

RELIGION

Spiritual abuse will not heal all by itself

by REV. J.C. BROWN

Last week I wrote on "spiritual abuse in the 90s", and this is a sequel to that. I hope we can define some of the emotions, stresses, and confusion a person may experience if they have been victims of spiritual abuse. I want to thank each one who called to offer encouragement and those who called to receive counsel. I only pray you will continue to receive help and healing that will bring you back to wholeness.

Leaving a spiritually abusive predicament will, more often than not, conjure up numerous emotions and needs that will occur during the transition process. You may well experience some of the following feelings:

- A lost feeling — wondering where you are going or who you really are.
- Feelings of guilt — because you left your spiritual family or you didn't practice the teachings you were taught, or for subjecting the family to this kind of abuse.
- There is a lack of trust toward spiritual leaders — who do you turn to

Clergy Comment

for guidance and support now? I was deceived once so it may happen again.

- There can be feelings that you have lost your ability to discern or evaluate a situation because you have been told you are not spiritual enough. You wonder, "Have I sinned by leaving or have I committed blasphemy against God?"
- You could end up confused — wondering, "Why didn't it work out?" or "How could I have been so blind?" or "Does anyone really care anymore?" or "Was I really wrong?"
- You may experience a total lack of feelings — you may not be able to exhibit anger, sadness, pain or even joy at being free. Remember, this could be a protective mechanism because a day will come when you will vent emotions.
- There can be fatigue involved — physically and mentally exhausted. Tired and you don't know why.
- You may experience feelings of

isolation — you have just left your spiritual family and are now on your own.

Note: if you were in a tightly structured group and removed yourself, then you are now in uncharted territory where you may feel vulnerable and even think God has abandoned you.

- You may experience depression — this often sets in when a person comes out from a spiritually abusive place.
- You can almost end up in shock — you realize that all the time (years or months) you have lost to the organization you counted on.
- You may be embarrassed or ashamed — because you were manipulated or taken in.
- Perhaps you feel angry toward God — because He didn't protect you or you may feel he has betrayed you.
- You can have a variety of thoughts — like "Am I going crazy?" or "Am I the only one who is going through this?"

or "Will God kill me for leaving?"

- There is a fear of committing oneself again to the work of ministry — I was betrayed once so I'm reluctant to get involved. I have distrust of others now.

How do you receive healing if you are a victim of spiritual abuse? Remember, God's love for you is everlasting and He will never leave you (read Isaiah 49:15 and 16; Psalm 100:4; Matthew 28:20; and Romans 8:38 and 39). You need to seek a new support group that is based on God's word and not controlling or manipulative. Find a group or a person who will love you with no strings attached. Someone who will help you sort through your various emotions, unresolved hurts and confusion. Read Matthew 11:28 to 30, and see that Jesus doesn't make excessive demands nor does He oppress. Jesus came to bring freedom! He does this by showing love and giving us peace within our hearts. Remember, healing of spiritual abuse will take time. Healing is a process — you were

in an abusive process, now begin your healing process. Get to know who you are in Jesus Christ. God's Word brings healing and counsel (read Psalm 107:20; Proverbs 4:20 to 22; Psalm 119:24, 49 and 50).

There are three good books you can purchase that deal exclusively with this subject and I have gleaned much of the above material from them. They are: Churches that Abuse by Ronald M. Enroth, published by Zondervan; Healing Spiritual Abuse by Ken Blue, published by InterVarsity Press; and The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse by David Johnson and Jeff Van Vonderen, published by Bethany House. Once again the Pastors of this Church apologize to all who have or are suffering from spiritual abuse and we seek your forgiveness. Churches should be safe places. If you need help please seek out a Godly pastor or counsellor. You are invited to speak to us by calling 564-7434.

We are praying for you.

Rev. Brown is the senior pastor at the Prince George Pentecostal Church.

Stint as monk took guts

by JENN GODDU
Edmonton Journal

EDMONTON — Straddling a motorcycle in his black leather jacket, blue jeans and boots, Patrick Ryan doesn't look like he was once a Buddhist monk.

But he was, and his blond hair and blue eyes drew a crowd in Burmese villages.

"Even with my head shaved I stood out like a neon light bulb," the 40-year-old Edmonton-area man jokes.

Ryan returned to Alberta last month from an 18-month adventure in Asia. While there he had a personal encounter with Burma's pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi.

Ryan had travelled to Burma, which is run by a military junta, to learn more about meditation. But while he was in Rangoon he became a Buddhist monk.

"Some lay people will study for years to become a monk and other people will become a monk very quickly and very easily," he says.

He did have to learn Pali, the language used in ordination ceremonies.

Soon after joining the monastery, Ryan was sent



RYAN

into regions usually forbidden to foreigners.

Detained several times by the military because he was a foreigner, he would be released because he was a monk. "They found it easier to turn their backs and let me go."

When he heard Suu Kyi was released from house arrest, Ryan decided to meet her at her home in Rangoon. It took confidence and cloak-and-dagger tactics.

"With all the arrogance of the dumb western tourist that I was pretending to be, I asked to see Suu Kyi," Ryan says.

His question was answered by three men who grabbed him, removed him out of the yard.

Ryan continued to take chances. "I felt that because I was a foreigner there was no way in the world they were going to hurt me, so it gave me a little bit more confidence to stand my ground."

At the house the second time, Ryan was pulled aside by military men who took his picture and threatened that Burma would no longer be so welcoming.

He was able to enter Suu Kyi's house and speak with her privately.

"I felt clearly a sense that she is motivated by doing good for the people of Burma," he says.

Ryan is no longer a Buddhist monk. He decided the life of a monk was too restricting.

Polish pastors ordained

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask. (CP) — Three young men from Poland received a standing ovation at Sacred Heart Cathedral as they were ordained as Roman Catholic priests.

The three were part of a group of 14 seminarians who came to Canada from Poland in 1993 at the request of Prince Albert Bishop Blaise Morand and Saskatoon's former bishop, James Mahoney.

It was hoped the project would ease the shortage of priests in Western Canada.

The Polish men agreed to spend a year in Saskatoon, taking English classes, experiencing Canadian culture and meeting with bishops.

They were then free to return to Poland or stay in Canada.

All 14 decided to stay and 10 chose the Prince Albert diocese.

After taking holidays in Poland, three will begin pastoral duties Aug. 1.

westwood church
worship • discipleship • community

Worship Services & Sunday School

2658 Ospika Blvd. • 562-3711

Pastors: Mel Fehr, Craig Reimer, Yvette Visscher, Bill Cram

"Be Part of the Family"

Guest Choir
"Jubilee Singers"

Speaker: Pastor Mel

145477

Faith Alive Fellowship
3400 Hart Highway - 962-2993
Pastors Ron & Sharron Gray

SERVICES

Sunday:
10:00 a.m.
& 6:30 p.m.
Everyone Welcome

For Information - 962-2993

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The Parish Church of
St. Michael and All Angels
Welcomes You
Sunday, June 9th
Holy Eucharist:
8:00, 9:15, 11:00 a.m.
Telephone: 564-4511
1505 - 5th Avenue
Prince George, B.C., V2L 3L9

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Weekend Worship

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
LC-C
180 Tabor Blvd.
562-2777

9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Class

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

We Warmly Welcome You to Worship With Us

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St. Andrew's United Church of Canada

3555 - 5th Ave.
Minister: David Wood
10:00 a.m. Service
Sermon: "The Power to Heal"
Sunday School Promotion Sunday
Inquiries: 563-9167 or 563-0252

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Knox United Church of Canada

1448 - 5th Ave.
10:00 a.m. Morning Service
Sermon:
"Extraordinary Ordinary People"
Rev. Nelson Rajotte
Inquiries 564-7822 or 563-3772

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St. Giles' Presbyterian Church

15th Ave. & Edmonton St.
564-6494 or 564-6495 Fax
Minister - Rev. Rod Ferguson
Youth & Music Associate Sandy Jenvey
Sunday Worship Service
10:15 a.m.
Communicant's Sunday
Sermon Title:
"Journeying with Jesus"
Church School - Baby care
All are welcome
Wheelchair Accessible

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Evangelical Free Church

5th & Killoren Crescent 564-5889
Pastor Mike Conway
Cliff Dietrick (Pastor Emeritus)
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship Service
Wednesday 7:30 p.m. Midweek Prayer Meeting
"Let God Be Glorified"

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Fifth & Gillett
PASTORS
Lance Morgan, David Gast, Reg Steward
Don McLeod

SUNDAY
8:30 a.m. Early Service
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Morning Service
6:30 p.m. Evening Service
Please call the office for further information
564-4522

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Church Services at
459 Cassiar St.
(between 3rd & 5th Avenue)
Bethel Baptist Church
Rev. Art Schlak
Church Phone 562-2242
Sunday 9:45 a.m. - German Service
Grace Community Fellowship
Sunday 11 a.m.
Worship Service and Junior Church

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The Salvation Army

777 Ospika Blvd.
Sunday Services
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Holiness Meeting
7:00 p.m. Praise Meeting
Corps Officers
Captains Brian & Edith Beveridge
561-0414

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OUR SAVIORS LUTHERAN CHURCH
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

Corner of Ospika & Dufferin
Everyone welcome!
Pastor Roland Ziprick
Sunday
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
"A Friendly Church serving Christ and the community"
Church Office - 564-4336

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College Heights Baptist Church
Corner Moriarty & Doman
964-4181

Rev. Norm Poehlke
10 a.m. Worship Service
No Sunday School until September
Nursery Provided
Everyone Welcome

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Hartland Baptist Church
6599 Driftwood Rd. - 962-8641
Pastor Cliff Pedersen

9:45 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
11:00 a.m. Worship Service
With Junior Church & Nursery
Prayer Meeting Thursday 7 pm
Friday 7:00 pm Youth
"A Friendly Welcome Awaits You"

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Kelly Road Gospel Chapel

7046 S. Kelly Rd.
Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Family Bible Hour & Sunday School
7:00 p.m. The Lord's Supper
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.
Bible Study and Prayer Meeting
563-8983 - 563-4876

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Lakewood Alliance Church

5th & Ospika - 564-8737
9:30 am Sunday School
11:00 am Worship Service Celebration
6:30 p.m. Family Gathering
Please call for other services

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Superet Chapel

Founder Dr. J.C. Trust
AIO - 5931 Hart Highway
962-8482
Peace Prayers Tues. 7:30 p.m.
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.
Jesus Christ's Doctrine

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CATHOLIC CHURCHES

St. George's Ukrainian
Rev. Basil Galarnyk
562-3237
Corner of Massey & Vanier
Masses:
Sundays 10 a.m.
Holidays & Weekdays 7:00 p.m.

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Church of the Immaculate Conception
Cathedral Avenue off Highway 16 West
(across from Vanway Firehall)
Fr. Pier Pandolfo
964-4362 (message)
Sunday Masses: 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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St. Mary's
1088 Gillett Street
564-4097

Sunday Masses
9:00, 10:30 and 12 p.m.
also Saturday Evenings 7 p.m.
Confessions: 6:15 - 6:45 p.m.

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Sacred Heart Cathedral

887 Patricia Blvd.
564-5225

Monday through Friday Masses
7:15 a.m. & 12:10 p.m.
Saturday Masses
9:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
(Sunday Mass)
Sunday Masses: 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
Confessions:
Saturdays 4 - 5 p.m. or by appointment

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Christ Our Savior
4514 Austin Road West
962-8352

Father Ivan McCornack OMI
Sunday Mass 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.
Saturday 4:00 p.m.
Confession:
3:30 p.m. Saturdays

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