

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 0:23

Thanks for joining me for episode 42, of Transformed by the Word.

Somebody asked me the other day, how I was going to continue finding guests for the show, whose lives have been transformed by the word of God, and by their encounter with Jesus Christ. Well, that, my friends, is not a problem that I worry about! God has been transforming lives since the beginning of time and when Jesus came to the earth as a man, everywhere he went, and every person that he came into contact with was changed by their experience. Hey, if you don't believe me, read the Gospels, and the book of Acts for yourself. And if you're new to the Bible, those books are in the New Testament and they include Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the book of Acts.

If you've been listening to this podcast for a while, you've been hearing quite a few stories about life change and transformation through the guests that I've had on the show. If this podcast has been a blessing to you, please give it a rating of five stars and leave a review at lovethepodcast.com/TBTWpodcast.

Amber recently left a review and said, "Transformed by the Word is a blessing. I am encouraged by the teaching of Minister Barr and the guests that she has on her podcast. The testimonies of her guests touch my heart and give me hope. Hearing what God has done is doing and will continue to do is what we all need."

Thank you, Amber for leaving that review.

Today, I have another dynamic guest that will share his life story with us. I've invited Reverend Jonathan Queen, the youth pastor at my church, First Baptist Church of Glenarden. I've invited him to share with us his testimony of complete life transformation. His story is amazing, and his passion to change the world is undeniable. Reverend Jonathan Z Queen was the oldest of five children. And he was raised in an impoverished neighborhood in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania by a struggling single mother. Jonathan spent his youth and young adulthood engaged in drug dealing. At the age of 23, he was arrested for the third time, labeled a career criminal, and sentenced to 10 years in federal prison.

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

<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>

Debora 4:07

Hey, Reverend Queen, it is so good to see you. Thank you for being on the show today.

Jonathan

Oh, it is my pleasure, Reverend Deb, I'm so grateful to be here with you.

Debora 4:13

We're in a series of podcast episodes focused on life transformation stories. And I know you have a heart for young people and you serve as the youth pastor of our church. I want to have you go back in time a little bit so we can learn somewhat of your childhood and some of the influencers in your life as you were growing up.

Jonathan 4:35

Hmm, wow. Okay, you can jump right in I love it. Okay. My childhood was so contrary to what most people would believe when they meet me now, I did not grow up as a young person in church or even having any type of relationship with God. Actually, I am the oldest of six children. My mother had me when she was 16. My father was probably 17. And, yeah, I was raised in probably what you would call your typical single parent, extreme poverty. That type of home. I'm talking food stamps and eviction notices, and, you know, don't get me wrong, there was a lot of love. But you know, I had a lot of responsibility.

Unfortunately, my mother was addicted to drugs, even as in my younger years, my father was in and out of prison and on drugs as well. So, my childhood was, it was a, it was a good mix of, you know, being in the streets and, you know, trying to try to find myself trying to, you know, determine who I would be my identity, but I was basing it off of the wrong influences. If you want to say influencers, my answers were the drug dealers in my neighborhood, gang members, things like that. So yeah, my, my upbringing was a little different that don't get me wrong, I love school, I was very smart, very intelligent honor roll kid, even though I would miss two days a week of school, you know, based on having to take care of my younger siblings or not having anything to wear. So, you know, school was one of my safe havens until I got to high school, which is when I ventured into selling drugs, getting high myself. And you know, a lot of things changed. And so I don't know if that's enough of the childhood piece. But yeah, well, we can definitely talk about that a little more when we start speaking about the different transitions of transformation I've experienced.

Debora 6:43

Yeah, so I bet you saw a lot of tragedy in your neighborhood and in your community. Sure, you lost a lot of friends as a young person living that kind of life.

Jonathan 6:54

Yes, yes, definitely. I often tell people that I went to way more funerals and weddings when I was younger, actually, the first wedding I ever went to was my own. So that would tell you a lot in regards to what type of experiences, you know, I had as a, as a teenager, you know, growing up and I grew up in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, not a big city, but it had big city problems. You know, it's the capital of PA and, you know, I found myself really caught up in that, you know, that pursuing that chase of success through quick money. And that became my lifestyle, drugs, women, being the leader of a small gang in my area. So it was it was tough.

Debora 7:41

So tell us about how you got incarcerated the first time and subsequent times what happened there?

Jonathan 7:51

Yeah, well, I mean, mine is pretty much a full example of what Albert Einstein defined as insanity, doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. I was selling drugs, you know, and I thought I was good at it. It's always you know, when you have a little bit of success that you think you're good, and, you know, I was 16-17 years old, making 1000s of dollars. And when I was 18, I was arrested in a small little County. I had drugs on my possession when the cops pulled me over. So I ended up spending a few months in a county jail.

And, you know, again, the insanity pieces I did those few months, I came home and I went right back into the streets, I started selling again, and I even elevated and selling more and becoming a little bit bigger. I'm traveling now, you know, moving weight to different areas. And I got arrested again. And you know, this time it was a little more impactful because I you know, I had my, my young my son who was only two years old living with me at the time I was arrested. And I was 19. He was two, three, and when the cops came in to raid my apartment, you know, five something in the morning, my son and I was sleeping on the floor of the living room, it you know, something had happened where he turned my waterbed off and it got cold so we were sleeping in the front room. And when the cops came in, they actually had their guns trained on, you know, my two-year-old son as he stood up, ready to run away from the noise and I'll never forget just feeling like they're gonna shoot my son and it's my fault.

So, you know, by God's grace, they didn't shoot and, you know, they arrested me and this was my second arrest and it led to me going to state prison. And, you know, I did a year and some change few months in that sense, and, you know, I thought I changed and I was like, I'm gonna come home and do things right. And I was trying, I was working at a, at a trucking company and driving a forklift and wearing the big Dickie suit and the back brace. And you know, and I was doing something happened where my back was against the wall, and I said, I was going back to what I know best. And that led to me getting arrested at the age of 22 being indicted by the government, charged as a federal case. And at the age of 23, I sat in a courtroom and heard a judge say I sent you to 120 months in federal prison.

I was 23 with a ten year sentence. And it was my third conviction. So I was labeled a career criminal. And yeah, at 23. That's what that's when I begin that long stretch of prison time.

Debora 10:50

Wow. So how did you come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ because that was your story, then, but it is so different now.

Jonathan 11:00

But yeah, and it gets worse when I was in prison. I was. I was that guy who argued against anybody who claimed Christianity and I was not just the casual are arguing I was a debater, I have my, my history books, open the Bible, the Quran, I was in there, the library, I worked in education department, I was a tutor. So, I had a lot of time to be around the books. And I would try to convince anybody who said that they love Jesus, that they were wrong. And I did that for a long time, simply because I was so angry, I was angry at my life, I was angry that, you know, I had, in my words, I had been dealt a horrible hand.

And so, you know, as a child, the closest thing I had to having anything to do with Jesus was getting on this bus that would come to our neighborhood and take us to a church that was probably a mile or two

away. And I remember this, this little white guy named Mr. Fox who drove the bus and I would beg my mom for 50 cents, so I could have money to put into the offering, because I knew that that was the respectable thing to do. But I really only went because they had the best cookies and juice ever. Like they had the butter cookies and fruit punch, and I would dip my cookies in a fruit punch. I'm giving up too much information, you

Debora 12:20

pay your 50 cents for those cookies, right?

Jonathan 12:22

Yeah, exactly. That's what the 50 cent and I always can't be, I gotta be honest, sometimes I kept a quarter only put a quarter in, I felt guilty, but I did it. But that was the extent of my, you know, my information in regards to Christianity.

But when I had first went to prison, I had become a Muslim, you know, and it was the thing to do in order for me to feel protected. Most of the guys from my area were Muslims. And yes, and, you know, this is another gang I need to join, I need to make sure I'm okay. So I learned to make us a lot and took the shahada, and, you know, learn some Arabic and you know, but even after that, when I saw the Muslims coming out of Jumar, with the cigarettes in their ears and talking about them money they were going to make on this and how disrespectful they were to the women, I was like, Oh, this is kind of fake, too. So anyway, I just was anti religion.

And I went hard against religion, but I had an amazing encounter with God, like, I'm not one of those people to just say, you know, my transition, or my transformation was based on a logical, you know, accumulation of really starting to realize it No, God spoke to me directly. I was in the segregation unit, the hole of the prison. I don't know if you know about the hole Reverend Barr, but the hole is when you're in prison inside the prison, like you've been still doing things wrong.

I was gambling. You know, I was under investigation for running a gambling operation. And I was in the hole. And I didn't have any time as far as when I would get out. I just was there. So they would only give me a phone call every 30 days. And when I got my first phone call after being without communication with anyone, even the guards wouldn't talk to me because of my investigation. I was you know, just excited that I could finally call someone and again, you know, I didn't have any, any black book or anything. I couldn't remember any number. So I ended up calling my children's mother now.

Let's go back. I had children. When I was 16 years old. And you didn't miss hear me. I said I had children. At 16 years old. My first child was born 10 days after my 16th birthday. My second child was born four months after my 16th birthday. And my third child was born two months before I turned 17. So, you know most time people say well, they can't be to the same woman. Of course not. So, add womanizer into my you know my resume of iniquity - foolishness when I was younger, but I called from the hole, the number that I could remember from afar, which was my, my children's mom and my son and my youngest daughter at the time, and I got to talk to my daughter who was seven years old, and she was getting ready for a recital.

It was December 12, 2001. And she said, Daddy, I get to sing a solo, I get to do Joy to the World. And I said, well sing it to me, let me hear. And then she started singing the song to me and over and over

again. So, I started coaching her. And I'm like, Yeah, that sounds good. You know, slow it down here, and I'm coaching for 10 minutes and my 15-minute call, my daughter sang Joy to the World. And she was singing to someone who had no joy at all. And when we hung up the phone, and it was quick, because she was rushing, and the phone only gives you a couple of seconds before let you know it's hanging up. And she hung up. She didn't say I love you. And that was rare, because that was such she always said, the other thing that stood out is she didn't expect me to be there.

The year before when she had a dance recital. She begged Daddy, please come please. I'm gonna let you out. Please, daddy, I just want you here - tell them we will bring you back. And, you know, I was so my sickness. I just didn't even want to hear I was like, Come on, put your mom on the phone. But this time, I noticed that she didn't even expect me to be there. And that kind of broke me.

We hung up the phone and you know, for the first time in years and I mean years I cried. I cried like a baby. And I didn't cry when my grandmother passed. I didn't cry when my father passed. But I cried in that moment, the only book I had in that cell with me was the Bible that they would let me have since I was in the hole. And I had been reading the Bible. I knew the Bible because I was always trying to argue against it. So, we had a chaplain who would come down all the time. And I would hear him doing the Romans road, the prayer of salvation with the inmates, you know, in the cells next to me. And so I did it. And it was like God was speaking to me while I was crying on the floor with the Bible open and he said "Give me a try." I heard it clear as day. And I said, Okay, I said, I said, If I let you take over, you know, I'm expecting everything to be great.

And to be honest, everything hasn't been great. But I know, I've never felt like I felt before that. And that was the beautiful part of the transformation. December of 2001, Lena, Minister Queen, who is my wife for 15 years now, she came back into my life in February of 2002, and made the commitment to be with me, we got married a year before I got out of prison. And when I came home, we never looked back from you see, you know, how we operate. Now people don't understand why we're so close, and why we operate the way we do, you know, a woman did four and a half years with me, made sure I seen children that she didn't give birth to. And you know, when I came home, if I didn't have that support, I would have been probably one of those statistics where it says you go back then the first two years of being out, so.

So yeah, my faith story is that and that doesn't mean I wanted to preach or be anything else. I just knew I loved God. And I started learning as much I can. I stopped drinking, stopped smoking, stopped cursing, and all of that stuff that, you know, that came with my previous lifestyle and I had no desire for it. I had no desire to impress women, I had no desire to, you know, be who I used to be. I started teaching and, you know, it just so happened when I came home from prison, the first church that my wife and took me to, we fell in love with it. And eventually they nominated me to be a Deacon. I looked around who were they talking to

Debora 18:38

Are you talking to me?

Jonathan

Yeah, exactly. Y'all got the right one? I still, I was still on supervised release, still on probation. And I'll tell y'all want me to be a Deacon. So, I walked as a deacon-elect for almost two years learning everything.

And it was a beautiful process. But I even got my call to ministry, probably a month before my ordination. So, you know, God knew what He was doing. I just be in a way sometimes. But he took all of the leadership skills I had, and being a gang leader, he took all of my persuasiveness from being a drug dealer, and he said, you're going to use this to, to build my kingdom. So that was a long.

Debora 19:14

No, that's amazing. Just, I mean, that night that you cried out to God. How did you feel? I mean, did you feel like he actually heard you in that moment? What was that like? Because I know there's people out there that are on the fence of whether they should even trust God or reach out to him. And I'd like to know what it felt like for you. I mean, you were alone at that time.

Jonathan 19:40

Yes. Yes. It's funny because there's certain things that you can remember and you still get the visceral response like I got chills going through me now just thinking about it and remembering what I felt in that moment. Because I had did so much in my head and regards to you know, trying to know about God and go against him and everything. He knew that it would have to hit me straight in my heart. And the only thing I can say I felt was just as this, this weight lifted off me like I was, I was laying on this cold cement floor crying. And it felt like someone was pressing me down, like holding me down. Like I couldn't get up if I want it to. But when I heard God speak, and I'm being you know, as honest as I can be without people feeling like, you know, all as spooky spiritual stuff, but I heard his voice within me saying, Give me a try. And, um, yeah, it's like, wow, you know, I don't even deserve to hear your voice after all that I've done for you to do that. And yeah, just say no more. I'm gonna do whatever I can.

And yeah, it just felt like everything lifted up, like I felt the weight come off me. I felt a joy. Like, you know, that's why I connected to the Joy to the World song because that was the first time in a long time that I felt true, authentic joy. And it was it was amazing. When people ask me why you don't do this, or why you don't do that. Why you don't look like who you used to be or what you've been going on tonight. God did something that transformed me in a moment, not don't get me wrong, I was still struggling. I still had some temptation and all of that stuff. But I, I now had this conviction that yeah, you know, if, if it ain't about God, you're not going to pull me away. So and then the other day, you know, and this is kind of like a funny moment. I had read in a bible where after the Last Supper, they had went out and sang hymns and you know, and I was like, Okay, I gotta do communion. And, you know, my mind is like, I gotta take my First Communion. And I had some toast the next morning, and some water and I started singing and, you know, I have my own communion with the toast and the water. And yeah, you couldn't tell me nothing. I'm like, I'm in. I'm good.

Debora 22:05

Yeah, getting in the best gang ever.

Jonathan

Exactly. Exactly. He is loving.

Debora

Wow. Wow. What would you say to somebody who's listening today that is not convinced that God can change their life in whatever circumstances they're finding themselves in?

Jonathan 22:25

Um, it depends on you know, you know, now that I do this, as a as a part of my calling, you know, most people would say, you know, why do you? Why do you have such a passion for young people and for you, then I think about the fact that if someone would have told me about Jesus in a way that I would have really connected back when I was 13-14, 15. And if I would have gave my life to God, then so much heartache would have been avoided. And, you know, I probably be so much further than I than I am right now. But I trust God's process that trust His timing, I trust his plan.

But I also believe that my experiences are meant to be shared so that other people don't have to go through the same thing. You do not have to go to prison to learn what I learned in prison, you can learn from my experiences. For someone who is doubting and wondering, let me put it to you like this. I am a youth pastor and associate pastor for probably one of the greatest churches in the world. I am an author of six books. I am a multi award winning mentor, I have graduated with my bachelor's degree, my master of divinity degree and I'm now working on my dissertation from my Doctor of Ministry degree.

And I dropped out of school when I was 16. In the ninth grade, if you want to know what the transformation of God looks like, you look at the fact that people now call me Pastor or Reverend or Mr. Queen, when they used to call me 09138067 Or inmate C-1501. The transformation that comes from God is so amazing and so real, that even if you can't quote scriptures, and you don't know where you heard this, or why it feels the way it feels, you know that God is real. And that's what I invite you to do. Just give him an opportunity to show you how much he loves you. And that's what it really boils down to God's love for me, has made me feel like I was worth being loved. And then that gave me the courage to love others as well.

Debora 24:53

So, as the youth pastor at First Baptist Glenarden, we now have an international ministry and there may be folks listening today that want to know how they can get connected to the ministry. Can you share that with us?

Jonathan 25:06

Sure, sure. Listen, we are on all of the social media platforms. We have followed the same model that the adults use within our church. So, we have unashamed youth ministry, which serves as our church for young people. That's every Friday night. We start back, actually, in probably a week from now in March. March 4, we have our five-year anniversary. So, you can connect by following unashamed DMV on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, all of them unashamed DMV, of course, DMV stands for DC, Maryland and Virginia for those of you who are in other countries and, or even in the States. Not like I'm talking about the Department of Motor Vehicles. No, we represent the DMV over here at First Baptist but we are international. Now. Of course, we have our Bible study, which is rebels youth Bible study that serves of course to support to the Unashamed ministry, and we have so many Discipleship Ministries for our teenagers, we have Star for young girls, we have Gideons army for teen boys, we have the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts. But if you go to the FBCGlenarden.org website and click on children and

youth, you'll find emails and everything. And of course, you can reach out to me directly if you're looking to get connected, we can make that happen.

Debora 26:33

Yeah, that's amazing. Can you tell us a little bit, you've mentioned that you've written several books, could you talk a little bit about what those are all about?

Jonathan 26:42

Sure, sure, of course, just allow me to preface it with the fact that when God, you know, changed my heart and changed my life, he started doing things that just blew my mind. One of them was, you know, bringing Lena back into my life. And of course, she would end up becoming my wife, she also is God's vessel that he used to get me reconnected to two of my children, my two daughters who I hadn't spoken to, for almost three years while I was incarcerated.

But the other thing he did is allow me to go back to something I love, which is teaching, I was teaching, GED, and in the prison and you know, I was one of those people who if you were the teacher, you could just sit back, read a newspaper, and I would go ahead and take care of the class, the men, they respected me, they honored what I was doing, I had a very innovative way of teaching, even if it meant teaching fractions by giving them drug measurements, whatever they were familiar with, and things of that nature.

But I also was, you know, real inspired to bring classes to the men there that they wouldn't have gotten, like I didn't learn about stocks and bonds until a guy who was in prison for, you know, hedge fund, you know, embezzlement, things like that taught a class on stocks and bonds, so I can encourage men to use what they had as gifts and teach others. So I taught a creative writing class and I created a writing class led to my first book that I wrote, while I was in prison, it was called Don't Blame Me, the Convict Chronicles, I challenged my creative writing class to write short stories that, you know, didn't glorify why we came to prison or didn't, you know, add to the stereotype of prison, but talk about the birthday parties that we have in prison, talk about the power of a, of a church service in prison, the choir - talk about what it felt like to be on a visit with your child for the first time. You know, so that book became my introduction into the literary world. It was a great, it had great success, they, you know, The Source magazine, or one of the magazines, reviewed it, and they call me to James Baldwin of my generation, which was a true blessing to me.

And when I was released, my wife and I started our own publishing company. And we, we put the book out ourselves, we were independent. We were shipping it to prisons all over the country. And that led to them inviting me to come in and speak. And when they would ask me, Well, how did you manage to come home and become successful? That led to the second book, which is called are you sane, setting a new example. And that was the book that ended up, you know, being used in therapeutic communities within the prisons and schools have adapted my judge who sentenced me to 10 years, recommends it to other organizations, or at least he did when he was still on the bench, and it became a testimony of self-help a motivational book.

And then of course, you know, my passion is young people. So, I have a series of children's books that we've written. It's called the cool like school family or five foster children were adopted by missionaries who have the last name of cool so they are the cool kids and I've done plenty of schools. families back in

my day, we're focused on teaching young people about what it means to really be cool. And most recently, my wife and I have penned a 30-day devotional called one of them bringing both faith to a broken world. And that's sort of our contribution to everything that's been happening in the past two years, how to still have that both faith and recognize that you are one of them. Jesus said, Forgive them. We are one of them. When he had compassion on them, we are one of them. When it says when two or more gathered, I am with them, we are one of them. So yeah, those are the books that that we've written. And he's passionate.

Debora 30:40

Wow, that's so amazing. I love how God uses what we've gone through. And if we are willing surrendered to Him, we can turn that around and help other people with our life experiences. I love it. How can people find your books? Do you have a website?

Jonathan 30:56

We do. And that's actually I'm connected to our new nonprofit. We have a nonprofit that my wife and I created called new mindz ministries Incorporated, 501 C3. But before we launched, our nonprofit new mindz was our LLC. So you can go to new mindz.com or new mindz.org, click the shop button or store button, you'll see all of the books there as well as some of the other things that we provide as well.

Debora 31:29

Yeah, how is that spelled? Because I know it's not to standard?

Jonathan 31:32

Oh, yeah, yeah,

it's new mindz with a z instead of an S

Debora 31:40

Excellent. And I will definitely put that on my website as well and make a link available to all of our listeners. Is there anything else that you would like to share with our listeners before we wrap up today?

Jonathan 31:55

Um, I guess one of the things that and you just, you know, kind of lead into it when you said how God, you know, uses what we've been through to bring Him glory. You know, I've been out of prison now for over 15 years, celebrated a 15-year anniversary on October 30. And that is when we actually launched the nonprofit on that day, we had a virtual launch party. But God continues to just blow my mind with the fact that what the devil meant for bad when he tried to do to take me out. And I definitely could have been taken out I've been in shootouts in the streets, and, you know, prison riots. I've been in situations where guns had been pointed at me and I could have died in that moment. And yet God spared my life. And when people said, Well, why do you still talk about the prison experience now when you're a pastor, now you're, you know, you're about to be a doctor. And, you know, you have all of this success - beautiful wife, I have six children, and, you know, four of them are married and have seven grandchildren. And they're all beautiful, and we've broken the cycle, that cycle of going to prison and being involved in drugs or being in a system. You know, I'm a cycle breaker, I, you know, I'm grateful that

God is using my life to show my siblings and you know, my family members that you can be successful, even after falling into incarceration.

But I just want someone who's listening to recognize that none of this is possible, none of this success habits for me to books, having the nonprofit being able to mentor people who are coming out of prison, you know, I get to go back into the prisons that once held me in a prison uniform and the khaki uniform, and I get to go in there as a guest that speaks life into the men and, and you know, that is something that only God can do.

And I want you to realize that if you're going through anything, I know, this is a tough time and know that there are certain things that you've been doing a lot of us, we get so caught up because we keep carrying our past in front of us and wondering why we keep tripping over things that shouldn't affect us no more. And that's why we can't let go of what we've been doing where we've been, I call it being in a personal prison. Even if you haven't been behind bars, a physical prison. Many of us have personal prisons, addiction, abuse, you know, all kinds of different things depression, we put ourselves in personal prisons, and I just want you to know that God is standing with his arms wide open saying, Come, come to me, I've got you. And that's what I did. And that is what made the difference. So, I encourage you to consider what could happen by being in a relationship with Jesus Christ. You now have an example. You have one clear choice example of what it looks like when you could admit wholeheartedly to being faithful to the one who is more faithful than anyone you could ever imagine. That's an Amen You got a child Let me start preaching - I'm not gonna preach, I'm not gonna.

Debora 35:03

That's what happens when you take the risk of inviting preachers to a podcast.

Jonathan 35:09

That could be something there - preaching on a podcast. Well, this is great work that you're doing. I'm so proud of you. This is super exciting. Most people don't know, we've known each other for years now, and I've watched you, you know, do the same thing, you know, just basically taken with God, you know, for you to have as your calling and to help others. So I think is a great extension of that.

Debora 35:35

Yeah. Thank you. Would you pray for our listeners before I let you go?

Jonathan 35:40

Sure no problem. Heavenly Father, we love you. We honor you, we adore you. We are so grateful, Lord, that even though we are not worthy, yet, you still love us. You love us in ways that we can't even imagine. So Lord, I'm praying that whoever is listening right now for that person who has been wrestling, who has been struggling, who still has the enemy whispering in their ear, Lord, break those chains or allow whatever is holding them back. To be removed. Lord, I come against the spirit of inadequacy and come against the spirit of depression, and anger and hurt and bitterness. Lord, I just ask that you do what only you can do, Lord, and that is have your way in the hearts of those who need to know you as their Lord and Savior. We thank you for this time. And we just pray that someone be transformed simply by hearing what you have done for us. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

Debora 36:44

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

<<MUSIC INTERLUDE>>

Debora 37:31

We just heard from Reverend Jonathan Queen, about how God completely changed his life. There he was in the depth of his pain, and he heard the voice of God. And he responded, surrendering his heart to Jesus. Everything about his life changed. And that can be your story as well.

Jesus really does transform lives, and he sets the captives free. We are all captive. We are all in prison because of our sin. And Jesus is the only one who can free us from sin, wiping our slate completely clean and giving us access to the Father.

Jesus died on the cross, taking the punishment that we deserve. He was buried and rose from the dead to cleanse us of our sin and give us everlasting life. Jesus invites you to accept this free gift of salvation right now. If you sense that God is calling you to surrender your life to him. Don't delay. Respond to his calling today. You can pray a prayer of surrender and faith, something like this.

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

Now, if you just prayed that prayer, and you're declaring that you'll turn away from your sins and follow Jesus, He will transform your life from the inside out. And I would love to know about your decision. To be here to support you in some next steps of your Christian faith. Please visit my website at TBTWpodcast.com. Click on the link and let me know about your decision so that I can reach out to you.

My prayer for you today is that you would trust Jesus. He really wants to transform your life to give you that joy deep down on the inside, that does not depend on outward circumstances. Jesus truly is the only one who can transform you from the inside out. The most important decision that you can make this side of eternity is your decision about Jesus.

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

Announcer 41:02

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.