shop alone in malls or grocery stores late at night.
- If leaving shopping malls late at night, ask the security guard to walk you to your car.
- Beware of staged incidents and requests for help.

### Prov 22:3

Rape is not merely an impulsive act of passion, but rather a venomous act of violence. It can poison the identity and value of the victim, often leaving the victim feeling worthless and unworthy. The Lord, however, is your Redeemer, offering total

recovery. He gives every believer a new identity—His identity. Indeed, the Lord is your Shepherd who promises to restore your soul.

#### PRACTICAL DO'S AND DON'TS WHEN HELPING A RAPE VICTIM

Don't react with shock or horror.

Do . . . Respond with compassion.

Don't suggest the victim could have avoided it.

Do . . . Affirm that the victim is not at fault in any way.

Don't ask for details of the incident.

Do . . . Suggest the victim write down the details for authorities.

Don't offer quick and simplistic answers.

Do . . . Encourage the victim with God's unfailing love.

Don't press the victim to initiate immediate forgiveness.

Do . . . Refer the victim to professional counseling.

Don't criticize choices or decisions made by the victim.

Do . . . Strongly suggest the victim report the crime.

Don't infer that this was God's chastisement for sin.

Do . . . Encourage medical treatment.

Don't change the subject.

Do . . . Urge the victim to write out her feelings.

Don't speak at all if you don't know what to say.

Do . . . Comfort with your presence.

Eccl 3:7

Jer 31:3