

Chaplains for Children : A Call for Collaboration between Faith and Child Protection Professionals

www.ncptc.org

Victor Vieth

Gundersen Health System's
National Child Protection Training Center



Why we need to work together

- ∞ 93% of sex offenders describe themselves as “religious” (**Abel study of 3,952 male offenders**)
- ∞ In a survey of 2,864 church leaders, 20% knew of a sex offender attending/member of their church (**Christianity Today 2010**)
- ∞ Hard core offenders maintaining significant involvement with religious institutions “had more sexual offense convictions, more victims, and younger victims.” **Eshuys & Smallbone, *Religious Affiliations Among Adult Sexual Offenders (2006)***
- ∞ Church provides “cheap Grace”, gullible religious people, and easy access to children (**Vieth 2010**)
- ∞ Large numbers of children severely injured or killed in the name of God (**Vieth 2014**)
- ∞ Few seminaries provide training on child maltreatments (**Grossehoeme 1989**)

The agenda

- ✧ **Spiritual injuries resulting from sexual abuse**
- ✧ **Clergy as support person for children who must testify**
- ✧ **The role of the faith community in providing additional resources for abused children**
- ✧ **Working together on prevention**
- ✧ **Addressing vicarious trauma**
- ✧ **Recognizing and responding to ACEs**
- ✧ **Reducing child deaths and injuries from abuse**
- ✧ **The difference clergy can make**

Working together to address spiritual abuse



Prevalence of spiritual abuse

- ☞ Most offenders use a religious or spiritual theme in the abuse (Vieth 2011)
- ☞ In review of 34 studies of 19,090 adult victims, the majority had spiritual injuries (Walker, et al 2009)

The impact of abuse on spirituality

- ✎ A study of 527 child abuse victims (physical, sexual or emotional) found these victims had a “significant” spiritual injury
- ✎ The injuries included feelings of guilt, anger, grief, despair, doubt, fear of death and belief God is unfair.
- ✎ However, the victims reported praying more frequently & having a “spiritual experience.”
- ✎ **Lawson, et al, Child Abuse & Neglect (1998)**

When the perpetrator is clergy, the impact on spirituality is greater

- ✎ Clergy use “religious cover” to justify abuse (i.e. their “good works” overshadow the abuse; God gave this child to me)
- ✎ Clergy often communicate this cover to the victims
- ✎ When this happens, church attendance of these survivors decreases, less likely to trust God, and their relationship with God “ceases to grow.”
McLaughlin, Devastated Spirituality: The Impact of Clergy Sexual Abuse on the Survivor’s Relationship with God (1994).

Spirituality-Based Blocks to Disclosing Child Abuse

*Vieth, When Faith Hurts: Overcoming
Spirituality Based Blocks & Problems
Before, During and After the Forensic
Interview (Revised & Expanded), 2(10)
CenterPiece (2011)*

Perpetrator Induced

- ⌘ Perpetrator manipulates child's faith to convince the child that he/she is sinful (i.e. child's biological reaction means child enjoyed contact as much as perpetrator)
- ⌘ The victim who initiated sexual contact as means of “getting it over with.”

Child induced

- ✎ Even if perpetrator does not manipulate child's faith, the victim's own analysis of a religious doctrine may cause a block
- ✎ Example: my conversation with a 13 year old
- ✎ Seven year old: "Am I still a virgin in God's eyes?"

Doctrinal induced

- ☞ **A child may correctly understand a religious doctrine—and may be tormented by its application**
- ☞ **The police officer in the back of the room**

Institution induced

- ✎ Many faith institutions are more interested in addressing the spiritual needs of perpetrators than victims
- ✎ Many members of a congregation will rally around the perpetrator
- ✎ Even if a perpetrator confesses, many church leaders urge reconciliation (the Sunday School teacher)
- ✎ The case of the crowded courtroom

Religious leader induced

- ☞ Numerous studies document that when the perpetrator is a faith leader, the damage to the child's psyche is particularly pronounced
- ☞ One victim's comments about the Eucharist

Religious leader induced

Jack Schaap, Indiana Pastor, Claimed Jesus Wanted Him To Have Sex With Teenage Girl

The Huffington Post | By Meredith Bennett-Smith  Posted: 03/14/2013 4:53 pm EDT | Updated: 03/15/2013 
12:26 pm EDT

 Recommend

 11,215 people recommend this.



Jack Schaap, a former megachurch pastor accused of having sex with a teenage girl, gives an animated sermon on "Polishing the Shaft."

YouTube

Pastor Schaap

- ✎ Schaap's teenage victim “particularly susceptible to this offense due to her mental state.” *Probation pre-sentence report*
- ✎ Schaap sees an e-mail the teenager in his church is “frightened, confused, and emotionally traumatized” and was engaging in “self-destructive behaviors.”
- ✎ The e-mail notes the child has “a tender heart and...is still very teachable and moldable.”

Pastor Schaap

- ✎ One week later, Schaap begins to “counsel” victim
- ✎ Among the victim’s troubles, she discloses an emotional breakup with boyfriend
- ✎ Schaap transitions from pastor to friend to child molester—sexually assaulting the teenager in 3 states

Schaap's letter to victim

∞ “You opened your heart wide to me—you made me more than a Pastor/Rescuer—you made me your friend, your confidant, your beloved....In our ‘fantasy talk’ you have affectionately spoken of being ‘my wife.’ That is exactly what Christ desires for us. He wants to marry us & become eternal lovers! I tried to craftily catch your heart...Thank you for the privilege of helping a struggling teenager...You have such a wonderful life ahead of you. I must be careful not to spoil that with my selfish fantasy desires...When we get scared, Jesus sends his spirit to live within us...I must follow the example of Christ. I have espoused you to Him as a chaste virgin...”

Victim's letter to Schaap

☞ “I was in love with you and I would not admit that I was a victim...I also felt so guilty and partially responsible, like maybe it was my fault....Then I became really angry towards God. For a second I did not believe in God. I thought there can't be a God because he would not let this happen and if there is a God, I hate him because he let this happen because you told me that he was OK with this...”

Victim's letter to judge

✎ “My entire life the Church has been my universe. Growing up, I watched (Schaap) in Church, listening to his sermons three times a week. I was raised by my parents and teachers to trust and obey my pastor. He was a celebrity to me, a father figure, and a man of God...I felt most safe when I was in Church. I first met (Schaap) when I was in kindergarten, and still had my baby teeth...”

Victim's letter to judge

∞ “As my pastor, I sought guidance and counseling when I was in need of help. He told me to confide in him...He told me I was special, that he loved me, and that he wanted to marry me. He told me that I was his precious gift from God...he made me believe what we were doing was okay and right in the eyes of God. I felt so special when he texted me from the holy alter during his sermons...”

Would Schaap's victim...

- ☞ Benefit from medical care?
- ☞ From psychological care?
- ☞ Spiritual care?

The role of spirituality in coping with abuse

- ✎ Researchers have found a victim's "spiritual coping behavior" may play a positive or negative role in the ability to cope with the abuse
- ✎ Victims of severe abuse and very young victims are more likely to remain "stuck" in their spiritual development (i.e. remain angry with God)
- ✎ Nonetheless many victims reporting "greater resolution" of childhood abuse were able to "actively turn to their spirituality to cope...rather than attempt to cope on their own." **Gall, *Spirituality and Coping with Life Stress Among Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, 30 Child Abuse & Neglect 829 (2006)***
- ✎ "Comforted by Velvet Paws"

Mental health professional may need clergy

- ✉ Clinicians lack knowledge or training to deal w/ spiritual issues
 - Survey of 400+ clinical psychologists – only 5% had training on religious or spiritual issues (Shafranske & Malony, 1990)

Clergy may need mental health professional

- ✎ Clergy more likely to have congregant seek help from them than clinician (Hohmann & Larson, 1993)
- ✎ Clergy not prepared to deal with serious abuse or mental illness (Vieth 2012)
- ✎ Clergy may fail to recognize suicide risk (Domino, 1985)

Types of Collaboration

(Bilich et al, 2000)

- ✎ Minister as consultant
- ✎ Therapist as consultant
- ✎ Referrals
- ✎ Limited collaboration
- ✎ Full collaboration
 - Therapy and spiritual guidance offered as integrated whole

Clergy as support person at trial



Support person

- ☞ Presence of support person helps children respond to questions at trial (Myers 2005)
- ☞ Legislation and case law supportive
- ☞ Basic kindness

Clergy as support person

- ✎ The case of the crowded courtroom
- ✎ The case of Father Murphy
- ✎ The case of Pastor Schaap—141 letters from parishioners supporting Schaap, victim forced out of church
- ✎ Can you think of cases where this may be helpful?

Clergy providing additional resources



Additional Resources

Adopt a Social Worker

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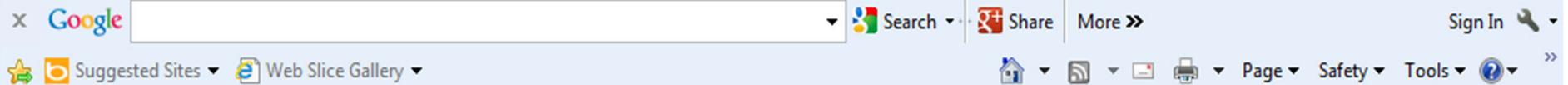
CLICK HERE

Clergy as leaders in prevention



Prevention

Church policies



JACOB'S HOPE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE
JACOB WETTERLING RESOURCE CENTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 • JUNE 2011

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N.C.P.T.C
NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION
TRAINING CENTER
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SUFFER THE CHILDREN: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE CHURCH POLICIES ON CHILD MALTREATMENT

By: Victor I. Vieth¹

Prevention

Policies

Updated May 9, 2012

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved by the Congregational Council of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on April 9, 2012.

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Chapter 1 Purpose

Prevention

Personal
safety classes

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La Crosse, Wisconsin USA

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[English](#)
[Procedural Brochures](#)
[Espanol \(Spanish\)](#)



PRAYER FOR HEALING VICTIMS OF ABUSE
God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Church Prevention works

- ☞ Personal safety classes—a lesson from Milwaukee
- ☞ Respite care—a lesson from Virginia

Clergy addressing vicarious trauma



Religion and well-being

- ∞ Even when controlling for age, race, ethnicity, region, socio-economic status, marital and child bearing status, “very religious” people scored higher than “moderately religious” or “non-religious” on Gallup’s “well-being index”
- ∞ This index measures life evaluation, physical health, emotional health, healthy behaviors, and work environment.
- ∞ Why?
 - Religions promote healthy behavior
 - Belief in God provides unique comfort in times of sorrow
 - Religion provides “super-charged” friends (Newport 2012)
- ∞ Helps cope with trauma

Military chaplains

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.goarmy.com/chaplain/about.html>. The search bar contains the word "chaplains". The website header features the U.S. Army logo and navigation links: TALK TO US, REQUEST INFO, LOCATE US, LEARN HOW TO JOIN, and APPLY ONLINE. A "LOG IN | REGISTER" button and "ASK SGT STAR" link are also present. The main navigation menu includes: ARMY STRONG: ABOUT THE ARMY, CAREERS & JOBS, BENEFITS, SOLDIER LIFE, FOR PARENTS, and a Site Search box.

The page content shows a breadcrumb trail: > HOME > ARMY CHAPLAIN CORPS > ABOUT ARMY CHAPLAINS. The main heading is "ARMY CHAPLAIN CORPS". Below the heading is a photograph of several Army chaplains in uniform standing in front of a brick building.

On the left side, there is a sidebar menu for "Army Chaplain Corps" with the following items:

- About Army Chaplains (expanded)
 - Requirements
 - Benefits & Incentives
 - Chaplain Basic Officer Leadership Course
 - Chaplain Assistant Program
- Chaplain Candidate Program >
- Corps Careers & Jobs
- Chaplain Profiles >

The browser's zoom level is set to 100%.

Hospital chaplains

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the Gundersen Lutheran Pastoral Care website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.gundluth.org/pastoral>. The search bar contains the text "gundersen lutheran pastoral care". The website header features the Gundersen Lutheran logo with the tagline "A Personal Relationship with Medical Excellence". Navigation links include "MyCare Access", "Contact Us", "For Clinicians", "For Employees", and "For Employers". There are also social media icons for YouTube and Facebook, a "SHOP" icon, and a search bar. The main navigation menu includes "Our Services", "Health Information", "Education & Research", "Employment", "About Us", and "Make a Gift". The main content area is titled "Pastoral Care" and features a large image of a woman and a man looking at a baby. To the right of the main content are two sidebars: "Find a Doctor" with search fields for "Search by Last Name" and "Search by Specialty", and "Quick Links" with a dropdown menu labeled "I Want To...". Below the main content, there is a "Pastoral Care" section with a list of links: "About Us", "Spiritual Needs", "Pastoral Care Staff", "Clinical Pastoral Education", and "Pastoral Stories". The text in this section states: "Gundersen Lutheran Pastoral Care and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) are an important part of Gundersen Lutheran's history of caring for mind, body, and spirit. Our staff has a deep respect and commitment to serve people of all faith traditions. Each hospital unit has a chaplain assigned to visit you and there is an on-call..." A small image of a woman and a man sitting on a couch is visible in the bottom right corner of the content area. The browser's status bar at the bottom shows a zoom level of 100%.

Google gundersen lutheran pastoral care

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Pastoral Care

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Pastoral Care

- ♦ About Us
- › Spiritual Needs
- ♦ Pastoral Care Staff
- ♦ Clinical Pastoral Education
- ♦ Pastoral Stories

Gundersen Lutheran Pastoral Care and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) are an important part of Gundersen Lutheran's history of caring for mind, body, and spirit. Our staff has a deep respect and commitment to serve people of all faith traditions.

Each hospital unit has a chaplain assigned to visit you and there is an on-call

100%

Fire department chaplains



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website for the Federation of Fire Chaplains. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://firechaplains.org/>. The search bar contains the text "fire chap". The website header features the FFC logo on the left, the title "Federation of Fire Chaplains" in the center, and a login form on the right with fields for "Email" and "Password", a "Remember me" checkbox, and "Login" and "Forgot password" buttons. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, Membership, Regions, Training & Resources, Events, and 2013 FFC Conference. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a "Welcome to the new FFC Site" section with a paragraph of text and a "Mission Statement" section. The right column contains an "Upcoming Events" section with a list of events.

Welcome to the new FFC Site
We are an international fellowship of Fire-Rescue Chaplains. From here you can learn about us, check out the news of the FFC, explore membership, and investigate our training. Members can sign in to access the [FFC directory](#), participate in a blog, view articles, update your profile, and renew your membership. We encourage contact to our officers and regional directors.

Mission Statement
The mission of the Federation of Fire Chaplains is to bring together persons interested in providing an effective Chaplain Service to

Upcoming Events

- [FFC Chaplain Training/Leesville, LA](#)
22 Mar 2013 • St Michael's Catholic Church
- [FFC Training/Kamloops BC](#)
04 Apr 2013 • Kamloops Fire/Rescue Training Centre
- [FFC Training/Moncton, New Brunswick](#)
12 Apr 2013 (EDT) • Moncton FD
- [FFC Chaplain Training/Ft. Worth, Texas](#)
19 Apr 2013 • Riley Conference Center, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, TX

Law enforcement chaplains

International Conference of... x

Google police chaplains Search Share More >> Sign In

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 **International Conference of Police Chaplains**
Serving all law enforcement chaplains

Home About Us Membership Chaplaincy Intro Credentialing Regions ATS News & Views

QUICKLINKS

- How to Join ICPC
- Regional Information
- Regional RTS Brochures
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- Members Only Section
- ICPC Store
- Journal Publications

100%

Corporate chaplains

Corporate Chaplains of America

Corporate Chaplains International

Serving companies coast to coast since 1996.

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Offering Meaningful Hope

The CCA Story from the Founder/CEO, Dr. Mark Cress

Are you a business owner considering Corporate Chaplains?

Frequently asked questions from HR managers about chaplaincy

75%

How about...

☞ **Chaplains for Children?**

☞ **Chaplains for Child Protection Professionals?**

- **A detective's question about fairness**
- **The child or children that got away**
- **“I said the wrong thing”**
- **Drip, drip, drip**

We need to work together in understanding
and responding to the impact of Adverse
Childhood Experiences



Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) : A Preview

- ☞ Over 17,000 men and women surveyed on 10 types of adverse childhood experiences (sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, witness of domestic violence, etc)
- ☞ Now over 25 ACE studies (1998 to present) (Kaiser Permanente, CDC)

1 or more ACE increases risk of:

- ☞ Cancer
- ☞ Heart disease
- ☞ STDs
- ☞ Liver disease
- ☞ Smoking
- ☞ Alcohol abuse
- ☞ Obesity
- ☞ Drug dependence
- ☞ IV Drug Use
- ☞ Early intercourse, pregnancy
- ☞ Depression
- ☞ Anxiety disorders
- ☞ Hallucinations
- ☞ Sleep disturbances
- ☞ Memory disturbances
- ☞ Anger problems
- ☞ Domestic violence risk
- ☞ Job problems
- ☞ Relationship problems

Effects of Exposure to DV

(Summers, 2006)

| | Infants | Preschool Age | School Age | Adolescents |
|------------|--|--|--|---|
| Behavioral | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Fussy•Decreased responsiveness•Trouble sleeping•Trouble eating | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Aggression•Behavior problems•Regressive behavior•Yelling, irritability•Trouble sleeping | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Aggression•Conduct problems•Disobedience•Regressive behavior | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Dating violence•Delinquency•Running away•Truancy•Early sexual activity |
| Social | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Trouble interacting with peers•Stranger anxiety | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Few and low quality peer relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Dating violence (victim or perpetrator)•Increased risk for teen pregnancy |

Effects of Exposure to DV

(Summers, 2006)

| | Infants | Preschool Age | School Age | Adolescents |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Emotional/ Psychological | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Attachment needs not met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fear/anxiety, sadness, worry •PTSD •Negative affect •Feeling unsafe •Separation anxiety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Somatic complaints •Fear & anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, shame •PTSD •Limited emotional response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Substance abuse •Depression •Suicidal ideation •PTSD •Feeling rage, shame •Unresponsiveness |
| Cognitive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inability to understand | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Self-blame | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Self-blame •Distracted, inattentive •Pro-violent attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Short attention span •Pro-violent attitude •Defensive |

Understand effects of DV on children through drawings

An eight-year-old was asked to draw a picture of his father. He wrote in Spanish:

“This is how I see my father because he often gets angry and drunk and his eyes turn red.”

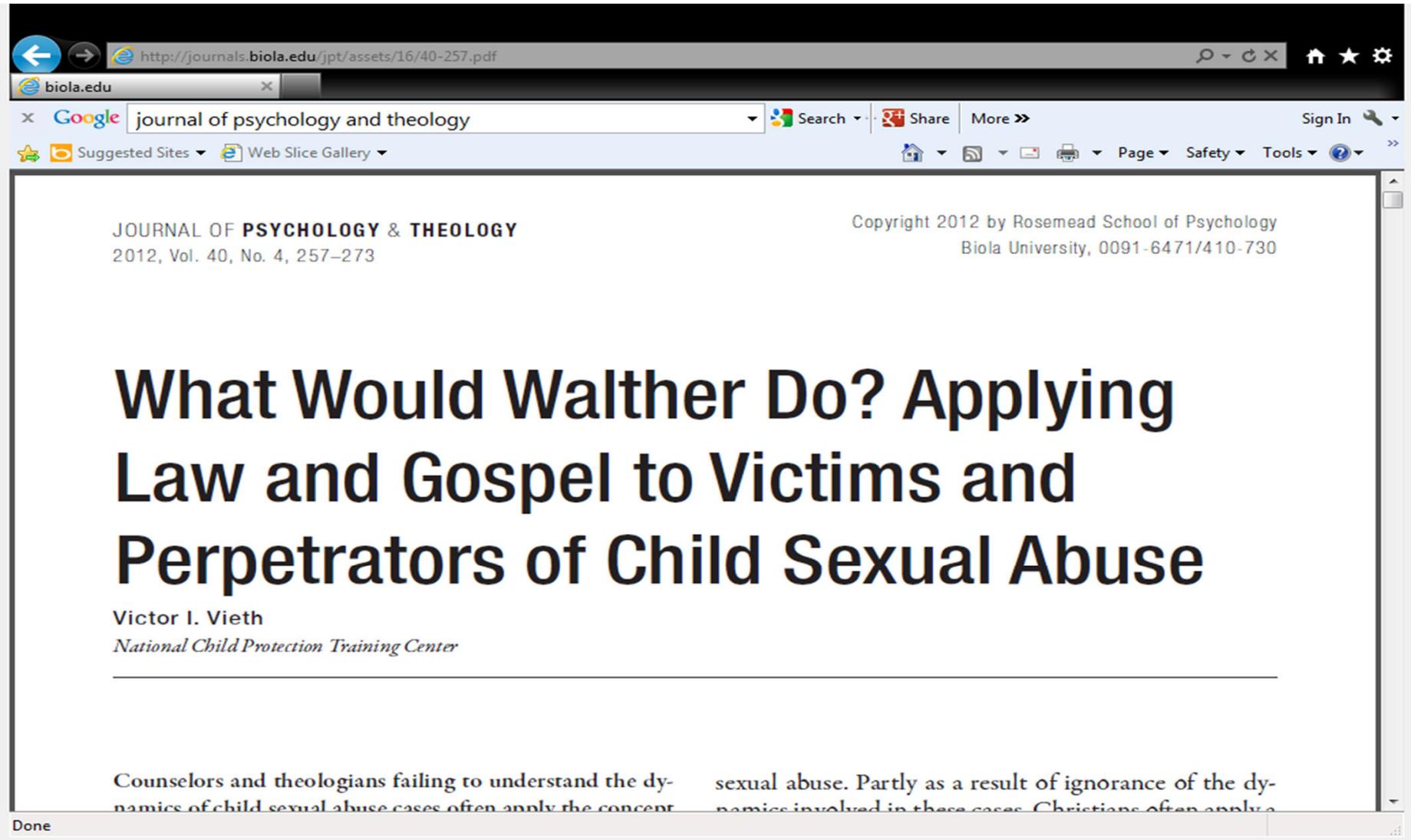
© CONNECT – Family Violence Prevention Fund



ACE and Law & Gospel

- ✠ If we don't understand ACE, we apply the law to victims and gospel to offenders
- ✠ "I consider church people easy to fool...They have a trust that comes from being Christians...They tend to be better folks all around. And they seem to want to believe in the good that exists in all people...I think they want to believe in people. And because of that, you can easily convince, with or without convincing words." Salter, Predators.

Advice for theologians



The image is a screenshot of a web browser window. The address bar shows the URL <http://journals.biola.edu/jpt/assets/16/40-257.pdf>. The browser's search bar contains the text "journal of psychology and theology". The page content includes the journal title "JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY & THEOLOGY" and the issue information "2012, Vol. 40, No. 4, 257-273". The copyright notice reads "Copyright 2012 by Rosemead School of Psychology, Biola University, 0091-6471/410-730". The main title of the article is "What Would Walther Do? Applying Law and Gospel to Victims and Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse", written by Victor I. Vieth, who is affiliated with the National Child Protection Training Center. The beginning of the article's abstract is visible at the bottom of the page, starting with "Counselors and theologians failing to understand the dynamics of child sexual abuse cases often apply the concept of..."

http://journals.biola.edu/jpt/assets/16/40-257.pdf

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What Would Walther Do? Applying Law and Gospel to Victims and Perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse

Victor I. Vieth
National Child Protection Training Center

Counselors and theologians failing to understand the dynamics of child sexual abuse cases often apply the concept of... sexual abuse. Partly as a result of ignorance of the dynamics involved in these cases, Christians often apply...

Done

When an offender confesses

- ∞ Inform him that sexual abuse contributes to significant health risks and that he should fully disclose his conduct to a medical care provider to ensure the child's physical well-being (Centers for Disease Control, ACE studies)
- ∞ Inform him that sexual abuse has a significant impact on a child's mental health and therefore the victim should be referred to an appropriate mental health provider (CDC, ACE studies)

When an offender confesses

- ∞ Inform him that SA results in significant spiritual damage and, in consultation with a religious counselor and pastor, we will need to address this issue. **Diane Langberg, *Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (2003)**
- ∞ Inform him he has committed a serious crime and that he should turn himself in to the police and be assessed by and follow the recommendations of a sex offender treatment provider
- ∞ If he refuses any of the above, his “repentance” should be questioned and the church should exercise appropriate discipline **(Vieth 2012)**

Assessing a perpetrator's "repentance" (Vieth 2012)

- ∞ Have you informed your spouse? If your spouse wants you to move out, are you willing to do so? If your child victim(s) want you to move out, are you willing to do so?
- ∞ Have you informed your child's medical provider? Have you referred your child to a therapist?
- ∞ Do you hold yourself fully responsible—or do you believe your child in some way contributed to the abuse?
- ∞ Have you turned yourself into the police? Will you be confessing and pleading guilty or will you make the government "prove it"? Will you allow your attorney to grill your victim at trial?
- ∞ Are you willing to enroll in a sex offender treatment program?

Managing sex offenders in church

In a survey of 2,864 church leaders,
20% knew of a sex offender
attending/member of their church
(Christianity Today 2010)

Managing sex offenders in church

1. Compliance with the law. Speak to the offender's probation officer and/or the local prosecutor.
2. Consultation with the sex offender's treatment provider. This will determine potential dangers and help the church in meeting the offender's needs.
3. Review court and investigative records. What charges were dismissed? What did the offender confess to?
4. Determine level of supervision necessary. Low risk may require a shadow, high risk separate services.

Managing sex offenders in church

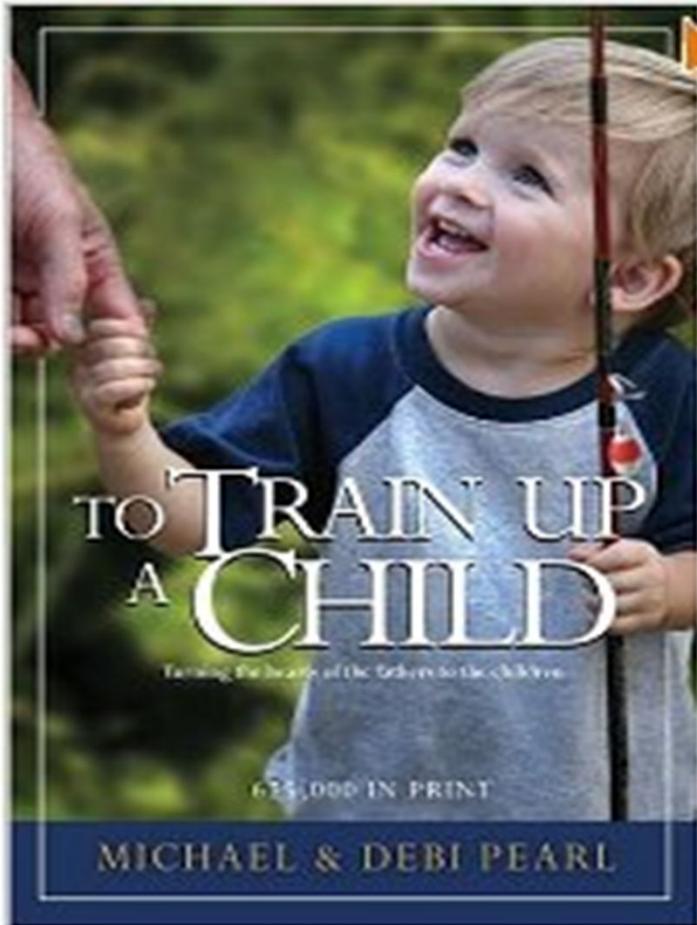
1. Sex offender should not be allowed to attend services with victim. This is true even if low risk.
2. If SO goes to different congregation—let them know of risks.
3. Be sensitive to the fears of parents and the emotions of all survivors.
4. Have a public congregational meeting.

Working together to reduce death, injury and
spiritual harm from physical abuse



To Train Up a Child

Click to **LOOK INSIDE**



✎ Michael and Debi Pearl

✎ Sold more than 650,000 copies

“Putting a rag doll to bed”

“ When your baby is tired and sleepy enough to become irritable, don’t reinforce irritability by allowing the cause and effect to continue...Get tough. Be firm with him. Never put him down and then allow him to get up. For the sake of consistency in training, you must follow through. He may not be able to sleep, but he can be trained to lie there quietly. He will very quickly come to know that any time he is laid down there is no alternative but to stay put. To get up is to be on the firing line and get switched back down. It will become as easy as putting a rag doll to bed.” The Pearls

“Ungodly Discipline”



Disciplined to death

DA: Kevin and Elizabeth Schatz Killed Daughter With "Religious Whips" for Mispronouncing Word

comments 22

Like 684

Tweet 46

+1 18

Share 4

More +

By Edecio Martinez Topics Daily Blotter



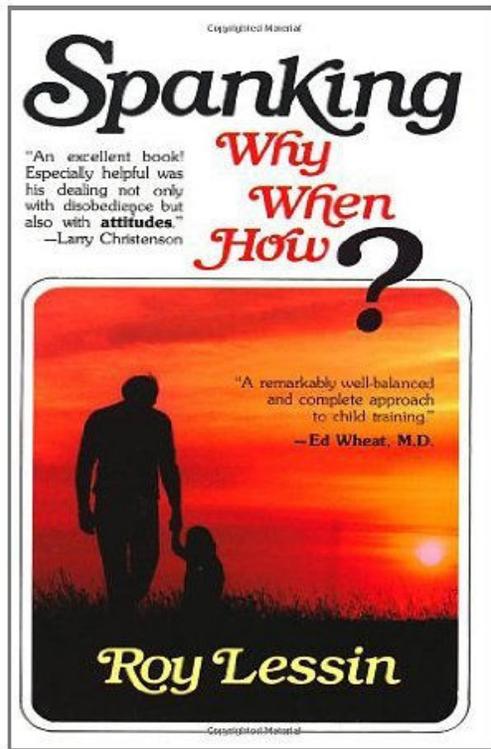
(CBS/KOVR)

CHICO, Calif. (CBS/KOVR) Three years ago, Kevin Schatz and his wife Elizabeth did something so noble, a local television station featured them; the pair decided to adopt three children from Liberia. Now, they're accused of killing one of the children because she mispronounced a word.

Spiritual damage

Roy Lessin, Spanking: Why, When & How (1979).

Photo from Lessin's book



A Roy Lessin Spanking: a child's perspective

“My first spanking was when I was six months old. My mother spanked me for crying after she put me to bed. She had to spank me repeatedly to teach me not to cry when she put me down. I know about this incident because my mother used to tell all the new mothers about how young I was when she started spanking me. My last spanking occurred when I was thirteen years old...”

A Roy Lessin Spanking: a child's perspective

“The Roy Lessin spankings that I remember most vividly took place between the ages of three and seven...My father would explain the reason for the spanking...I had already developed irritable bowel syndrome and would feel my guts cramp up with anxiety during his speech. Then he would ask me to take off my pants and underwear. I would feel deeply embarrassed because my father was not supposed to see me naked....”

A Roy Lessin Spanking: a child's perspective

∞ “The stick, paddle inscribed with Bible verses, or belt would swish violently through the air before slapping painfully...I would scream in pain and anguish...My parents were never concerned about the marks they left on my body...Pulling up my pants was incredibly painful...After we prayed, it was time for me to be happy. But my insides would be a mess...It would be a lesson I'd learn for life—being falsely happy regardless of how my body felt...

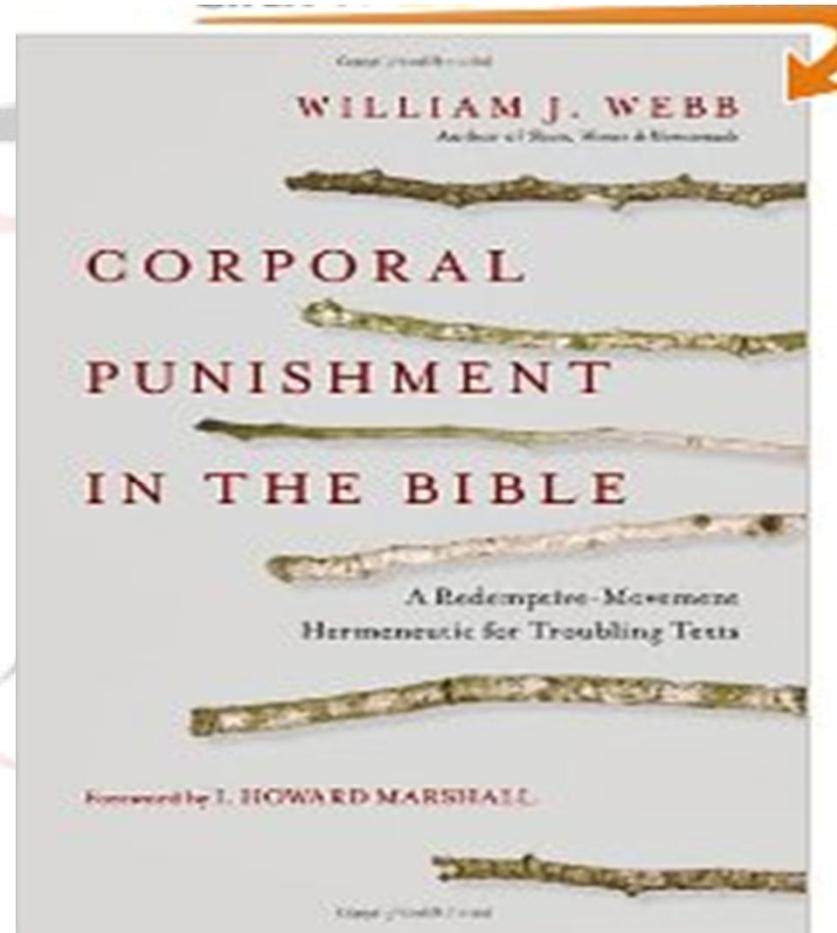
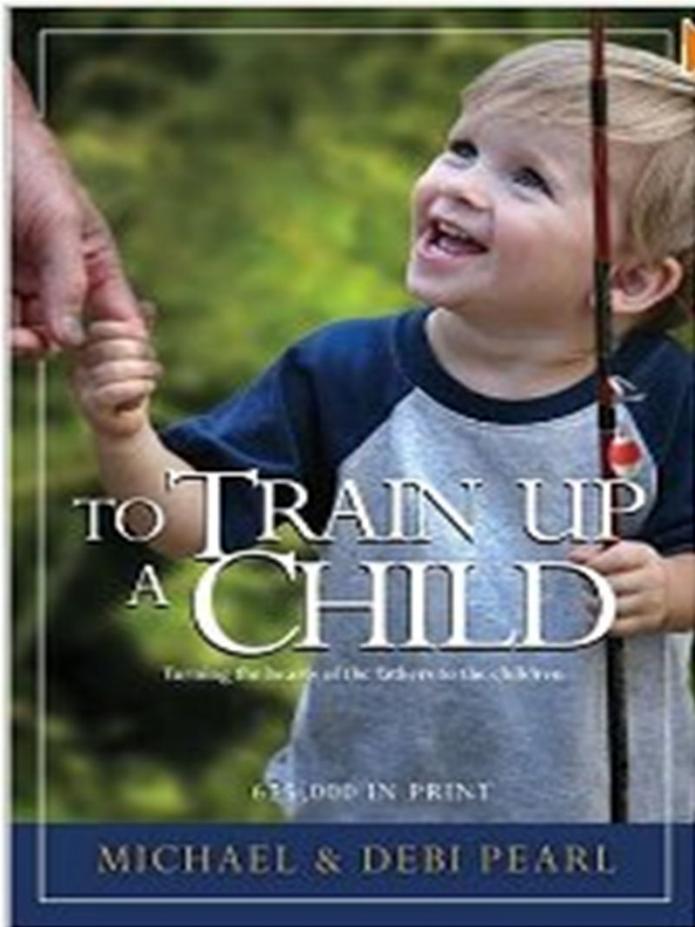
A Roy Lessin Spanking: a child's perspective

∞ For almost every day of my life, I fear people...I especially fear men in authority roles. I occasionally look even at people I know, and who I know to be safe, with terror just because they've spoken in a tone that reminds me of those early times. I fear making mistakes. I choose not to have children of my own because a child's screams scramble my insides. ..I now fight for my physical and mental health...I can't imagine God would condone such behavior in people who claim to be loving parents.”

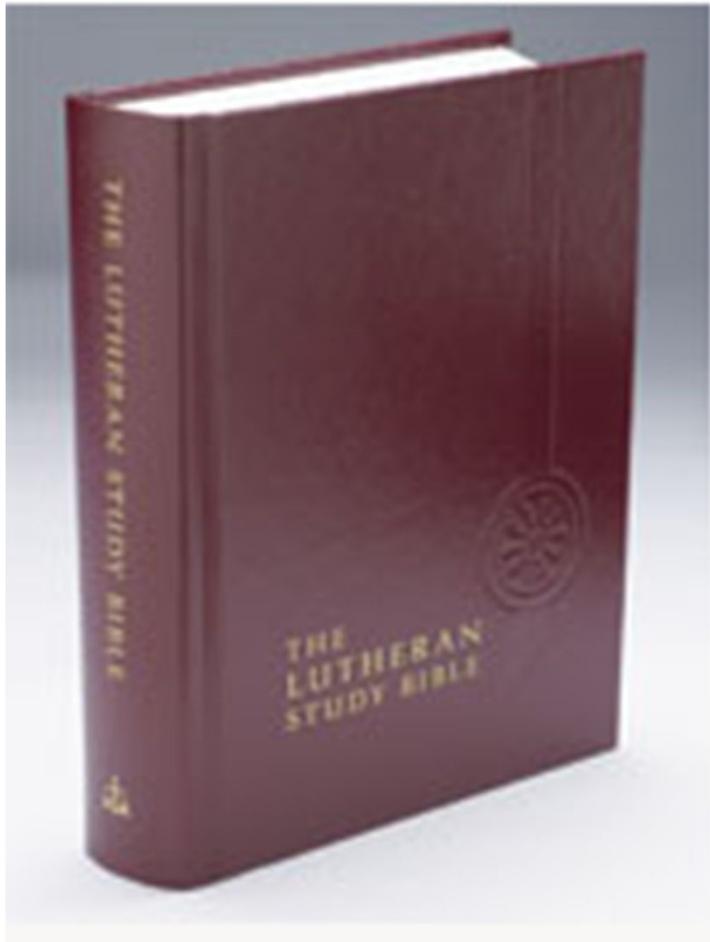
- Beth Finimore, How Spanking Changed My Life, www.DrMomma.org

Some clergy are responding

Click to **LOOK INSIDE**

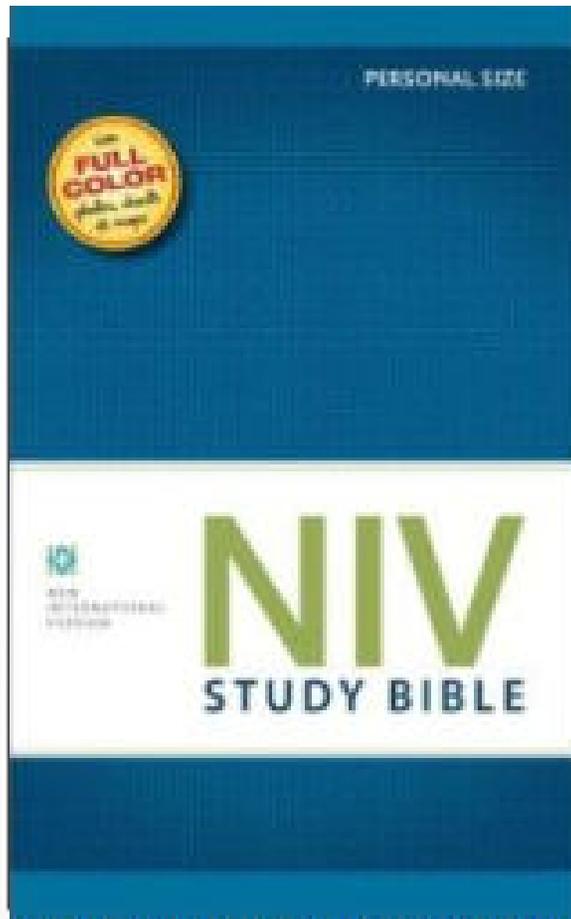


Some conservative commentators agree



- ✎ “Flogging was a common form of punishment. The ceremonial scepter held by rulers symbolized their authority to judge and discipline. Children are best ‘trained with kindness and delight. For children who must be forced with rods and blows will not develop into a good generation.’” The Lutheran Study Bible p. 1015 (Concordia 2009) (quoting Martin Luther’s Large Catechism).

And still more...



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✎ “Discipline is rooted in love...rod...is probably a figure of speech for discipline of any kind.”
(NIV Study Bible)

✎ 7 million copies sold

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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

Thou Shalt Not Abuse: Reconsidering Spanking

Misuse of biblical teaching on discipline can have deadly consequences.

A Christianity Today editorial [posted 1/16/2012 10:16AM]

Dead children have a way of shocking the conscience and making us angry. Especially a dead child like Hana Grace -Rose Williams, a 13-year-old adopted from Ethiopia by Washington State parents.

Police found Hana's body starved and naked, wrapped in a sheet in her adoptive parents' backyard. They had denied her food for days, locked her in a closet, forced her to sleep in a barn, and required her to use a Porta-Potty



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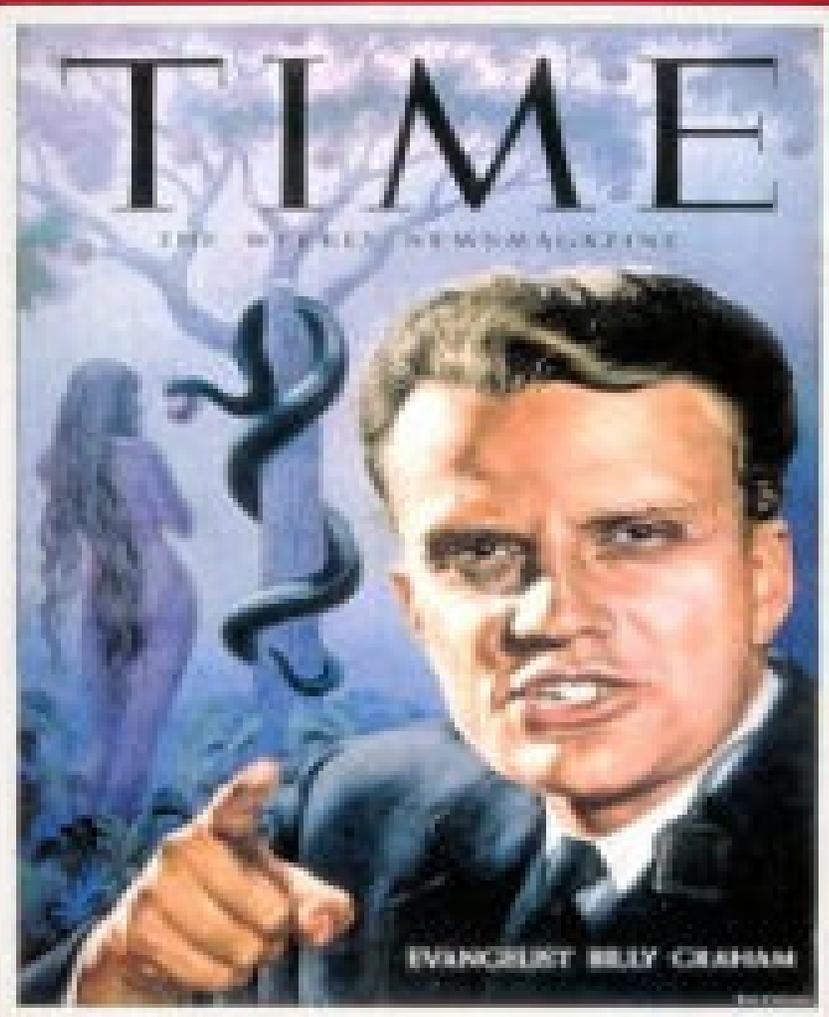


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The moderate mainstream



“Children are more impressed by the conduct of others than by lectures or spanking.”

--Billy Graham

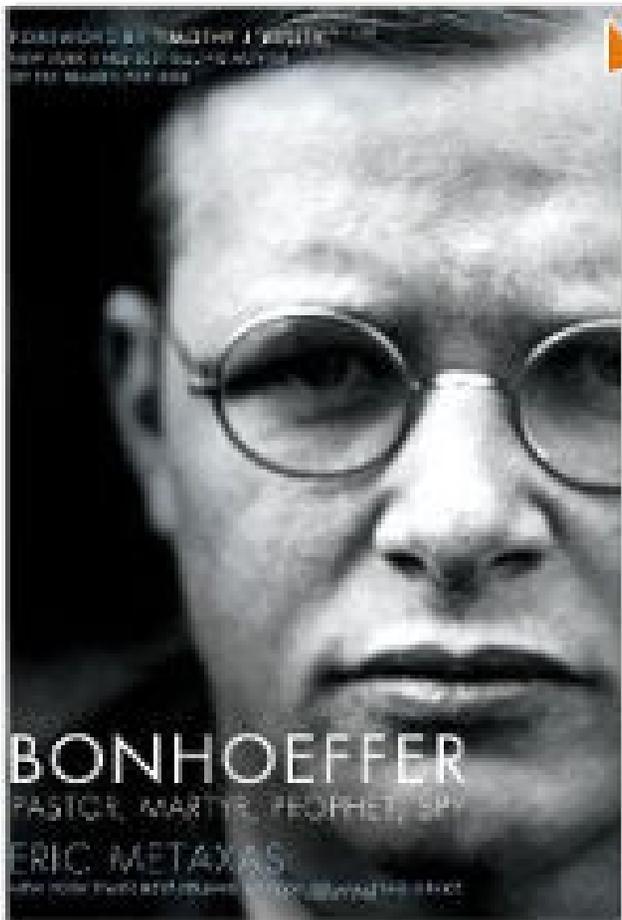
Why is this significant?

- ✎ Spankers more likely to use other forms of CP
- ✎ Aversive discipline more likely when parent is angry, depressed, fatigued, stressed
- ✎ 1003 Minnesota moms: 44% spanked most often when they had “lost it.” *See Gershoff, [Report on Physical Punishment in the United States: What Research Tells us About its Effects on Children](#)*

Can clergy make a difference?

 **My Mom's minister**

“Till the night be passed”



“Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to act is to act.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer