

Personal Timeline- Hervé Talom

Childhood-

- 2nd child out of 8, second male out of five males.
- My parents frequently visited my room at night twice and woke me for bathroom time.
- At the age of 4, I was separated from my parent and sent to live with my aunt (my mother's younger sister). She lived with my parents when I was born; she cared for me because my parents were both working. When my aunt got married, she did not want to be cut off from me and requested that I live with her and her husband. It was a painful separation.
- I enjoyed sharing my meal at school, which quickly opened doors for relationships and protection from bullies and beat-ups.
- Peacemaker and mediator: Always seeking ways to de-escalate tension.
- I quickly became aware of life as a gift, not a privilege, when my best friend died at 8; we were classmates in the same school.
- I never enjoyed scary movies or scary places. I was afraid of the cemetery or attending funeral services.
- I developed an interest in engineering; I enjoyed doing handcrafted toy cars with recycled electric cables and used items.
- I developed an interest and curiosity in knowing how things are made. I pushed my interest a little bit too far; one day, I took the FM/ AM radio and unscrewed it to see the people talking inside. Upon returning home with her husband, my aunt was disappointed, and I could not assemble the radio together, which began my first project.
- I was afraid of failure because my aunt and husband never celebrated my achievement; they always compared my result with our neighbor's children and said, "We need more"
- I moved in to live with my aunt and husband after their marriage; we moved twice until they finally bought their home.

Teens-

- One remarkable thing that occurred in my teenage is salvation and persecution from my family.
- Before my salvation, I had friends about to initiate me into a secret cult. But God had a different plan, and that same week a student gave an invitation for a student Christian fellowship, and during the meeting, I encountered God and started a new journey.

College-

- In 2002, I was admitted into the Rivers State University of Science & Technology,
- It was a challenging season; I could not engage in a sexual relationship, no nightclub, and my old friend had girls' friend and was involved in all the fun stuff. I was miserable, but I look back; most of them died of STDs and dropped out of school. But God graciously singled me out in that community and trained me through the wilderness. Today I am grateful to be the voice and a leader among the same people

Career-

- I studied marine engineering. While studying marine engineering, I also studied cross-cultural languages in the Summer at the University of Rouen in France. After graduation, I worked in the engineering field as a marine engineer, Superintendent, Quality Control, supervisor, Project Manager, Sales Representative, and Service Technician.
- The nature of my job exposed me to connect with people from various backgrounds and cultures.
- My first job was from a friend's recommendation, placing me in the upper echelon of my new organization. My work ethic opens more doors in the engineering firm
- The marine engineer spent time either at sea or harbor getting ready for the next voyage, and the nature of the job exposed me to homosexual proposals from colleagues and free sex.
- I made up my mind not to compromise my faith and beliefs, but my colleague that embraces same-sex relationships appears to be doing well financially.
- In 2007, I had a divine encounter where God revealed my calling into ministry and leadership in an open vision. In 2010 I met my wife, Felicia Romeo, and got married on May 8th, 2011; she was a teacher and the founder of Cinder International School (Daycare, nursery, and primary school).

On December 18th, 2011, my wife went to be with the Lord. She was diagnosed with an advanced stage of blood cancer; she was four months pregnant with our first children, a set of triplets, at her death. After my wife's death, I took an extended vacation from work and went to Nigeria to serve as a missionary among the Muslim communities for three years. I had the opportunity to serve with the Church of God Mission of late (Archbishop Benson Idahosa) with the headquarter in Benin City, Nigeria. I also served with Dr. Isaac & Rev. Gloria, former Elim Bible Institute & College students, and Rev. Paul Johansson, former President of Elim Bible Institute & College. Their passion for missiology gave me a depth insight into missions, ministry, leadership, and community development program. God brought me in contact with these people at the right time, and the meeting ignited my thirst to acquire more knowledge and practical training to advance the frontiers of world missions, leadership, and ministry.

Reflections

· Grew up in a family that worshiped dead skull (a year after the dead body has been buried, there is a traditional ritual where the family gather around the tomb and exhume the skull and keep it in the designated room called " the skull room" and the access to the room is prohibited to the family only to the family priest for ritual purposes.

My salvation brought separation and rejection from my family. I was rejected and asked to reject Jesus if I was to hold my identity with my family, but I told my family I would instead identify with Jesus.

Working best without supervision

Working in engineering allowed me to lead teams and projects; I tapped into my gained experience in engineering to lead in ministry.

How God has used you to minister to others

Authenticity/ Relationships.

People can open and share deeper issues at our first meetings.

I struggle to keep relationships; I am excellent at starting relationships but need more zeal to maintain and cultivate them. As I get involved more in leadership. I am working on being more proactive in developing meaningful relationships.

The transition from engineering to ministry

Once I had confirmation from different religious leaders through prophetic prayer and word of wisdom without prior communication with them about my encounter and calling into ministry and leadership. I knew it was time to inform my family about the decision of going to study theology and missiology. I told my family about my intention not to return to a full-time career as a marine engineer. My family did not welcome the news. According to my family, it was disgraceful and degrading for their second son to leave an excellent, rewarding job with benefits. I have four brothers, and we all studied engineering. My older brother (Pascal) is a telecom engineer with Alcatel France) He opposed my idea of going into ministry, and my decision created a gap in my relationship with him and my family. I am in constant battle with my family; it became more challenging as a second child and second son. From inception, my older brother assumed the authority figure in the family, and whatever he said must be considered before other opinions.

As I look back, every season has molded my soul and perspective. I cannot help but believe that it was my purpose in life. My wife's and unborn children's deaths came at crucial times in my life. Her death made me see the world from a different perspective. It was like going on a journey without GPS, left in the wilderness. I had to face my fears. This experience made me look deep within myself and move closer to God. I have found that every time someone who is very important to me passes away, I find myself in the wilderness not only to connect with God but also to find more of my identity and my purpose. My life has not been easy; Romans 8:28 says, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."* God has called me to reach people who are broken, wounded, despised, and who feel unloved. If I was not broken and wounded, I could not reach them with the Word of God. God has ordained me to walk through the midst of the people by relating through their culture and the universal commonality we share (e.g., struggles, honor, respect, traditions, births, and deaths).

Moved to the USA in January 2017

I spent five years studying engineering, and once my calling into ministry was confirmed, I began to look for a bible school where I could be trained for full-time ministry. After my divine encounter with God in 2007, I received specific instructions about my calling. After spending five years studying marine engineering, I did not want to dive into ministry and leadership after my divine encounter with God without adequate training. In 2017, I relocated to the USA for a theology program in Applied Science in Biblical and Theological Studies. I was admitted into Elim Bible Institute and College, Lima, New York. www.elim.edu. Another factor that shaped my worldview is my transition from a corporate organization into a Christian one. Moving to America was not a smooth transition. My cross-cultural experience paved the way for ministry at the global level. After my program in Applied Science in

Biblical and Theological, I had a job offer with the New York School of Urban Ministry in Queens, NY. My job revolves around training and Leading short-term missionaries for Christian leader / Ministry teams in diverse - ***Cross-cultural urban Ministry Outreach throughout New York City.***

- ***Provides urban ministry teaching and training*** about cross-cultural ministry:

- Training, preparing & leading teams for "hands-on" inner-city. Ministry networking with NYC multi-cultural inner-city Pastors, Churches, and church leaders for urban ministry outreaches to reach hurting humanity.

- ***Hands-on***" inner-city ministry, field ministry, and outreaches include but are not limited to ministry at inner-city churches, soup kitchens, city shelters, food pantries, rehab programs, and late-night ministry for the homeless.

- Facilitating emergency disaster resources with short-term missionaries, students & adult teams to help empower and reclaim hurting humanity in the urban context through "hands-on" training.

- Serving in other Food Service Outreach Urban Ministry-related assignments with short-term missionaries and students throughout NYC.

I wanted to enhance my knowledge of Theology and Urban Ministry. Another significant fact that compelled me to enroll is the school's vision and mission "***preparing men and women to 'take the whole Gospel to the whole world.'***" Alliance Theological Seminary's vision and mission statements aligned with my objective and mission. Studying in the USA gives an edge because America is in high esteem across the globe. And the education system is keen to provide balance

training for students on the national and global levels. Alliance Theological Seminary will provide the proper tools and the serene environment to encumber and nurture the seed that God has placed in me in this generation.

I worked as a kid's pastor, youth pastor, associate pastor, and missionary among the Muslim communities in West Africa. I have reviewed several Christian schools' mission statements and visions. Praise God. I see earning the MDiv Degree at Alliance Theological Seminary as the optimal springboard for enhancing the contribution that I will make to African and French-speaking countries across the globe. I see my primary contribution to the church as being that of a shepherd and transformational leader.

Looking at where I am and where I am standing now, I realize that the Lord took the time to prepare me for a Christian transformational leader's mission—even before I decided to do it. "By the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15: 10).

I come from a family that practices Voodoo and ancestral worship. The calling into full-time ministry has created a relational gap with my family. I vow to the Lord to become an agent of transformation and reconciliation for my family, community, and generation.

My international work has helped prepare me to excel in Urban ministry in the most diverse city in the world. I look forward to bonding with many other Christian international students of Alliance Theological Seminary. By the grace of God, I have been able to explore many different spheres of urban ministry with an advanced understanding of theology in religious organizations. These experiences have fueled my thirst to proclaim His word to His people (The Great Commission). The Lord takes pleasure in aligning certain events in my life for His glory (The death of my wife, changing my career from engineering to theology, and relocating to the USA). It is a privilege to do urban ministry in New York and study in the same state.

I am so grateful, and I pray that God inspires and empowers me to be an agent of change and reconciliation for my generation and the Great Commission's fulfillment.

As it is written, "***And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?***" (Rom 10: 14b -15a).