

Whitewashed Tombs: Coercion, Abuse, & the Hidden Sins of the Fundamentalist Church

Rows upon rows of polished pews, filled with the faithful. Heads bowed in reverence, families worshiping in their Sunday best, heads tilted in concentration, hanging on every word of the polished, articulate man behind the pulpit. The choir sings in angelic tones and the sanctuary swells with a wave of emotion. The great American Fundamentalist church, in all its shining glory, silently demanding veneration and praise. But beneath the surface, nailed under floorboards of secrets and shame beats the tell-tale heart. Sexual, physical, and mental abuse, children hiding the bruises of punishments they believe they deserve while living in fear of their parents, wives married to violent men they cannot divorce being told to martyr themselves to prove their holiness, men in fear of being seen as weak if they protect their families from the harmful messages. One can imagine with confidence this is what Jesus meant when he said: “You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean” (Matthew 23:27). It would be easy to imagine that a Christian church environment is idyllic and holy, a paradise where people live in peace and harmony and are respected as individuals based on the moral codes set forth in the Bible. Unfortunately, the truth is much more complex and has nuance beyond the surface level beliefs many people have about fundamentalist religion. Within these churches, the realities of unequal power, and authoritarian leadership structures with little to no accountability create an environment that is ripe for abuse in its worst forms.

How should we define Christian Fundamentalism? In a New York Times article from 2024, David French writes, “Fundamentalism,” Richard Land, the former head of the Southern

Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, once told me, "is far more a psychology than a theology." That psychology is defined by an extreme sense of certainty, along with extreme ferocity. Roughly speaking, fundamentalists are intolerant of dissent. Evangelicals are much more accepting of theological differences. Fundamentalists place a greater emphasis on confrontation and domination." (French) This psychology of intolerance for outside perspectives creates a dogma effect which then becomes internalized as a part of that individual's identity. After all, if your religious beliefs are based on you being right and everyone else being wrong then wouldn't it feel like a personal threat to have those beliefs questioned? Hence the presence of a confrontation and domination mindset within these communities. Unfortunately for the victims of these systems, they are often entrenched in the very beliefs that marginalize them. One can imagine the harm that is possible if the person who is a victim believes they are fully deserving of the treatment they are receiving and is not able to retaliate against it, the long term effects of that level of abuse are devastating.

As this topic is explored at a deeper level, one of the first questions that is raised is why are good people drawn to such toxic and controlling environments? How is it that they do not see the hidden infrastructures of harm so prevalent in these communities? How are they themselves brought to a place where they participate in abuse fully believing it is biblically valid and spiritually necessary? In a New York Times article from 2023, journalist David French asks these questions and reflects on his personal experiences with the now disgraced fundamentalist leader Bill Gothard and his Institute in Basic Life Principles or IBLP. "When I went to the Gothard seminar, I didn't see strange people. I saw people seeking community and certainty in the most important relationships of their lives. In fact, the families at the seminar were so mainstream and so numerous that I worry that the word "cult" communicates something more fringe than it truly

was.” It would seem that the majority of those that participate in these systems are merely everyday people who are hungry for community and connection. They are in search of solutions to their real life problems, and desperate to believe that these charismatic leaders can give them the solutions to their most pressing issues. They are not insidious monsters, they are victims of well structured propaganda that draws them in and then traps them in extreme beliefs and restrictions. French concludes by cautioning that the quest for certainty in life often leads people to adopt extremist belief systems that ultimately cause harm to innocent people.

An excellent example of everyday people being led astray into damaging belief systems is the case of the immense popularity and idolization of the Duggar family. In the spring of 2023 a documentary about this family, called “Shiny Happy People” was released on Amazon Prime. Many Americans were already somewhat familiar with the Duggars from their hit reality TV series “19 Kids and Counting”. What they may have been less familiar with however is the truth of what was going on behind closed doors when the cameras were off. The Duggar family was held forth by the fundamentalist Christian community as an example for them to emulate, and an exemplary standard of “Biblical, quiverfull” living. From the outside looking in they seemed to have it all together, the children were disciplined and well behaved, the mother looked at the father with adoration in her eyes as she followed his leadership and met his every need. But the truth of the matter was that this family was hiding dark secrets, and was indeed a microcosm of the very system they participated in; Bill Gothard’s IBLP. As season after season of their wildly successful show was produced, behind closed doors the oldest brother Josh molested four of his sisters and a family friend. According to an article by Jessica Durando, published in USA Today the only action taken in this case was “his father took Duggar to an Arkansas state trooper who was a personal friend, who took no action other than a “very stern talk.” That officer is now

serving a 56-year term in prison for child pornography, the magazine reported, and no case was ever brought against Duggar.” (Durando) Josh was then sent to a non-professional counseling center to be rehabilitated, his father stated that Josh became “closer to God” as a result of this counseling. In December of 2021, Josh Duggar would be found guilty of receiving and possessing child sexual abuse material by a federal jury and sentenced to 12 years in prison without possibility of parole. (“HSI Investigation Leads to 12-year Sentence for Former Reality Television Personality”) How did this happen? How did a boy raised in an environment with such an emphasis on Biblical morality find himself in this place and what led him there? This seems to make no sense, until you crack open the case of Bill Gothard and the sexual abuse he participated in during his time as the leader and founder of the IBLP. In 2014, 34 women came forward alleging sexual harassment and gross misconduct by Bill Gothard including 4 who say he molested them. So how did a man who was never married and never had children create a seminar on marriage, family, and “Biblical principles” that has been attended by an estimated 2.5 million people since 1961? (Radnofsky)

To understand how men like Bill Gothard are able to exercise this level of domination over their followers and feel as though they can commit heinous acts without being held accountable we must delve into the concept of coercive control and spiritual abuse within religious settings. In a 2022 research study on the spiritual harm and abuse scale, the question asked in this study was simple: what types of religious abuse most succinctly capture the phenomenon of being more broadly exposed to spiritual abuse? A survey was given to 4,914 participants with a total of 66 prompts about potentially abusive situations within a church or religious setting. In the end, they found six factors most likely to comprise spiritual harm and abuse: 1. Maintaining the system 2. Internal distress 3. Embracing violence 4. Controlling

leadership 5.Harmful God-image 6.Gender discrimination. The highest correlation being between controlling leadership and embracing violence. (Koch and Edstrom) Other such studies define spiritual abuse as “a form of emotional and psychological abuse characterized by systemic patterns of coercion and control in religious contexts; spiritual abuse is distinguished from broad emotional abuse by its common inclusion of specifically religious elements, like the quoting of scripture or the giving of a “divine rationale” for mistreatment.” (Oakley, Kinmond, and Humphreys) If someone can spiritually rationalize abuse there are no limits to the levels of harm this could cause, especially in systems where the men at the top are beyond reproach and seen as the agents of God himself.

The impacts of spiritual abuse on the psyche of those who are subjected to it cannot be understated, lifelong effects are felt and the thought patterns it creates often leave the victim in a state of total vulnerability. To understand how this happens, we can take a look at the interpersonal relationships that are encouraged in these types of settings. Those in the fundamentalist community are often encouraged to not have close friends or relationships outside of the church, this is explained as a protective mechanism to prevent those friends from leading you astray or causing you to doubt your faith. In reality, this creates a situation where members of these communities live and die in an echo chamber of confirmation bias and spiritual bypassing. If there are no outside voices allowed in, then those in power are able to have free reign to create the rules and regulations as they see fit. Oftentimes, if someone does break free from these harmful patterns they are seen as a threat to the community and excommunicated. The argument is used that they must have never been a true believer at all or they would not have fallen away. Thus continues the pattern of abuse and severing all possibility of alternative thought process from gaining a foothold in the hearts and minds of these congregations.

While there are many marginalized groups within the fundamentalist church, two in particular stand out above all the rest as being vulnerable to some of the more extreme forms of abuse; children and women. From the marches of the suffrage movement, to the ratification of the 19th amendment, to Title IX and beyond, women have fought a long and arduous battle for freedom and autonomy. There is more work to be done, but American women today experience greater levels of freedom and equality than many of their sisters from days gone by. It would be easy to think that this is the case for all of them, until we examine the circumstances of women in the American fundamentalist church. To walk through the doors of many conservative Christian churches is akin to traveling back in time. Subversion of female congregants ranges from overt to subtle, from an underlying message to a detailed sermon topic on the holiness of a woman in submission. But regardless of the method of delivery the message is the same: to be born female is to be born of lesser value and lower station. The negative implications of this message cannot be overstated, it allows a level of dehumanization and domination that is fertile ground for unequal and abusive power structures to grow and flourish. The subjugation of women within patriarchal power structures is hardly exclusive to the fundamentalist church, but it seems to be particularly accepted and widely adopted in these environments. This can and does lead to higher levels of intimate partner violence, verbal, mental, and spiritual abuse, along with intentional withholding of education or resources that would equip women to make the independent choice to remove themselves from the situation they are in. According to a 2010 study on religious fundamentalism and intimate partner violence among college students, “Christian fundamentalism is positively associated with two of the three measures of partner violence, The greater the level of Christian fundamentalist beliefs among our respondents, the more likely they were to approve of violence and to use violent behavior in their intimate relationships.” (Koch,

Ramirez, 2010) This begs the question of how we can develop both a deeper understanding of the power dynamics that contribute to this issue and what possible solutions can be found to educate and provide resources to those who are in dire need of assistance.

To truly understand the power dynamics of a patriarchal and complementarian system can be mind boggling for those who are on the outside looking in. Going back to the case of the Duggar family, the title of “Shiny Happy People” could not have been more appropriate. Based on outward appearances it seemed that this was the perfect family, mom spoke in a sweet and serene tone, the picture of maternal calm and peace, and the children fell in line instantly without complaint. But when taking a deeper look we must question why this is, is it normal for children to exhibit what they refer to as “instant obedience”? Is it not unusual that a wife never questions her husband or his choices but lives in subjection to him and his authority? It’s only strange if you’ve never sat in a church that teaches a patriarchal headship model, under that teaching the man is in authority over everything in the home, he is the final word and the master of everyone. Women are discouraged from higher education or from working outside the home, their value is in being a homemaker and a mother and self sacrificial love is viewed as their highest calling and special vocation. They are also valued for their purity and virginity, being taught their sexuality is solely for their husband and for his pleasure. In “The One Ring Model: Rape Culture Beliefs Are Linked to Purity Culture Beliefs”, Kathryn R. Klement’s explores this concept in depth by hypothesizing that there is a very real connection between cultures that value female purity and the promotion of myths and false beliefs about rape and what constitutes sexual assault. The suggestion is along the lines of where there is smoke there is also fire. The preservation of doctrines that place valuations on women of either being “pure” or “impure” also perpetuates the idea that a woman is in charge of remaining chaste and she is at fault if a man violates that

chastity. In one study, undergraduate psychology students completed both the Female Purity Beliefs Scale and the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. The FPBS assessed their beliefs about female purity such as sexual autonomy and virginity. The UIRMAS assessed their endorsement of the more common rape myths such as “she was asking for it”, or “it wasn’t really rape”. Belief in purity culture and support of these common rape myths were shown to be positively correlated. The article proposes that this correlation goes beyond a simple mental link between the two beliefs and is actually a deeply embedded thought process that is the result of systemic oppression of women in religious circles. When one attains a deeper understanding of these systematized beliefs, it becomes clear that women are marginalized in a variety of ways and the implications are potentially devastating to their wellbeing.

This begs the question, why do these women not take control of their situation and realize they are being abused? The simple explanation for this is the power of coercive control in religious settings. This concept is explored by Shane Sharp in a 2014 study “Resisting Religious Coercive Control.” In this study, the author explores religious coercive control specifically as it relates to the doctrines of submission and the links that it has to intimate partner violence and abuse. This is not limited to physical abuse alone, it can be mental, emotional or financial in nature. They speak of the doctrines of submission and how they are used as a mechanism of coercive control specifically in the case of husbands controlling their wives through these means. It can also mean using physical violence as a tactic to force her into submission. Another common methodology of these abusers is to convince their partner they are worthless, and once they have achieved this, their partner has no choice but to stop resisting and see the abuser as the master of the relationship. These women also use a variety of tactics and resources to attempt to resist their partner’s controlling behaviors, specifically the idea of “religious capital”. Religious

capital is discussed as the ability of the women in these situations to resist their husbands through their own understanding and interpretation of the Bible. The data used in this article is from an interview project that explored the impacts of religion on women who had experienced intimate partner violence. These interviews assessed their religious beliefs, childhood history and abuse history. Across the board, the women whose husbands were religious, used scriptures to justify mistreatment of their wives in an attempt to force them to submit. The control mechanism was significantly lessened among the wives who studied scripture and had their own interpretation of those verses. The conclusion of the study is that women being taught a more egalitarian view of these doctrines may reduce the impacts of coercive control.

Beyond the use of scripture to justify abuse, there is the issue of books and other materials that perpetuate a harmful message being used to further indoctrinate women into submission. Many marriage and family books promoted to women within the Fundamentalist church are riddled with messages of abuse and victim blaming. One such example is “Created to be His Helpmeet” by Debi Pearl, this is the advice she gives to wives when their husband threatens them: “Has your husband reviled you and threatened you? You are exhorted to respond as Jesus did. When he was reviled and threatened, he suffered by committing himself to a higher judge who is righteous. You must commit yourself to the one who placed you under your husband’s command. Your husband will answer to God, and you must answer to God for how you respond to your husband, even when he causes you to suffer. Just as we are to obey government in every ordinance, and servants are to obey their masters, even the ones who are abusive and surly, ‘likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands’... You can freely call your husband ‘lord’ when you know that you are addressing the one who put him in charge and asked you to suffer at your husband’s hands just as our Lord suffered at the hands of unjust

authorities...When you endure evil and railing without returning it, you receive a blessing, not just as a martyr, but as one who worships God.” (Pearl) For anyone familiar with the sadistic nature of domestic abuse and the control mechanisms that abusers employ this is chilling advice. When we are already seeing increased likelihood of intimate partner violence in fundamentalist settings, to advise these women to submit even to the point of martyrdom is madness.

So what happens when a victim realizes that something is not right and seeks help? Often when they do come forward it is first to a pastor or a trusted church member. Rather than being met with proper resources and qualified counseling, they may be encouraged to stick it out and pray for their husband instead of seeking safety. It’s easy to imagine the harm that this advice could cause, and Jaclyn D. Houston-Kolynik et. al explores this in a research study published in the American Journal of Community Psychology in 2019. This study explored the responses of Protestant Christian leadership to intimate partner violence within their religious congregations. A consistent theme found in their research is that these leaders lack the education and resources necessary to properly respond when confronted with IPV within their communities. While some of them were willing to be educated and admitted this is an issue that needs to be addressed, many were lackadaisical in their response and not as alarmed at their lack of resources. According to the article, more than 75% of those who are experiencing violence or abuse within an intimate relationship disclose this to a trusted friend or a religious leader. There is a wide range of possible responses from the confidant, ranging from acceptance and help, to victim blaming and perpetration of further harm on the individual. To move forward, we must question the structures that uphold abuse under the guise of holiness and begin empowering victims with education, resources, and the support necessary to break free from spiritual bondage. It is only through such reckoning that true healing and justice can begin—within the church and beyond.

The second marginalized group are children, they are valued based on their obedience and trained to be under their parent's authority with questionable and often abusive methods of discipline. This is another area where the effects can be lasting and life altering. Hannah Sutton-Adams delves into this topic in her research study "Recognizing Stones and Snakes in Children's Christian Formation: An Introduction to Religious Trauma and Abuse." In this study Sutton-Adams takes a very emotional and impactful journey into the lasting effects of childhood religious abuse. These scars in many cases are too deep to heal and take a lifelong toll on those who bear them. She begins with a story of a man who endured abuse by clergy in the Catholic church as a child and even as an adult he would have panic attacks if he saw a priest. Religious trauma and abuse, or RTA as it is referred to throughout the paper is shown to have lasting traumatic effects on its victims. A prime example of fundamentalist extremism perpetuating abuse is the case of Michael and Debi Pearl, whose teachings have been linked to the deaths of three children. In a 2011 article in The Seattle Times, Jeff Hodson looks into the cases of these victims; Sean Paddock, Lydia Schatz, and Hana Grace-Rose Williams. "The deaths of the three children occurred in different parts of the country — North Carolina, California and Washington — but each allegedly happened at the hands of their parents, all of whom were charged with murder. The parents had several things in common: They adopted children, home-schooled them and lashed them with quarter-inch-diameter plastic tubes. They also used the child-rearing teachings of a Tennessee evangelist, Michael Pearl, and his wife, Debi." (Hodson) The article states that over 670,000 copies of the Pearl's book "To Train up a Child" have been sold globally, translated into 12 languages. To this day, this book and the Pearl's other books are immensely popular in the IBLP and other similar organizations. In discussing discipline, the Pearl's write: "If you are just beginning to institute training on an already rebellious child, who

runs from discipline and is too incoherent to listen, then use whatever force is necessary to bring him to bay. If you have to sit on him to spank him then do not hesitate. And hold him there until he is surrendered. Prove that you are bigger, tougher, more patiently enduring and are unmoved by his wailing. Defeat him totally. Accept no conditions for surrender. No compromise. You are to rule over him as a benevolent sovereign. Your word is final.” (Pearl) Lydia Schatz died after being spanked for several hours. Hana Williams died of hypothermia after being severely beaten and left outside naked, in the cold. Sean Paddock died after his mother wrapped him in a blanket so tightly it restricted his airways - his mother was punishing him for getting out of bed without permission. Ruling over your children as a benevolent sovereign, this phrase should send shivers down the spine of anyone who understands attachment theory and the development of a child’s nervous system. Even if parents don’t take things to the extreme of actual physical abuse, the idea of defeating your children and spanking them until they surrender should be unconscionable to any loving and responsible parent. But when a message of total control and total submission is preached, these types of behaviors are normalized, accepted, and become a part of church culture.

The dehumanization and marginalization of children is a toxic core belief of Fundamentalism. Voddie Baucham, one of the most sought after homeschool conference speakers in the country, refers to infants as “vipers in diapers”, he teaches a doctrine of total depravity that compares children to serial killers. “One of the reasons that God makes human babies small is so they won’t kill their parents in their sleep. They’re evil.” (Baucham) When you consider the teachings of both the Pearls and Baucham, it’s not hard to piece together the puzzle; children are already incredibly vulnerable, and to teach parents that they are evil and need to be subdued creates fertile ground for both physical and mental abuse. Abuse to the point of death?

Looking at another quote from Voddie Baucham's sermon series on "Child Training": "God says your children desperately, desperately need to be spanked. Amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord! — and spank your kids, okay? They desperately need to be spanked. And they need to be spanked often. They do. I meet people all the time, you know, and they say, 'Oh yeah, I can think of maybe 4 or 5 times I've ever had to spank Junior.' Really? That's unfortunate, because unless you raised Jesus the Second, there were days when Junior needed to be spanked 5 times before breakfast... When they were 2 and you said, 'Come here,' and they said 'No,' — you should have worn them out... You might feel like picking up the phone going, 'I think I'm gonna kill him.' That's ok. 'Cuz you know what Proverbs says about that? It says don't spare the rod! 'Cuz 'though you beat him with the rod, he will not die but you may save his very soul from destruction.'" It's hard to imagine the mental gymnastics necessary to justify killing your child in the name of saving their soul from destruction. This is a primary example of the dangers of seeking certainty in religion, if you submit yourself to the teachings of men like this and believe that questioning them is akin to questioning God then you put yourself and those around you in danger of believing that evil such as this is justified by the Bible. Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this teaching is that it dehumanizes children, reducing them to "vipers in diapers" makes them second class citizens. In 2009 a study done in New Zealand by the Ministry of Social Development found a correlation between people's attitudes about children and how those people treat children. The study found that people who view children as innately bad are more likely to support physically punishing and striking children. The primary reason for this was these people also viewed children as being "born with a sinful (rebellious) nature" and thus "one of the duties of the parent is to curb rebellious expressions by the child." These people also mentioned being fine with children receiving "treatment that is less respectful than that which is

available to adults.” (Debski et al) In light of studies like these, one can easily see why dehumanizing children creates justification of abusive treatment. When scripture is weaponized, innocent children are dehumanized, and obedience is enforced through fear and domination, the essence of faith is lost.

Behind the polished veneer of Christian fundamentalism lies a graveyard of silenced voices, fractured identities, and immense spiritual harm. It is not just a theological movement, but a rigid psychological framework marked by absolutism, domination, and intolerance of dissent. This framework makes abuse not only possible but common, and it cannot be ignored any longer. The weaponization of the Bible and the normalization of domination over women and children represent not faithfulness to scripture, but a betrayal of its core teachings of love, justice, and human dignity. True healing cannot begin until these religious communities confront their complicity in enabling abuse and reject systems that prioritize image over integrity. They must question and dismantle the harmful teachings of the past and examine the core of their beliefs. Pastors, theologians, educators, and leaders must commit to dismantling any doctrines that enable spiritual abuse and replace them with teachings rooted in empathy, equity, and accountability. Survivors should be encouraged to share their stories and be given access to trauma-informed care, not gaslighting and spiritual bypassing. They must be met with the true love and compassion they deserve. Religious institutions must develop transparent safeguards, support systems, and theological frameworks that affirm the humanity and agency of every congregant. Those safeguards must be implemented in a way that protects the vulnerable and limits the power of those with ill intent. The time has come to exchange blind obedience for brave accountability, to exchange the false safety of certainty for honesty and a fragile hope for the future. The essence of faith is trust that transcends the need for certainty, an admission that

no one can truly know all things, they can only trust their faith and live in the comfort that hope grants to them. Perhaps by embracing the reality of genuine faith, these organizations can move from being whitewashed tombs to sanctuaries of peace, hope, and true religion.

Works Cited

Debski, Sophie. et. al "Just Who Do We Think Children Are? New Zealanders' Attitudes about Children, Childhood and Parenting: An Analysis of Submissions on the Bill To Repeal Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961," *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 34, April 2009.

Durando, Jessica. "Josh Duggar's Sisters Open up about Abuse." *USA Today*, 5 Jun. 2015.
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/people/2015/06/05/duggars-family-sex-scandal-fox-news-second-interview/28529587/>

French, David . "Shiny Happy People, Fundamentalism and the Toxic Quest for Certainty." *The New York Times*, 13 Jun. 2023.

Hodson, Jeff. "Did Hana's Parents 'Train' Her to Death?" *The Seattle Times*, 27 Nov. 2011.
<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/did-hanas-parents-train-her-to-death/>

Houston-Kolnik, Jaclyn D et al. "Overcoming the "Holy Hush": A Qualitative Examination of Protestant Christian Leaders' Responses to Intimate Partner Violence." *American journal of community psychology* vol. 63,1-2 (2019): 135-152. doi:10.1002/ajcp.12278

"HSI Investigation Leads to 12-year Sentence for Former Reality Television Personality." *ICE.Gov*, 25 May 2022,
www.ice.gov/news/releases/hsi-investigation-leads-12-year-sentence-former-reality-television-personality. Accessed 24 Feb. 2025.

Klement, Kathryn R., et al. "The One Ring Model: Rape Culture Beliefs Are Linked to Purity Culture Beliefs." *Sexuality & Culture*, vol. 26, no. 6, Dec. 2022, pp. 2070–106.
EBSCOhost, <https://doi-org.proxy.library.vcu.edu/10.1007/s12119-022-09986-2>.

Koch, Daniel, and Leihua Edstrom. "Development of the Spiritual Harm and Abuse Scale."

Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, vol. 61, no. 2, June 2022, pp. 476–506.

EBSCOhost, <https://doi-org.proxy.library.vcu.edu/10.1111/jssr.12792>

Koch, Jerome R., and Ignacio Luis Ramirez. "RELIGIOSITY, CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISM, AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS." *Review of Religious Research*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2010, pp. 402–10. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20778531>. Accessed 15 Jan. 2025.

Oakley, L., Kinmond, K. and Humphreys, J. (2018), "Spiritual abuse in Christian faith settings: definition, policy and practice guidance", *The Journal of Adult Protection*, Vol. 20 No. 3/4, pp. 144-154. <https://doi-org.proxy.library.vcu.edu/10.1108/JAP-03-2018-0005>

Pearl, Debi. *Created to Be His Help Meet*. No Greater Joy Ministries, 2004

Pearl, Michael , and Debi Pearl. *To Train Up a Child*. No Greater Joy Ministries, 1984

Radnofsky, Caroline . "Ministry That Once Nourished Duggar Family's Faith Falls from Grace."

Nbcnews.Com, 6 Feb. 2022,

www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/ministry-nourished-duggar-familys-faith-falls-grace-rc-na14024. Accessed 24 Feb. 2025.

Sharp, Shane. "Resisting Religious Coercive Control." *Violence Against Women*, vol. 20, no. 12,

Dec. 2014, pp. 1407–27. EBSCOhost,

<https://doi-org.proxy.library.vcu.edu/10.1177/1077801214557956>

Sutton-Adams, Hannah. "Recognizing Stones and Snakes in Children's Christian Formation: An Introduction to Religious Trauma and Abuse." *Religious Education*, vol. 118, no. 4, July 2023, pp. 356–68. EBSCOhost,

<https://doi-org.proxy.library.vcu.edu/10.1080/00344087.2023.2227816>