



A Closer Look

AT THINGS PERTAINING TO THE FAITH

December 2003

Interview with Randy Mabe

(Editorial Note: Randy Mabe is a gospel preacher and works with the Boulevard congregation in Las Vegas. The following interview with Randy concerns his work as a crisis counselor, in particular with people who have been sexually assaulted. This interview contains valuable information, some of which is sensitive. SML)

STEVE: Tell us about your work with the Community Action Against Rape in Las Vegas.

RANDY: My lectures in the Las Vegas School District centered upon the subject of sexual assault, commonly called rape. I worked as a first line crisis counselor for the Community Action Against Rape organization in Las Vegas and these lectures originated out of this program. I had been involved with over 500 cases and was asked to develop a program of prevention for the middle to high school age children in Las Vegas.

The program I designed for the school system in Las Vegas was three fold: 1) Prevention, 2) Clear and concise information, 3) Help for the victims. I used this vehicle to communicate Biblical principles of morality, integrity and justice to the students. I used past cases from our own newspapers to illustrate the evil of sexual assault. I would define terms in the language of the young people present and answer every question raised. I would teach them the worth

of every individual, being made in the image of God. Society still teaches that girls are not equal and must expect to be abused by the boys!

The most powerful part of the presentations would be when I would select a girl at random and make her start taking off jewelry in a very demanding and overbearing manner. They would always comply and most would find a point where they refused. This was used to teach them that rape is a 'control' issue and not sexual. This would provide opportunities for the girls to run these scenarios through their minds and have a ready answer if ever faced with this reality. The young men would be humbled in hearing the harsh penalties for rape in Nevada and when a girl would shoot a caustic glance toward a young man as if to say, "That will never happen again!"

I tried to make the presentations dynamic, relevant and strictly on their level. The presentations would last for one hour. I would do classes from 25 to assemblies of 500. With the separation of church and state issues I felt like Paul in Caesar' court as the teachers gave me complete control and never objected to the Biblical principles being taught.

STEVE: Is "rape" defined by law in any way that would surprise the reader?

RANDY: Yes. Sexual Assault is defined as forced

sexual activity that involves penetration. Most people, especially the young, think that full sexual relations must occur. I use the illustration of a touchdown in football. How many points are awarded the team if a receiver catches a pass in the back of the endzone? How many points are awarded if a runner barely gets the nose of the football over the goal line? The same. And so it is with sexual assault. When girls realize that sexual exploration in the back seat with their clothes on can be defined as “rape”, they realize that they have power to keep it from happening to them. Any penetration qualifies if it is sexual in nature, no matter how slight. The power is really given to the girls because both male and female are in my lectures - so everyone knows it is prosecutable. It is enough to make “no” mean “NO!”

Another thought that never occurs to young people is that most sexual assault in their age group, which is the highest percentage assaulted, occurs at home or with someone they know. We make sure they know it is possible to prosecute anyone with the evidence. Another surprising fact is that boys “rape” boys as well. It usually goes unreported. The intended result in my lectures on this point is that no one should have this happen to them. It is no one’s right to do this to you and we are successful prosecuting about 76% of the time in Las Vegas.

STEVE: What advice would you give to our young readers that would help them avoid being molested?

RANDY: The first advice would be the same for all people. Be aware of your surroundings always and watch your drinks. Rapists are seeking control of another person. They prey upon the weak or

unaware. Always scan the areas you enter, parking lots especially. Never accept a drink, of any kind, that has already been opened or prepared. Date rape drugs are everywhere and easily obtainable. These drugs mix easily and quickly even in water. They have no taste, no appearance, and no smell. They are used to incapacitate you and leave you to the rapist’s desire. Remember that most assaults in this age range are by people you know. Do not trust in this area. Open your own drinks,

“...most sexual assault...occurs at home or with someone they know.”

watch them being made and keep them in your immediate possession until you are through with them. If you leave them unattended, such as going to the restroom, do not drink from them again. Order a new one. Special advice for young Christians: Evil people relish in destroying the lives of good people. Remember that your bodies are not your own,

having been bought with a price, and are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor.6:18-20). Be on guard to protect it and enjoy a full life in Christ. If any person is assaulted you must remember that this crime crosses all barriers of age, gender and social status. It is a crime against you and nothing you have done makes you to blame for it happening to you. Yet, precautions that you take are a protection for you.

STEVE: Is there any way of knowing how often a man is falsely accused of molesting a woman? What safeguards are in place to protect an innocent man?

RANDY: The latest statistics I have seen suggests that 1/2 of one percent are falsely accused of sexual assault. The safeguards that are most effective are the many professionals that have

contact with each case. I have seen only two false accusations made and they were caught on the day they were reported. By the time the first line crisis counselor, the sexual assault nurse examiner, the patrol policeman and the sexual assault detective have interviewed the “victim” two times each a ready assessment usually can be made. That assessment impacts the priority that case receives in the investigative stage. It would be nice if every complaint received a quick and thorough investigation, but the sheer numbers of reports prevents this. In Las Vegas we have sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE) that only deal with these cases and they are very adept in spotting the false accusation. It has been my experience that they hate the crime but are not biased in ascertaining the truth. The man accused is not treated unfairly in this process. It takes evidence and a good case to get the conviction. If anything the victim feels the underdog and has the burden to prove the accusation true. We all are innocent until proven guilty.

The greater problem is the many perpetrators who are never accused: Men who rape their wives, fathers who molest and assault their children, men who have raped other men (a recent hazing incident at a football camp involving a broomstick stands for an illustration), teens protected by peer pressure and the like. Many of these people think that the law does not protect them due to relationship and suffer silently for a long time. There are laws in place and help is at hand. Sometimes these think that these events will end soon, but they do not. Rapists are in the highest percentile for recidivism.

STEVE: Do you have any way of knowing how comparable your experience and the statistics you have given concerning your work in Las Vegas compares with other states or parts of the country?

RANDY: Every year that I worked in Las Vegas as

a crisis counselor the state statistics mirrored the national statistics consistently. This might come as a surprise especially when Las Vegas is often called “Sin City”. Sexual assault is a crime born out of lust for power and control over another person and happens in every age group and every financial group regardless of gender. One of every three females and one of every five males will be sexually assaulted by the age of eighteen. Date rape accounts for 50-70% of all reported rapes. Of these, 80% occur in the home of the male. Of the 30-50% of non-date rapes, 50% occur in the victim’s home and 48% occur in the daytime. False reports for revenge are rarely made. Only 2% of these crimes are unfounded. It is estimated that only one in ten sexual assaults are reported.

Sexual assault is a crime born out of lust for power and control

Another set of statistics that may help one understand sexual assault defines the types of sexual assaults. Eighty percent of sexual assaults are committed by “Power Rapists”. The attacks are planned and usually born out of sexual and rape fantasies. Threats and physical force are the weapons most often used to subdue the victim. The victim symbolizes the perpetrators own weakness and powerlessness in life. He gains victory for a brief moment and will strike again to be “strong” again.

“Anger Rapists” make up 15% of offenders. These attacks are spontaneous, impulsive, violent and short in duration. Physical injury or severe verbal abuse will be used. The victim may or may not be the actual person with whom the perpetrator is angry.

“Sadistic Rapists” comprise the last 5% of offenders. These seek destruction and punishment. Mutilation and murder often occur. These attacks are planned and are ritualistic. All the victims of a sadistic rapist will share common characteristics such as age, appearance or occupation.

It is important that all victims make a report immediately and properly of any sexual assault because most all rapists are serial rapists. Rarely is a rape event a “one-time” event. More victims will follow if the perpetrator is not stopped and put in jail.

STEVE: Is there any aspect of your work that I have failed to ask about that you would like to address?

RANDY: There are a few things that I think worthy of mention at this point. One, it is a great blessing to be a part of a program that really helps the young people secure their hearts and arm them to guard themselves from abuse. I have had seniors in high school chase me down and tell me that what I taught them in the freshman year was utilized to save them from being a victim. That is very fulfilling. It is also great to see the young people tune in, think about serious matters and make appropriate comments instead of looking so bored.

Two, it is a wonderful service to help a victim, shortly after a sexual assault, to start to regain their control of life again. You help bear their burden simply by listening and extending knowledge that empowers them to understand and react appropriately to the present circumstance. After that it is a source of comfort because they know you are only a telephone call away. The following statement communicates the proper attitude and realization in healing: “I was a victim. I was in a

**volunteerism
needs to be
practiced
more by
everyone**

fight that was not a fair fight. I lost. There is no shame in losing such fights. I am a survivor.”

Three, volunteerism needs to be practiced more by everyone! It impressed the young people in high school that someone would come to them without pay. I also encouraged them to “pay it forward” by

volunteering at some point in their lives just to serve others. It need not consume massive amounts of time but any volunteer service you perform will edify you and help others. Sometimes people get into a rut thinking only of what someone needs to do for them. The fulfillment cannot be experienced until the effort is made to serve others.



rlmabel@fastmail.fm



NOTE

In 1998 **RANDY** was awarded the Florence McClure award by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the Citizens Committee on Victims Rights. Florence McClure is the founder of the Las Vegas Community Action Against Rape, the organization for which he served.

In 1999 he was awarded the Las Vegas Community Achievement Humanitarian Award by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. This award was recognized publicly by Governor Kenny Guinn. He also received written commendations from Senators Richard Bryan and Harry Reid; Congresswoman Shelley Berkley; Congressman Jim Gibbons.



The next issue will complete the trio of articles on Faith, Hope and Love. Articles by Jerry Abraham and Dan Morris will be featured.

Several more interviews are in the works and special studies are planned for upcoming issues. Thanks for your interest in this work.

A Closer Look is edited by
Steven Lloyd, Jim Lloyd and Tom Steed.
For back issues, visit us at:
www.chinochurchofchrist.org