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Old Habits Die Hard

Brynn Beiler
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On Monday, July 9th, I was sitting in the backseat of my mom's charcoal Honda Accord riding back home. I was so utterly frustrated with everything in my life, from the stress of not being able to find a job to the shocking and painful break up that still crushed my heart to think about. I was furious about all the areas of my life where I had failed, and I didn't know what else to do with myself. As my mom pulled into our garage, I jumped out of the car, slammed the door shut, briskly walked into my house, and ran up the stairs. I stopped in my room to grab the only thing that I thought could help me cope with the hurt and disappointment that I felt. With desperately rapid breaths, I shut the bathroom door and locked it behind me. I needed something tangible, something that I could physically feel. The hot, salty tears rolled down my face as I dragged the blade over my skin to let out all my pain, my anger, my anxiety, and the rest of my pent-up, internalized feelings.

This time was different. While trying to seize control of my disheartening life, I had lost it. I felt as if I was stranded in my worst nightmare. Thoughts tore through my mind as I struggled to think of any possible way I could hide this. Defeated, I numbly traipsed down the stairs with a t-shirt held tightly to my wrist. I heard my scared, ashamed voice cry out and repeatedly apologize to my mom. There was an eerie strain in her voice and fear written on her face as she frantically scrambled to grab the car keys. Hearing the commotion, my older sister ran over to me with a loving sadness in her eyes and calming words in her mouth.

The rain fell from the sky like the mix of mascara and tears on my face as I tried to remember to breathe through the panic of my

reality. I sat in the back of the car wrapped in my sister's arms for what seemed like an eternity. My mom glanced back every so often, attempting to process what was happening as her world crashed down around her. The Honda eventually slowed to a stop in the parking lot as we finally reached the waiting room. The tears began streaming faster. I was ashamed, embarrassed, and full of complete regret. I signed the paperwork with a shaky left hand. As I looked up, the nurse met my eyes with her own. "God loves you," she stated confidently to me.

"Old habits die hard." Never had I truly experienced the authenticity and accuracy of this saying until the day of my life-changing relapse. Two months prior to July 9th, I would have been proud of the victory over my hard-fought battle. Ironically, that was my problem. Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs us to trust in the Lord with our whole heart and to depend on his omniscience and sovereign plan for our lives. If we faithfully look to Him with trust, He will guide us through each part of our lives. I had been choosy with the areas of my life that I entrusted to the Lord. Instead of relying on Him and His promises, I wanted to be in charge of my own life. This summer, I had to work through trusting God with all of my heart and acknowledging Him in every single step I took in my life. I had experienced firsthand that knowing a truth and actually applying it to one's life result in two completely different lifestyles.

I still have to remind myself to fully and completely rely on God each day. One piece of beneficial advice that I have clung to is to meditate on Philippians 4:6-7. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." When I stop and force myself to consider what I am feeling or worrying about, I can visualize the big picture of my life and, more importantly, God's plan for it. Remembering that He is in control of every part of my future and knowing that I have the privilege of laying my burdens on Him results in a peace that one can only receive from the Lord.

On Tuesday, August 6th, 2018, I had 2 Corinthians 12:9 tattooed on

my wrist in bold, black ink. A cross forms the “t” in “Corinthians” making up the verse reference tattoo that is personalized in my own handwriting. “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” I continue striving to lean on God throughout the ever-changing ups and downs of life knowing that His grace is bigger than my past mistakes.