

Is There Healing After the Kavanaugh Crisis?

Since 2001, I've devoted my life to bringing the healing of Jesus to women—mostly in developing nations where domestic violence is the norm. I build shelters to protect women. I pay school fees for girls who are denied education. I provide counseling for rape victims. I teach men who have been abusers how to treat women with respect.

I do this because I'm a Christian. I believe Jesus fights to protect the powerless from the powerful. He stood up for a woman who was accused of adultery. He healed a woman whose bleeding made her a social outcast. He defended widows and showed mercy to prostitutes.

I am a justice crusader because God is a God of justice. But if you search through my wallet, you will also learn that I am a registered Republican. That may shock some people who think only Democrats believe in social justice!

I have friends on both sides of today's divisive political spectrum. For the record I consider myself a "compassionate conservative"—a term popularized by President George W. Bush. I believe in conservative economic policies rather than big government spending. I despise socialism because I've seen how it makes developing nations even poorer while enriching a few. And I love immigrants, so the current anti-immigrant sentiment among some Republicans disturbs me deeply.

I try to apply my faith to my politics—and I try to vote according to my faith principles. I also try to show respect to those who don't agree with me, which means 1) I don't use hateful language or profanity to denounce Democrats, and 2) I don't post political vitriol on my social media pages to stir up more division.

In other words, I try to act like a Christian in this age of political outrage. I try to be a peacemaker. And in the end, I try to bring the truth of Jesus to a broken world that cannot be fixed, ultimately, by Republicans or Democrats.

Because of my commitment to justice for women, it was difficult for me to watch the spectacle that unfolded two weeks ago when senators fought hard to either confirm or block President Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh. When Dr. Christine Blasey Ford brought her allegations against Kavanaugh, the volatile issue of sexual abuse touched a national nerve and stoked the fires of political fury.

In the end, Kavanaugh was confirmed, Republicans celebrated and Democrats vowed to retaliate. But as I prayerfully tried to make sense of what happened in those confirmation hearings, I applied my faith and made these conclusions:

1. Victims of sexual abuse always deserve compassion. I felt only sympathy for Dr. Christine Blasey Ford when she shared her testimony of abuse with members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Sept. 27. I have no question that she went through something horrific as a teenager—and her trauma was intensified by having to talk about something so painful on national television.

In the end, there wasn't enough evidence to prove to senators that Kavanaugh was the man who forced himself on Ford some 36 years ago. But if Ford's memory was clouded because of the trauma of abuse, she and all abuse victims like her still need support, counseling and prayer. Dr. Ford certainly doesn't deserve judgment, death threats or public ridicule for sharing her story. Please don't let the politics of this incident harden your heart toward abuse victims.

2. People who are accused of abuse also deserve fair treatment. Some feminist groups began circulating a mantra

during the Kavanaugh hearings that demanded: “Believe all women.” The implication is that all allegations of sexual abuse are always true, and there’s no possibility that a woman would make up a false allegation or be confused about the circumstances of an abuse experience.

Yet our justice system demands that defendants are innocent until proven guilty. That’s what protects people from character assassination. I’ve seen a lot of cases of abuse over the 17 years I’ve been involved in aiding victims—and typically the woman is hesitant to confront the man because of fear. But I have also seen cases when false accusations were made to harm a person. Biblical justice is not just for abuse victims; it also protects those who are wrongly accused.

3. Not all women believe all sexual abuse allegations. It was ironic that a female Republican senator, Susan Collins of Maine, provided the most compelling argument for confirming Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Her 40-minute speech to her colleagues was a reminder that even though men outnumber women in the U.S. Senate 77 to 23, we have outstanding female lawmakers who are articulate, level-headed and persuasive. (Collins’ speech actually swayed one senator who was on the fence, West Virginia Democrat Joe Manchin, to vote yes—giving Kavanaugh the 51 votes needed.)

The Kavanaugh hearings proved that American women don’t walk in lockstep. They are not a monolithic bloc. In fact, 69 percent of Republican women supported Kavanaugh and did not believe there was enough evidence to prove he was the person who attacked Ford during the summer of 1982, as she alleged. Those women believe Kavanaugh has the integrity needed to sit on the nation’s highest court.

4. Our nation is more deeply divided than ever by gender issues. Because of the Kavanaugh appointment, some feminist organizations have vowed to unseat Republican senators in next month’s elections. Some angry men in the extreme alt-right

movement will use the whole incident to strengthen their message of male superiority. It's a set-up for all-out gender war. And President Trump, who is known for his harsh rhetoric, could trigger more animosity with his tweets and sound bites.

It's time to pray. I urge all believers in Christ, whether you lean conservative or liberal, Republican or Democrat, to pursue justice in the purest biblical sense. Rise above the divisions of party and politics. Don't let the media determine your attitude—let the Holy Spirit show you how to be a voice for healing and reconciliation to our fractured country.