

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual Abuse

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Spiritual abuse involves coercion, control, or exploitation by another person in a spiritual context. It can come from a faith leader or a partner who uses spiritual or religious beliefs or doctrine to exert power over you. Spiritual abuse can involve verbal, emotional, and/or physical violence.

Source: Therapist, Meghan Turner

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Spiritual abuse may include:

- Manipulation and exploitation
- Enforced accountability
- Censorship of decision making
- Requirements for secrecy and silence
- Coercion to conform
 - Inability to ask questions
- Control through the use of sacred texts or teaching
- Requirement of obedience to the abuser
- Suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position
- Isolation as a means of punishment
- Superiority and elitism

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Power

Rituals or Rules

False Teachings

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Rituals/Rules

LUKE 13:10-17

¹⁰ One Sabbath day as Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, ¹¹ he saw a woman who had been crippled by an evil spirit. She had been bent double for eighteen years and was unable to stand up straight. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Dear woman, you are healed of your sickness!" ¹³ Then he touched her, and instantly she could stand straight. How she praised God! ¹⁴ But the leader in charge of the synagogue was indignant that Jesus had healed her on the Sabbath day. "There are six days of the week for working," he said to the crowd. "Come on those days to be healed, not on the Sabbath." ¹⁵ But the Lord replied, "You hypocrites! Each of you works on the Sabbath day! Don't you untie your ox or your donkey from its stall on the Sabbath and lead it out for water?" ¹⁶ This dear woman, a daughter of Abraham, has been held in bondage by Satan for eighteen years. Isn't it right that she be released, even on the Sabbath?" ¹⁷ This shamed his enemies, but all the people rejoiced at the wonderful things he did.

JOHN 2:14-15

¹⁴ In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. ¹⁵ Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 21:18-24

¹⁸ The next day Paul went with us to meet with James, and all the elders of the Jerusalem church were present. ¹⁹ After greeting them, Paul gave a detailed account of the things God had accomplished among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ After hearing this, they praised God. And then they said, "You know, dear brother, how many thousands of Jews have also believed, and they all follow the law of Moses very seriously. ²¹ But the Jewish believers here in Jerusalem have been told that you are teaching all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn their backs on the laws of Moses. They've heard that you teach them not to circumcise their children or follow other Jewish customs. ²² What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ Here's what we want you to do. We have four men here who have completed their vow. ²⁴ Go with them to the Temple and join them in the purification ceremony, paying for them to have their heads ritually shaved. Then everyone will know that the rumors are all false and that you yourself observe the Jewish laws.

GALATIANS 2:12

¹²When he first arrived, he ate with the Gentile believers, who were not **circumcised**. But afterward, when some friends of James came, Peter wouldn't eat with the Gentiles anymore. He was afraid of criticism from these people who insisted on the necessity of circumcision.

1 CORINTHIANS 7:18-19

¹⁸For instance, a man who was circumcised before he became a believer should not try to reverse it. And the man who was uncircumcised when he became a believer should not be circumcised now. ¹⁹For it makes no difference whether or not a man has been circumcised. The important thing is to keep God's commandments.

JOHN 14:15-17

"If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

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False Teachings

2 PETER 2:1-2

"But there were false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality, and because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered."

2 THESSALONIANS 3:14-15

"Take note of all those who refuse to obey what we say in this letter. Stay away from them so they will be ashamed. Don't think of them as enemies, but warn them as you would a brother or sister."

TITUS 3:10-11

"If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their own sins condemn them."

MATTHEW 7:15-16

¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. ¹⁶ You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"

2 CORINTHIANS 11:12-14

¹² But I will continue doing what I have always done. This will undercut those who are looking for an opportunity to boast that their work is just like ours. ¹³ These people are false apostles. They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ But I am not surprised! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 20:28-30

28"So guard yourselves and God's people. Feed and shepherd God's flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders. 29I know that false teachers, like vicious wolves, will come in among you after I leave, not sparing the flock. 30Even some men from your own group will rise up and distort the truth in order to draw a following.

MATTHEW 24:24 AND MARK 13:22

For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones.

1 JOHN 4:1-3

1Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world. 2This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God. 3But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here.

CHURCH 3.0

Healing Steps

- Listen to their stories
- Guide them to truth in Scripture
- Bring them into the presence of Holy Spirit
- Gently lead them to forgiveness
- Ask God's forgiveness
- Understand true identity in Christ
- Deliverance

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