

Popular Christian authors Beth Moore and Max Lucado talk about surviving sexual abuse

Moore and Lucado were featured speakers at a conference at Wheaton College on sexual abuse and the church.

by [Emily McFarlan Miller](#) in the [January 16, 2019](#) issue



Beth Moore (left) and Max Lucado (right) speaking at Wheaton College in December 2018 during a summit on sexual abuse and misconduct. RNS photos by Emily McFarlan Miller.

When popular Bible teacher and author Beth Moore was growing up, church was a safe harbor, a place where she could escape from sexual abuse at home.

“Still, I had a terrible secret and nowhere to take it,” Moore told hundreds of listeners at Wheaton College. “What if I’d heard my pastor or my teachers or any of my leaders address what I was going through, call it what it was, say that I wasn’t to blame and not to be ashamed?”

Moore was a featured speaker at a December 13 conference organized by the Billy Graham Center on sexual abuse and harassment.

Speakers reviewed mandated reporting laws and denounced abuses of power. Experts shared a clinical understanding of how trauma affects survivors and how the church can help them heal. They stressed the importance of believing survivors when they come forward.

In closing remarks, best-selling author and pastor Max Lucado spoke publicly for the first time about being sexually abused as a child by a community leader. He knew the difficulty of “regaining a balance, having gone through this type of situation,” he said.

He also repented for what he called “locker-room banter” in his days playing football, for conversations with women in which he “could have done better,” and for a condescending attitude he has had at times as a senior pastor. Lucado said, “Now is the time for across-the-coffee-table conversations that begin with this phrase: ‘Help me to understand what it’s like to be a female in this day and age.’” —Religion News Service

A version of this article appears in the print edition under the title “People: Beth Moore and Max Lucado.”