

Can Anything Good Come Out of the Josh Duggar Molestation Tragedy?

I've had time to reflect on the many articles and newscasts I've managed to see with the limited internet connection I had while on a family camping trip. Many of you have emailed or messaged me on Facebook asking for my two cents on this horrific revelation of a family that has burrowed their way into many hearts across the United States.

Josh Duggar, the eldest son of Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar, came out with a statement addressing the confirmed allegations of sexual abuse. From what I gather by these various reports, Josh Duggar sexually molested at least five young girls, a majority of them his younger sisters (and the others most likely their friends).

Watch the CNN report [here](#).

What has turned my stomach is the lack of care, concern or acknowledgment of the victims in this situation. The parents "removed" Josh from the home (for only a month) when one victim came forward in 2002 and told what he had been doing while "in her sleep ... and sometimes not." The parents sent him away to a "camp" that made him do physical labor. And when the full report of the number of victims came out four years later (2006) and was leaked to the Oprah Winfrey Show before they were to have an appearance Jim Bob took him to see the local deputy, a family friend who "gave him a stern talking to" and never charged him with sexual assault of multiple minors (as should have been done). That same deputy is now serving over 50 years in prison for child pornography!

In his statement Josh says "he's sorry for the 'mistake' he made." Mistake? This isn't a mistake; it's a sickness.

What I didn't hear in his statement was concern for his victims. These young women (who are now probably in their early to upper teens) will forever remember not only that he held them in fear, but also that he took their innocence, which is to be a beautiful and joyous gift in discovery as they matured properly. But worse of all, they were overlooked, kept unsafe, not acknowledged.

One issue for survivors in healing is the duration they remain in the "victim mode." If a young victim confides the abuse that young person deserves immediate attention. They need to see that they are worth fighting the evil that caused the harm and the earlier they get the help the better result they'll have in overcoming the long-term, and at times debilitating, effects of abuse.

For all victims, the Duggar family, especially the parents, should have come out and addressed the welfare of the victims first and foremost, showing concern for their well-being and personal growth, letting the world know they are doing everything it takes to get them into counseling and being their No. 1 support.

I don't discount them standing behind their son but they admitted they never had him go to counseling. That is troubling. Why would physical labor take away the sickness over working through what was going on in his mind to think it was OK to touch not just one sister but several?

This particular case presses into a deep bruise in my heart. I have been working with a victim of sexual abuse that was done to her by her brother. And I still say "victim" because in many ways she holds on to that classification rather than choosing the freedom of surviving or thriving simply because she can't accept her worth. She is one female of many male siblings and the size of the family lent to easier access to get away with extreme evil behavior that at times could very well have been acknowledged and stopped.

But as in most family situations where a sibling abuses another the evil in it all is so incomprehensible the adults look the other way, call it a “phase” and hide behind the assumption that it will go away in time. Never acknowledging the irreparable damage sexual abuse causes.

I have always believed that God can bring forth good from every situation, no matter how tragic, horrific or despicable. The good God can bring in having the Duggars under the microscope is to bring awareness to the real evil that has been and is) going on in many homes across the United States. With the heightened sexual awareness in every aspect of social media it is that much more important for parents to be vigilant and aware of every single child in their household. To be open about conversations on moral behavior when hormones begin to kick in because the world is not going to teach them right from wrong.

It is unfortunate to say that parents can’t just assume their children would “know better” than to look at their own sibling with lust, let alone act on any sort of sexual behavior. But when we have porn at our fingertips on every single source of technology then it is a conversation that might be uncomfortable but is a necessity.

BE AWARE! SPREAD AWARENESS! BE YOUR CHILD’S (CHILDREN’S) No. 1 ADVOCATE!

And by all means, if something is happening or has happened to your child, do everything it takes to fight for your child. Let them see they are worth fighting for, even if it tears a family apart. God will be in the process and He will mend it as it needs to be mended.

Blessings,

Shannon

Shannon Deitz *started the “I Have a Voice” abuse awareness*

project where survivors share their personal stories of abuse (domestic, sexual, incest, rape, neglect, emotional and verbal) through intensely personal and honest YouTube videos. The videos show the power of giving a VOICE to survivors that was once kept hidden, and not only aides in their personal healing, but shows others they are not alone and there is reason for hope.