

Dear Ray,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You told us that your wife had been prescribed pain medication after an injury ten years ago. Over the last decade she had been abusing these drugs to the point where she was fired from work and reported to the Drug Enforcement Administration (the DEA). She then went off all medication for over a month. You said she recently went back on drugs and is "looking for sympathy." You said you have a hard time with sympathy since you think that she wants people "to feel badly for her" when, in actuality, her behavior is having the opposite effect on you. Although you have been married for over 20 years, this current situation with your wife is probably worse than any other situation that you have been through in your marriage. You wanted to know how you might pray for YOU first and then, of course, for her.

One in five Americans report misusing a prescription drug at least once in their lifetime, but the overwhelming majority put the pills away with no lasting harm. However, "some people have a predisposition to addiction," according to Andrew Saxon, MD, and professor of psychiatry residency program at the University of Washington. "There is something different in their brains to begin with and prolonged drug abuse likely creates further chemical changes." For people with an inborn vulnerability to opioid addiction, taking pain pills can lead to an intoxicating rush that makes the brain want more and sets the stage for drug addiction.

You said that your wife was on a prescription pain medication for over ten years. Most people who get addicted to an opiate based drug find that the longer they are on the drug the harder it is to get off of it, and even when they have been through treatment and are not using, they often relapse, as your wife has apparently done. Difficult as this situation is for you, it is equally difficult, if not more so, for your wife, who is in bondage to her addiction, an addiction she most likely loathes, but feels enslaved in a vicious cycle. Obviously, professional help is needed.

When looking on the Internet for available treatments, we found that there are some new medications doctors are using for pain killer addictions that have had great success. We would advise you to go on line at <http://www.howtogetoffpainkillers.com> and find out more information as well as consult a physician knowledgeable in the latest medical advancements for treating addictions.

How do you pray for YOU as well as for your wife? You need to ask God for patience, understanding, wisdom and strength for endurance, as this situation is very trying on both of you. It is important to remember each of us has areas in our psychological makeup that we are not proud of and would like to improve. Once you truly understand that your wife's addiction is not deliberate, you will be much more sympathetic to her situation as well as proactive in getting her into a program and staying in that program even when she backslides.

You also need to ask God to give you the ability to outwardly manifest the love you have for your wife. Your wife's self-esteem is most likely very low so she needs to know that in spite of her addiction you still love her and will be there to support her as she goes through the ups and downs of rehab. In order to further help your wife we would suggest that you also attend counseling sessions. A professional counselor will give you strategies that will assist you in your day-to-day dealings with a recovering drug addict.

How do you pray for your wife? Since addiction is a life-dominating problem, you need to pray that your wife will yield to Christ and not to drugs, self-pity, guilt or fear, etc. Pray that she will focus her attention outward by helping others and in the process of this help she will help herself. "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."
(Philippians 4:8-9)

We believe the most effective prayer that you can pray is one in which you and your wife sincerely pray together praising and thanking the Lord for his many blessings while asking for strength and guidance. Your wife can also ask God to lead her into a small activity that will keep her busy helping someone else so that she can take her mind off herself.

Additionally, we are including some practical links with pop-up windows from U.S. Addiction Statistics. They are listed below.

[on-line article published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

[Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment](#)

[Most Popular Books On Addiction](#)

[Christian Recovery Resources](#)

We hope we have given you some needed information. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio