

Sandy's Story

HIS WORD OVER DECEPTION

Deception came early... and stayed long. Sandy felt unloved by her father. She went to church with friends, but always wondered: Is God really here for me? In college, it was easier to turn away from faith toward alcohol and drugs. Once out of college, she believed sexual intimacy would fill her emptiness.

Sandy moved further away from God and the father of lies settled in. The floodgate of emotions burst when she heard the words, "Your test is positive." For perhaps the first time, Sandy knew real fear, shame, and loneliness. Her mom would cry. Her father would be so angry! He'd never been there for her before, so why would he be there for her now?

At the door of the abortion clinic, Sandy paused only long enough to name her baby. "I'm sorry, but I can't be your mother. There is nothing else I can do." Now the deceiver sang his own praise.

Sandy moved back home, but did not confide in her parents. The whole experience, Sandy believed, was finished. Because the difficult relationship with her dad had not changed, Sandy spent as much time out of the house as possible... and met the man she would marry.

Satan continued to play his game of deception with the goal of alienating Sandy from her heavenly Father. The first years of her marriage to a loving man were to the tune of hissing sounds. "You can't be a good wife." "You don't deserve a good husband." In caring so little for herself, Sandy resisted the love of her husband. She resisted the love of God. But God, unseen yet faithful, was present and involved.

Sandy and her husband had kept their distance from church, but when their son was born, they realized their need of a church family. Shortly after their son was baptized, Sandy finished adult instruction and was baptized as well. A daughter was born and baptized two years later. Something was changing in Sandy. She wanted her children brought up in the Kingdom of God. The deceiver, though frustrated, kept a talon in the door of Sandy's life.

It was difficult for Sandy to look at her children and not be reminded of her first baby. The hissing continued. "You were a terrible mother then. You are no better now." Mother's Day was a day of mourning for Sandy. The burden of guilt and sadness weighed heavy. Most pressing of all was Sandy's question, "Am I right with God?"

That question was answered by a bold, but caring pastor. "Sandy, in Jesus Christ you are a new creation." There was prayer. Honesty. Trust. A listening ear and gentle nudging with the Father's Word. "Oh, Jesus my Savior, I lay it all before You." With confession and absolution, the weight was lifted (Psalm 32:3-5). The hissing subsided with each day of healing.

Sandy had never been able to explain the sense of sorrow that overwhelmed her during the month of May. Why did joy elude her during the season of new life? God was faithful to help Sandy realize that May would have been her first child's birth month. With each bit of painful truth also came more freedom.

There's so much more to Sandy's story, but here's what she wants us to know. God is faithful. His compassions never fail. They are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). With His life-changing Word, God used the woman who didn't think she could be a good mother to mentor a Christian daughter. Sandy was open and honest about her past. And, when her daughter did not reject her, Sandy's confidence grew. Mother and daughter reminded each other of Jesus' merciful and abiding love. Together, they prayed. They cried. But they also laughed. With each prayer to their Abba Father, with each healing cry and sound of laughter, Satan took a step back from their door.

Today, Sandy is a grandmother to her daughter's children. She knows that the "Lord binds up the brokenhearted" and proclaims, "liberty to the captives" (Isaiah 61:1). She also knows that life for the Christian is set forth in Jesus. "If you would be My disciple, pick up your cross and follow Me." Sandy will always be faced with challenges, but she is wearing a Robe of Righteousness (Isaiah 61:10). She is comforted by the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus to be her advocate.

The deceiver has no hold on her.

TALKING POINTS

Sometimes it seems that we carry our sins with us as so much baggage. **Why do you think this is? Who are we listening to when we believe that only certain sins can be forgiven? Where do we take our sins? Why can we leave them there?**

The liar and deceiver will leave us in despair. **What hope are you given in Exodus 20:5-6? How does Jesus describe Satan in John 8:44? What does Jesus say of Himself in John 10:10; 27-30?**

