



# FAITH & FACTS

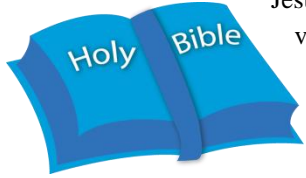
## Domestic Violence

### Women and Children

### What does the Bible say?

Jesus' concern for the victim is seen in the story of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25-37**). By concluding this parable with the words, "Go and do likewise,"

Jesus indicates that we are to receive all people who have been violated or abused, who are weak or vulnerable, with particular compassion and caring.



I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. (**John 13:34**)

Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband. (**Ephesians 5:3**)

### What does The United Methodist Church say?

The Social Principles state: "We recognize that family violence and abuse in all its forms--verbal, psychological, physical, sexual--is detrimental to the covenant of the human community. We encourage the Church to provide a safe environment, counsel and support for the victim. While we deplore the action of the abuser, we affirm that person to be in need of God's redeeming love." (§ 161.H)

The United Methodist Church affirms the sacredness of all persons and their right to safety, nurture and care. It names domestic violence and sexual abuse as sins and pledges to work for their eradication. The church commits itself to listen to the stories of battered spouses, rape victims, abused children, adult survivors of child sexual abuse, and all others who are violated and victimized.



The church further commits itself to provide leadership in responding with justice and compassion to the presence of domestic violence and sexual abuse among its membership and within the community at large. (*2008 Book of Resolutions*, "Violence Against Women and Children")

### What do the facts say?

Globally, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some other way most often by someone she knows, including by her husband or another male family member; one woman in four has been abused during pregnancy. (*Johns Hopkins School of Public Health*)



Thirty percent of women murdered in the U.S. are murdered by their husbands, ex-husbands or boyfriends. (*U.S. Bureau of Crime Statistics*)

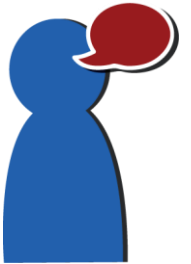
Christian women often feel compelled to stay in abusive relationships by scripture mandating them to submit to their husbands or turn the other cheek. Rather than offering resources and alternatives to battered women, pastors, priests and rabbis have often advised women to return to violent homes and be better wives. (*Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence*)

Abuse occurs in communities of every racial composition and every economic status, in rural areas as well as cities, in families adhering to every religion and to no religion. Men are also victims of domestic violence.

### What do you say?

Take action for justice ...

- Encourage all clergy and lay leaders to work collaboratively with community agencies on prevention strategies and to provide for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of victims, offenders, and other family members.
- If you reside in the United States, ask your Member of Congress to support the International Violence Against Women's Act which will establish an advisory Commission on International Violence Against Women and a strategy to prevent violence against women and girls. Take action at [www.umpower.org](http://www.umpower.org).



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