

Hi. I'm Susan Dohse, and I am going to begin my third talk. But before I do, I want to preface what I have to say with this tissue. Some of the things that I'm going to talk to you about are fresh in my memory, and the wounds are not totally healed, so I may tear up. And I just ask that you bear with me as I work through this talk.

My third talk is entitled "Incompetent Counseling." It would appear that after graduation from Cedarville, teaching in a Christian school, and being married to a pre-seminary student was close to perfect. How many of you recall the country song "No One Knows What Goes On Behind Closed Doors"? Red flag started popping up before Wayne and I were married. Comments made in his letters, long written discussions back and forth about issues that I assumed were already settled in heaven, so to speak, and then a long period of time of no communication at all with no explanation of why when his letters resumed. Most of the time his letters were full of eagerness to be married and less and less of full-time Christian service. He never wrote about the weekend-long parties he and his MP friends held revolving around drinking and marijuana smoking. In Korea, alcohol was cheap at the PX, and marijuana was even cheaper from the Korean dealers. When time to return to the States neared, he shipped his belongings to my parents' home in Louisville where I was staying until our wedding in July. Hidden in his belongings was his stash of marijuana. Until he found a dealer in the States, at least he had some handy.

On our honeymoon, Wayne brought up the slide projector and slides he had taken of Korea--the beautiful people, the land, the Asian culture, and his friends and their parties. He explained that it was all behind him. It was just a passing curiosity, and it wasn't all that great anyway. My brother found Wayne a job at A. O. Smith in Tipp City, and it was a third shift machinist job. It was perfect for Wayne to work at night, take classes in the afternoon, and still get enough sleep to return to work. It was perfect for Wayne to work at night, skip classes and get high in the afternoon, and sleep it off so he could return to work again at night. Within one month of marriage, he had found his dealer, and it was not limited to weed. My husband was on a quest for the perfect high, and that lasted for over thirty-five years. LSD, speed, uppers, downers, in-betweeners, cocaine, combined with beer and hard liquor in various combinations and amounts. At one of his places of employment, his supervisor was the dealer and was humorously labeled "The Pharmacist." I was naïve, always forgiving, always in denial.

After a few months of marriage, the mind games began. He knew I would not do drugs, but the mind games played in order for me to approve or allow the drug usage in the home, to have parties in our home began. When Wayne started badgering about the harmlessness of weed, I had no room to be critical because I had never tried it. And besides, it would enhance our love life. I became very, very concerned but could not tell anyone at church. It was too embarrassing. And by now he had lost the job at A. O. Smith because of poor attendance. He had flunked out of Cedarville because of poor class attendance. And I needed the job at Xenia Christian until he could find another one. So I practiced what Xenia Christian had taught me: look the part on the outside and keep silent.

Church attendance became an issue. I was attending alone because Wayne wanted to be at home in order to do his drugs. And now another addiction was added: pornography. When asked where Wayne was, my answer always was, "Well, you know, he works third shift, and this is his sleep time." The pastor came to our home to counsel Wayne and to encourage him to attend church more. Well, I was happy because I wanted Wayne to be confronted and challenged in regards to his lifestyle. Instead, the pastor sat across from Wayne in our living, accepted the answer that it was hard to come on Sundays because of this third shift schedule, but he would try harder in the future. The pastor leaned forward, looked at Wayne, and asked, "Are you okay?" Well, inwardly, I was screaming, "No! No! He's not fine. I'm not fine." "Yes, pastor. I'm fine." "I thought so. I knew you were okay." He stood up, shook Wayne's hand, and left. Wayne turned to me and said, "I told you I was okay. Even the pastor thinks I'm okay. So get off my case."

Over the course of Wayne's hunt for the perfect high, he was beaten with bricks on the west side of Dayton and almost killed while attempting to buy cocaine, wrecked a new Bronco, and was almost killed trying to return home from a party, received multiple DUIs, spent thousands of dollars to [UNINTELLIGIBLE] 00:06:33 to get him off with little or no consequences. He barely escaped getting a felony DUI and was sentenced to eighteen months in jail. No one knows what goes on behind closed doors. My only counsel was from the pulpit and from Christian radio teachers. And that lack of counsel drove me to the brink of suicide. According to my pastors and the radio teachers, I was the cause of my husband's addictions because I was not a submissive woman. All I needed to do was to be a total Christian wife, submissive. And then your husband will conform to God's will. The best counsel I received was from an unsaved friend at work. "Susan, why don't you just turn off the radio?" I did.

After fifteen years of marriage and being told we could not have children, we found out I was pregnant. I was so pregnant I was six and a half months due before I knew. Xenia Christian informed me that the day after Timothy was born, I would no longer have a job because working mothers were not allowed to teach at Xenia Christian. After some negotiating I was allowed to finish the school year. I was relieved. Because of his heavy drug usage and alcohol consumption, not much money was going to the household budget. Wayne switched to third shift so he could take care of Timothy while I was at school. And this was a blessing. And Wayne really enjoyed being a daddy to his newborn son. Hope was on the horizon. Maybe being a parent would change things.

It was when Timothy was six months old that Wayne did not come home from work. I had no other childcare backup plan. It was finals week. I had no sick days left. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know who to call. So I packed Timothy up and hid him under my desk. I felt I cannot let the principal know that I had my baby with me. I later paid one of my students to watch him in the nursery. And then when I went down to lunch to see him, the principal was there waiting for me and asked why I brought Timothy to school. Why, I broke down and told him the whole ugly story about Wayne, cocaine, and how Wayne didn't come home last night. His answer was that I was not to return to my classes. He would administer the tests. And then we would speak later.

The next day I was called to the principal's office. This time to be told that I could finish up the school year, that if I could not find child care for Timothy, I would have to miss school with no pay. I was no longer needed at the faculty meetings, he said, and I could no longer be more than a classroom teacher. I was to limit my contact with the students outside of the classroom, because Wayne's behavior was a reflection upon me. And I was a poor testimony to the young people of what a Christian marriage was to look like.

Soon after that experience, Timothy and I began attending another church in Xenia. Well, it's actually the church building we now live in. The bible teaching was refreshing and accepting, the people welcomed us. It was a relief from what I've been exposed to at the other church. After not being allowed to return to teaching at Xenia Christian, I was hired at the Ohio Veterans' Children's Home as a fourth grade teacher. The night before my first day of work, Wayne was arrested for DUI. I called my parents. They drove through the early morning hours from Louisville to watch Timothy and to bail Wayne out of jail. What a way to begin my new job teaching behaviorally-challenged boys and girls who came to OVCH via route of the juvenile court system.

After my bad experience with counseling from my first pastor, I was reluctant to seek counseling from a new pastor that I really did not know. So I continued what I had been taught: play the part, keep silent. After Philip was born, our third son, the downward spiral continued--the DUIs, the money spent for lawyers. One week in rehab at the hospital, Wayne said it always looks good to a judge to show that you are getting help. Weekend counseling required from the court system on the dangers of drinking and driving, taught by a citizen of Yellow Springs who said, "I know you're gonna keep on doing what you're doing. You just pay me \$500 to tell you how not to get caught again."

Eventually, I went for counseling from the pastor. I was told to quit my job teaching and stay home. It was because I worked outside the home that Wayne did what he did. And if I obey God's word and stayed home, things would change. I explained that I needed help with someone watching Philip for a short while because Wayne was in jail again, but this time it was for eighteen months. In short, the pastor refused basically because if I was not working outside of the home, I wouldn't be needing childcare. For the women at Calvary to help me would be facilitating my rebellion and lack of submission to my husband.

While in jail this last time, Wayne rededicated his life to the Lord and purposed in his heart to remain sober and to teach others from God's word how to stay sober, the right start, right step Christian version of AA. For two and a half years, sobriety was a blessing and hope was on the horizon. Wayne was counseling six or more men, and there was a semblance of peace in our home ... until he returned to drinking. After being caught and confronted, he walked forward at church, repented, genuinely repented, but was no longer allowed to teach the right start, right step program. He was to train a pastor. He could sit in on classes but no longer lead them.

Gradually, all the men left the group, and all but one returned to their addictions, including Wayne. This time he put his heart and soul into drinking and pornography, claiming all the while that he had all things under control. Alcohol, pornography, and raising teenagers do not mix. And what resulted was physical altercations between Wayne and the two older boys. My two older sons begged me to do something. Leave Wayne before someone gets hurt. My reply was, "Leaving may be in the picture, boys, but divorce is not." I made a covenant of marriage. And if I had to leave with the three boys in order to be safe, that was one thing. Divorce was another. Besides, the Lord would help me make the decision, not two teenage boys. The marriage shut down. I worked two jobs, did all the driving because Wayne had lost his license, and I lived on survival mode.

The counseling I received from the pastor was the same, this time with an added twist. If I did not do what the pastor suggested, I would lose reward in heaven. I stopped going to his counseling. My oldest son began attending Dayton Avenue Baptist Church with some friends and encouraged me to try it. I would really enjoy the contemporary music, and Pastor John's preaching was really different. So I took Tim up on it. And I agreed. The music was wonderful; the preaching was different.

It was a couple of months later that I told Pastor Hart [SOUNDS LIKE] that I was leaving and going to Dayton Avenue. Pastor Hart told me that I was not allowed to leave. I was a member forever. We are family, and you are not allowed to leave. Wow. My answer was not exactly a sanctified one. I remember pointing at the door and saying, "Do you see that door? I'm walking through it. And I'm not looking back."

Not to make a repeated mistake, I made an appointment with Pastor John to inquire more about the church and if Dayton Avenue was willing to counsel a dysfunctional family. Surprisingly, maybe not surprisingly, his answer was, "No. I am not comfortable. I am not qualified to counsel you and your family. Oh, but I'll go contact Cedarville University and find someone who could counsel you." I did not take him up on it.

Wayne began attending church with us and even attending the men's bible study and men's breakfast. Hope was on the horizon. I went to one of the men Wayne really admired and shared with him about Wayne's drinking problem, and Charles was willing to continue to pray for Wayne and even come over and talk with him and encourage him to keep coming to the men's fellowship. But when two of the men tried to come over and speak with Wayne directly about his addictions, Wayne refused. He stopped attending church and the men's fellowship. His reason, I had tainted the men's thinking of him. These two men remained faithful to Wayne in praying for him and trying to reach out to him until Wayne passed away.

Wayne's drinking caused multiple health problems--depression, diabetes, and congestive heart failure. Because he could no longer physically go to work, he was fired again. In December of 2009, he was admitted to the hospital, crashed in the emergency room, brought back to life, and spent a week in the hospital getting stabilized. They wanted him to go to a nursing home because the doctor felt I would no longer be able to care for him at home. He refused. He came home on a Friday, had a pretty good Saturday, a great Sunday watching the Bengals lose. He reminded me on that day that he wanted to be

cremated, and whatever else I wanted to do if he died was up to me. He died the next day in his sleep. We held his memorial service the following January 9th.

Then came Paul. By the time I met Paul, I was steeped in stinking thinking what I had been taught and what I had learned I thought and behaved accordingly. My three boys were amiss. Tim told me he didn't think he believed all that stuff anymore. Ben is now a single father, paying child support and sharing custody with his ex-girlfriend. Philip went through a rough rebellious time attempting to follow the footsteps of his brothers. Then came Paul with his competent to counsel mindset, opening the Word of God and showing our family how God's word has the answers to our problems, specifically. And it had to do with thinking and doing.

What I want you to take from this talk, men's preferences are not as sharp and cutting as the word of God. Respect one another's preferences but be careful not to place them in as high regard as the Holy Word of God. Pastors, if you stood in the pulpit and told your congregation that you did not feel comfortable or qualified to preach or teach, how would you expect your congregation to respond? Become competent to counsel from God's word. It will be life and health to your church. Husbands, pastor your families from God's word at home. It will be a level of worship you will not experience in any organized church worship service, and the life and health it will give your family will be felt for eternity. I love you, Philip. I love you, Paul.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]