

Help for Victims of Abuse

If you are a victim of abuse, seek help immediately. Talk with your priesthood leader, normally your bishop or branch president but at times a member of the stake or district presidency. He can help you know what to do.

Be assured that you are not to blame for the harmful behavior of others. You do not need to feel guilt. If you have been a victim of rape or other sexual abuse, whether you have been abused by an acquaintance, a stranger, or even a family member, you are not guilty of sexual sin. Know that you are innocent and that your Heavenly Father loves you.

Pray for the peace that comes only through Jesus Christ and His Atonement (see John 14:27; 16:33). The Savior has experienced all your pains and afflictions, even those caused by others, and He knows how to help you (see Alma 7:11–12). Rather than seek revenge, focus on matters you can control, such as your own outlook on life. Pray for the strength to forgive those who have hurt you.

Continue to seek help from your priesthood leader so he can guide you through the process of emotional healing. Through the blessings of the gospel, you can stop the cycle of abuse and be freed from the suffering you have experienced.

Additional references: Matthew 18:1–6; D&C 121:34–46

See also Forgiveness; Repentance

Addiction (*See* Gambling; Pornography; Word of Wisdom)

Adoption

Children are entitled to be raised by parents who honor marital vows and who provide love and support. Adoption can be a great blessing for many children who are born without this opportunity.

When a child is conceived out of wedlock, the best option is for the mother and father of the child to marry and work toward establishing an eternal family relationship. If a

Adultery

successful marriage is unlikely, they should place the child for adoption, preferably through LDS Family Services. Placing the infant for adoption through LDS Family Services helps unwed parents do what is best for the child. It ensures that the child will be sealed to a mother and a father in the temple, and it enhances the prospect for the blessings of the gospel in the lives of all concerned. Adoption is an unselfish, loving decision that blesses the birth parents, the child, and the adoptive family.

If you are married and you and your spouse want to adopt a child, be sure you know all legal requirements of the countries and governmental agencies that are involved. Counsel with your priesthood leaders and, if possible, with staff members in LDS Family Services. If LDS Family Services is not available in your area, work with your priesthood leaders to locate licensed, authorized agencies that protect both the children and the adoptive parents.

Adultery (*See* Chastity)

Adversity

As part of Heavenly Father's plan of redemption, you experience adversity during mortality. Trials, disappointments, sadness, sickness, and heartache are a difficult part of life, but they can lead to spiritual growth, refinement, and progress as you turn to the Lord.

Adversity comes from different sources. You may at times face trials as a consequence of your own pride and disobedience. These trials can be avoided through righteous living. Other trials are simply a natural part of life and may come at times when you are living righteously. For example, you may experience trials in times of sickness or uncertainty or at the deaths of loved ones. Adversity may sometimes come because of others' poor choices and hurtful words and actions.