

October 2022
Newsletter



Julie's Heart Cry

Bringing Hope to Women Globally



Speaking up for women who have no voice

Dear Friends and Partners,

I'd like to share bits and pieces of what some women in developing countries regularly experience when they need a midwife and a birthing center.

As much as I wish these stories weren't true, they are – and they are happening every day, even as you read this. I'll spare you the unimaginable details.


You may wonder why these women don't speak up or do something about their situation. When the consequences of freedom of speech are a price much too high for these precious women to pay, they choose silence. They not only bear the weight of all of this, but they also normalize every act of humiliation, ridicule, fear, trauma, and physical and emotional abuse.

Abuse comes in different forms

Imagine arriving at a birthing center just to be met with hostility by the midwife who is supposed to assist you in delivering your baby. You can barely stand as the contractions become intense; the midwife sees you and is entirely indifferent, scrolling through her phone. When it rings, she answers it and walks away to have a cheerful conversation.

Imagine arriving at a birthing center where the service is not first come, first served, or prioritizing those with the most urgent needs. Instead, it's who offers the most money to the midwife and/or nurse on duty in hopes of being treated with kindness, respect, dignity or even better medical care.

Imagine a first-time mom who has made it to 32 weeks for the first time after having two
(over)



miscarriages. She knows something is wrong. Terrified, she arrives at a birthing center in the middle of the night, only to discover the midwife is nowhere to be found.

This kind of treatment is nothing new – it has been going on for decades. A lady shared her experience of 50 years ago after she gave birth to her son. When she got out of bed to pick up her crying baby, a midwife slapped her across the face. I won't even tell you the midwife's reason, as it's completely incomprehensible.

When asked about her reaction at that moment, the woman replied, "Who am I to say anything?"

I have heard of other women who were slapped, screamed at, cussed at, and called every name in the book while in active labor.

Root cause of behavior is sin

Many developing countries have policies that dictate no one is allowed in the delivery room with a woman in active labor except the midwife. This means midwives have no accountability, and their inhumane behavior is left unchecked.

Tribalism plays a role in this as well. When there is division and favoritism among tribes, this directly affects women and children who need medical attention in clinics, hospitals and birthing centers.

The accounts I've shared are not the result of human or medical errors. They, along with other types of abuse, are intentional, purposeful and willful acts. As we know, the root of this despicable behavior toward women – who are created in God's image and are loved by Him dearly – is sin.

Sad to say, but many of these midwives and nurses claim to be Christians and are churchgoers. And many, if not most, are

involved in church ministries and often hold prominent positions. Church leaders are hesitant to speak against the cruelty and abuse. In their own words, "The midwives and nurses who work at these birthing centers are quite vindictive."

These women will never, and I mean never, have the privilege or voice to speak out.

Therefore, I am speaking to you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, on their behalf. We live in a country that has afforded us the privilege of freedom of speech, so I am asking you to join me in solving this problem.

Restoring dignity, showing God's love

My own biological mother died at the hands of an abusive midwife who was assisting her during my birth. I am pleading with you to stand up for these women by helping Julie's Heart Cry ministry build Christ-centered birthing centers wherever needed.

Let's build a place where women can give birth with dignity. A place where women will look forward to going when bringing their babies into this world. Why? Because they will be shown the love of Christ.

We cannot change how governments operate in impoverished countries, but we **can** make a difference – one pregnant woman at a time.

Will you please consider joining me in prayer as well as giving financially?

Please go to **Juliesheartcry.org/donate**, select Birthing Centers and donate \$12, \$35, \$50 or more. You can also sign up to become a monthly donor.

Last but not least, please consider Julie's Heart Cry ministry during your year-end giving.

Julie Mad-Bondo