

A Garden of Faith

Throughout my life, God has been merciful to me. I am thankful for the loving Christian home into which I was born 38 years ago.

My mother prayed over everything, and our family attended church each week. It was a wonderful childhood.

But while in college, I was introduced to marijuana and cocaine. I'd nearly finished my nursing program at Georgia State University, but I left school so I could work to support my drug habit.

I became involved with Rickey, who was a cocaine dealer. I didn't like him at all, really. But he could get me all the cocaine I needed—for free. The cocaine helped to keep me awake on my night job at a large bank.

In 1986, I married Rickey, who was also a cocaine user. I thought I could change him. After all, I reasoned, I had a good life so far.

I thought I loved him, but really I felt sorry for him. His father died when he was a child. I felt he wouldn't make it without me.

A year later, I was pregnant with our daughter. By now I really did love him. But he was in deep trouble and began stealing from me to pay for his drugs.

Rickey also started slapping me around and once held a gun on me and told me I was going to die. He was completely taken over by a spirit of lust, and he'd been involved in several adulterous relationships.

By 1991, I had grown very tired. With Christmas approaching, I surrendered my life to God. Instantly Jesus saved me and delivered me from cocaine addiction.

I was told later by three different doctors that I would not be able to have any more children because of the infections my spouse had given me through his unfaithfulness. After hearing this, I became bitter toward everybody.

In February 1994, Rickey was arrested and sentenced to a year in prison. While incarcerated, he turned to the Lord and received a call to the ministry.

I was still embittered, but I decided to be faithful to God. As an act of obedience, in 1996, I planted a vegetable garden and buried my bitterness, anger and hatred in the ground.

God healed our marriage, and on January 25, 1999, I gave birth to our son. Before his release from prison, my husband founded Christian Deliverance Outreach Ministry, which is the church we now pastor together.