

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 40 of Transformed by the Word.

This has been quite a journey, as we have been in a series of episodes highlighting real life stories of people whose lives have been transformed when a person encounters the living God who truly loves them, especially when their life is out of control and unfulfilling. A radical change occurs that changes their lives forever.

I met a man several years ago, who was caught up in a life that was completely unfulfilling. And he had the courage to ask Is God who he says he is? When he received the answer to that question, his life was transformed. This man's name is Ronald J McCray, and he will be joining me in just a few moments.

Ron is a minister of the gospel under the pastoral leadership of Bishop Charles E. Johnson, Senior Pastor of greater Morningstar Apostolic Ministries. Ron was born again on Sunday, October 18, 2009. And he accepted his call to the ministry in 2014 when he preached his trial sermon. Prior to his conversion he identified as a gay man for six years of his teen and early adult life. His life hasn't been the same since he met the Lord Jesus Christ. His life changing testimony has been featured on the Christian Post, the 700 Club, CBN News, and other media outlets around the world. His ministry is focused on helping others experienced the life transforming power of the gospel. Ron is the author of the international bestseller Is God Who He Says He Is. And he's coauthor of Echoes: Stories of Male Survivors Overcoming Sexual Trauma coming out this year. Ron is also an international gospel recording artist with his debut single, Come Holy Spirit, available on all music outlets. Ron is married to his amazing wife, Fatima, and they are the proud parents of their son, Alexander.

Stay tuned, we'll be back in just a moment.

<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>

Hey, Ron, thank you so much for being on the show today it is so good to see you.

3:57 Ron

Thank you so much for having me. It's great to see you as well.

4:02 Debora

You know, we're in a series of podcast episodes about life transformation. And I know that God did an amazing thing in your life. So I would like for you to just share a little bit with our listeners about your early years. Did you come from a faith background?

4:20 Ron

I did come from a faith background. So I was raised in the Pentecostal church. My grandmother, the late Cora Dixon was the pioneer of faith in our family, she was witness to actually by a, an elder of our

church who was now deceased. That individual shared the gospel with my grandfather, my grandfather and began encouraging my grandmother to go to church back in the 1960s. And my there you know, going to church resulted in my grandmother actually ending up giving her life to the Lord and, and being saved. And my six aunties, and uncles, including my mother, are all born into the church. And there, they were later saved and their children, they came into the world war later say, me being a third generation, Pentecostal, I was raised in the church. And so growing up, I learned a lot about Jesus by way of mom and dad and aunties and uncles relationship with the Lord.

One of my aunts, is a very prominent minister in our church and has been for probably, maybe, four decades now. And going to her house growing up was like, sitting in the best vacation Bible class that you could ever imagine. She is a teacher, like, we would just sit and all of the way that she would describe the Bible stories and teach it to us as children, to the point where we didn't want to stop listening. So I had a great, you know, experience or examples of Christianity doesn't mean that it was perfect by observation of everyone's life, but no one's is really you know, but I couldn't say that I knew Jesus relationally for myself.

And so, I, my parents growing up, were not married, my father was also raised in the Pentecostal church. So sometimes I will go to dad's church, and sometimes I will go to mom's church, so I kind of felt like I was in the middle of a tug of war. And they, my mother and father had their share of issues. And I often felt that I was in the middle of them. And the issues were so they impacted me greatly, because I just wanted for my parents to be together, like, my cousins, like my friends around me. And so I felt at times, the solution to their problems was, if I were no longer here, even contemplated suicide at the age of probably six, as early as probably six or seven.

And the tension came with a lot of depression and anxiety at an early age and just not really understanding why my life was the way it was, my father was addicted to drugs and alcohol. And so that resulted in an absence in my life, for quite some time before he went to rehab to begin to get his life together. So there was rejection and abandonment issues, compounded on top of mommy and daddy not being together, and then somewhere around the age of maybe nine, somewhere between seven to nine years old, a close relative and two of his male friends began molesting me watching pornography, and they would experiment on me what they saw the guys doing to the girl, you know, the women in the film. And so that was the beginning of like, my identity crisis, I couldn't tell anyone I was told not to tell anyone. I didn't feel that I had a safe space. Both. It'd be it in my family or in the church to go to someone and say, Hey, I've been, you know, something happened to me, you know, I've been broken in and I need help. So that's a little bit about the makeup of my, my childhood.

8:21 Debora

Wow, that's really tough for a small child to hold on to that kind of pain and not feel like they have a way to share that with anyone. Definitely. So how did you come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? I know you are following him closely now. And so somewhere along the line, you made that decision to follow him? Can you share that part of your life with us?

8:49 Ron

Sure, so as I had mentioned, I observed Jesus from afar. And not really knowing him, myself. And so what as I grew into my teenage years, I began to well actually, as early as elementary school, I began to

experience same sex attraction. And that abuse, made a defining mark on my sexuality, but it certainly introduced ideas about sex to me. And it was pointed toward that at the same sex because the molestation was my first point of sexual references. So growing up with this secret, and these feelings is out of me. I just kind of kept them bottled in and it was this thing that existed within my mind until I finally finally opened up and shared it with a cousin of mine who was the same age and had the same experience with same sex attraction. And so I just kept this secret between he and I and as I got grow older I think at about maybe the 10th grade, I had made the decision to act upon the feelings that I was experiencing. I didn't know where it would lead me.

But I remember telling my cousin that I was going to try relationships with men for six months, as if you could put a limit on it with exploration, but I tried it out, you know, started to explore. And I found myself online on gay websites and chat rooms. And it started off inquisitively. Again, I didn't know what endgame was in mind other than exploration, other than to see if actually consenting to male relationships with men and possibly sex with men would be the answer to what I was feeling inside. And so I was introduced to the gay world I was in, or the gay culture, if you want to call it that, with the clubs and the bars, and you know, hookups, and all that came with it. And for our time, it was exhilarating. It was, it felt good to be amongst an environment of other people with shared experiences, like you, who also had this same secrets and feelings, and they understood your language and knew what you were talking about.

And so, at some point, I was outed, by a relative and word spread around the family about my sexuality. And I was rejected a lot by family. And some of the very people who were like, you know, best friends to me, or like second moms or dads growing up, but then my family kind of turned me away, and it was very hurtful. But then the gay community was right there with its arms wide open. And so I ran to safety, or what I thought was safety in the gay community. And I continued on, of course, in gay relationships, and, you know, promiscuous, you know, sexual encounters. And I found that the more that I, like, just really was out there and, and just living what we call the life at the time, I just felt so empty, I felt like there was, I was constantly giving and giving of myself. And I just felt like there was a void inside of me that just continually expanded with every encounter encounter that I had. It's like the relationships didn't satisfy the void that I felt inside. And because I knew what the scripture said about the way in which I lived my life, I could couldn't sin peaceably.

12:52 Debora

That's why you're, you could only do it for six months, right?

12:58 Ron

The funny thing is, the six months ended up consuming six years of my life. I remember specifically, being with a boyfriend at the time and just waking up together, aligned together. And I just felt so much conviction sit on my heart. And I said, you know, the Bible says that what we're doing is sound like, what do you think about, and he was just so confident that it was okay. But maybe for him it was, but for me, I didn't have peace. And so that that lack of peace, that lack of joy, that lack of contentment caused a great conflict in my heart between sexuality and my faith. And God would use his word to speak to my conscious in those moments when I try my best to run away from him from his work from the church, from anybody who had anything to do with him. And randomly, I would meet people that I hadn't seen for years that I grew up with in church that I would encounter, like, as a store, the target shopping

center, I remember seeing this woman who was my mother's age, she said, you're Eileen's son, right? And I tried to get away from her before she saw me, but I couldn't. And I didn't know what she was gonna say like, at the time I there was no question about whether or not I was gay, like my parents were as tight as my skin and I had a deep V neck shirt that plunged down to my stomach. And she just threw her arm around me and just walked in talk with me and I was just waiting for the conversation about the obvious fact. obvious fact that I was a gay man. A gay identify man. And she said out, she said, I want you to know that Jesus loves you and I do too. And she invited me to come back to the church and that really left an impression in my heart. I just figured that I was just an abomination waiting to go to hell.

But here this woman was telling me that Jesus loved me into desired a relationship with me, that really stuck in my heart, it really stuck in my mind. And God was leading me to repentance, even though I didn't know what that meant at the time, and knew that repentance meant a change of life. But I didn't know that I was in the process of being led to life change that his spirit was already, like, beckoning me unto himself.

And so I remember I had a roommate at the time. And the two conditions upon which we could be roommates was that I would pay half of the rent. And then the other half was that I will go to church, mind you, he was in the life as well. And he will go to the clubs on Saturday nights, we will go to level Saturday nights, and he goes to church on Sunday. And so we went to church, and I'm thinking these people are going to cut their eyes at me and asked me why I'm here. My do this the first time I stepped into church in a long time. And I was just met with so much love and embrace. And it just totally changed my perception of the church. Like it's really easy to hold a flawed perception about a group of people until you have an experience with them. And that experience changed my viewpoint, which led to me going back to the church that I was raised in, which is greater Morning Star apostolic ministries. And so I would just, again, met with the same loving reception, and I just remember sitting in the church, and the choir was singing, it took me like, I had flashbacks of when the choir was singing when I was a little boy. And the anointing of God was just so heavy in the room. And it was like, the Spirit of God was just like resting on me. And I was just, I was bawling in tears, like all the pain that I had carried for so many years. No one understood but Jesus understood, when I couldn't articulate the brokenness of my heart. The Lord knew everything that I had experienced.

16:57 Ron

And I didn't feel rejected in his presence, I felt accepted in his presence, I felt that he was that he wanted to show me that a relationship with him was, could well, like it could satisfy me more than any relationship that I have with any man, even any woman, I think of Psalm 145 and 16. It says that God opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living creature. And I was one of those creatures that God wanted to prove that he was able to satisfy continually in this life and in the life to come, and are repented. And just as it says, In the Book of Acts, and chapter two and verse 38, well, actually, before we get there at chapter one, verse eight, says, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, you shall receive power. And so I was filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit. And that was the day that my life changed forever.

I didn't know what was gonna happen the following day. But I knew in that moment, I was someone different, because I felt the presence of God in me, living in me moving within me. And that was the beginning of this 12 year journey that I've been on today.

18:17 Debora

Wow, I love how your life intersected with the church and in loving Christians that didn't judge you that just loved you unconditionally, because that's exactly what happened to me. And it's, it's a powerful thing. And just a reminder to Christians out there that are listening to this podcast, you have the ability to be Christ to someone. And the way that you respond to people who are living in ways that are not pleasing to the Lord really can either help them get back to him or hinder them. And so what you've just heard about Ron's story, and what you've heard about my story is that loving people unconditionally like Christ does, and drawing them back to church is the way to help them get back to him.

What were some of the first changes that you noticed right away after you came back to the Lord because you knew him as a child, and you had strayed for a long time? So what were some of the practical things that changed in your life right away?

19:23 Ron

Practically. So it's very notable for me to mention the presence of joy that I experienced. When I surrendered my life to Jesus I was joyless I had fleeting happiness, I would say, but the consistent experience of joy with this relationship with Jesus our just like, I would, every time the doors of the church were open, I was there like prayer for the you know, for before we started every service, we have prayer for an hour I was there for prayer. You know, engaged in Bible class, I was the, you know, person asking questions, and then the Bible class. And when I got home, I was listening to tapes and you know, CDs of my pastor, the associate pastors teaching and preaching. And I was in the word, they that sunup and sundown, you know, of course until I had to go to work. But I fell in love with the word.

And so some of those practical things that I experienced a change in was just the, it was like, I, the weekend before I was born again, I was at the club, I was out there, and you know, doing my thing, and there's a guy that I was involved with, but immediately, that same day, when I give my life to Jesus, I called them up. And I told him, I said, I can't do this anymore. Yeah, I, you know, was, I was filled with the Holy Spirit today. And my life changes today. And to my surprise, he was encouraging of it. He said, You know, I totally understand that

21:10 Debora

He didn't want to get in the way of God, right?

21:14 Ron

Which led to me, you know, ministering to him. And he had come to my church quite a few times, and, and so cutting off beginning to cut off those relationships that have the potential to pull me back to the life from which I came, there was a gradual change in terms of my friendship dynamics, and that that was a challenge. That didn't happen overnight. Because again, these were the people who embraced me when my family turned away from me. But God told me that he was calling me out from them, to show them that there's a difference. And as difficult as it was, I had to obey Him. Some other immediate changes was, I was no longer casually drinking or, you know, drinking, whenever I went out to the clubs, I didn't drink at all, the way that I carried myself, like in terms of appearance, like God began to deal with me about that. And at the time, I didn't have a lot of money to revamp my wardrobe. But God, he told me at some points, I want you to backup all of the clothes that there reminds you of your old life. And

that left me Debora with two outfits. I'm like, Okay, Lord, multiply these clothes, like he did the fishes and loaves of bread. And he were like, he did that, like he will randomly send some brothers in the church to say, hey, Ron, you know, have some, you know, suits and things that are close on getting rid of, if you can fit it, you know, you can gladly have it. And that same woman that I ran, ran into the target shopping center, when I was in my sin, her husband came to me and said, hey, the LORD laid on my heart, I would love to take you out to buy some suits. And he bought me my first, maybe two or three suits that I wore to church. And I had to repeat them, until God replenished my wardrobe. But it was the beginning of the transformation of becoming this new creature that God was calling me to be.

23:15 Debora

Wow, I love that. And as I'm hearing your story, I'm just smiling over here. Because the Lord did the same thing for me. He brought someone to me that says, hey, I'm cleaning out my closet, and I have these clothes that I think would fit you. Are you interested? So it's so amazing how God worked in your life in a very similar way that he worked in my life. So what were some of the struggles that you continue to face? Right after your conversion? I mean, did you still feel attracted to men or explain like those things? The couple of things about continued struggles?

23:54 Ron

Sure. So the day after, so I saved on October 18 2009. On October 19, I woke up, like, I was unsure if I didn't know what was supposed to happen. I knew I was born again, that I was beginning my relationship with Jesus, but it's like, okay, so what happens now? Like, what, what? Right now hashtag now what? And so I was just honestly, I was on a high with Jesus, I was still on that cloud. Like we, it's a terminology that's used when a person just after they're saved, you're on this honeymoon period, with the Lord. And it's like, you all you feel is the presence of God. You know, so to say, I was not in touch with temptation or anything like that.

But eventually, the realization came to me that I still did have the attractions and I wrestled a lot with lust, like, it made sense because I went from Being able to, well, in my past life watching pornography, you know, I wouldn't say I struggle with masturbation, it was something that I did freely, and then the promiscuous, you know, sexual encounters, and then to go to, you know, to celibacy. They're absolutely absolute, like the Scripture talks about the war between the flesh and the spirit. And that was the first time that I realized that I had to, you know, there was my fleshly nature, and then the spirit man were at war with each other. And so my flesh was like, What in the world are you doing in the spirit was like, you know, you're gonna have to die to these things, and pick up your cross and follow Me. And that was a that was very difficult. And I still struggled with porn and masturbation. At that time, I will qualify it as I struggled, because I wanted to stop. But I had done it so much, it was difficult to just stop. It wasn't like a light switch. And so I wrestled with a lot of my condemnation, because I felt like, oh, my gosh, you know, I'm born again, and I'm struggling with sin.

And I was very hard on myself very, very hard on myself, I felt like, oh, my gosh, God must not love me, or he doesn't want anything to do with me. And I remember when I would have the, you know, when I was experiencing the attractions early on, I felt like something was wrong, like, maybe I didn't get a good enough dose of the Holy Ghost. Maybe I need to go back to the altar, and just let him just continually pour more of himself into me. But the reality was, I'm still a, you know, I'm still living in this flesh. And our flesh will always be at war with the spirit, but we have to feed what we feed will grow. If we feed

things of the Spirit, then the art, the appetite of our flesh, or the strength of our flesh will significantly decrease, it doesn't mean it will cease to be tempted. But we'll have power over our flesh, and we can bring it under subjection, where it won't rule over us. And so I had to learn that I had to learn that God was gracious in the midst of struggle, when I was, you know, again, fall into temptation, and porn and masturbation. God wasn't angry with me. I didn't realize that I was a baby. And babies make messes. I, I have an almost three year old. I'm the one that had to change the diapers. And so if we think of it in the same sense, God is the one who has to hit it has to change our diaper when we were babies, and eventually, you know, we grow and we go from crawling, then we, you know, eventually learn to walk. And then we learned to run.

And so God wasn't angry with me for being a baby. He wasn't angry with me for bawling, but he was inviting me into, into his heart so he could help me in those areas. So I could understand the root of my struggles, not only with porn, and masturbation, but with same sex attraction period, there were absolutely routes that I didn't know. And I had to invite God into my trauma, so that he could go back to when I was an adolescent, and show me where the brokenness began. And this was before I even knew much of anything about therapy, like God was, he was my therapist, I would pour myself out to him. And as scary as it was, I began to pray, Lord, I invite you to the areas where I've been broken. I didn't share my sexual trauma with anyone until I was 22. And I shared it with that was the same year that I was saved, but I didn't share. Excuse me, I shared it with the man who became a father to me and disciple me. He was one of the pastoral assistants of the church. And it was like, a dam broke and released in my heart. And it began the process of healing. For me from an emotional and sexual perspective, there are so many fragments of my life that were just shattered, and, you know, and separated. But God was going to bring them back together over the years, and helped me to become whole. There was an invitation to wholeness that I had to accept and 12 years later, I am so grateful that Jesus has been with me on this journey. I didn't know that homeless was possible. I didn't know that change and healing was possible. But when we invite God in, he absolutely brings change in many ways that we would never imagine.

29:45 Debora

Yes, yes, that is so good. I want to shift gears a bit and tell us a little bit about how you met your lovely wife, Fatima, and how that part of your life completely changed.

29:59 Ron

Yeah, so Fatima, and that well chance my wife, Fatima, who's just an amazing woman, mother, wife, business woman, entrepreneur, everything. She's all that in the bag of chips. So funny enough, we grew up a few blocks away from each other never knew one another. We went to the same middle school and high school together again, not knowing one another. But in high school, we had mutual friend groups. And my wife, my now wife, at the time, was she identify as lesbian and bisexual for about nine years of her life. And excuse me, and again, we had mutual friend groups, and, excuse me, a mutual friend group and our mutual friend group were consisted of gay identified individuals and lesbian identified individuals.

And so she was see me around a school, but I hadn't really, like really remember her. And she told me this was sometime after we met, and I'll get to that part. But um, she said, I saw you walking down the ramp in high school, she said, a voice spoke to me and said, that's going to be your husband. And she

responded within ourselves saying, Well, how can that be, I'm a lesbian, and he's gay. And then 10 years later, we meet in church, her cousin had been witnessing to her, you know, sharing the gospel with her. And she, you know, got saved, gave her life to the Lord. And we were sitting in Sunday school. And Sunday School teacher was teaching him the story of getting in. And to make a long story short, he said, If God is speaking to you, it will behoove you to listen, because he's not speaking to everybody. And I heard God speak to me. And he said, to tell the young lady behind me, which was Fatima, that I have a work for her to do, and that if she seeks me out, show her what that is. And so after Sunday school, I said, this may sound really crazy, I know you don't know me, but God wanted me to share with you that he has a work for you to do and that if you seek Him, to show you what that is, and like her as just like, lit up like a deer in headlights, and she awkwardly shook my hand. And she said, this is like confirmation that the same guy that's been speaking to me all my life, also speaks to other people that remind you, my wife was not raised in a Christian home. Her mother was Jehovah's Witness, and her father was Muslim, both of which, sadly, have passed away. And she would be in some of her, you know, moments of drunkenness and being high, and sometimes periods of feeling suicidal, and she said, a voice would speak to her and tell her about her life. And she wrote these things down with dates and all. And this voice, you know, again, told her that we will be married, and then we meet in Sunday school. And she said, Actually, I do know you we went to high school together, she said, I remember seeing you around. And that was just the beginning of like, a beautiful friendship, which eventually led to our now six going on seven year marriage with our beautiful son, Alexander, who will be three going on 30 in February.

33:05 Debora

Wow, that is so amazing. God is He was orchestrating all of that, even in the midst of your mess, which is beautiful. Absolutely. Which share with us just a bit about your ministry. Tell us about your book about your music.

33:24 Ron

Yeah, so to be perfectly honest with you, Debora, my ministry is still evolving. And as it evolves it, it's like, I'm a person who likes to feel like I, you know, understand what's happening in my life, I have some type of control over what's happening in my life. But this expansion has me feeling like I have no control. And it's like, I totally have to trust God for every step of the way. So a little bit about my ministry, I will say as a whole, my ministry is focused around leading other people to experience salvation in a life changing relationship with Jesus, that's the heart of my ministry. What that ministry looks like, is different. I am an author, I have a book called is God Who He Says He Is. And this book has really been an extension of me, sharing my testimony around the world, to actually put it in book form written form, which was actually something you encouraged me to do, if you remember years ago, I do. And so doing that has really allowed me to connect with a lot more people than what I could share in a room. And I've been able to connect with men and women around the world who had shared experiences, and have come to me asking, How do I get out of this? How can I have a relationship with Jesus and I've been able to leave many of them to salvation and watched many of their lives change. And so that's, you know, the book aspect as it relates to restoration of, you know, sexual identity and the Lord You know, pursuing wholeness, but the extension of that also is ministering to individuals who have experienced sexual trauma. And, you know, that's something that I'm that wholeness is something I'm still walking through even 12 years later,

I'm a co author of a book that will be released in April 2020, excuse me, 2022. And it's called Echoes: Stories of Male Survivors of Sexual Assault. And this book, again, is an opportunity to connect with a different demographic of people have different experiences, to be able to, you know, again, extend them an invitation to the Lord and, you know, connecting them with resources to help them to, to heal, you know, to know that hope and change is possible that you don't have to live as a result of your brokenness, but that the Lord absolutely can, you know, bring healing to build areas of your heart and soul and mind. Then there's the music, which I'm growing in now I am, you know, released a song and April of this year, and the song is titled Come Holy Spirit. And it's a worship song, The Lord gave me the lyrics during a time of prayer and worship. And it's really an invitation for the Holy Spirit to come. And whatever area of your life where you need him. If it's a personal revival of restoration of your heart, your your faith, or whatever it is, the song will certainly invite the presence of the Lord. And I really want to create music that allows people to experience God and to for the believer. And for the non believer alike. I know that music is a tool that God uses to reach people. So I'm very grateful for the opportunity to share music that continues the spread of the gospel.

36:56 Debora

how can listeners connect with you if they want to get your book if they want to get your music, and if they want to just reach out to you for encouragement,

37:05 Ron

the best way to get in contact with me is via my website, which is RonaldJMcCray.com , all of my social media handles and email contact is there. If you're interested in music, Come Holy Spirit is available on all these outlets. I also want to share that before I was, you know, sharing my story or you know, writing music and all, I was called to the ministry as a preacher, I started, I preached my initial sermon into the ministry, I 2014. I thought ministry will look one way. And God just took me in a completely different direction. So I hope it makes sense from what I'm describing, as to this expansion of ministry in many different ways. That the Lord is you know, continually putting earth beneath my feet with every step that I take.

38:06 Debora

Oh, that's amazing. What would you say to someone who's listening today that is listening to your story? And they're going Yeah, that's great for you. But I don't see that God can change anything in my life, what would you say to them right now.

38:21 Ron

I will say to the individual, I can understand you. I there. I myself was there. I didn't know if I don't even believe God loved me to begin with I thought because of my sin. That made me ineligible for salvation for a relationship with God. But God's totally changed my thinking about that. And I know that my prayers that he would do the same for you. I think it's a matter of faith, our willingness to trust God, stepping into the unknown, is a scary thing. For me, stepping into the unknown meant leaving a community of people in which I found safety and comfort, and stepping into the unknown of what this life would Jesus would look like. And in making that decision to follow after him, I left everything behind. But I gained so much more than I thought I could ever have. I can't experience the way this word changes loaded. I think a lot of times when it comes to this discussion about change for the same sex

attracted personal the individual who identifies as LGBT, what change means, but it's it's a loaded term like God absolutely can bring and does bring change and so many different ways, but it starts with faith. And so I would encourage you, if you're struggling with faith, just to pray a simple prayer and I know this might be hard to do. The Lord help my unbelief. Help me to believe you again, or if I never believed helped me to Believe, and he will respond. And when he responds, I just encourage you to take his hand and follow him to wherever that role may lead with him.

40:09 Debora

Yeah. Is there anything else you'd like to share before we wrap up?

40:16 Ron

Second Corinthians 5:17 is my favorite scripture. And it says, If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. And whatever walk of life you come from, whatever sin you've committed, whatever behavior that you find yourself struggling to let go, I want you to know that Jesus loves and forgives. The reason why Jesus died on the cross was because he wanted to reconcile the world John 3:16, says, from God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life. And that following verse is, so key three said, John 3:17, the God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it became a saving, and that means he wants to save you and die, my friend.

So whatever it is, wherever you find yourself today, know that you are not beyond God's reach. And I just my simple prayer for you is that you will respond to God's call, because he's calling the world he's calling all of us. And I promise you that, if you surrender your life to Him, it will be worth it everyday may not feel like a bed of roses, there are very difficult days on this journey. But the reward is not only in this life, but in the life to come that we can live eternally with Jesus, that that's worth living every day of this life for is to know that we will live with him our Savior forever.

42:02 Debora

Yeah. Would you close us out prayer?

42:07 Ron

Absolutely. Father, in the name of Jesus, we thank you for what you've done. On the cross, thank you for sending your son to give his life to reconcile us to yourself, to have relationship with you. Across is was and is and will always be until you return an open invitation for humanity to have a relationship with you to have our sins forgiven. Lord, I thank you for forgiving my sins. I thank you for forgiving Deborah sins and the miraculous change that you performed in our lives. And I know that you are no respecter of person. And that you can do the same for every person that's listening. If they don't know you. I just pray Lord, that something that was said during this interview, would register in someone's heart that it would bring hope that it would bring encouragement. And for those who don't know you that it will bring life I pray that for someone who's on the fence about whether or not that they want to go to explore sin or to follow you, I pray that they choose you and that they find so much joy in their relationship with you and unfollowing you or a bit a desire for anything other than you that's displeasing law or just we just leave their hearts and in those moments when, as humans when you know those desires rise up, or that you would help us to put it right back down and to keep our eyes fixed on you. Or

do you have a hope? And a future for us? You have a plan. Before we were formed in our mother's wombs, you knew us, you purposed for us to be here. So Lord, help us to to see you as worthy. Forsaking all to follow after every day of our life, even when is difficult, Lord, give strength to someone today. In Jesus name, we pray, amen.

44:08 Debora

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

<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>

44:55 Debora

We just heard from Ron McCray about how God had completely transformed his life. As you heard him share. It was when he fully surrendered his life to Jesus, that He began to experience joy. And things begin to change. I don't know what you're going through in your life right now. But I do know that it is not a coincidence that you heard this message today. God loves you so much, that he doesn't want you to remain stuck in an unfulfilling life. If you want to change that only God can do. It starts with a relationship with Jesus, who died on the cross to take away your sins, and to give you everlasting and abundant life that starts right now. If you're ready to receive this free gift of salvation, you can repeat this prayer as a surrendering to Him.

God, I confess that I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus in my life. I repent of my sins and I turn to you. I believe that Jesus died on the cross. He was buried and rose from the dead. And I accept this by faith and invite Jesus to be in control of my life. Today I surrender my life to you. Take control, and teach me how to live for you. Thank you for forgiving me, and saving me. Amen.

If you just made a decision for Christ, I want to hear from you. Please visit my website at [TBTWPodcast.com](http://TBTWPodcast.com). And click the link to let me know about your decision for Jesus so that I can encourage and support you with the next steps of your faith.

My prayer for you today is that God would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your heart through faith that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all of 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 the fullness of God. Because Jesus is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us. Amen.

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word where we will hear yet another life transformation story.

Announcer 48:11

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](http://TBTWPodcast.com). Until next time, be blessed.