

Announcer

Welcome to transformed by the word, a podcast about discovering how to live your life with gratifying purpose. God created you for a reason and the Bible contains the keys to unlock your transformed life. Now, here's your host, Debora Barr

Debora 0:26

Thanks for joining me for Episode 26 of Transformed by the Word.

God uses people and their stories to draw other people to him. Think about it. Has anyone in your life ever shared their faith with you? If you're like most people, you heard the gospel message more than once from different people, before you responded to it, and accepted Jesus Christ. And you might be listening today and have not yet made a decision about Jesus. Please keep listening, because today might just be the day that you are ready to say yes to Jesus.

God often uses the stories of his impact on ordinary everyday people to give others hope to increase their faith and to bring them comfort. When we hear about what God miraculously did for someone else, when we are in the midst of a struggle, or in the midst of pain and suffering, it might be just what we need to hold on a little longer, and actually believe that it could happen to us too.

Today I've invited a special guest to the show to share how God has been working in his life. His name is KaRon Wilson. KaRon has dedicated the past 10 years to helping others overcome life altering obstacles, find their voice, understand their purpose, and walk out their life paths through education, career development, and self-development. He accepted Christ at the age of 14, and he accepted his call to ministry in 2,007. KaRon has served the body of Christ through teaching, preaching, singing, stage plays, counseling, and mentoring ministers. He understands that his relationship with Christ is the most valuable gift that he possesses, and it is from this relationship, that he must serve the body of Christ. He is a proud work in progress. And as he continues to develop his prayer is that the world will see him and know that KaRon is who he is, not by power, nor by might, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. That is Zechariah 4:6.

Stay tuned. We'll be back in just a moment.

MUSIC INTERLUDE

Debora

Hey, KaRon, I am so honored to have you on the show today to share with my listening audience.

3:49 KaRon

Thank you so much. I was very honored. When you asked me. I'm glad to be here with you.

3:54 Debora

Do you know that you're the first guy that I've had on the show? The very first! That's a good thing. Blazing the way and you won't be the last. So today, as you know, we are discussing the topic of sharing with others what God has done for us. Would you mind as we began just sharing a little bit with the listeners about your faith background?

4:25 KaRon

Yes, I was born and raised in the church. Initially I started off in the Baptist Church. I knew my life was going to be there. I knew that. Really from the time of kindergarten to first grade, I can still remember my parents telling me that I was born. Actually, when I was christened. They said that I was born in the womb to be a preacher.

Debora

Oh, wow. Yeah, no pressure, no pressure.

KaRon

And that's not what I wanted at all. I said preachers don't make any money. I don't want to be that. But that was my path. But early on, I found a love for church. I love singing in the choir. I was on the childrens choir I was in the ushers for a period of time. And then I can remember a particular day in Sunday school where they asked a question, Is anyone a sinner? I said, No, I'm not. And they said all are. And that was the beginning of planting the seed to bring me to salvation. To help me to understand that though I was only 10, not believing that I was a sinner, but no, I was. And I gave my life to Christ at age 14.

And interestingly enough, that following week, I began to have dreams of people preaching, I'm sorry, of myself preaching, and bringing people to Christ, that started happening within a week, I was in eighth grade, when that began to happen, and so ventured off a little bit. When I got into college, you know, found my way back in 2007, I finally did accept the call to ministry. I was in high school when I realized that it was that it was happening, and I wouldn't be getting to accept it. But I didn't want to walk in it fully. 2007 is when I finally answered the call, and then I was licensed to become a minister, a minister of the gospel in October of 2013.

6:09 Debora

Wow. So it's been spoken over your life at a very, very young age. And look what happened, it began to come to fruition.

6:17 KaRon

Yes, yes, it came to fruition, it is very much it wasn't a thing where I'm glad to say that it wasn't, it wasn't a thing where I walked into it, because someone told me, this is what you're supposed to do. It was something that I really prayed about. And I really asked God about it. It was something that I believe he spoke to me. And I walked into it. So my parents knew it. But I had to find that out for myself.

6:39 Debora

That's awesome. Now, I know that we have some listeners today, who also grew up in the church. You know, they say, I've been in church all my life. They were on fire for the Lord at one time in their life. But something happened along the way to draw them away from their first love. And that being Jesus - something drew them away from living for him, loving him completely, and walking with Him. And I know there's a piece of that in your story as well. Would you share a bit about that part of your journey?

7:11 KaRon

Yes. And it's so interesting that we mentioned 18, because that was actually when I think my love began to change. And I didn't realize it, because I was still going to church, every Sunday, started singing the choir became a minister. But long before then, my love was changing because of ways I felt about myself and how I wanted my life to go, and how much I wanted to be wanted. And so I gave myself over to sex eventually. And eventually, while I was also worshipping Jesus, I was also worshipping sex. And sex became my God, I love to talk about it. I served it, I would love to be in conversations about it. And it really began to wreck my life in ways that I never imagined.

Never imagined that it would. Yet I actually believed at one point in growing up hearing stories that I'm hearing testimonies about how people had been changed and delivered, I thought I had to go out and sin in order to have a testimony, and very much tricked by the devil in that. And so I went out and I did this. And what I thought was, no, you think you're not going to be in this too long, was a 15 year struggle.

Debora

Hmm, you think you can just dabble in this for a little bit, and you'd be fine.

KaRon

Not at all. You just keep and you keep praying and praying, and it doesn't go away. It doesn't go away. And it was not until age 33 that I finally found the power to break free of it. And that's when I realized that God was never number one. All this time I had been serving and living but I'd had one foot in the world, and one foot in the church. And God was not number one. I was I was number one.

And so given myself over to the love of sex was - it was fornication, it was a lot of lying about what I had done about a deception, a lot of manipulation that I had done to kind of cover my tracks. And unfortunately, that even went into a relationship that I was in and it went into a marriage that I was in thinking that I'm being honest, thinking that you're being forthcoming, but even lying so much to myself that you don't even know what the truth is sometimes.

9:31 Debora

Almost like he got caught up in a web and the more you struggle, the more it encapsulated you

9:38 KaRon

To say the least, to say the very least, the web that I was in, just to be perfectly honest, I went on the DL.

Debora

And what is that for our listeners that maybe don't know?

KaRon

The D.L is the downlow and that's where some men who have attractions to other men they hide it, so sometimes they may be dating someone else but secretly dating men or they just don't acknowledge that they have these struggles, and they make it seem like they're only we're attracted to women. And that's the area that I went and never ever thought I would go there. But that's where I found myself out of fear and other shame of people knowing that I had to struggle.

It's not something I ever believed that I was. But I was looking, I was looking for love looking for a piece of looking for a validation and acceptance that I didn't believe I could find anywhere else. And I didn't even really find it as much as I thought in the church, you know, and that's not enough to any person who would around me who was loving me and supporting me. But there was something missing on the inside that I was trying to fill externally. And yet it broke me in so many ways. It broke me mentally, emotionally, spiritually, almost brought me physically almost died. And in the process of this,

11:01 Debora

What would you say to someone who is listening to your story that maybe is thinking about stepping out on some area of sin in their lives - what would you say to them?

11:16 KaRon

I would say, to stop, pause, and really think about what it is that you're doing. Pay attention to those butterflies that you get in your stomach. The butterflies aren't just nerves. It's not, I'm just nervous to do this. A lot of times that is the Holy Spirit trying to stop you. And trying to warn you that this is not where you should go. I remember the very first time I stepped out and I was my stomach was hurting with a knot. I thought I was just nervous. And looking back, I really do believe this was the Holy Spirit coming No, don't do this, go down this road do not do this. And many times it only takes one act of disobedience that leads you into a lifetime of struggle.

11:57 Debora

That's powerful, right there. And you also mentioned that when you take that step, you have to begin to lie to cover it up. And then that just compounds things.

12:08 KaRon

Yeah. So it's like, I can be a great speaker, you know, I'm gifted to speak. But then you use that gift in the wrong way you use it to cover yourself. And I remember I had a friend who told me one time he said, you know, you never tell the truth. Sometimes what do you mean? He said, I'll ask you, what did you do? How was your weekend - what did you do this weekend? But I would say that my weekend was fine. Oh, my weekend was good. How was yours? And I didn't even realize I was skating around the issue because I had learned so much about how to cover myself, and how to hide that I was lying even when I didn't intend to.

12:45 Debora

So that might be a clue right there for someone if you find that you're having to lie about things, that there's something that right in your life. So how did you get out of this? How did you get out of this tangled web of lying and being caught up in something for what you said? 15 years? How did you get out of that?

13:08 KaRon

I had to start telling the truth. And November of 2017, I finally started to tell the truth about what was really going on in my life. I had to tell the truth about adultery, I have to tell the truth about fornication. These are words we don't really like to hear, right? I'm calling it what God calls it. I can say I messed up, I can say I stepped out I could say I cheated. But the reality is it was it was lying. It was a

bearing false witness. It was - it was adultery. And I had to tell the truth. And I had to acknowledge the impact of it. And what really hurt me the most.

I remember praying in bed and thinking about all the people who I was impacting, how you can stand in front of people and say that this is how I'm going to live. And this is what I'm going to do. And this is the vow that I'm going to keep and you weren't keeping it even before you took the vow. And you weren't keeping it after you took the vow and realizing that how much this can move people away from God and move them away from Christ. And I remember thinking about the Scripture, Woe to them that lead my sheep astray. And I was like, Oh, wow. I said, God, please.

And I started praying and praying for those kinds of please God, whatever, whatever this may be, please do not let this happen, where they leave Christ, and they leave you because of me. And I had to sit with that. And ever since that day, I've been on a journey where I've had to acknowledge some very difficult truths about the reality of my struggles, the reality of who I am, meaning who God says that I am not what the world was say that I am because of what I've done.

Come into the reality of that come into why it's been a challenge to accept God's truth, and sometimes still holding on to lies. I know are not true. Yeah, this has been a journey of truth, vulnerability, exposing the shame and the dirt in my life and allowing God to clean me up. That's how I got out. And as I do it, while it's very uncomfortable, is all it's been very healing because things started to fall into place. Because I started to tell the truth.

You know, I did lose a marriage because of it. But I did gain myself. I did begin to see Christ in a new way. It was it was, it was so weird that how I grew up in church all my life. But in that moment when I started to tell the truth, and then I started to hear Jesus preached, I started hearing him in a way that I had never heard before. And I remember sitting in church one day, and I heard Jesus being preached. And I said, Wow, I want to know him. And that was so amazing. For me, it almost made me feel like did have I never given my life to Christ before. But it was I had never left church before. And I hadn't been thinking about the songs that I heard. And I wasn't even thinking about who preached. The only thing that was on my mind that day was about getting to know, Jesus.

And that has been the journey. That had been the journey telling the truth. Interestingly enough, I remember that I was in so much pain, while doing it, that my faith got really shook. And I started to question is God really real, because of the level of pain that I'm experiencing in my mind and heart and cannot find any comfort. I said, this cannot possibly be real. And so I threw myself into the Bible.

16:50 KaRon

I actually read from November until December 31. I remember I read the entire New Testament, from Matthew five, I'd already read the first four chapters. But from Matthew five to Revelation, I read that and six to seven, six to eight weeks. I just threw myself into the word and just kept reading and just kept studying and just kept studying.

And I remember one day, you know, I'm sitting in church, and you're preaching about Jesus. And I'm like, Jesus, I know you're real. But I don't know why this is coming at me like this, why I'm doubting you. And the preacher said, and don't let the devil trick you into believing that Jesus is a real. He was speaking straight to me. It still took me some time to get it. But I remembered, there was a time when I was tempted. This was after I divorced. And I'm still going through the healing process. And I'm tempted to

go back to a life that God's bringing me out of, and I couldn't go, I could not go and I intentionally broke off the contact with that person, prayed for him, and said, You go and be healed, I'm going to go and continue to be healed.

I shared it in a discipleship group, that I was in and on the way home, I prayed. And I thank God, I said, God, I thank you for life, I think you actually love me, I thank you that Jesus is real. And something in me just turned and twisted. And it was like, I got my hope back. Because I really did not have any hope, you know, or I would say minimal hope. Well, I was questioning whether or not Jesus was still real that the Jesus that I had professed at 14 years old, the one that I was teaching people about and preaching about, and I was losing faith.

And when I got that something began to be restored inside of me, so I'm still on that I'm still in the place where I tell the truth, I have to tell the truth I have, God has put a lot of great men and women around me, who I can share my honest truth with and tell my whole stories with and who accepted me for me. And I don't have to do anything to earn their love and to earn their support. God has taught me how to pray about the people who are around me and who I open up and share with and having this community of true believers who are walking with God and who are honest about their own struggles as well who are willing to be vulnerable with me, has helped me out significantly.

19:18 Debora

Yeah, the enemy wants to keep us silent and keep us by ourselves and away from other people. But it's getting around others being honest, being transparent, sharing your story that really truly sets sets free.. What would you say to someone who feels far from God right now that was in a, that currently is in a place that you've experienced before? Because of the choices that they made? What would you say to them today?

19:50 KaRon

I would tell them to not pay attention to the feeling. Feeling that God is far from you is not the same as him really being far from you, because the Bible says He sticks closer than a brother. The Bible says that he leaves the 99 to go after the one. I was thinking about the Scripture, even this morning about the prodigal son where he came back, and the father ran out to him. So, God is looking for you, and he's waiting for you now, he's knocking at your door.

And I am a witness that no matter how bad it is, God really does forgive. He really does forgive when I repented. And I was working my way back. I was so afraid that God was going to condemn me that he was going to say, you know what, you're just nasty. You're just gay, you're just this just the other. And he never told me that. He never told me that - He used someone who I never expected to come up and share a story with me and to let me know that all the things that I did was just that, it was what I did. It was not who I was. It was not who I was.

The truth is, and it's a truth that I still digest to this day that I am a son of God adopted through Jesus Christ, that is who I am. The truth is, is that I am fearfully and wonderfully made. That is the truth. The truth is that I am somebody and that I am important, and that I'm important to God, even if I find myself in a place where I'm not important to anybody else around me that at least I am important to God.

And there are days where I have struggled in that if I'm just being honest, I've struggled to accept that emotionally. But the truth is, that is who I am. And if you're able to accept that, that helps you to come back to God that God is looking for those he's looking for lost sheep, to bring into the kingdom. And he's looking for those sheep who have come in and who have gone off, because he wants you back. And he wants to bring you back. He wants to restore you. And we don't often share enough that when God is coming for you. He's not coming to condemn, he will correct.

Now there's a difference, you know, I did have to be corrected for my sin, I did have to sit down and not Minister for a bit. I couldn't sing for some time because I needed to healing. I was broken. And I had to really come back and really learn God all over again. But learned to return to him him from a relational space, and from a healthy space because I really didn't know that I was serving him out of obligation. And I was serving him just out of ritual. This is just what you do. But really being more intentional about serving God out of a place of relationship, serving him out of a place of love.

Making sure that your life lines up and being honest, when you struggle with it. That is what God really wants to do for you. And he's doing it and me, I have not arrived. I dare not telling anybody I have arrived. But I am so much better. I'm so much better than where I've been. Even just being being able to acknowledge what I've done today is only by the strength of God. Because I can't keep his light on the deal. You know, we can't do it. He He's given us a light that's meant to shine. And I just pray that those who are in here will listen to the Spirit of God as He is drawing you back. He's not coming to condemn you. He's coming to love you.

There is no condemnation in Jesus Christ. And remember the Scripture, it says, I came that you may have life and life more abundantly. That's why he's coming is to change your life, not to condemn you for what you're done. Allow God to correct you. And some of the correction may even hurt. But he's loving you in the process like a good father does. He's loving you, I'm going to correct you. But I'm not just going to sit you in a corner, I'm going to correct you, I'm going to pull you out of the corner, I'm going to walk with you and help you to do that. And that took me some time to really accept when God was saying I'm going to walk with you. That was weird to me. Because I didn't understand the intimacy of God that he wanted. And that's what he really wants for every listener who's listening today. And intimate walk with them.

24:05 Debora

Yeah, that is so powerful. I once told someone because I too, was someone that God came after and drew me back after years of living outside of his will. And I once told someone that I think I love God more than people that have been in the church all their lives. And I've never really done anything wrong because I know how much I hurt his heart. And I know how much he loves me and loved me even through it all.

24:35 KaRon

You just said something so powerful that because I've literally just been having that conversation with my friends about how those of us in the church that some of us really don't know, we don't appreciate God the way some have who have been far away from him, because we straddled the fence so much, versus those, you know, those of us who you're in the church doing one thing but they have one foot in the world versus those who just go away. And they come to the true realization about how they have

impacted God. And then they come back. And for those of us in the church, we really have to sit back and really look at that. And really ask ourselves, honestly, and sincerely, how much do I really love God? And does my heart line up with my mouth? I don't know exactly where it's at. But you know, the scripture that says they speak kind things, but their heart is far from me, and that has been part of my prayer, as God has afforded me the opportunity to be able to teach again, that I'm not just saying it out of my mouth. But my heart as far from him is that they both will line up. So what you see behind closed doors will line up with what you hear, I just been my honest prayer, because I do not want to go back to that place where I was before.

25:54 Debora

Wow, that's powerful. Is there anything else that you any nuggets that you would share with our listeners, before we wrap up,

26:05 KaRon

That God loves you more than what you can imagine. More than you can imagine. And do not be afraid to tell the truth about where you've been. It may hurt some around you. It could, it could really hurt some relationships. Some relationships may be damaged. But it can begin to heal relationships as well. It will begin to heal your heart and it will bring you back to a good place. The pain is worth it. That's what I believe with the pain of telling the truth. And being healed is worth it than living in a broken state.

26:47 Debora

One last thing. Would you pray for our listening audience?

26:51 KaRon

Absolutely. God, we thank you for this time, we thank you for your love. We thank you for your compassion. Father, we thank you that you have so much grace, and so much mercy for us. Especially when we fall away, God, we thank you that you are convicting us in the process, we thank you God that you call us back not to condemn us, God and send us to hell God, but you want us back in your arms, you have a true path and our purpose for us. And Father, we thank you for that.

Even now, we asked you God for every listener, God that's here, that if they are outside of your will, father to give them the courage to draw them back. Because you're already beckoning them. Father, you speak to their heart, you speak to their spirit, and they feel they feel the tug. And we guess you got to give them the courage to step forward. And we asked you also, to surround them with loved ones, God, whether it be in their family, or in the faith, those who can help them walk back into right relationship with you. Because God, they cannot do it on their own.

You've called us to be in community. And so I asked you God to surround them with a loving community, God that will challenge them, and love God and also build them and love them to become the men and the women that you have called them to be restoring them in the right place in relationship with you. We ask all these things. And we thank You, Father, in Jesus name, amen.

28:18 Debora

Amen.

Don't go away. We'll be right back after this short break.

MUSIC INTERLUDE

29:04 Debora

We just heard from KaRon Wilson, about the power of breaking free from secret sin by beginning to tell the truth and letting God heal your heart. He reminded us about how much God loves you. God's love is so much bigger than any other love that you might find in this world. And Jesus reminds us in a parable, that he will actually leave the 99 to come and find the one lost sheep.

If you are that lost sheep, and you've never surrendered your heart to his love, you can do that right now because it is by faith that we believe that Jesus died for us. And if you're ready to place your trust in Jesus Christ and receive the forgiveness of sins, allow him to move into your life and move into your heart. Won't you pray this prayer with me?

Jesus, I confess that I'm a sinner and I need you in my life. I repent of my sins and I turn to you. I believe that you died on the cross for my sins, and you were buried and God rose you from the dead. I accept this by faith and invite you Jesus to be Lord of my life, to reign and rule in my heart. Amen.

Now, if you just made that decision for Jesus, I want to hear from you. Please visit my website at TBTWPodcast.com and click the link to let me know about your decision for Christ.

My prayer for you today is that you will understand with certainty how much God loves you, and that he would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in your inner man, that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith, and that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width, and length and depth and height. To know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all of the fullness of God. Amen.

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word where we will discuss witnessing the Great Commission.

Announcer 31:53

Thank you for listening to transformed by the word with your host Debora Barr, be sure to subscribe to our podcast on iTunes or Google Play and connect with us at TBTWPodcast.com. Until next time, be blessed.