

Revelation #63 – My FIRST vision: On the Cross with Jesus!

“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live, I live by faith in the one who loved me and who gave His life for me.”

- Galatians 2:20

When I was around 30, I had a vision that not only rocked my world but confirmed my calling into pastoral ministry. I was having a quiet time when all of the sudden I saw myself walking down the aisle of a big Cathedral, and up in front was a Crucifix, Jesus hanging on the cross. As I walked up to it, Jesus held out His hand to me and invited me to come onto the cross with Him. As I took hold of His hand, I felt pain and joy like I had never experienced before. It awakened my senses almost like I had been asleep. As I stepped onto the cross, Jesus supernaturally turned and faced me on the cross and asked me, *“Will you walk my walk?”* And that is how the vision ended the first time I had it.

I told my pastor about it and he asked me, *“why do You have to go on the cross? I thought that what Jesus did was enough.”* I told him I didn’t know but that I would ask the Lord. The next day, I revisited the vision. But this time, I saw myself walking hand in hand with Jesus up the aisle toward the exit. As I turned around, I saw myself hanging on the cross and heard the words from Galatians 2:20, *“I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live, I live by faith in the one who loved me and gave His life for me.”*

That vision began a whole new journey of learning what it meant to live a life ruled and led by Jesus and the Spirit of the living God. Some people were even jealous of me having such a vision. For others, they felt this vision confirmed my calling into pastoral ministry. Though I agree it was part of God’s confirmation, the greater truth I took from this was how the power of JOY transformed PAIN!! Maybe that’s why the writer of James could say, *“count it pure JOY when you encounter various trials and tribulations...”* or why the writer of Hebrews said in chapter 12, *“For the JOY set before Him, Christ endured the cross”; or in Nehemiah 8, “The JOY of the Lord is my strength!”* Joy trumps pain! It is power beyond measure.

I had already experienced so much pain in my life, from my parents’ divorce, from being teased about my weight or being too sensitive, to my own pain of struggling with a hidden porn addiction or my deep insecurities about who I was as a man! God didn’t REMOVE the pain, but He transformed it with JOY! I don’t know if I have ever felt anything so powerful since! But it definitely started me in a new direction towards greater healing and seeking out of this new life in Christ that went beyond religious activity or duty! I wanted to know the REAL Christ, and to experience Him in every way possible!

Over the next 6 years, I got my M-Div. from Fuller seminary and became a pastor. I LOVED being a pastor and felt I had finally found my calling! And then tragedy struck! My wife

asked for a divorce, the church through me out, I lost everything, even my faith. I ended up in Portland, Oregon in a half-way house, totally broken and wrecked. I went to Good Samaritan Ministries there and began a journey of healing that would take me further than I could ever imagine. I had lost everything, but I was just beginning to experience freedom for perhaps the first time in my life.

I am grateful for my time there, and the incredible truths and love that were demonstrated to me. It culminated in me climbing Mt. Sinai with a group from GSM, and encountering God, where He said to me, "*I declare you innocent!*" One other significant change during this time of life was meeting my bride to be, Linda. We were both at GSM and went to Israel. Later that year, God united our hearts together in marriage. Years later she shared with me that while in Africa with YWAM, God had told her she would marry a pastor and would save his life. She laughed at God! Five years later, she would have to repent of that!

Along the way on this journey, I experienced Theophostic ministry, where God took me into a memory, and I encountered Jesus and He took my pain away! This was something brand new, something I'd never experienced before!! I wanted more!!! Which led me into learning about ELLEL ministries and Elijah House and other healing and deliverance ministries that were seeing real breakthrough in people's lives.

Eventually, as I was working on creating a Healing/counseling training program of my own, three people came to Linda and I, who were now a "we", and told us about Restoring the Foundations, that we were already doing it anyway and should check it out! SO, we did!! And that decision would change our lives forever! When I did an issue-focused ministry, God showed me my heart in a soul/spirit hurt, that it was dark and crusted; but then He took part of HIS vibrant red heart and sewed it to mine! I was shocked! He didn't replace my heart, but by attaching His heart to mine it began to change MY heart! My sin didn't defile His purity, but HIS purity started to heal and transform MY heart!! That sealed the deal for me! I wanted more!

Now, 15 years later, we have ministered to almost 1,000 people, and seen such incredible healings and miracles and transformed lives! It made it all worth it!! One of the amazing truths I've learned from this is that Gods' grace is SO much bigger than my sin! And that it is the spirit of PRIDE that helps me believe that my sin is greater than His grace and love! (I explore this further in another article about the [Waterfall of Grace](#).)

What I have learned over the past 30 years since that vision is that God always keeps His Word and is faithful to do the work in me, IF I'll let Him. It has been a journey and a process and will continue until the work is complete. I eagerly await that day! But what Christ did for me on the cross and because He has walked with me ever since, I will never be able to express the depth of gratitude in my heart for Him taking hold of me and making my life worth something extraordinary, leaving a legacy and inheritance that will never end. Praise Jesus!!