

I've Been Raped
by a Church!
A Recovery Guide
for the Wounded

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for the Wounded

by Vicky Elizabeth Lynch



Bladensburg, Maryland
www.conquestpublishers.com

Conquest Publishers
A division of Conquest Industries LLC
P.O. Box 611
Bladensburg, MD 20710-0611
www.conquestpublishers.com

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ISBN 13: 978-09883809-0-5

Library of Congress Control Number: 2012949864

Printed in the United States of America

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Dedication

I've Been Raped by a Church!—A Recovery Guide for the Wounded was written for every person who needs healing and restoration from past hurts, failures, frustrations, and disappointments as a result of church abuse. Since spiritual and emotional rape are just as traumatic as physical and sexual assault and can happen to anyone, the author speaks to both genders of any age. This material will benefit those within the church as well as those who are seeking a healthy church home. Those outside the church who are working to promote the health and healing of those within the church may also use this book. Church leaders can benefit from this guide by understanding the potential for abuse and how best to take the steps to avoid it.



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Foreword

The Lord has opened the spiritual eyes of his people against ungodly leadership. This book is not intended to discredit men or women of God in leadership positions who are thrusting believers into their purpose. Neither is it written to grant permission for believers to rebel and not submit to leadership. It is written to enlighten those members of the body of Christ who might be spiritually sick, and who need to identify these symptoms, such as being spiritually raped.

I've Been Raped by a Church! – A Recovery Guide for the Wounded is based on the experiences of a victim of spiritual rape. We must be careful as we serve in the kingdom of God that we obey God rather than man concerning our purpose and destiny. We must remain spiritually healthy and not be controlled by witchcraft in the pews. Believers must have the courage to move and break away from bondage and every hindrance that will not allow them to walk in the will of God. Only he may glorify our lives. This book will build your confidence and encourage you to stand up and be honest with yourself if you are being spiritually raped. Co-Pastor Vicky Elizabeth Lynch lays everything out for you so that deliverance can take place as you read her book.

As an apostle, I am very aware of these spiritual rapes that are an onslaught in the body of Christ: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6). God is raising up leaders such as Co-Pastor Lynch (a follower and now a pastor), who will understand and know how to heal, deliver, and set people of God free from bondage.

I do hope that you and others will read the entire book not just once, but several times. Let these truths penetrate your heart and mind, whether you are a leader or a believer. The days of being spiritually raped and abused are over.

Chief Apostle Byron H. Lampkin
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Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for saving my soul. It is his love that motivates me with a passion to share my heart on this issue. It is my prayer that my personal account will touch and encourage you to overcome past hurts, failures, frustrations, and disappointments resulting from church abuse.

I also would like to thank my family, especially my parents, Jean Claude Bonhomme and Rebecca McKenzie, for their years of dedication. I sincerely appreciate you for raising and molding me to become the woman I am today. To my spiritual parents, thank you for imparting, mentoring, and birthing me into my destiny. To those individuals who have sincerely prayed for my family and me, words cannot express my excitement over our divine connection. Last, but not least, I cannot move forward without thanking my beautiful children. I am proud to be your mother. You have inspired me to be stronger, better, and wiser in all my endeavors. I love you!



Preface

I've Been Raped by a Church!—A Recovery Guide for the Wounded was written for two purposes: to encourage those who have been victimized by a church and to bring awareness regarding the signs, symptoms, and dynamics of church abuse. In this book, rape is defined as “the power one assumes over another through witchcraft, which is mind control and manipulation.” In this context, the word “rape” does not refer to physical and sexual assault, but spiritual and emotional assaults that strip individuals of their true identities in Christ. I pray that once the truth comes out it will offer comfort, hope, healing, restoration, reconciliation, and deliverance through true openness and transparency. I am concerned for the children of God who are wounded and dying after being summarily stripped of the authority God has given to every believer. Just as it happens in human families, blessings and curses continue for generations within spiritual families. I wonder how many are truly aware of the generational curses that are actually perpetrated in the name of God. It is time to break the cycle of abuse.

If you have been spiritually raped, I pray that, first of all, you will realize that God is not the author of

such things. Rather, it is fallen man who has used power in ways that God never intended. God abhors abuse in any form and empathizes with the pain and grief you feel. He says you are the apple of his eye (Proverbs 7:2), and he delights in you. I also want you to know that there is hope for you, including total healing and restoration as you let God tenderly minister to those wounds.

If you have not been victimized in this way, I want to equip you with ways to understand and identify the potential for such problems in any church setting. Once you are equipped with the truth, you can protect yourself and those you love from such injuries.

It is important to note that some pastors know exactly what they are doing when they wound their people, while others do so out of ignorance and feelings of insecurity.

If you as a pastor have ever been a part of wounding your people, I pray that God will open your eyes to see the truth, and that you will repent and begin to love your people the way that God intended. According to the Old Testament books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, God will heap terrible judgment on those shepherds who refuse to repent for leading the sheep astray.

Although this is not an easy subject to discuss, it is essential that we uncover the many lies and dark secrets that exist in the body of Christ. It is unfortunate, but in our day, these kinds of things are epidemic, and it absolutely breaks God's heart.

At the end of the book, I have included a list of steps that will help you recover from church abuse. A character analysis section is also provided, and I encourage you to use this book as a group study guide.



Introduction

This story is true, although the names have been changed to protect the innocent. I share the details to bring truth to light regarding an all-too-common scenario: church abuse that borders on cultism and mind control. As you read, you will discover several important things, including how to pray and intercede for those in leadership. You will learn to determine when a shepherd has a heart for his people, and when the opposite is true. You will discover the importance of the spirit of discernment – that check in your spirit that tells you that all is not well. I will also share an insider’s view of the interpersonal conflicts that can exist within the four walls of a church building. Finally, you will begin to understand the tactics and the people that Satan uses to keep God’s people in bondage so that you can successfully protect yourself and those you love from such betrayal.

In Daniel chapter 10, we find that there are leaders who know how to operate in demonic realms that oppress the children (also referred to as sheep) of God. The prince of Grecia and the prince of Persia were demons who worked in those nations to oppose God’s people. By the end of this book you will know what to do if your leader is in that category. As you

read, you'll find that *I've Been Raped by a Church!* – A Recovery Guide for the Wounded requires a great deal of self-analysis. You will find yourself asking such questions as, “Does this character reflect my personal situation?” “What kind of relationship do I have with my pastor?”

Although the word “rape” conjures all kinds of mental images, remember that for our purposes the term means using power to manipulate others into doing what they would not otherwise choose to do.

This book was written to expose what occurs when church leadership develops its own agenda and fails to listen and obey the voice of God concerning the people of God. However, let me reassure you that there is hope. Not all politicians are crooked. Similarly, lawyers don't always lie, and every pastor does not manipulate. Rather, I want to equip the people of God to be able to identify the difference between faithful pastors – who love their people the way God does – and those who have agendas of their own. Most important, it is imperative to stress the need for healthy relationships and divine healing to take place, especially within the church.

Rape does not just occur in back alleys. It also occurs in pulpits, pews, and behind closed doors in the sanctuary. But it is often misinterpreted as something else – or missed entirely. When I realized how badly I was raped, it shocked me to my very core. People whom I trusted and opened myself up to for many years had perpetrated it. The very people who should have protected me took advantage of me in many different ways and left me scarred, isolated, and hesitant to step out of my shell to trust anyone again. And while I felt as if I'd been tied up and gagged, unable to run or scream, no one could take

away my personal relationship with God or his deep and abiding love for me. However, it was not until I finally escaped that I saw how a bucket of cold water had been used to extinguish the fire that had once burned so deeply within me. Today, my deepest desire is to be a voice for those in the same or similar situation. Through my own pain, I learned to have a tender heart of compassion for other wounded people.

Have you ever wondered what it means to be raped by the church? The difference between an actual rape and a spiritual rape is that, with the latter, the signs and symptoms are not always visible.

Church should be a safe haven for people who are seeking salvation, healing, deliverance, restoration, and reconciliation. But because some men and women simply choose to work out of a pulpit instead of being called and anointed, they often operate out of their own fallen natures so that their people are bruised, bound, isolated, and derailed from their God-ordained destinies. In every case, the abuse impairs the ability of the victim to hear God's voice and feel his tender compassion. In that place, victims lose their vision and feel anxious, even paralyzed, for fear of doing something that will bring down the wrath of the pastor. These people are often controlled, manipulated, and micro-managed, and their gifts are used to foster and even subsidize a selfish leader's personal agenda. However, such leaders fail to recognize one important fact: there will be a day of reckoning when God will demand to know whether they faithfully cared for God's people. The judgment for false shepherds will be severe, because their people's blood will be required at their hands.

The sad reality is that people can be saved for years, filled with the Holy Ghost, speak in tongues, and dance before the Lord, but they will still bust hell wide open for perpetrating assault on those God loves.

Such churches mirror the sibling rivalry of Cain and Abel. “And the Lord said unto Cain, ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ And he said, ‘I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?’ And he said, ‘What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand’” (Genesis 4:9-11).

In our day, such things often take place in the church because we’ve lost the heart and hunger for God that we once had, and we now settle for a counterfeit of the gospel and the abundant life. To prevent that, we must compare our pastors’ behaviors with the requirements for leadership outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, which tells us:

“This is a true saying, ‘If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.’”

On the other hand, Luke 20:46-47 (NLT) says: “Beware

of these teachers of religious law! For they like to parade in flowing robes and love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces. And how they love the seats of honor in the synagogues and the head table at banquets. Yet they shamelessly cheat widows out of their property and then pretend to be pious by making long prayers in public. Because of this they will be severely punished.”

Anointing and true worship tend to flow from the top down; unfortunately, so do confusion and disorder. And sometimes the temptation is just too strong for some pastors to resist when there is money to be made at the church’s expense.

As a mother, it would be an indictment of my parenting skills if my children grew up to become perfectly capable adults who still lived at home because of a sense of codependency that I cultivated in them from childhood. Because it is my assignment to rear bold and courageous men and women of God, I should not be content with babysitting my own grown children. Unfortunately, that is what some in the body of Christ are doing today. The house of God has become a place where destinies are being thwarted, and people are not prepared for freedom at the proper time to take care of the kingdom’s business of winning souls.

Good parents always know, based on a child’s level of maturity, when the child is ready to leave home and make his or her own way. Loving parents want their child to excel beyond their own level of achievement. They are never intimidated or jealous when the child flies higher or excels to a greater extent than the parents. That is exactly what’s missing in the leadership of today’s churches.

Why has the church lost sight of what it means to develop mature disciples who are ready to fulfill the Great Commission? It is time to eliminate the controlling, jealous, and manipulative spirit that has infiltrated the church. We must realize that leaders must no longer be allowed to get in the way of God's moving in people's lives. While Scripture advises us to respect our leaders, it does not give them license to abuse the privilege.

As a victim of church abuse, I am not ashamed or fearful to declare what God has shown me through my personal experience. As the prophet Ezekiel said in chapter 34, verses 1-16:

“And the word of the lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord god unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the lord; As I live, saith the Lord god, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the lord; Thus saith the Lord god; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord god; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord god. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was

broken, and will strengthen that which was sick:
but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed
them with judgment.”

In these last days, God is in the process of restoring people who have been abused by leadership. Now that my husband and I have stepped into pastoral roles in the church, our greatest prayer is to treat the people of God with love, kindness, and sincere hearts. We cannot and will not abuse God’s beloved through mind control, manipulation, or ungodly guilt in order to perpetuate a selfish personal agenda.

G.G. Bloomer wrote an excellent book titled *Witchcraft in the Pews: Stop the Manipulation of Your Church, Family, and Faith*. My daunting experience not only reflected witchcraft in the pews, but also in the pulpit, and my broken marriage. By witchcraft, I mean the manipulation of a person’s mind against his will. It was not simply a matter of who was sitting next to me; it became a matter of who was preaching to me. It was my pastor’s desire to impose not only his will, but also his timeline, on me, which is why he was so upset when I decided to leave.

In Daniel chapter 10, the prince of the Persian kingdom held up Daniel’s prayer for twenty-one days. Like so many of God’s chosen people, Daniel was doing everything he could that he knew was right. He sincerely humbled himself before God. He fasted and sought the face of God in prayer. Yet, he didn’t understand that it was not God who failed to answer his petitions; rather, they were being delayed behind the scenes as a war went on between angels and hindering demon spirits in the spiritual realm. Thankfully, in the final round, Daniel

won a mighty victory when God spoke to him directly to explain the situation. Perhaps you find yourself feeling like Daniel. You worship God with your whole heart and have been petitioning him for a very long time. You have been living righteously before him, but never realized the source of your real opposition.

It is one thing to step into a boxing ring and know that your opponent is the one throwing punches at you to knock you out of the game. The fight is easier when you know your adversary. However, what do you do when your true opposition is someone who is supposed to be in your corner? You find yourself confiding in the individual and receiving instruction, yet you never realize that your downfall is because of an inside job. While some church members, including adjutants, pastors and bishops, appear to stand with you, they are actually undermining your success.

“And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days” (Daniel 10:10-14).

Many times, I received prophetic messages from outside preachers. After each one, my pastor would slyly ask, “Did any of that happen?” I quickly picked up on the sarcasm in his tone and could see a lack of genuine concern; clearly, he had no desire to see me receive my blessing.

Once I had escaped from under my pastor’s thumb and sought shelter under God’s mighty hand, God restored all that the cankerworm had eaten. He restored my self-esteem, my respect, my creativity and my sense of fulfillment. I am now at the place where God is manifesting and revealing what had been locked up for so long.

I am now serving notice that God is revoking the licenses of those who care more about hindering his people than blessing them.

He will demote leaders who have usurped their power and authority over his people, leading so many astray – especially those who have sought to please men rather than pleasing God – promoting their own interests instead of God’s.

Scripture promises that he will seek out those who are lost. He will establish new leadership who will care for the sheep and not scatter them. This new leadership will work to heal the sick, restore the broken, welcome the lost, and use meekness and love to care for those in despair. The new leadership will be skilled to raise up a fresh generation of powerful, anointed leaders.

In a relay race, a runner will complete his leg of the race and then pass the baton to the next runner, who runs the next leg of the race. Sadly, some older church leaders refuse to pass on the baton, preferring to run the entire race. They will ultimately have to face God’s wrath for

playing mind games and forcing God's people to remain children rather than assuming adult leadership roles. I have served under leaders who purposely prevented their people from reaching their God-given destinies.

Leaders who fall into this category get in God's way and have no agenda but to stay in power and keep others in line.

I have also seen the other end of the spectrum and have the utmost respect for real, godly leadership that seeks to empower the people of God. And while I respect leadership and submit to the authority of those whom God has placed over my life, they must be worthy of that trust. I encourage you to seek out godly leadership that lines up with God's agenda rather than man's. But let me also warn you not to get so caught up with a church body that you forget God and his will for your life. If you choose to make your allegiance to man, you may find yourself making an unwilling pact with the devil—forever disqualifying yourself from running the race. And the reality is that your very soul is at stake.
