

Divine Intervention: Hope and Help for Families of Addicts

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Introduction:

Heb 11:6: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Cuckoo Bird Illustration

A. The Addict's View of Others

1. Idolaters _____ their desires are met.
 - a. Using others to please self
 - 1) View people as _____ to help them get what they want.
 - 2) One-sided relationship: you give, I take.
 - 3) Loved ones are not viewed as pleasing the addict unless they help them get that pleasure.
 - b. Loved one is viewed either as an _____ or _____.
2. Relating to an Idolater/Addict
 - a. _____: Blocks the idolater from getting what he wants.
 - b. _____: Gives the idolater whatever he wants.

Motivations:

- . Enables to get the _____ of an addict
- . Enables in order to be " _____ "
- . Result is the relationship is destructive to the addict & to the loved one.
- . An *enabler* could also be called an _____ when they are knowingly helping the addict in wrongdoing.
- . Family often accepts deception instead of confronting it.

Eph. 5:11: And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

- c. Appendix A in Shaw's book, *Divine Intervention: Hope & Help for Families of Addicts*, lists ways family/friends enable the addict.
- d. Lead the family members to confess their own heart issues like men-pleasing and seeking to control rather than trusting God.

Proverbs 28:13: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

B. Teach the Family How to Respond to Idolatry

1. Enabling is _____. Eph. 5:11 above commands to openly rebuke sinful heart attitudes and outward behaviors.
 - a. Help them to identify how they can respond differently (put on).
 - b. Learning to respond as Christ would is the _____ of every Christian.
2. Confront by speaking the truth in love. It is a call to repentance. Prepare family to be ready for these possible responses:
 - a. _____ response in that they repent.

2 Timothy 2:24-26: And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

- b. _____ response when called to repentance and they reject.

Mark 10:17-22: And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? 18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. 19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. 20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. 21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. 22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

- c. Either response is both the _____ of God and the responsibility of the addict. You are simply a messenger of the Gospel, not the author of that message! No one is powerful enough to change a human heart.

C. Biblical Counsel from Luke 15:11-32

Luke 15:11-12: And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

1. _____ his Father was dead - v. 12
 - a. Viewed his father as an object and an obstacle blocking him from his desires. (I call it an “entitlement” mentality in 3 of my other books: *Cross Talking*, *Relapse: Biblical Prevention Strategies* and *Addiction-Proof Parenting*.)
 - b. Often at this point, it is best just to let the addict go, or if needed, drive them out.

Prov. 22:10: Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

Luke 15:13: And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

2. He spent his entire inheritance on _____ and luxurious pleasures - v.13 (I call it a “consumer” mentality.)

Luke 15:14: And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

3. *He began to be in want* means he became an impoverished beggar. He had nothing left because he spent it on luxurious things.
4. A _____ arose in the land meaning no one had anything extra to give a beggar - v. 14 (Quite likely, you could imagine a “victim” mentality here though the text does not explicitly tell us.)

Luke 15:15-16: And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

5. He joined (or attached) himself to someone he could use for financial gain and stuck with him as long as possible- v.15-16. (Again, it is implied that he is thinking like a “victim” because he is not working or taking responsibility for his spending and poor choices.)
6. He began to be in real, physical need (hunger) and no one gave him anything! No enablers!

Luke 15:16: And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

7. _____ the Father: **Ephesians 5:1:** Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children
 - a. The Father let the son go, and he did so lovingly.

- 1) Notice that he was looking for his son's return in verse 20.
- 2) Letting the son go does not mean one quits praying!
 - . Also pray in order to keep your heart from hardening against your loved one.
 - . Family must look for what God might be teaching them.
 - . The only real failure in this situation would be failing to please God.

b. Practical helps:

- 1) **Do not chase after them, text them every day, etc. Allow them to feel the weight of their sin and decisions.**
- 2) If family (e.g. parents) choose to help, give clothing or groceries, but cash is not recommended.
- 3) Do not co-sign anything. Take your name off their bank accounts, etc. Stop providing for a rebel.
- 4) **Consider changing the locks.**

D. A Repentant Addict

Luke 15:17-24: And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, 19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. 20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. 21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. 22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: 23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

1. He came to his senses as he looked down at where he was (in a pig pen, starving) and looked up _____ his Father's love - v.17
2. God's grace, mercy, and love is what the family must rely upon, not their own abilities to convince or cajole the addict.
3. There is a distinct difference when someone is repentant:
 - a. Three fruits of repentance I look for are Responsibility, Gratitude, and Submission (find details in *The Heart of Addiction*).

- 1) When someone is repentant, they acknowledge their sin as being toward God and mankind. (Responsibility)
 - 2) They display less selfishness, pride, anger, and depression. (Gratitude)
 - 3) They will do anything to demonstrate their new attitude because they are not seeking anything but forgiveness. (Submission)
- b. Don't cheapen repentance to be an "I'm sorry."
- 1) "I want my car back..." is *not* repentance but a demand and shows a lack of gratitude along with an "entitlement" mentality.
 - 2) **"I'm not worthy..." is what a repentant person says.**
 - 3) **"Make me like a hired servant" is what a repentant person says.**

E. Guard the Family's Heart from Bitterness (v. 25-32)

Luke 11:25-32

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. 28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. 29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: 30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. 31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. 32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

1. Though he lived near his Father, he was relationally _____ and far away - v. 25-26
2. Family may become hardened and harsh. *Luke 15:30: But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!*
3. The older brother is angry that a sinner repented - v. 27-28

- a. He takes out his anger on his Father - v. 29-30
- b. He justifies himself and has a self-righteous attitude.
- c. He is a sinner by omission (not commission like his brother).
- d. Quite likely, the older brother killed his Father with a piece of wood just as Jesus was crucified.¹

F. No Specific Timeline for Repentance

1. While you wait, pray, read your Bible, and trust God for the outcome.
2. Recognize that only God can change someone's heart desires. Only God can grant repentance.

Romans 2:4: Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

3. The addict will probably need to face the devastating consequences of their sin to come to repentance. Consequences alone do not change the heart. There is a sin that leads to death (1 John 5:16).
4. Family feels _____ in two different extremes:
 - a. If the addict dies alone in his sin, the family member says, "I didn't do enough."
 - b. If the addict dies in the home of an enabling family member, family says, "I did too much."
 - c. Guilty feelings may occur in either of these situations so it's a no-win situation for family. But God...
 - d. Therefore, the goal must be obedience of **Hebrews 11:6:** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

¹ MacArthur, John. *The Prodigal Son: The Inside Story of a Father, His Sons, and a Shocking Murder*, Thomas Nelson Inc., 2010.

- e. Counsel family to trust God with their loved one and that they are doing God's will. This leads to a clear conscience before the Lord.

G. Conclusion

Family members must act in _____ regardless of their decision to either cast the scoffer out OR continue trying to evangelize/disciple the addict.

Rom. 15:13: Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Recommended Resources

- *When Good Kids Make Bad Decisions* by Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jim Newheiser
- *Age of Opportunity* by Paul David Tripp
- *Divine Intervention: Hope and Help for Families of Addicts* by Mark Shaw
- *Addiction-Proof Parenting* by Mark Shaw