

How the Lord Rescued and Redeemed This Broken Family From Addiction

As a pastor, I have talked with more than a few parents who didn't know that their children were using drugs and, not only that, were seriously addicted to them. It's easy to rationalize or dismiss changes in behavior as just quirks of being a teenager or young adult.

This discovery is so heart-breaking and overwhelming. Parents find that their minds swirl between great fierceness, "I'll fix this. We'll beat it. We'll win," and overwhelming fear and defeat. It is lonely and sometimes fraught with judgment from others which only makes it more heartbreaking.

Dawn Ward is a mother who knows this battle. But in her family, after many years of struggle, they have won. Through finding a renewed trust in God and complete dependence on Him, Dawn began to find herself climbing back out of that "miry pit" (Ps. 40) of dealing with addicted family members.

Her children found help and gained freedom. Now they are thriving and succeeding again.

Out of the pain of being the parent of addicted children, Dawn felt God call her to a ministry to parents with addicted children. This is so needed in our day. So many people struggle with drugs. Coronavirus has only made this worse as people have medicated their loneliness, isolation, paused schooling and work challenges with drug and alcohol use. That usage has been up and so have suicides among the young.

Dawn's ministry, The Faith to Flourish, is touching countless lives. Offering prayer, education, community and other resources, parents who have felt isolated, embarrassed and

helpless, have found a way to go forward with God at the center. They have experienced their own hearts transformed.

Often Christian families are embarrassed to admit that addiction is a problem in their homes. Feeling they must appear perfect, they are reluctant to admit drug use problems or addiction problems in other areas like gambling or pornography.

But a hidden problem remains an unsolved problem. It is time we acknowledge that addiction is touching the lives of believers and unbelievers both. If we want to stop this evil, we need to face it, communicate about it and draw God into the heart of it.

Dawn is in the midst of writing more teaching material for the women she helps but has already co-authored a workbook with Valerie Silveira, a woman whose own daughter also battled addiction and died, called *Still Standing After All The Tears Workbook, Faith in the Battle Version*. Dawn says, "Think Bible study and action plan to help get you out of the funk you are stuck in with your child's addiction. Valerie's books were very helpful to me on my journey, and I am honored to have participated in this project with her."

To hear more of Dawn's testimony about the saving of her children and about her work with countless families, listen to *Rooted by the Stream* on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eo}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.