

How Perseverance in Prayer Brought These Parents From Pain to Praise

If you're a parent in pain due to the behaviors and choices of your son or daughter, New Year's might not be a good time for you, so I have something special for you. It's the true story of God's faithfulness in His pursuit of a wayward son. A former prodigal and his mom got together wrote it (I've made only a few grammar edits). They gave me permission to share with others to encourage them. This is for parents far and wide; a vision of what God could do in your child's life—a gift of hope.

Let me tell you about John. You may see similarities here to your own child. John is the son of Christian missionaries. He made a decision for Christ when he was 5 years old. He rededicated his life at age 12 and was baptized at 17. However, when he was 18, he decided to live life his way. He chose to deny God to justify his choices. These choices led him out of his parent's home, first to live with friends, then on the streets.

He never blamed his parents for his choices or their consequences, "You guys have done nothing wrong. These are my decisions. I feel like I need to do this."

Eventually, John joined the Army. A few years later, he got married. His parents found out on Facebook. Over time, he made many bad choices that led to several addictions. After a few years, his marriage ended. This was a huge life-change that led to him on a search to find self and what he was missing.

God brought about him reconnecting with an old friend with whom he desired to have a relationship, but she shared that if he wasn't walking with the Lord, it was a deal-breaker. A

month later, John called his mom and told her, "I'm having a crisis of ego. It is my ego that is keeping me from God."

This godly mom questioned his motives, but of course, she wanted him to pursue God. She gave him some advice a wise woman had given her many years earlier: "If you don't make a decision because you think your motivation could be wrong, then you'll never make any decisions because your motivation could always be wrong! Connect with God and pursue whatever He is calling you to do. And if you think your motivation may be wrong, ask Him to change it. You can't steer a parked car; you have to start in a direction and then let God steer you."

Soon after that, John chose to come back to God, and a transformation began.

The change has been amazing. He has connected with a good church, joined a men's small group, and is being mentored by an older gentleman. He's also reconnected with a former middle-school friend who is now a strong believer. This friend directed John to some excellent resources that answered many of his troubling questions regarding Christianity being rational and the Bible being valid. He now sees where "science and God really do go together."

God has met John in a profoundly personal way showing him:

He was God-true and powerful. He has "unbridled joy in His presence." That His Word is unfailing, steadfast and living, teaching him different things each time he reads it.

John chose total surrender, in his own words, "...not just supplementing my life with God."

He has a passion for the Bible. He's choosing forgiveness, for himself and for others. He's facing challenges but facing them with faith and trust in God. He's connecting with God; listening and obeying have become a way of life.

His mom shares, "What a joy for us to watch this transformation in our son's life! We couldn't be more proud! He has taken a hard road to Jesus, but we're confident the Lord wastes nothing and will use all his experiences for his glory. God truly is doing a mighty work in John's life and in all of our lives!"

This Bible verse has become special to John and his family: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there but water the earth and make it bring forth and bud that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void" (Isa. 55:8-11).

Note from Dena: Never stop praying and bringing your requests to God. John's parents never knew if or when their prayers would be answered, but they never gave up. Persevere! 2018 could be the year of transformation for your child (and for you)! {eo}

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