

COPING AS A PARENT WITH A CHILD'S ADDICTION PROBLEMS

By: A loving Christian Mother

I was the parent who said, "My child would never do 'that'." The "that", I thought my child would never do, he did. First, don't ever say, mine won't do this or that. We may teach, and *we must*, we may train, and, *we must*, but we cannot and do not control what another person does, not even our children.

I am responsible to teach and train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6). But Lord, how old is old?

A child, like a plant, can be trained in chosen directions. But it is true, if the child departs, when they are old, it is their choice and if it is a bad choice they will suffer consequences, but never the less it is their choice.

As you can see ladies my coping has been very hard and I am still trying and struggling with difficulty to cope. My son, L - - - is an alcoholic, (a recovering alcoholic.) He began by drinking a beer, and smoking a little pot when he was in high school.

As time went on that beer was not enough, it took more than one. Then beer(s) weren't enough and he turned to vodka. When there was no more money for vodka, he would steal to buy vodka. He would get caught drinking and driving, then fender-bender drinking, and then stealing the lawn mower at Wal-Mart. One arrest after another until wham!! You made the big time. Lynn is serving time at Limestone Prison.

My God, where did I go wrong? What did I do to cause this? Why Lord...Can I not fix it?

At first, I thought it was the glucose I took twice a week while I carried him. He was used to getting a high. He lived in pure hell inside of me for nine months, as I vomited everyday. He came into this world with all types of allergies. He had to start shots at the age of eleven months.

For me to be able to deal with his addiction, I had to realize he made the choice. The Lord said choose you this day who or what you will serve. I didn't choose that for me and I certainly did not choose for my son to be an alcoholic. I had to admit to God that this

is too big for me.... God I am giving it to you. I prayed, and asked God, "Please help my son, Lynn, to learn and to know that he can live without alcohol. Help me 'O Lord, I prayed, to be the encouragement he needs - that doesn't mean that there have been times when I took it back and tried to help.

I realize now that the only way I could become aware of the sufferings of others and the pain of a child who is an alcoholic is to have to go through it with my own child. ONLY the Lord and the mother of an alcoholic can imagine the hurt and embarrassment. You know, there are so many "Perfect Families" out there. I was one of them once upon a time...until the daily paper printed the story.

Then our son M - - - - and his wife divorced. Lord I thought my world had collapsed for sure. BUT the Lord has shown me that everything given to Him will work for good. Not only my son, but my grandchildren suffered terribly and I am sure Judith, also.

God has been at work in my life so long that I had seen or at least was learning that I was not the fixer. So just pray and be there and I pray I have.

"Fixing It" what ever it was...is how I had grown up. I am the oldest of eleven children. In our family there are twenty-eight nieces and nephews, twenty-seven great nieces and nephews and two great-great nephews.

My dad had seven brothers and sisters, mom two. So there were lots of cousins, WOW, I am tired just telling you about them. You can imagine with that many people we have committed every sin imaginable. But oh how I love my family.

Thank God we serve a loving, forgiving God, who is our JUDGE. I think how terrible we are, then I look at Adam and Eve, the very first of God's children, sinned.... yes, punished.... yes, yet God loved them. Rehab, a harlot, but she is mentioned in God's hall of faith, (Hebrews 11:31). Noah, a drunk was chosen to save and replenish the earth after the flood, (Genesis 9:1, 20). Sarah, a doubter, devised her own plan for Abraham to father a nation, Genesis Chapter 16:3ff. David, a murderer, a man after God's own heart...God loved him. Note David's sins in 2 Samuel Chapter 11. Look at the woman caught in the very act of adultery - Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more" (John 8:11.). Look at the thief on the cross. Jesus forgave and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

There is hope for all of us. We must be Christ like in our attitudes and our actions lest we be condemned. There are no scoundrels in God's eyes. I don't look down my nose at the sinner or the alcoholic anymore. Sin is sin. Sin is addictive. Anything that we cannot

“let go” and let God deal with it in our lives is robbing us of doing His will. That separates us from Him. His desires are our lives dedicated to His will. Aren’t we lucky! God’s love, goodness, and mercy, (which are blessings) are given, to us, by His nature, not our worthiness.

God forgives the ‘ugliest sins; He avoids no seeker. His pierced hands touch the most common heart. The Lord is maker of them all, Proverbs 22:2. With God any situation can be used for good. I pray every day that my son’s struggles with alcohol and his prison time will work for good in his life and in mine.

Ladies, Genesis 4 says, sin is lurking at our door and it desires to have us. God says that we must master it. How? Study II Timothy 2, verse 15, says to us, be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker. Be a seeker also. Pray, yes pray without ceasing, I Thessalonians 5:17; Pray with the spirit and understanding, I Corinthians 14:15; Trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, Psalms 37:7. If we hope for what we do not see, eagerly wait for it with perseverance. With God all things are possible, (not yours truly); that admonishment of truth is stated in the scriptures and echoed by Jesus in Matthew 19:26; Mark 9:23; and Luke 18:27.

How did I come to know that God could smooth my path, calm my storms, and keep me and mine safe?

1. By going through the storm
2. realizing they were too big and too complicated for me
3. know that God could, would, and did give me the strength to survive, one day at a time.

Did I learn that from someone telling me how? NO, I learned it the hard way. I learned it by facing and dealing with it in my own family. Where is my strength? My strength is buried deep inside my soul; given to me by my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, His Spirit, my Comforter.

What does Hebrews 12: 6 tell you and me? The Lord disciplines those whom He loves, and chasteneth and scourgeth every child whom he receives. I say, “Thank you Jesus.”

Today God has shown me that I cannot fix everything. I am not responsible for another adult’s action and behavior. With God all things are possible (Not Yours Truly). I am worn out from trying. So please God help me as I try to encourage and share with others that you are able and willing. First we have to put it in your hands.

We mothers are like the shepherd, watchfully caring for our own. The Lord said to the worthless shepherd, *"Woe to the worthless shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and against his right eye: his arm shall be completely dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly blinded"* (Zechariah 11:17).

I do not want to be one of the worthless mothers. I want to be remembered as, M - - - - , the wife of W- - - - , mother of L- - - - and M - - - ; grandmother of W - - - - and H - - - - , and great grandmother of J - - - - , Sister of T - - - , M- - - - , L- - - - , B- - - - , C- - - - , H- - - - , P- - - - , J- - - - , D- - - - , and S- - - - . She was fair, honest and a hard worker. She loved everybody. She served the Lord.

In closing I would like to cite Ecclesiastes 1:9, 15; 3:14; 7:20, 25; 8:1; 11:5; 12:13:

(1:9) *"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."*

(1:15) *"That which is crooked cannot not be made straight, and that which is lacking cannot be numbered"*

(3:14) *"I know whatsoever that God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it, that men should fear before him"*

(7:20) *"For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not"*

(7:25) *"I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:"*

(8:1) *"Who is as the wise man... And who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the strength of his face shall be changed."*

(11:5) *"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit (wind), nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all"*

(12:13) *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man"*

Coping: Webster says, struggling. Successful - I hope so - I will love you forever, my sons.

I love you all, H- - - - -.