



09/04/2025 - 09/04/2026

Hello, my name is Chelsea.

I grew up in a Christian home. My father was extremely religious. However, my father ended up leaving my mother for a woman in the church, and my parents divorced. After the divorce, I stopped attending church and blamed my father and God for breaking up my family. I became angry inside and completely turned away from God. Rebellion set in, and I began sneaking out and smoking cigarettes which progressed to alcohol and drug use.

I ended up in a relationship with a man who verbally abused me and kept me isolated from my family. I had my beautiful son by this man - and, sadly, this is when my relationship with cocaine began. My addiction worsened over time, taking over my daily life, distancing me from family, and causing me to lose multiple jobs. I found myself in one abusive relationship after another.

The cycle of abusive men was all I knew.

At that time, drugs had a hold on me and were more important to me than my own safety.

Then, I ended up in another relationship with a man I feared.

He threatened to kill me and my family if I didn't help him with robberies and burglaries.

I helped him commit the crimes and was caught by the law. It was serious.

I had 13 months in county jail waiting on a verdict. While I was in jail, I met a woman who suggested

I go into a Christian residential program. She knew about the Women's Refuge.

At that point I was facing 12 years of prison time. I started to pray for acceptance into the Refuge program, all the while, still angry at God. I knew I needed some real help.

After several court appearances, the judge gave me a chance and sentenced me to the Refuge program under probationary status. God dealt with me while being incarcerated.

I begged him for one more chance to get it right and He answered my prayers.

When I came to Women's Refuge, I was so excited. On my 1st day there, I was lovingly welcomed and instantly felt at home. My whole life is being worked on. I completely surrendered to God two months after entering the Refuge program. I am now 22 months clean and for the first time addiction does not have power over me. I have a completely new outlook on life. I never thought this was possible, but God made it possible. I could not be helped by anyone or anything –

Not until I met God for who He truly is.

What makes this recovery different from the other 7 attempts is that I have surrendered my life over to God, and I have made up my mind to move forward instead of backwards.

I have been at the Refuge 9 months. I am working and I plan to stay here in Saint Augustine, close to my Refuge and church family.

~2 Timothy 4:7~

I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.



Chelsea