



Read Luke 15:11-32

The Prodigal Son wants to leave home. That is a natural response to growing up that is supposed to happen. Sons and daughters are supposed to leave home and create their own lives. Unfortunately, today many leave their home because their addiction to opioids has made it impossible for them to live in their parent's house.

When a child's life becomes ruled by substance abuse, everyone's lives are affected...in bad ways. It would be a whole lot easier to prevent the addiction in the first place.

Today as you fast, pray, listen, and respond, ask God to show you how we can prevent our children from ever becoming addicted. How do we keep a child from ever falling into the grip of opioids?

What can the church do in the lives of the children in our community (not just the ones in our church, but those that live all around us) that will help prevent them from ever turning to drugs? Ask God to show you who the vulnerable children are in your community. Ask God to help you find these children and get to know them by name. Give God thanks for the adults who knew your name, who cared about your success when you were young.

Drug-endangered children need loving adults to show them they are beloved children of God and are worthy of our time and concern. What if God answers our prayer? Are we willing to mentor a drug endangered child and help prevent them from becoming a prodigal son or daughter?

It is not enough to open our church doors and wait for the children to come to us clean, well fed and well behaved. We must leave our sanctuaries and find them!

WEEK 3 / DEVOTION



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WEEK 3 / DEVOTION

Drug Endangered Children

Persons suffering from opioid addiction are not in control of their lives. Part of their day is spent seeking out opioids. Once the opioids have been acquired and taken, the rest of the day is spent enjoying the high, until it is time to start seeking the next dose of opioid. For the addict, this is a horrible way to live. For the sober adults who love the addicted person, it is a horrible way of life. But imagine the lives of the children of addicted persons.

These children are called Drug Endangered Children. They live all around us and they have no way of understanding what we would call a “normal life.” Many of these children are born dependent on opioids because of their mother’s addiction. The parents of Drug Endangered Children cannot properly care for their own offspring. The children have no one at home to help with or encourage schoolwork, proper hygiene, proper nutrition, or acceptable behavior. These children are exposed to the violence and unpredictability of the illegal drug world, and yet we expect them to succeed in school. We wonder why they do not come to our Sunday School, and we are shocked when they become addicted themselves.

In order to have a chance at a life that is not identical to their parent’s life, the Drug Endangered Children in our neighborhoods need a loving and caring adult to mentor them. A loving adult who shows the child they are valuable and special. What would it cost us to spend time in our local school helping a Drug Endangered Child learn to read or accomplish their multiplication homework...an hour or two each week? Studies show that when a child gets behind in reading and/or mathematics, they are very likely to get discouraged with school and drop out. When a Drug Endangered Child drops out of school, they are much more likely to get involved with drugs than if they stayed in school. Studies also show that if a Drug Endangered Child has a loving, caring adult from outside their family mentor them, the child has a much greater chance at success in school and, in turn, success in life.



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