



Impact of Sexual Abuse by a Father

Scriptural Anchors for Healing

- “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” (**Psalm 147:3**)
- “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.” (**Psalm 27:10**)
- “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (**John 8:32**)

1. Psychological & Emotional Wounds

- **Betrayal Trauma:** A father is meant to protect and nurture; abuse turns protector into predator, creating deep trust fractures.
- **Identity Confusion:** Victims often wrestle with questions of self-worth, shame, and confusion about their identity.
- **Chronic Anxiety & Depression:** Lingering fear, intrusive memories, and sadness often follow.
- **Self-Blame & Guilt:** Children may internalize the abuse as somehow their fault, leading to toxic shame.

2. Relational & Social Impact

- **Difficulty Trusting Others:** Especially with authority figures or men.
- **Distorted Boundaries:** Confusion about healthy intimacy and relationships.
- **Isolation:** Feelings of being different, unworthy, or unsafe may push survivors into secrecy.
- **Intergenerational Risk:** Without healing, cycles of trauma, secrecy, or dysfunction may continue in the family line.

3. Spiritual Consequences

- **Distorted View of God:** If the earthly father is abusive, a child may project that onto God as distant, harsh, or unsafe.
- **Shame & Silence in Church:** Fear of judgment or unbelief can silence survivors in faith communities.
- **Theological Struggles:** Wrestling with “Where was God?” or “Why did this happen?” can erode faith.

4. Physical Impact

- **Somatic Symptoms:** Headaches, sleep disturbance, gastrointestinal issues.
- **Increased Risk of Substance Abuse:** Coping mechanisms may develop into addictions.
- **Long-Term Health Risks:** Studies show survivors are at higher risk for chronic illnesses.



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5. Pathways Toward Healing

- **Safety & Disclosure:** Breaking silence in a trusted, safe context begins the journey.
- **Therapy & Counseling:** Trauma-focused therapy helps address shame, flashbacks, and boundaries.
- **Spiritual Reframing:** Encountering God as a safe, healing Father restores identity and hope.
- **Community Support:** Safe, believing communities (church, support groups) counter isolation.
- **Forgiveness & Justice:** Healing may involve both internal forgiveness (not excusing the abuse) and pursuit of accountability.

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