

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 46 of Transformed by the Word. Today you will get to meet another person whose life has been radically healed and transformed by God. But before we meet her, if you know of anyone in your circle of influence, whose life has been transformed by Jesus, and by the word of God, please let me know and they may be asked to be a future guest on the show. You can send an email to me at BarrMinistries@gmail.com or simply go to my website, TBTWpodcast.com and click the Connect link to get in touch with me.

I would like to take this moment to thank a listener for leaving a five-star review. Writing this is such a smooth, easy listening to hear how Jesus changes the lives of individuals. The testimonies are inspiring and the material is well put together. Hey, thanks for taking the time to leave that review. If you would also like to leave a review and give me feedback about the podcast. Go to love.thepodcast.com/TBTWpodcast, let us know what you think.

Today's guest is Tamika Sanders, and I met her the first time a few years ago when both of us were speaking at a conference and our paths have crossed a couple of times since then. Tamika is the founder and executive director of Coming Out Incorporated. She's a public speaker, spiritual mentor and a prophetic voice for this generation. After years of serving in various ministry capacities, she answered her call to full time ministry in January 2016 after relocating to Dallas, Texas to join the Potter's House church, where Bishop TD Jakes is her senior pastor.

After experiencing the delivering hand of God from generational strongholds in her own identity, and forgiveness of childhood abandonment, which yielded the restoration of an estranged relationship with her father Tamika grew a passion to see all people completely whole set free and delivered. Though she does not have a past and homosexuality Tamika has a huge heart for hurting people, and could not ignore the call of God to provide a safe haven for those coming out of homosexuality. A place to be healed, restored and renewed. with much prayer and a vision from God of 1000s coming out of the LGBTQ community to seek lasting freedom and complete wholeness through Jesus Christ. Coming out Incorporated was established on National Coming Out Day, October 11 2016, which is also the same date as our birthday. Believing this was a divine confirmation from God. Each year she dedicates her birthday to Coming Out Incorporated with fasting and intersecting for LGBT communities around the globe and celebration of our National Coming Out Gala.

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

<<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>>

Debora

Hey, Tamika it is so great to see you today. Thanks for coming on this show to share with our listeners your journey with Jesus.

Tamika 4:44

Thank you so much. I'm so glad to be here. I am honored to be a part of this podcast and I thank you so much for the invitation.

Debora 4:53

Yeah, it's really good to see you. It's been a while since we've been in the same space at the same time.

Tamika 5:00

Yes, I'm extremely excited. I know, I think the last time we were together was in DC last year.

Debora

We're in a series of podcast episodes about life transformation as a result of people's encounter with Jesus. And I know that your life has been radically transformed by him just like mine has. And I would like for you to just tell us a little bit about your story, go back to your childhood, tell us what it was like growing up.

Tamika 5:32

So growing up my parents, they were married. And I, they I was born in Birmingham, Alabama, my mother grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and my father grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And so they met in Cleveland, and they weren't married, they didn't know each other very long before they got married, maybe six months. And then they got married, they were just deeply in love. And so I was born, my mother already had my oldest brother. And then my father also had two children from previous relationships. And so they were coming into this blended family. And then I was born through their union. And so as far as I know, obviously, I don't remember what life was like at that time, because they ended up divorcing when I was three years old. But from pictures and things like that, we looked like a happy family on the outside. On the inside, I bet my father was battling a drug addiction. And their marriage became very toxic and very abusive. And so within that, they ended up getting a divorce. And I was about three years old, so I didn't know what was going on. And just following, you know, my family.

So my father went off to the military. And then during that time, it's when my mom moved back home to Cleveland, Ohio. And so that was the start of the life that I remember growing up. And I grew up there, I went to school, you know, just had a normal childhood, like any other child. But there was still this missing this void, that I didn't understand that I didn't have my father no more. And my brothers and my sisters were no longer there. And so I probably saw my father maybe two or three times after their divorce, but not very often. Because he was then stationed in Texas and Antonio, Texas is where he was then stationed after he was released from bootcamp in the military. And so fast forward, my dad remarried, he had two more children. And I will say, between the ages of six and 10 years old, is when that transition was happening. And I didn't really, he didn't really contact me very much. So I didn't hear from him for that four year period.

Within that four-year period, he also ended up giving his life to Christ, trying to clean up his drug, substance abuse. And then my mom also started going to church. So I grew up in church. But during that four year period, I did not hear from my father. And I will say that became probably one of the most

defining times of my life as a young girl trying to navigate. And so at 10 years old, my father resurfaced and came to Cleveland, with his new wife and my new siblings that they just had. And we went off to Texas. And from that day forward, I spent every summer in Texas with my father, for one month. And so growing up, I didn't know there was anything wrong with that. I didn't know that it was affecting me in any way. I was just excited to go to Texas, you're a young girl, you're 10 years old, you're getting on the airplane, you know, you're not thinking I'm thinking oh, I don't know how to process, any feelings that I'm having about it. And no one knew how to communicate to me the transitions that were happening. So no one spoke to me in, you know, a, just an age appropriate way to tell me Hey, Mommy and Daddy are separating, this is happening, these transitions are happening. You're gonna have to go here. It was just kind of those that was a miss. And so I will say that continued until I was about 18. And I went off to college in Eastern Michigan University.

Debora 9:43

Wow. So I bet it felt like a little bit of abandonment not being with your father all the time, and then just that intense time in the summer. Yeah, that's gotta be tough.

Tamika 9:56

Yes. And so after all, went to college. That's kind of where I ended up encountering the Lord. So like I said, I did grow up in church. And however, I didn't know the Lord growing up, you know, I knew church, culture, church traditions. But I didn't know the Lord. I didn't. I wasn't disciplined. I didn't know what discipleship was. I didn't know what having a relationship with God was. And so to tell you how much I didn't know, this is funny, I kind of embarrassing, but it's where I started. And so I although I grew up in church, and we went to church several days of the week, I remember being in college Googling, which one was born God or Jesus, like I didn't, I knew that they were one in the same, you know that. But I didn't know which one actually walked here. And that's sad for someone, a kid to have grown up in church, her whole life, but I grew up in a very religious church, kind of more traditional. And so I can't say that they didn't teach the children maybe I just wasn't paying attention. However, so. But yeah, so that's just a given idea. It's kind of funny. But thinking of where I am now, and how interactive I've been in my relationship and walk with the Lord and where He's taking me, that's where I started Googling on Google, what is in the world that I learned growing up, you know,

Debora 11:23

Wow. You know, a lot of people grow up in the church, and they don't really understand who Jesus is. I mean, they don't get that full understanding. Once you surrender your heart to Jesus and actually learned who he was and what he did for us, how did your life begin to change after that?

Tamika 11:44

Okay, so my senior year of high school, I dated a young man, and we were best friends, we went to college. I mean, we didn't go to college, sorry, we went to high school together. He also taught me how to drive our families were really close, we were like, really, really close. And we ended up dating, we went to prom together. And that relationship ended one summer after I went to college, because it became physically abusive. And I can't say it wasn't a pattern, it happened one time. But the moment that it happened, and he hit me, it that transformed a lot within me, we broke up. And after that, I don't want to go into too much detail about that just to protect his identity. But after that relationship ended,

I was devastated. And it sent me down a path of rebound relationships, just kind of looking for a replacement for that void. Because not only I was young, so I was about 19 years old. That was my best friend, and my boyfriend. And so it was like, I felt like I lost two relationships in one. And no one knew how to process that. And my family, one of the hurtful things that happened during that time was my mom told me not to tell anyone. And I know her intentions were pure, and tell him that she said to me, you never know you might get back together. And you don't want your father your brother not to like him. And but she didn't want I think she didn't understand is that in that moment, I didn't feel protected by her. And I didn't feel like she was she cared more about him protecting him than versus protecting me, your daughter.

And so when he was a really great guy overall, he later found out that he had his own trauma. He had his own, you know, areas that he needed healing. And so it wasn't like an argument, a heated argument. It was just like in a moment, he snapped. And I and I was actually driving when it happened. So it created some other trauma there. However, my mom's response silence to me. And I didn't tell anyone. And I asked I didn't know who to tell. I didn't know about counseling, that wasn't a common thing for anyone to seek counseling and our family. And I didn't tell my brothers, I didn't tell everyone just knew they broke up. And that was the end of that.

So I went off to college and continued my semesters. And I remember there was another young man, like I said, I was on the rebound. So there's another young man that I worked with at Express. And he was a believer, he was a Christian. And he grew up in the same type of church that I grew up growing up. So once he told me that I was like, oh, we had a connection. So after that, he ended up he was different than any other guy that I ever liked. So I was thinking, Oh, he's cute. We're going to talk we're going to hang out and we can go to church sometimes. However, A guy used that, that friendship to really learn me into a relationship with Him. And so the guy ended up taking me to church every Sunday, he would pick me up, we would go to church, we would go to church. And there was one Sunday that the presence of the Lord just hit me really hard. And I broke down crying. And I just felt so convicted about where I was headed. You know, I didn't know how to fix the pain in my heart. I didn't know how to, you know, there was some of the guys I was very insecure. There was some of the guys that we were being sexually intimate. And so I remember crying out to the Lord. And I said, God, if You saved me from this, I will never have sex until I'm married. I won't have it again. I won't kiss, I won't do anything until I'm married. I won't date a guy I won't. And I really just surrendered my life to the Lord. I mean, at that point, it was surrendering my relationships. But in my heart, I was exchanging one love for the other, you know, and so I told the Lord, I made that promise to him. And after that started a transition to him, healing me.

Debora 16:11

So how did the Lord begin to heal your heart from all of this? These things that had happened growing up?

Tamika 16:19

Yes. So, one Sunday, he was at church and I went to, they were doing praise and worship, and then they were doing an altar call for prayer afterwards. And so and this was actually my very first time, I can recall really hearing the voice of God. And so I went to the altar to pray. And I was just crying because I was still hurting. I didn't know what to do. I didn't, I still didn't know how to navigate a relationship with the

Lord. But I knew the promise that I made, and I was going to keep that promise to him. But he spoke to me in that moment. And this is how I think I knew that God was real, not just church, not just what I grew up learning, but that the everything the Bible said that God is love, and he cares was real. So in this moment, he said to me, I'm going to heal you from all the men that broke your heart, from every man that have ever broke your heart. And he started naming every single person that broke my heart that was a man, all the way until kindergarten, elementary school, first grade, there was I was in I went to, I used to go to after school program at the why. And I remember there was a young man named Calvin. And we were probably a first or second grade, but I had a crush on him. And he had a crush on me. And we were, you know, holding hands. And then I remember one day I came to, after school care. And we were we were walking to the park, our camp counselors walking us through the park, and he was holding another girl's hand. And I Yes, uh, you know, that was the worst. Her heart broke my little heart. But the Lord named him. And that, like, I just wept, because I never, I mean, at this age, I was 20 years old by now. And so for the Lord to go all the way back to first grade to say, I saw that moment, and I know it hurt you. And he he said his name. And I said, Lord, I didn't even remember how did you know?

You know, it really made me realize is that God sees us that he really is present. Like, those are things that I grew up hearing, God sees you. God is there. He's everywhere, he knows everything. But to experience it and hear him tell me that I saw this. And in that process, he also named my father. And so like I said, growing up, I didn't know how to process the pain with my father. So I didn't process it at all. So it wasn't like, I grew up crying every day, like I miss my dad or anything like that. So I didn't know. So it wasn't when my dad when God named my father in that moment. It pricked my heart a little bit, because it was like, I didn't know that, that there was something wrong with or I was missing something from that relationship. It was normal to me.

And so it was, it had become normal to me to live without my father. So I didn't know that there was a void in my heart, concerning that relationship. And so he named a couple of other people and I just wept, and I wept and I wept. And so, obviously, I didn't know how he was going to heal my heart, but that was the promise that he made to me. And so fast forward. He started with healing me from my father, because that was the foundation of the pain. So even all these other relationships were kind of they were causing pain, but the foundation of where started the root of the pain was, like you said, rooted in abandonment and rejection from that father is so and then. And it's also, you know, had an effect on my identity and how I viewed myself as a woman. And perhaps, had I not had that boy, I would have been able to discern better in relationships and not fall down a bad path after the abuse.

And so I was at a retreat, a weekend retreat, and it was called acquire the fire was the name of the ministry that would have this conference every year. So are you college youth group went to the retreat and or the conference bedroom, sorry. And there was a demonstration that was being presented. Where it was, it was Senator Ron fatherlessness. And it was a young girl who had a similar situation, they were telling the story of her family going through a divorce, and she not living with her father. And I remember watching the story, and because I wasn't aware, fully aware of all pain in my heart, I just was like, wow, that was a great presentation. I didn't make the connection right away, you know. But during the worship, the pastor got up and he started crying. And he's like, I want to pray for abandonment. And I want to pray for orphans. And I want to pray. And the Lord said, I want you to get down on your knees and worship. And so I said, Okay, so I got on my knees, and I started praying and crying and singing the songs. And while I was singing, it was like, this heavy presence fell over me. And my heart broke open, and I cried hysterically. It was as if I was crying, 20 years of tears that were bottled up. And the only

words that could come out of my mouth was I want my daddy, I want my daddy, I want my daddy and I said it maybe 100 times, you know, the Word says that out of the abundance of your heart, the mouth speaks. And so all these years, that is what was bottled up in my heart to pay. And that is what my heart was crying for. But that was also something that the Lord had to reveal. He had to open up and he had, he waited until the time where I was mature enough to be able to deal with the pain of that. And I don't think I've ever cried that hard in my life. So but I kept just saying, I want my daddy, I want my daddy, I want my daddy. And it got to a point where I was like, okay, you know, but I just kept coming out. And guys like this is 20 years of crying. 20 years of pain that is coming out in one moment. And so I remember afterwards, my youth pastor, which was also my spiritual father at the time, he was discipling. Me and he pulled me to the side. And he said to me, are you okay? And I said, Yeah, he goes, what was that? And I said, I don't know, I guess I want my daddy.

Tamika 22:59

And then we had a moment. But after that, is when the Lord opened up the wound, in my heart. And since then, it's been a painful journey of healing. He eventually, after I graduated from college, he eventually led me to move to Texas to live with my father, to restore that relationship. And in between that time, I went through forgiveness, I had to start with forgiveness. And so we were at a prayer retreat, another prayer retreat. And they were talking about forgiveness. And I remember I went up for prayer, and they loved it that was praying for me. She said to me, to me, God, I feel like you need to forgive someone need to forgive. And I feel like Lord is saying, You need to forgive your father. And at that time, I wasn't in, I wasn't ready. Like, the Lord just revealed to me this pain. And I just became aware that I was abandoned. I just became aware, I felt like all the feelings, I felt like, he replaced me with his new family. I felt like he didn't he didn't want me because he would take care of his other children. And then he wouldn't take care of me. I felt like oh loves, like, all the feelings that I didn't know I felt came up and I wasn't ready to forgive. And the young lady, she said, I really feel like the Lord wants you to forgive him. And I just started crying. I said, No, no, I hate him. He abandoned me.

Like I just started saying all the things that I was feeling at the time, but the Lord did not let me leave that retreat without forgiving my father and saying the words I forgive my father broke, like a spiritual stronghold off of me. Yeah, like it was. It was such a relief to say that, but it also released me to go into a moment of deliverance from that abandonment from that rejection, and I don't want to go into too much detail about that. deliveries process because I never shared it publicly. And I'm going to share it for the first time at my own conference in a couple of months.

So I want to, I want to kind of just give the viewers a little bit and hopefully they can find it later. However, he took me through some time of deliveries from abandonment, and rejection, and unforgiveness opened the door. And so I later learned that all forgiveness, it can be an open door to the enemy, you know, and so the word tells us to, to forgive. We know that is the center hole of forgiveness. But I don't think people really know how much the enemy uses that to keep us bound. And I didn't know at the time and so that forgiveness really opened the door, another gateway to my healing process. So fast forward, the Lord told me to move to Texas to live with my father. And I did not want to do that. I actually, that was probably the one time in my life that I really rebelled against the Lord. And he had, at the time of that rebellion was probably a few months, every nothing in my life was working, I had no peace. I had, I didn't have a job, I couldn't get a job. And no one will hire me. And there was a young man I was dating at the time. And that was the last thing I was holding on to and that relationship was a

healthy relationship. It was a Christian relationship. But I remember he came to my house one night, and he goes to me guy can't date you anymore. And I'll go, why not. He's like, because you need to move in live with your father. And I know you're staying here for me. And he said, there are times that I feel like you're taking your issue with your father out on me. And he says, I have made some mistakes in our relationship. But I can only be accountable to those that you need to heal from your father and I it was the, it was the hardest truth that I needed to hear. But at the time, I didn't want to hear that. And I I got so upset at him. And he goes, I will help you make that transition. I will drive you there. I will go with you. But I we can't date until you're home. And that was the last thing I was holding on to and that was the last thing that I said, Okay, God, that's it. I'll go, I'll move in with my father in our lives.

Tamika 27:39

So we moved to Texas that was in me trying to think the year 2011. So we took a road trip all the way from Cleveland to San Antonio, Texas, which was a 24 hour drive. So it was a long drive. But so he drove with me. We moved to Texas, and I remember going to my father's house. And it was such a an interesting journey to healing. So this was probably one of the most powerful parts of my journey to healing. Because I had to learn how to be a daughter. I didn't know like I remember one day saying God, what am I supposed to do as a daughter? What is my dad supposed to do with my mom, she was a single parent, she never remarried. So she did everything. So my heart is like, Okay, what was my dad supposed to do if he was here.

And so now I'm living in the house with him. And I don't know how to be a daughter. I don't have to learn those things. And I remember one day, my dad came into my room. And he said to me, he said to mica, you come in the house, because I would come into the house angry at him every day. Even though I had said my verbal forgiveness. Now it was time for me to walk it out, which is what was challenging. And so the Lord brought me there. And my dad even said, I don't want you to work. I don't want you to do anything. I just want you to focus on healing. And I want to focus on restoring our relationship. And I want to try to make up for what I missed. And then he told me that when during a four-year period where I didn't remember I told you I didn't hear from him, but he had given his life to the Lord. He said that, during that time, him and my mom were having some feuding. And he wanted me to come live with him. But she wouldn't let me. And so the law he said, The Lord told him to leave the situation alone. And when she was older, I will send her back to you.

And he told me that story before. And I remember I told him that he wasn't hearing from God. So this is the moment that I'm in his house. And he recalls this moment and we both having a moment and we're crying and he's like, the Lord kept his promise to me. He said, I don't care what condition you're in. I'm going to I'm happy that you're Hear, so but I still for like maybe the first six months, I will come in the house and I will go straight to my room, I wouldn't even say anything to him, I would look depressed, I would look sad. And I would just sit in the room all day. And so one day he came in my room and he sat on the edge of the bed. And he said to me, you know, I'm really happy that you're here, I love it, I'm so glad. And he said, I know that it took you 25 years to get in this condition. And so I'm not trying to change you overnight. He said, But you come in the house, every day, you're mad, you're upset, your head is low, you're sad, and you come in the room, and you stay in this room locked in his room, until it's time to get up and eat or get up the next day. And he goes, and none of that bothers me, because I'm just happy that you're here. The part that bothers me is, is that as your father, I don't know how to make you happy. And when he said that, like I remember just crying. Because I think that was the first

time I ever heard my father's heart towards me, that he really did want me to he really did want a relationship with me. And it bothered him. He said, I can go to the grocery store and pick out anything that my kids want. I don't know what you like, I don't know your favorite color. I don't know what you enjoy. I don't know how to go shopping for you. He's like, and that is the part that bothers me. And he goes, so can you please forgive me, so that I can heal the part that I broke and restore our relationship. And I think that was the moment that I really forgave, walked out, was able to walk out the forgiveness, I was still with the process, there will still be moments that he was in conversation. Like I can remember just for example, like he could be talking to a complete person that I don't know, but a person that he knows, and saying, yeah, so growing up, the kids did this for Christmas and did this. And I will always feel the need to say well, I didn't get that. And that the Lord had to show me that's not forgiveness. Stop doing that. He's trying you're you're he's trying to make up for what he missed. And you cannot continue to remind him of what he did in the past. Does that not that is not forgiveness. So it took a long it took Debora some time for me to unlearn those behaviors, and to not respond to him out of my bitterness. Hmm.

32:39

So that was like a really, really powerful time in a healing time that that's, that's an amazing, just journey that you've had. Because the Lord was there with you the whole time, even when you didn't even really know who he was. But he was there. He was there with your father. He was there with you. And I'm so glad to hear that you were able to restore that relationship with him.

Tamika 32:57

Yeah, so the relationship to just want to say one thing the Lord did with the restoration process, what their restoration looked like. Because the Lord, you know, the Bible tells us that he will redeem the years, you know. And so there was one time when I was in elementary school, and I had friends who fathers would pack their lunch. And they would write little notes inside of their lunchbox and I remember sitting, we were like all the girls would be so excited like to look at her lunch to see what note her dad wrote and see what lunch he packed. And it was just a thing we did. I think I was in fifth grade. And so I remember there were times that I will sit there and I will go I wish my dad was here to pack my lunch. I wish that he could write a note in my lunch.

And so but I never share that with anybody. I never told anyone that. And so I remember there being one day, I was working in San Antonio. And I came home from work. And my dad goes, you know, how was your day? I say, oh, it's really good. You know, I just, I'm just tired of paying for lunch every day. I think I spent all my money on eating out. And he goes, he's just listening. So we're talking and I'm just saying how you know, I'm tired of spending all my money eating out for lunch every day. So the next morning, I get up for work, and I pull it out driveway, he comes running out of the house with this little red lunchbox. And he's like, Wait, he's flagging me down. Like Wait, wait, I almost forgot. And I opened the door and like, what are you doing? He's like, I packed your lunch. And so I just like my, my, my tip. My eyes got watery. Tamika I don't like what are you doing? And he's like, I packed your lunch. I packed your lunch. So I get teary eyed. And when I get to work and I actually open the lunch box. It was the most fifth grade lunch that my dad could have ever packed. It had a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. It had a fruit cup I had fruit snacks. And he had a spork. Like, I don't know where he found a spork sport. And I had to say that because I don't know you only see sports. If in elementary school you have never seen once it is, it was the cutest lunch. And he just, you know, sent me a little text message saying he

wish I had a great day. And so I called him and I just cried, and I posted it on Facebook because No, I cried the whole I don't know if I was able to eat the lunch and there was a bag of chips in there. And I cried, and I cried, and I posted that. And I told him, I just was crying on my way to work. And I'm like, I'm on my way home for work. And I'm like that you don't understand what that did.

And so I told him about fifth grade. And he said, I had no idea. He had no clue. The Lord told him. Yes, exactly. And so those are like really moments that the Lord was trying to redeem. Obviously, he couldn't redeem all of my time. But there were small moments that God was showing me like, I want to give back to you moments that you missed. So, you know, going back to where I was able to learn to be a daughter, and this is one defining moment to I remember, I had was going I was taking the class there at a community college. And on my way to school, I got a flat tire. For growing up with a single mom, you get a flat tire. She's gonna tell you what to do. You call AAA, you get your car, towed, you get it fixed and going about your day. It's not a big deal. So that is what I did. And I can't, I went to school, and I came home, and everything was normal to me. So my dad asked, you know, how was your day and I'm just telling him, I said, it was good. I got a flat tire this morning. But then I was okay. I went to onto class. And I was going on about the day and he stopped. He's like, what? You got a flat tire? And I say, yeah, he's like, Well, why did you call me? And I said, in my innocence, why would I call you? And I was so I was like, I was very, very like just curious, like, why I was honestly perplexed as to why even occurred to you. It didn't even and he goes to mica, you mean to tell me that you were stranded on the side of the road, that you didn't have that you had a flat tire. And he's like I he said, You were supposed to call me so that I could come fix it. And I said, I just sat there because I was one of the moments where I'm like, I don't know. And I told him, I said with that in mind defense, in the 25 years of my life, I never had the luxury of calling you in a moment of an emergency. So I did when my mom taught me to do. So that wasn't my first time getting a flat tire. But this is the first time that I'm learning that I could have called you to come fix it. Instead, he was just so I guess the thought of me being on the side of role in a foreign city that I'm not. And it wasn't anything to me. But he was teaching me. I'm here now. And there are certain things that you don't have to worry about, I can cover you, there are certain things that I can take care of and that Daddy can fix that you don't have to know how to fix.

Debora 38:30

And that reminds me that's exactly who Jesus is to us once we surrender our hearts to Him. Yes, is the one that can fix anything that we need. And we can give that to him. I want to switch gears for a moment here and talk a little bit about your ministry. So how did you come to the point of starting the ministry that you started about coming out.

Tamika 38:55

So in the midst of all of this healing and the things that I was sharing in college, I was part of a campus ministry and church there, and they were having a mentorship program. And so I gotta backtrack here, because this is going to lead to why God gave me the vision for coming out. And so I'm the pastor there, introduced me to a young lady that he wanted me to mentor so they were having the seniors mentor, the freshmen. And so I was assigned to a young lady who struggled with gender identity, gender dysphoria, and she had been living transgender life. And so she didn't hadn't had any major trance, you know, transitions, but she was dressing like a man wearing male clothing and things like that. And so when I met her, I thought that she was athletic. I didn't know that she was struggling with homosexuality. And so I was trying to connect with her and I said, Oh, you play ball because I play

basketball in school. And she goes, No. And I said, Oh, you play soccer, sports. You play it and she's like, No, I'm not I don't play sports. And I said, Oh, Oh, okay. Yeah, like oversized gym shoes and oversized gym shorts and a big T shirt. And so I said, Okay, well, I'm sorry. And she said, I am gay, like, pretty much like that is what is that's what you're saying. And I would have, and I tell her, I said, I, I didn't know that. But it was important to her because she said that she was so used to people seeing her as gay, and saying that outward appearance and assuming that she's gay, that it kind of healed a part of her that I that isn't what the first thing that I saw.

However, through that relationship, she one day we were meeting, and she told me her whole story. And she said she had been praying for the Lord to send someone to help her get out of lifestyle, and to stay out of the lifestyle. She had recently read dedicated her life to Christ, but she didn't know how to get out. And I didn't know either. At the time, this was my first time ever, hearing someone say they didn't want to be that way anymore. And my first time realizing that that is something the Lord can transform.

And so I actually, in my ignorance, told her that I didn't know how to help her with it, and that I couldn't mentor her. And so fast forward, I stopped talking to her for a few months. And the Lord just kept bringing her up in my spirit. I kept seeing her in different places on campus, I kept just being reminded of her. And so one day I called her and I said, Hey, you want to meet up because I just keep seeing you around and feeling like I'm supposed to help you. And I said, I'm honest, I don't know how to help you. But I'm going to, I don't know what the Lord wants to do with me. And so we sat and we talked, and she told me that she had a dream about me, before she ever met me. And she said, I had a dream that there was a tall, brown skinned slim girl, as she was helping me out of the lifestyle. And my pastor at the time told her that God was going to send that young lady into your life to hold you accountable to your walk with Christ. And she said, Whenever the pastor signed you, to me to you, I knew you were the girl for my train. And I was completely convicted. Because obviously, there was something inside of me that the Lord knew he put in me that I didn't know was there. And I couldn't after that moment, I couldn't tell her no, I said, Okay, well, I don't know how to help you. But I'm going to trust that God does. And so I don't want to make that story too long. But the Lord ended up revealing to me how to help her how to disciple her. So she met with me every single day. And for six months, and I she came to the house, and I taught her how to read the Bible, I taught her how to fast, I taught her how to dig in her work. And we worked on her her self-esteem and her image.

And one day she came to me, she said to me, I want to throw away all my men's clothing. And so we throw away our men's clothing. Now we were broke college students, so I didn't have a budget to go and buy her new clothes. So I ended up giving her some of my old clothes, I said, Okay, we're gonna throw away clothes, I'm gonna give you some of my old clothes. So we will come and she will play dress up, and she would just watch me be feminine. And she's like, I don't know how to be feminine. And so she. So that was part of her transformation. Eventually, I graduated, it should continue to go on. So once I graduated, I went on to pursue my career, I didn't think anything about that essence, I used to tell people, Oh, God gave me grace to block this girl out of homosexuality, and she transformed her life. And he just gave me grace for that one person.

Tamika 43:42

So, in the middle of me pursuing my collegiate career, I wanted to get my master's program. And I remember I didn't get accepted into the master's program. And that made me seek the Lord to say, why

didn't I guess I shouldn't have gotten denied this. And he showed me he said, he spoke very plainly. And she said, I know you thought that helping her was a onetime thing. But I'm calling you to the LGBTQ community. And you're going to help those that want to come out of homosexuality. And so I was completely floored, you know? And I said, God, what in the world like, and so that is what eventually led me to start coming out. So fast forward to 2016. I had the Lord led me to move to Dallas, Texas. And he prompted me to quit my job at the time, and to go into full time ministry to start coming out and he gave me the name and the entire vision for coming out. And I remember when he gave me the name, I was thinking coming out and he is like the Holy Spirit interrupt my thought and he said, I'm going to redefine what it means to come out. And because most of the time when we think of come And now we think of what we've been conditioned to think about it, you know, people are coming out to announce that they're gay. But he's like, No, this, this version of coming out, is going to be the journey of coming out of the lifestyle and pursuing wholeness. And he's like, the end goal to make it is to get people to be whole.

We're not trying, you know, we're not focusing on getting them heterosexual, we're not focusing on changing their clothes, we're not focusing on, you know, getting them married, we're focusing on making them home. And as your home those things will be, come a manifestation of wholeness. And so, so that is, that is our mission, that is our goal. And in the process of that everything that I did with her, he told me is going to be a service of coming out. So we're going to offer clothing distribution, we're going to offer discipleship, we're going to offer mentorship, we're going to offer, you know, inner healing, because eventually, you know, we got to the root of her issues, and she had dealt with sexual abuse as a young girl, she also dealt with motherhood abandoned. And he said, you know, even though you can't relate to this lifestyle, you can relate to some of the brokenness. And so everything that you learned through healing, your abandonment and healing, your rejection is the tools you're going to use to help those that are coming out. And that's when he began to reveal to me that homosexuality is just a manifestation of sin from a root cause of brokenness. And when you look at it that way, because when I would tell people talk to people about homosexuality, it's like everyone would act like it was the sin from Mars. And they were just like, it was just this is because you know, the church and people in society haven't really known how to handle this topic. And so he also said that the church is not equipped, hasn't been equipped to minister to those who are coming out of the lifestyle. And so as I begin to change and transform hearts, back to me, I need there to be safe places to state ministries, for them to go to, to be able to be healed and set free. So mind you, Debora at this time, I didn't know anything about ex gay ministries, I didn't know. So I'm thinking, God is revealing something brand new, for the first time. And I feel like Noah building the ark, like we haven't seen rain before, you know.

Tamika 47:33

And so I really thought like, this was like, something brand new that he was revealing. And eventually, the young lady I mentored she was sharing her testimony on a podcast one time, and the woman who is interviewing her after the podcast was over, she reached out to me, and she said, The while she was reading, telling her story, the Lord told her, or led her to reach out to me and tell her tell me that whenever I get ready to start my ministry that she's here to help, and yeah, so I didn't even know what she meant. Because at this time, you know, I mean, I knew that coming out was going to be a thing, but I didn't know the magnitude of her help. And so eventually, I reached back out that woman became a spiritual mom. And she is the one that introduced me to the, you know, gay movement and told me the stories of the ministries that were once there and no longer available with the ministries that came from

that. And so that was my first seminar. And I call I remember saying, Oh, this is, it's already it's a thing already. However, the Lord was revealing that he's raising up a new generation of ministries, and a new generation of people to obtain the promise. And so that is what he is doing through coming out, so that this new generation that is coming out, will have safe places to go, and will have safe places to heal.

Debora 49:01

Yeah. So how do people connect with you if what they're hearing is something that they're interested in? Coming out of the homosexual lifestyle? How do they connect with you.

Tamika 49:12

So if you want to connect my website is www.comingoutglobal.com. And that is the best way to connect, you can subscribe to our website, you can there's a contact form, also on the website, that will come directly to my email. And if you would like to set up a meeting to talk, I'm willing, I get parents that reach out all the time. Even if there are parents watching this podcast that has a child who is struggling with homosexuality or living a lifestyle of transgenderism or experiencing gender confusion. I have parents that reach out all the time and I'm just here to support and encourage and help navigate you through that process. We can pray together. We have a prayer request form. So even if it's not the individual itself or you have a family member, we will also be able to support you in the process of praying for them. And hopefully, eventually the Lord will, will return their hearts back to him. And when they when he does, we're here to help them take that journey to wholeness.

Debora 50:19

Yeah, this has been such a blessing to hear your story to hear how God interacted and worked in your life to bring healing to you. And now you are able to extend that to others, even in a different community of people that don't have a direct background like yours. And it's such a blessing. As we wrap up, I would love if you would just take the time to pray for our listeners, I'm sure that something that you've said today has brought up some things for people, maybe they aren't really sure about surrendering their hearts to Jesus, and they've experienced some things in their lives. And so I'd like for you to pray if you would, just to bring that healing touch to our listeners today.

Tamika 51:05

So before I pray, I just want to give my scripture that is laid on my heart, as relevant to our story. The worst says that when mother and father forsake us, or abandon us, the Lord will take us in. And so I just want to encourage someone with that scripture, because a lot of the times we run away from God because of how our we haven't been properly father, or mother. And so we have that Trump. And we think that God is the same way that he's going to leave us and he's going to forsake us, and he's also going to abandon us. And so the Lord is saying that he is not that type of Father, He will take care of you, he will receive you. And so for those that are struggling or debating, should I surrender my life? To him? The answer is yes. Because he is going to be a father like no other Father, he is a love that you will never experience anywhere else. So whatever struggle you have, even if it's not with homosexuality, whatever struggle you have, whatever sin you may be bound to, there is an underlying cry for love. And God is love. God is love. And one defining thing that he spoke to me was that everyone is looking for me. Everyone is looking for love, which means everyone is looking for me. But we've, we've found things to fill those voids in our heart to substitute his love for other things. So I just want to encourage someone

I'm gonna pray. Father, God, I thank you so much for this meeting, in this time of meeting and during this podcast, I thank you for the conversation that has come out. I pray that those that are listening would open their hearts to you, that they will open their hearts to receive your love. Your word says that you stand and you knock on the door of our hearts. And whoever opens you will come in so I pray that they will open their hearts, that they will acknowledge who you are, that you are loved, that You are the love that they have been looking for, that they have been crying for, that they have been searching for. You are the father that they never had, you can heal the mother wound that they never had. So I just want to encourage someone to hear, to open their hearts, to allow the Lord to come in to address their root issues. A lot of times, we want to avoid the healing process because it's painful. But that pain needs to be healed so that we can be whole and then we can be free and we can obtain the promises that the Lord says we can have. So I just want to thank you so much Debora, and for this time, I pray for you that God will bless you bless your ministry. Bless the next viewers and listeners of this podcast, asked want to pray all of that in the name of Jesus. Amen

Debora 53:58

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

<<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>>

Debora 54:44

We just heard from Tamika Sanders, who shared her story of how God has been involved in her life and has brought such healing to deep wounds that she didn't even know were there at the time. Jesus truly does transform lives. If you have never surrendered your heart to Him, and asked Jesus to guide and direct your life, you can do that right now.

You may feel that tug of the spirit, with that yearning to know who he is. You can pray this prayer with me and surrender your life 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 for my sins. He was buried and rose from the dead. And I accept this by faith and invite Jesus to be Lord of my life, to reign and rule in my heart. Today, I surrender my life to you. Thank you, Lord, for forgiving me, and saving me. Amen.

Now, if you just prayed that prayer with me for the first time, I would love to know that you made this decision for Christ. Go to my website at TBTWpodcast.com and click the link that says Record your decision for Christ and I will reach back to you and celebrate with you and give you some next steps in your walk with the Lord.

If you or someone you know, would like to be considered as a potential guest on this show, please send me that email at DBarrministries@gmail.com. Or you can connect with me through that same website. TBTWpodcast.com. I would love to consider interviewing you for a future podcast episode.

Now my prayer for you today is that you would allow the Lord Jesus to bring healing to those areas of your heart where you have experienced pain or rejection. He knows what you've been through, because he was there with you throughout your entire life. And He wants you to be whole and to understand how much he loves you.

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

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

Announcer 57:36

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.

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