

Letter to the Abused

Here is a letter to the abused. I get you! So many people say “you just don’t know.” “You have not lived in my shoes.” These are all true statements. Yet, in a war there are many victims. The widow hurts. The poor get killed. Women get raped. The soldier gets killed. I would even say that everyone touched by war gets a scar. Does it matter how big the scar is? I watched a Korean show called *All of us are Dead*. It’s about zombies. The general made a decision that cost many lives for the better. He killed himself because innocent lives were lost because of his choices. Nobody escapes conflict.

I know a woman who decided to leave her husband. It’s hard to say if that was a good move. Yet, she seemed to win. This woman gained a new career, husband and many other wonderful things like monthly travels all over the world. Yep, she won! Why is she on antidepressants? Nobody wins in a war or divorce. A disagreement has a winner unless they compromise. What is the compromise? Is it letting the other win? Maybe you don’t get exactly what you wanted? What if giving in seemed better than fighting. Did you take one for the team? Is it abuse if you’re the one who always takes one for the team?

I am a man. Recently, I heard a comment that men don’t let women be free to choose. Of course, I scoffed at this notion. Sure, we let women decide and lead. Then I started listening to other friends I have. One persuaded his wife to buy a lesser product because of financial obligations. Another guy went to sporting events but was iffy on new furniture. Guys? What concerts do you see? Hers or yours? What trips do you go on? Hers or yours. Years ago, I wanted to travel an island. I planned it out even down to seeing the wife’s friends. Yet, she said the trip was a nightmare. Why? It’s because this man didn’t once ask her where she would like to go. I planned the whole thing right down to her friends.

What does God have to say? Jeremiah 29:11-13 *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”* Look at these verses. Where is “you will do it my way?” Where is “I know what’s best?” Sure, God knows best. Yet, I see the words “give you”; “I will listen”; and “plans to prosper you.” God may know what’s best but He also knows your heart and what you want and like. When do we sit down and ask those around us what they want? When do we listen and plan stuff to prosper them? Most of us don’t and possibly it’s mostly men.

I talked to a group of ladies on encouraging their men. More than a few of them were nervous. One said “but I might lose myself in the process.” Why is she married? If there was a risk of losing herself in the marriage, why is she there? Just don’t do anything that makes the spouse thrive. They might be happy and find friends that are happy. Especially if the spouse is not happy. That seems convoluted but hear me out. The Bible also asks us to train a child in the way they are bent and in their old age they will not depart from it. Imagine giving a spouse a happy life. Making their world wonderful and fruitful. In their old age won’t they be happy people? Next question! Do happy people want unhappy people with them? No, they bring happiness and joy to others around them. Especially those who bless them with kindness.

Happy satisfied people are not necessarily prideful, narcissistic, and selfish. Is it possible that they know what they want and go get it? My wife does not run. Yet, she blessed me with new runners knowing how much I love running. I have tried to bless her with the things she talks about. I want to go on a cruise. She wanted Sicily. We are going on a cruise to Sicily. It’s not rocket science.

Ok, having your opinion on a topic does not justify telling it. Gossip goes way farther than only naming people in the conversation. Abuse just might be getting your way, way too much. Abuse might be receiving your unasked comments way too much. Is it abuse when you are irritated at another person choices and lifestyle? Why let your actions hinder loving them as people. Why must they play ball your way? Maybe abuse is different than you think?

Two things with abuse. The first is it takes one to know one. Abusive people can see abuse. Usually, they are not that bothered by it. The excuses are plenty. Well, they had to. They had no choice. If the other person hadn't done this or that. The saying "give them an inch and they will take a mile" is very true. There are miles of excuses for the abusive. They will fight to death to defend other abusers too. Why? Abusive people don't like being singled out. Instead, they hide in numbers.

The second thing is the abused. I knew a lady who was abused for 28 years. That's a long time. Does she know what abuse is? Absolutely she does, yet she swore she never knew. Oh, she knew. The abused try and be nice about it. To give the benefit of the doubt. Yes, even for 28 years. I lived in an abusive family. I know what it looks like, smells like, and feels like. Honestly, abuse is pretty common around me.

How can the abused get past it? it's simple: call it out. Single them out. That includes yourself. Why are you enabling? Why are you helping them stay abusive? What if the abused fought back? Excuses are not fighting back. Talking to the hand is a good start. Don't remain the abuser's plush toy. You should be a plush toy to a warm happy person who loves you. The abused are only victims if they enable the abusers. Try being the hero defeating the abuse. It's way more fun.

