

How the Holy Spirit Healed a Mother After Addiction and Abortion

She says it's cliché to talk about beauty from brokenness, but Amber C. Haines' testimony is one of raw power and simplicity. The Alabama girl was always craving to break out of her box and compared her lust of the unknown to Eve's. And her life has been jagged with just as much shame until she came to terms with the Father.

Now, the author and blogger is using her story to ignite the church to break down walls of shame and open a safe space for hurting people. "The people in my mind that I want to be the most like are the people who have experienced the most pain," Haines says. "I want to be like the people who have endured, the people who recognize we follow the suffering Servant."

It's possible, though, that Haines, a mother of four boys, doesn't recognize her own strength. Her past haunts her, but not in a way in which she's ashamed. Rather, she sees exactly how Christ was glorified in her weakness. Haines grew up in a small-town church. Typical of Southern church culture, though, members were all about appearances. So much so that when Haines became pregnant out of wedlock, she chose to take the shame upon herself and end the life of her child.

She wanted to be free, she says, but ultimate freedom comes from a heart of utter surrender and slavery to love. Her wild child days were all about feeling good, and she did whatever necessary to maintain the high. Haines was in college when she was captured by the Holy Spirit, but not at a youth conference or altar call. She was at her lowest—literally and emotionally—when she gave God an ultimatum: Pull her off the bathroom floor or she would die there.

When He stepped in, Haines' life became about a love story between her and the Divine. "We run so hard from death, we're so terrified of it, but the whole point (of following Christ) is we are not enslaved to death," she says.

While she knows she's a new creature, Haines doesn't shy away from her past. Instead, she uses her story to speak life into others. Christ was acquainted with suffering, she says, and if we as Christians are to truly hold our lives accountable to Christ, we'll forget about appearances and cling to God, something that's unattainable until we're filled with His Holy Spirit.—*Jessilyn Justice*