

Personal Timeline

Childhood

- Youngest out of 2 children.
- Rejected by my father early on as a child; also experienced lack of love.
- Abused physically and emotionally by my father. This was a significant wound and loss that I experienced in my life. Loss of safety and domestic violence experienced as a child.
- Did not feel loved, safe and felt great sense of rejection.
- Found pleasure in things of the world.
- Experienced anxiety and depression as a child.
- Even though was not saved as a child had a close connection with God.
- Went to Catholic Church as a child.
- Was closer to extended family (Aunts and Uncles).

Teenager

- Physically and verbally abused as a child.
- Bullied and ridiculed in junior high school and high school.
- Did not have many close friends as a child or teenager.
- Isolated myself in room and poured myself into my schoolwork.
- Found love in performance, things and people not from God.
- Sought Love and acceptance from the people that were hurting me.
- Led to engaging in relationships that were dysfunctional.

- Had 1 significant relationship with girl in Senior year of high school, broke up end of Senior year.
- Experienced anxiety and depression as a teenager.

College

- Felt lack of direction, security and Love during my college years.
- Changed major a couple times in college.
- Felt like I always had to seek the approval of my father with everything I did including what I majored in at college, what jobs I had, my friends and relationships with girls, and how I was dressed.
- Did not actively pursue relationships with girls in college. Afraid of rejection and lack of Love.
- During Senior year of college had second love. Broke up and felt loss.
- Experienced anxiety and depression in college.

Adult

- Found approval and love through my job and material things.
- Began dating 3rd Love, got engaged and married.
- Suffered physical and verbal abuse at the hand of my ex-wife for a period of 15 years resulting in me not feeling loved, a feeling of rejection and fearing for my safety, much like what I experienced with my dad.
- This was the result of a pattern of acceptance that resulted in me engaging in relationships that were dysfunctional like the one with my ex-wife.
- Buried myself in my work and school, got lots of acceptance and recognition.

- Always trying to seek the approval of those who hurt me and abused me.
- Denial of the problem resulting in internalizing pain of loss due to domestic violence suffered and contributed to anxiety and depression.
- The anxiety disorder caused my life to be riddled with worry and fear and left me feeling disabled and unable to have a normal life.
- Got saved at Living Word Fellowship in Wellsboro, PA. Had my own Damascus Road experience in my driveway and in the midst of loss of love, job, and financial issues experienced the overwhelming presence of God. He told me that if I trusted in him, he would make me a pastor in the church.
- At the church for 10 years. Got engaged in ministry work including children and teens ministry, small group bible study, prayer and healing ministry, and worship team.
- Went back to CT for new job.
- In my 40s, I experienced loss of love and intimacy because of separation and divorce.
- After much prayer, counseling with the church, the church intervening with my spouse about the verbal and physical abuse and abandonment that I experienced at her hand , I made the decision to separate and divorce my spouse.
- The separation and divorce from my spouse left me feeling isolated, alone, not loved, and left me with the feeling that I would never meet a Godly woman that I could experience love and intimacy with.
- In denial of the loss of love and intimacy as a result of the separation and divorce and ashamed to tell anyone about the loss of love that I experienced.

After Divorce

- From there got a new job in New Jersey and poured myself into the job.

- Attended church at Stonecrest Community Church in Warren, NJ.
- Got involved in children's ministry and raising up Godly next generation.
- The Senior Pastor encouraged me to go to seminary at ATS to get my Masters of Divinity and become a pastor.
- I started to go to seminary in Spring 2019.
- Experienced more significant loss. Went out with my 4th love and brokeup, experienced loss. Lost job and experienced financial loss. Experienced season of deep dark depression and anxiety. Was holding onto a lot of unforgiveness, anger and bitterness.
- After forgiving those who had hurt me and abused me and through prayer, worship, and reading and meditating on God's word, the depression and anxiety lifted.
- God refined my calling to not only be a pastor but also minister and help those who have anxiety and depression and addictions.
- I took 6 months off from ministry and seminary to take care of personal mental health issues.
- I returned to new job in Summer 2020; returned to seminary in 2020.
- Returned to ministry and ministered to and helped those who experienced homelessness, drug addiction, and mental illness.
- Also helped out with children's ministry in the church.
- Have struggled with being a people pleaser in the past and finding love in people, places and things rather than finding love from God.

In the midst of COVID 2020-2020

- Did not feel anxious or depressed.

- Able to help those with anxiety and depression through practicing mindfulness with scripture, prayer and worship.
- Grew closer to God and trusted God more.

Reflections

Patterns of seeking the approval of those who try to hurt me

Based on reflecting on the personal timeline, as a child, teenager, and adult I was seeking the approval and Love from those who tried to hurt me and abuse me. While I agree that we need to forgive those who hurt us, I also understand that I do not have to gain the approval of those who try to hurt me or abuse me. These experiences have taught me the importance of setting boundaries. If someone is trying to be verbally or physically abusive, it is important to recognize it, and then take action. This includes removing myself from the situation and choosing not to be around people who are unsafe and hurtful. I have learned to not only be around people who are positive and Godly.

Pattern of seeking approval from earthly people, places and things

In the past, I have tried to find love from people, places and things. Our love comes from God. Scripture says that “We Love because he first loved us”. If somebody does not love me, oh well Jesus loves me and that’s good enough for me.

Pattern of anxiety and depression

In the past, I have experienced anxiety and depression. This is rooted in my fear of rejection and failure and not being loved. First, as a result of not confronting my fear and anxiety, I missed out on God’s blessings including possible ministry opportunities. Second, God wants us to have

peace (John 14:27). We need to look at Jesus to have the perfect peace. Third, God wants us to experience his perfect love (John 4:18). The perfect love of God is more than adequate no matter what circumstances we are faced with.

How God Has Used Me to Minister to Others

With my experience with severe anxiety and depression, God refined my calling to not only be a pastor of the church but also minister and help those who have anxiety and depression and addictions. At the Bowery Mission, I have used spiritual techniques such as prayer, reading and meditating on God's word, and worship and teaching and preaching to minister to the men's population in recovery. Through leveraging these spiritual techniques, I have seen a transformation take place with the men in recovery. Men that were previously hateful were now loving and men that were unforgiving were forgiving and men that were prideful were now humble.

God has also used me with an adult men's small group bible study with an e-group at Elevation Church to minister to men from all walks of life through prayer, teaching/preaching God's word and worship. Through finding common ground with the men, I have been able to share the gospel. I have been able to understand their weighty issues and felt needs, communicate the word of God and apply the word to solving the weighty issues they are faced with.