



# **From Harm to Harmony: Overcoming Violence in the Family**

Timothy Leadership Training Program  
[www.tlti.org](http://www.tlti.org)

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## Introduction

Welcome to this TLT training course. This is usually the third course in the TLT program.

TLT courses provide essential training for Christian ministry. Through this course, From Harm to Harmony: Overcoming Violence in the Family, you will learn about harmful behaviors within family relationships. You will explore ways to overcome these behaviors. You will also learn about God's concern for those who are neglected or abused. You will hear God's command to protect and care for those who are vulnerable to abuse. You will explore ways to grow healthy family relationships.

Violence and abuse within families are not easy to discuss. Some abusers may want to hide their behavior. Others may defend their behavior. Those who are abused may be afraid. Others may feel shame. Sadly, churches have sometimes failed to protect those who are threatened or suffer abuse. Instead they have ignored, tolerated, or covered up harmful behavior.

But God's compassion is with those who are harmed or dishonored. We read in **Psalm 147:3**, "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." He brings them justice. We read in **Psalm 103:6**, "The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed."

The issues of family violence apply to both facilitators and participants. Each person needs to personally consider what the Word of God and the Holy Spirit are saying to them in this course.

Working through this course, you will:

- Interact with Scripture and others in your group to better understand the value of each family member and our responsibility to honor each one.
- Consider the effects of sin on family attitudes and behavior.
- Identify positive attitudes and speech for overcoming harmful behaviors in the family.
- Explore five practical ways to overcome harm and violence in the family.
- Identify ways to protect vulnerable family members from harm, and care for those who have been harmed.
- Identify obstacles you may encounter in your family, church or community as you engage in overcoming harmful practices and traditions.
- Practice what is learned through Kingdom-oriented Action Plans related to this subject.

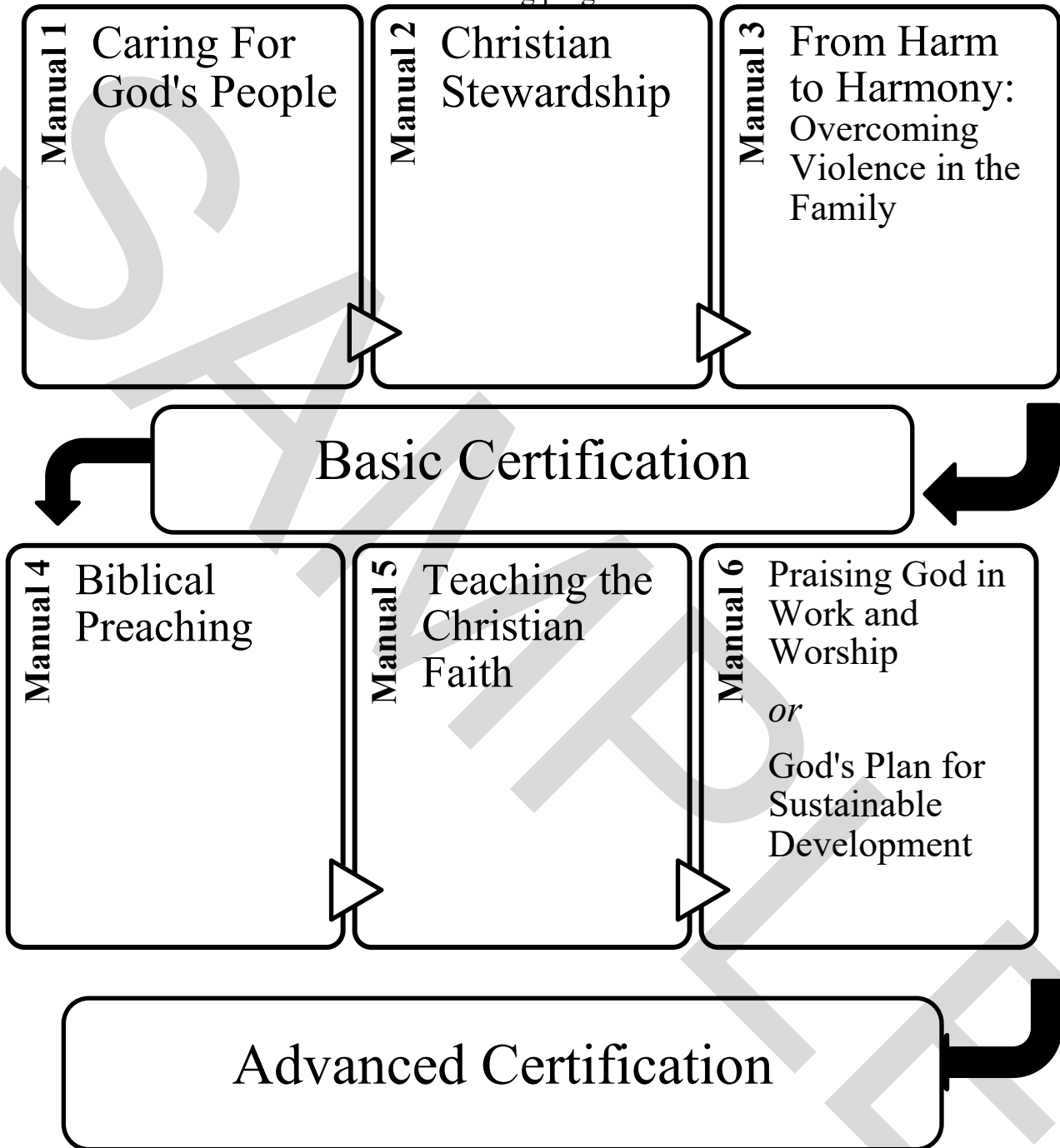
This course will provide you with a tool to train others: Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders, other church members, elders, and deacons. As you work through this course, discuss with your group how God may be preparing you to train others.

As you engage in this training, we pray that it will open doors for growth and renewal—for you personally and for those you serve.



## Timothy Leadership Training Certification

This is the path for Basic and Advanced TLT certification by the Timothy Leadership Training program.



**Note:** To receive an official TLT certificate you must be trained by a certified TLT facilitator following standard guidelines. Facilitators report trainings and request certificates through [reporting@tlti.org](mailto:reporting@tlti.org) or WhatsApp +1-616-438-5757.



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## Participant Testimonies

The following testimonies come from participants around the world. More testimonies are available on the Timothy Leadership Training website.

### LATIN AMERICA

Through this training I realized how violent I had been with my wife - not with my hands but with words. I needed to confess this to her and change. Now we speak regularly together about how I hurt her with my words and how she hurts me.

This course helped me to talk with young people about the violence they have suffered and about their own violent attitudes and deeds. It takes much energy and prayer as they unburden their hearts to me.

I shared with my church about how the Bible shines God's light on violence that happens in our families, even though it is painful to see. Now we are on the road to healing and change.

I am working with the men in our church to recognize and confess their violent behavior. They are responding positively, often with great emotion. And by God's grace they are changing.

### AFRICA AND ASIA

Each lesson of this course really touched me deeply. I am rededicating my marriage to God. The course also provided me with an effective tool to assist people who are hurting.

As a pastor, I have seen the positive effect of this course on the families of our church. Reconciliation and respect within families have demonstrated Christ's love to others. And it shows in the way our church has grown in the past 6 months!

After this training, church members began to show greater respect for each other and for others around them. Long-standing conflicts in our neighborhood have been resolved.



## LESSON 2

### Harming God's Image through Family Violence

1. **SHORT ACTION PLAN Reports** (can be done in small groups or in the larger group)
  - Did the change you wanted and prayed for in Lesson 1 happen? How do you know?
  - Did you accomplish the activities you planned in Lesson 1?
  - Did you encounter any obstacles which prevented you from accomplishing your activities? If so, how can you overcome those obstacles, by God's grace?
  - Did anything unexpected happen?
  
2. **Sin: The Source of Family Violence**
  - A. Read **Genesis 2:23-24**, which took place before sin entered the world. *How can we see that Adam honored and valued Eve when she was created?*
  
  - B. Read **Genesis 3:12**. *What did Adam say after sinning to show that he did not honor and value Eve as before?*
  
  - C. Read **Genesis 3:16-19**. *How does sin affect the earth and people? Give some examples where you have seen these results of sin.*
  
3. **The Bible often speaks about the sin of family violence.** It shows how terrible family violence is.
  - A. Read **Genesis 4:8**. *What happened between the first brothers who were born into the world?*
  
  - B. Read **Genesis 37:26-28**. *What did Joseph's brothers do to him?*
  
  - C. Read **2 Samuel 13:8-14**. *What did Amnon do to his sister?*
  
4. **Forms of family violence.** Family members are called to honor and value one another. Read **Colossians 3:18-19** and **Ephesians 6:1-4**.
 

Family members dishonor God when they commit violent acts against each other. Violence may be physical harm, but it may also be verbal abuse, unfair treatment, or sexual abuse. We will study each of these forms of family violence in the following lessons.

Throughout history and around the world, the most common form of family violence is that of husbands against their wives.
  
5. **Family violence in our communities**

Discuss these questions:

  - A. *What kinds of family violence take place in your country, neighborhood, or church? How can you know if it is happening?*
  
  - B. *Why is it difficult to talk about family violence in the church?*



## 6. Roots of family violence

Like hidden roots of a fruit tree, many times there are hidden roots to family violence. The roots need to be exposed and healed in order for good fruit to be produced. Here are some of the roots of family violence:

### A. Drunkenness and drug abuse. Read **Proverbs 20:1**.

- i. *Is this a problem in your community or church? How can you know if it is happening in your church?*
- ii. *How have you seen a church address the problem of drunkenness and drug abuse?*

### B. False religious reasons. Sometimes people wrongly use Bible verses to defend or support family violence. For example, some Christian men beat their wives referring to **Genesis 3:16**, “Your husband will rule over you.”

Read **Genesis 1:28**.

- i. *Whom did God bless to rule over all creation?*
- ii. *Sin changed the relationship between husbands and wives. Discuss how the relationship between the husband and wife changed because of sin. How is this different from what God desired in the beginning, and still desires today?*

### C. Power and control. People often mistreat those they want to control. For example, a husband or wife may mistreat their spouse in order to control them. They use their power in harmful ways.

Read **Philippians 2:3-8**.

- i. *How did Christ use his power?*
- ii. *What are some of the ways a husband will treat his wife when he has the humility of Christ?*
- iii. *What are some of the ways a wife will treat her husband when she has the humility of Christ?*

### D. Other roots of family violence can include harmful cultural beliefs or practices.

Another root of violence is people’s experience of being abused themselves, so that they struggle to have good relationships with others. *What roots of family violence have you seen in your community?*

## 7. God restores people from family violence. Family violence is harmful and sinful. God seeks to restore everything that is broken because of sin, including brokenness caused by family violence. This does not mean that family violence is not serious. Many occasions of violence do not have a happy ending that we can see. But Jesus carried the pain and injustice of family violence to the cross. He restores the brokenhearted. His judgment is on those who abuse and mistreat others.



- A. *What are some stories from the Bible where God restored people from family violence?*
- B. *One or two people briefly share a story from your family or community where restoration from family violence took place.*

### 8. Confession and repentance

Confession and repentance open the way for forgiveness and restoration. When we admit that our wrong attitudes, words, and actions contribute to family violence, the Holy Spirit will guide us on how to honor our family members.

*Consider how the Holy Spirit may be guiding you to honor your family members better. Alone or in pairs, reflect on the changes that could take place in our families, churches, or communities when we honor one another with our attitudes, words, and actions.*

### 9. SHORT ACTION PLAN

**Situation:** Write a problem or an opportunity that has come to your mind from this lesson:

*(Example: A problem in my community is that drunkenness creates many situations of violence. One of the churches in my community has a program to help alcoholics.)*

**Goal for Kingdom Change:** Write a change you want to see happen by God's grace when this situation receives your attention:

*(Example: My church will join another church in my community to help alcoholics.)*

**Activities:** Write one or two things you will do with God's strength before the next lesson to help accomplish this goal:

*(Example: I will talk with the pastor of the church in my community that ministers to alcoholics. I will share with the pastor what I learned from this lesson. I will ask how our church can help this ministry.)*

10. At the end of the lesson, share your plan with another person and pray together.