

Personal Testimony

by Raul Ries

Pastor Raul Ries shares his personal testimony of growing up in a violent home, his rebellion as a teenager, and his spiritual awakening and conversion after joining the military.

Duration: 43:35

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 43:25, Matthew 11:28-30, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philippians 4:6-7, James 5:16, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Testimony", "Redemption", "Grace Of God"

Description

Raul Ries shares his personal testimony, reflecting on his tumultuous upbringing marked by violence and abuse from his father, and the transformative power of God's grace in his life. He recounts the struggles of his youth, including his time in Vietnam, where he faced life-threatening situations and deep emotional turmoil. Ultimately, it was through a moment of desperation and a divine encounter that he found redemption and a new purpose, leading to a profound change in his life and relationships. Raul emphasizes the importance of prayer and the unconditional love of his wife, Sharon, which played a crucial role in his journey to faith. He encourages others to seek God's mercy and healing, regardless of their past.

Transcript

The following is a taped interview with Pastor Raul Ruiz of Calvary Chapel, Golden Spring, and Associate Pastor John Fraterola. Good morning, Raul. Good morning, John.

How are you? Good. How are you doing? Great. Just to let our listening audience know that today is Thursday morning, November 10, 1994, and we're here in your study, and it's raining outside.

I guess an appropriate day to reflect on the past, huh? Yep. You were telling me last night after the study, our Wednesday night study, you went to visit with your dad, who's been ill all the last six months or so. Yes.

Why don't you just tell us a little bit about that, and we'll get into it. Well, last night we took and gave him communion, because we feel that his days are numbered. And I thought of the scripture, John, in the book of Isaiah, chapter 43, verse 25.

It says, I, even I am he who blots out the transgressions for my own sake, and I will remember your sins, and I will not remember your sins anymore. Put me in remembrance, and let us contend together. State

your case, if you may be acquitted.

Since the first father sinned, and you have mediators have transgressed against me, therefore I will profane the princesses or the leaders of the sanctuary, and I will give Jacob the recourse of Israel to reproach him. And I thought how the grace and the mercies of God are so tremendous. And going back and reflecting now in my past, I was sitting there with my father last night.

And as he was communicating to me things from the past, because he's in and out, you know. And sometimes he says things that make you kind of laugh, you know. Because he talks about his mom, he talks about his dad, he talks about people that he knew in the past.

And then all of a sudden he'll be clear-minded and he'll talk to you, you know. And it's kind of weird when you see somebody that was so strong. And then when the time is coming to the end, you know, the peace and the love and the mercies that God has given to them, but also the reflection that they have in their own life.

And so it makes me think and it made me thought about my own life, what I've been through. Now, you know, in your earlier life, you and your dad butted heads quite a bit there. Oh yeah, a lot of stuff.

But now in seeing him, it's pretty amazing how the love of Christ has come in and removed all of that. Yeah, when you look at what God has done in the last 15 years. It's like giving you a second life with your dad.

Right, it's like a second life. And I mean, you know, a man that was angry and violent and abusive. And not to see such tenderness, you know, and such love and such mercy that he has.

It just totally amazes me that I know for a fact that it was the power of God in his life that changed him. Well, I mean, his own life as a young boy was pretty rough to begin with. Why don't you tell us a little bit about your family's background? Yeah, one of the things that I want to share is that I was born in Mexico City on August the 30th, 1947.

And the way it came about is that my parents had met in Mexico City. Just to give you a little bit of background, my father, my grandfather, was born in Hamburg, Germany. So that was your dad's dad, right? That was my dad's dad.

At this particular time, he was visiting in New Orleans, where my grandmother, which is from Mexico City, was singing opera. And they met. And I guess they fell in love with each other.

And then they went to Mexico City and they got married. And my grandfather lived there for about 10 years. Because, you know, through that, my father came.

Christian Reese Sr. That was his name. They named him Christian. And my grandfather was Protestant.

And my grandmother was Catholic. And so what happened is they got married. And then on getting married, my grandfather was German.

And during the Nazi conflict, he actually made artificial arms and artificial legs. The Germans came. And they were after him.

And my grandmother said they came and they took him away. And he never was ever seen again. So this is when, maybe like the late 30s or so? Late 30s, yeah.

And my father was about 10 years old, 9 years old, something like that. And my father never ever saw his father again. And my grandmother received some letters, but that was it, you know.

And we don't have those letters. At least we had them. So you have no brothers or sisters on your dad's family? We think he has family.

We know we have family in Germany, in Hamburg, because we've done a little retracing back. But we don't know how many brothers and sisters he had. You know, he was a pretty quiet person, you know.

But it's amazing to see how, you know, here's my grandfather and my grandmother. And they meet and they get married. And then my father was born to this.

And then he grows up as, you know, with a single parent, you know, my grandmother. And he begins to, you know, to smoke and to drink at the age of 11 and 12 and 13. And follows up a life that is not really good, you know what I'm saying.

And my grandmother was a really hard-working woman to keep the home and to keep my dad in line. But, you know, my dad is his own boss because he has no brothers, no sisters, you know. And so he grew up in a very violent life and drinking and becoming very abusive.

But the way it happened is my mother was on vacation. My mother was born in New York City in Long Island. And her parents, my grandfather and my grandmother, had met in New York.

They were both from Spain, from Galicia. And they had met there and they got married. And they had my mother and my Aunt Connie, you know, which was her sister.

And through that, my mother was visiting Mexico City. And on the way to Mexico City on vacation, she met my dad. And probably my dad was so handsome and good-looking, you know.

And they got together. Oh, he was. I saw the pictures.

Yeah, he was. And they got married and she never went back to New York, you know. They stayed in Mexico.

And during that time, my grandmother and my grandfather moved from New York to Mexico. And my father was a hotel owner. He had hotels all over Mexico, you know.

He was a business guy. I remember staying in hotels all the time. But they had a lot of money, you know, on that side.

And at the same time, you know, all this was going on. And particularly when they had me and I was born, then my brother also was born, you know. My brother, Xavier, and he's like two years behind me.

He was probably born, I think, in 1950. In 1950, he was born. And what was really neat about that is that as we started growing up, we began to see.

I remember, I don't know if I was four or five, but I remember ever since I was a little kid, the yelling and the screaming and the verbal abuse and the fighting that would go in the home as my father would come

drunk home every night. And that was really, really heavy because, you know, when you're a little kid, you expect to have fun and you expect to have really a better life, you know. But I remember my mother yelling and screaming and weeping and crying and suffering tremendously as my father would come home.

And sometimes he would come home with shirts full of blood where he had been fighting, you know, on the streets and stuff. And my father was really a tough guy, you know. And so what happened is that my father began, as his eldest son, to take me everywhere he'd go.

He liked to show me off, you know. And he took me everywhere. And I remember going to these nightclubs.

And while he was inside drinking, I was outside. He would leave me, you know, like in a newspaper stand with the people. And he'd give me money and he'd bring me my food and stuff.

And I would be out there like three, four, five, six hours. And how old were you at this time? I was, I think, about five or six. Wow.

Real small. I remember that, you know. And I used to sit there just kind of wondering, man, when are we going to go home, you know, see.

And he would be inside having a ball. And I was outside totally bored, you know. And then we would get on his little scooter that he had.

And we'd ride home. And we'd be wheeling back and forth on the road, you know. And lucky that we didn't, you know, do it.

We fell down. We fell one time, you know. And, I mean, nothing happened to us.

But, I mean, you know, I mean, now I can see why, you know what I'm saying. But, I mean, this whole thing. Then when we could get home, man, we'd get in a huge fight with my mom and stuff.

And then we'd pass out, you know. And then the next morning, it started all over again, you know. And this, this went on.

Now, would he be apologetic in the morning? Would he remember any of this? Some he remembers, some he says he didn't remember, you know what I'm saying. But we could see, we can see that, you know, all these things were leading to a more violent life, you know. At that particular time, also, a sister was born, my sister Sonia.

And then a little brother that died on Christmas Eve. You know, he was like three months old when he died. We think not as quick that, you know, he died.

But it was amazing because as continuing on in my life there, growing up in Mexico City the first 10 years, it was just totally hell on earth because my father was just so violent. It was kind of like a repetitious life, you know what I'm saying. Everything he did was drinking, verbal and physical abuse.

And sometimes, you know, he would punish me and he would hit me and stuff, real heavy. And I remember that my whole life was, when I would grow up, I would kill my dad. That was always in my heart.

Just hatred in your heart. Hatred in my heart, man. And I remember in 1957, after all the 10 years of abuse, that my mother finally had it.

And so what we did is she went ahead and my grandfather and my grandmother had sold their hotels. And they had moved to California and I moved to Los Angeles with my Aunt Connie. And they had written and told my mom that, hey, why don't you leave your husband and why don't you come and live with us in Los Angeles.

My mom never told us anything but told us that we were going on a trip. And so that night when my dad came home and did his thing again and he passed out, my mother woke us up about 5 in the morning and we got dressed. My brother Xavier, my sister Sonia and myself.

And I took a taxi and we headed up to the airport. You didn't know where you were going? Nope, until we got to the national airport in Mexico City. And then we asked my mom, where are we going? She said, we're going on a trip, don't worry, we're going on a trip.

She still didn't want to tell us. And we got on this plane in 1957 and we flew from Mexico City to Tijuana where the plane landed. And there my grandmother and my grandfather at my end were waiting for us and my uncle at that time, Manuel, was waiting for us.

And that's your mom's family, right? That's my mom's side, yeah. They were there to pick us up and to bring us across the border and to go to Los Angeles because my mom was an American citizen, you know. And so we got to Los Angeles up on 3rd Street and Huntley Drive, I'll never forget that.

And we lived so beautifully there with my grandmother and my grandfather, you know. It's a whole new life where there was no screaming, no yelling. I mean, there was a real peace, you know, where now I was enjoying life.

And I thought, man, this is so great, you know. We're in America, man. Totally a different land.

And now we're going to have a beautiful life. But then as time went on, my father began to write to my mother that he wanted to change and that it was changing. And that he wanted a second opportunity, that he wanted to come and live in the United States with her.

And so my mom, because my mom loved my dad, believed him and allowed him to come. You didn't trust him, though, huh? No, I didn't trust him. I begged my mom not to let him come, you know.

I begged my mom, please, mom, don't bring him. We don't want him. We hate him.

We don't want to be with him. But my mom went ahead and, you know, being merciful, allowed my dad to come to the United States. And when he came, everything was okay for a while.

But then... Well, let me ask you, when your dad first came to the United States after that time, what were the thoughts and the feelings in your heart when you saw him again after being apart from him? I was mad. I hated it. I hated it because I knew that sooner or later something was going to happen, you think? Because if he did, he started buying a six-pack, and he started drinking, and then he started buying more, and then he started abusing, and then verbal.

And here it is again, you know, this whole thing all over again. And so after living in Los Angeles, we decided in 19... Let's see, 1959, we decided to move to Montebello. And we bought a home.

Actually, no, we didn't. We rented a home from a friend of my dad's that he met here. And we rented this home in Montebello, and I went to Greenwood Unified, you know, the grammar school in Montebello.

I went fifth grade, sixth grade. And then I went to Montebello Junior High School, seventh and eighth grade. And, you know, I was a very athletic person.

I was playing baseball. That was my favorite sport. I was playing Little League, and I was playing, you know, Pony League.

And at the same time, while I was doing all this and going out for sports in Montebello Junior High School and becoming a letterman and getting lettered, you know, in baseball and stuff and track and all these football and everything, I was, you know, trying to do the right things, but I had all this hatred in my heart. Now, as a young boy in grammar school and junior high, you weren't violent then at that point, huh? As far as fighting, as you did when you got older? Right. It was beginning.

These feelings now were coming about. But it wasn't like that because it wasn't until I came to Ballant Park High School in 1962. We made the move, and we bought a house here in Ballant Park.

And it was a brand-new house that we bought. My father was so proud, you know, and so happy because he worked so hard. And my mom was working, too, for the Union Bank.

And so with that both incomes, we were able to buy a brand-new house. And at the same time, going and now joining Ballant Park High School, I began to meet, you know, guys like Louis Vega, Dale Goddard, David Shorter, B.L.D. Graffin-Reed. I mean, so many.

Roger Pontabinski, Albert Hernandez, Champ Boxer, Paul Smith, Mike Atkinson. All these guys that became my friends, you know. And they were all, you know, a lot of guys were surfers, you know.

We didn't hang out with gangs. As a matter of fact, we beat up the gang members, you know. At that time, there were not many, you know.

But we actually ruled, you know. And it was kind of a scene in the 60s where we were going down to San Clemente, Doheny, Huntington Beach, and we would be into the surf scene. But we loved to fight.

We just loved to fight, man. And what happened, by beginning that lifestyle of fighting, I began to find a release in my life. You know, what was going on in my home, the anger, the hate, and all these things.

On the weekdays and on the weekends, I would totally release it on somebody else. And that was real heavy. Because then, you know, I got a reputation, you know.

The police department in Ballpark began to know me as a troublemaker. Even though I was athletic and I was in trouble in school all the time, I was on the vice principal and principals every day, you know, for not behaving. And getting fights in the hallways, and at brunch and at lunch, you know, and after school.

And we would go to other schools in Tucson, everybody. By that time, we didn't use guns. Carried on, you know, from the ninth grade to our fifth, and we used bats.

You know, I was full of rage. I was a good old fight, you know what I'm saying? But it just carried on. I could control myself.

But I was out of control until the 11th as well. By the time I became a senior, man, I was full of rage. Dale Goddard could tell you this.

Baldy Graff had anger, you know what I'm saying? No longer I could control those three guys, and they would literally have to pull me off. So it fed on itself. Oh, yeah.

I mean, Dale, I would go wacko. That's one day, I'll tell you this. All my friends know me.

When I used to get in a fight, you know, it would become totally crazy, you know? After guys, you know, because I'd just lose completely. It took a little bit to feel pretty good, you know? I couldn't drink. Because if I drank, man, I really would lose it.

I didn't like it. But I saw my fight, and I didn't like drinking. But I drank just a little bit.

You know, it separated me from those things. I smoked maybe marijuana a couple of times, and I could take drugs. Your brain would actually get into drugs heavily, man.

And that just totally, you know, stuck with me. Because my father had told me years and years past that if my friends, you know, shoot up, I was totally destroyed. Mm-hmm.

And that kept me from drinking LSD. Everything. The good one, my dad told me, and I listened to that.

And so I watched my friends. You were up to your senior year, and that's where you... I watched them take Reds and Whites, and I watched them take LSD. We were into sex.

We were into that, and it destroyed their lives totally. So now, we're up to your senior year. 1966, the year that we were rich.

Pretty arguably. Right. They were into drugs.

We were into this from another school, and she took time off. And I remember in 1966, man, we went down there, and we were going to get to graduate already. Uh-huh.

I had a girlfriend before. And so what happened is, you know, and so I went to this party, man. I got all my friends, and the police came to follow.

We got into this big rumble, man, and I almost killed this guy. He had been put into the hospital. After we destroyed it, and I waited for my day, and they had press charges because the guy was in intensive care.

He took court, and the judge, and so they pressed charges against me. I had two choices. I could go to jail in court, and right before I graduated, I said, well, I'll tell the military.

They told me that I was either going to have to go, you know, I would not only get disciplined, but I would have to go into the military. Now, Vietnam was... I knew that if I go to the military, I would never... You know what? Every one of our friends did what I would like to do. Well, now... We all wanted to go to Vietnam.

You had no worry about that? No. You know what? You know, and we felt that we had to fight for our country. We wanted to go to Vietnam, believe it or not.

We were kids in school, you know what I'm saying? I don't see... You know what? We were Americans, man. You know, and we grew up in the cities, and we were really... This is what we were taught when we were kids in school. We still do, you know what I'm saying? This is the land today.

But if you talk to anybody that actually grew up in the city, I would go and take them. We really believed in taking care of our country. I still do this whole thing, you know, to get ready for that.

And so when I told the judge that I would go at that particular time on graduation night, he did that. They gave me this whole thing in high school. And so I graduated.

And at that particular time, I kind of liked it. I had, you know, known this girl Sharon in high school. Right, right.

Trying to pick up on her. Somebody else, she had another boyfriend, you know. And we sat there, and we, you know, kind of meet, you know.

Cute, you can say. Right, right. You know, because we kind of feel a little related.

At the senior party, I picked up on her, and it was kind of neat. You know, I kind of forgot about her, and I smooched, you know. And I mean, you know, it was kind of neat.

1966, man. My wedding. But then after the senior party, you know, I gave him my test.

July the 4th, 1966. They put me on a Greyhound bus, and they shipped me. It was Monday.

And they gave me my CIPAS, everything, one day. They passed that. They gave me my physical right there.

And they put me on a Greyhound bus, man. San Diego, man. Marine Corps.

The Marine CIPAS. I finally, you know, left, and I was on my way from. Were you expecting to leave that day? No, I was expecting to give a Greyhound bus.

You know how young, exciting. So, you know, I finally, you know, left. I'm leaving.

Tell my mom, San Diego. And I was thinking, wow. You know how in New York, I'm going to the Marines, man.

So I called my grandma. I said, Grandma? My mom's mom. I'm going.

See you later. Boom. I'm not coming home today anymore.

I'm independent all my life, you know. Because we will see them in September at graduation time. Me and my dad had done in such.

I got on the bus, and I left, you know. I was really independent. Beautiful German shepherd.

When I was a sophomore in high school, I destroyed and killed her. And I got in a fight. And my mom had given away my beautiful bike to L.A. And when I got to L.A., I was so mad at her, man.

I wanted to take a ticket to San Ysidro by bicycle. And I rode it from here, from Balampagos. And I hitchhiked all the way to the bus.

I sold it for \$10. And I took a ticket then. And on my way, I got across the border with his mother and some kids.

Across the border. And I was working my way through. I ran away.

I was so ticked, you know, and my mom and dad. And we hit this horse, man. Mexico City.

I was on the Greyhound bus. They picked me up, and we hit him full power. And it came close to Mexico, about 10 hours from Mexico City.

The staircase and the main power, man. And I was right there in the front when the horse hit me, man. All the glass.

And I was cut between. God protected me at that time. I remember my feet.

And I was crushed. And nothing happened to God, you know, after this whole thing. The horse was all over me.

And nothing happened to me. And here I am going. You know, it's amazing how the hand of God.

Another bus trip. Yeah, another bus trip. Back in the past.

Was there. Well, we go, and we're going through these gates. From L.A. to M.C.R.D. And you're thinking about another.

And we had these guys at the gates. And here I am, you know. And all of a sudden, we get down to San Diego.

In their fatigues, you know. I'll never forget these wide gates, man. And then saluting the bus, you know, the whole thing.

And we're guards, you know, these Marines, man. And all of a sudden, the bus stops. And we're standing there.

And they were waving. Another barbershop. And there's hundreds walking in there.

And we're going, wow, look at this place, you know. Outside. And you're wondering, where is this barbershop? You know, and you look at that.

And this guy, hundreds of yellow footprints. Like a bulldog, man. What the heck is that, you know.

And all of a sudden, the door opens. Nice blues. Comes walking up with a smoky hat, you know.

And he looks. Stripes. Sergeant stripes.

And he has this beautiful, you know. And cussing and calling us. With his brown shirt and tie, you know.

And nice. How now, your butt belongs. And all his medals.

And he starts yelling. And now, for the next 12 weeks, man. Guards and girls, man.

And he's telling us how nice and everything. And I'm going to hit you now, he says. You know, you belong to me now.

I'm going to make you a Marine, he says. You'll be your mommy and your daddy. And your granny.

And he started kicking us. I mean, literally kicking us. And he was the best way I can.

I'm going to break you. And I'm going to. And we're sitting there.

I don't even know. And then he started kicking us out of the bus, man. Kicking us.

No fear, huh? No fear. Starting now, man. And we started in these yellow footprints.

And the smell. And it took a long time, man. And anybody that was.

That's the difference. Even because you develop a sensitive ear. Somebody walking down.

Everything in Vietnam when you're in war. That's the end. My ears are tuned in to that, you know.

Hey, I can sleep. And I can hear things. Here I am now.

I'm in the jungles with outside noises. Because I tuned in. We go up north to case some consensus.

And so it's been incredible. Because here I am. This operation.

Arizona. I go to Chula. We go to Phu Bai.

We go. You know, so many people died. Down to Da Nang.

And we're doing all these things. It's a story of watching, man. Five.

All these things. Where we watch. You know.

And this is in my mind. You know. Completely.

You were hit by. So many died. Now you received two purple hearts.

I was sitting on a die. 47. And I was hit with a booby trap.

Now when you were. The guy that shot from the AK-47. You were wearing your flag.

I was on my right shoulder. At an angle. In the rice paddies? Yeah, in the rice paddies.

Burned my skin and bounced off, man. Shot behind me. And hit me in my right.

At that time. But yeah, I didn't know. And then the second.

I hit my flag here. And it reflected back. All it did was burn my.

I mean, what were your reflections? You got knocked. I mean, now I know why. You know what I'm saying? But that.

I laughed. I didn't. In time.

This guy from Texas. Let me stop you there for a second. I lost all fear.

To the ground by the shot, right? I laughed. Survival of the fittest, man. When I got to Vietnam, Johnny.

I started going. I. That's the way I thought. You know what I'm saying? And sense of death.

It was. Survival. The second time I got hit.

They said. It's not going to be me. It's going to be them.

That's 18 year old. From Texas. I was breaking.

And so. All these things were in my mind. You know what I'm saying? The 19 years.

The 19 years. 30 days to. Well, the next time.

I got hit. This village in the morning. Nobody.

The point. We went to this. And you were an old man of 19, right? I got up an ambush that evening.

Walking. But here I am. We're coming in.

Okay. There's gates. There's trip wires.

In the evening. They booby trap everything. So we're walking back to set up a cricket.

And then that's the end of us. To the camp. I told the guy.

Slow down. When you come to the gate. He's green.

He doesn't know. He goes. Very fine trip wires.

If you don't watch it. You'll click the second gate. I told him to slam.

Okay. So I'm done. But he doesn't listen.

He's young. He's green. Where he trips the wire.

So I escape. Perfectly. Executed.

Second trap explodes. And we fly. Boom.

He kicks it. I see the flash. You know.

The fire opens up, man. We're ambushing him. By the time I push him.

The booby trap. He picks his right arm. Loses both of his.

Actually fires. Flying through the air. And he fires.

Totally. Bloody mess. He's hit.

The young kid loses his rest. My endurance is really. Legs.

Up to his thighs. Up here. I mean.

All I remember. I don't even know that I'm hit. That I'm hit.

And I'm calling the medevacs. And the docks. It's low.

You know what I'm saying. And we're in a firefight. It didn't come down.

It was at night. Just being there such a long time. And.

It was hurting. And all of a sudden. Men coming up.

And taking care of the wounded. And the helicopters. Couldn't even remember.

It's being on the helicopter. Being medevacs. They couldn't come down.

Because the firefight. You know. You can see the traces.

Being taken to the US gaffes. I collapse. Next thing I remember.

I had shrapnel. Behind my right. Out to the Nang.

And from the. From the Nang. I had shrapnel.

In back of my. Three days. What was the nature of your wounds.

In that one. Well. That went through my back.

Next to my. Right. My right knee.

And then. You know. I mean.

In my back. Believe it or not. A huge piece of shrapnel.

In the US gaffe. They took me to the Philippines. My lung.

And it's still there today. They couldn't remove it. US gaffe.

I got so blown away. John. God.

Just blew me away. So I spent 30 days. In the American people.

And then from the Philippines. When I was in the US. Picketing.

Because there is where I saw. These 18 and 19 year olds. And 20.

I got so much hate. For these guys at home. That I. They are.

Being burned by napalm. You know. The words.

Of no value. When they see these. Up to the head.

They're totally shaven. You can see those. I watched this napalm center.

Where they have. Some are in comas. Some of these guys.
Are burned to a crisp. Guys have been shot. While he sits in to me.
I've been in Vietnam. 10. The bullet hole through here.
And they're not all there. They can't even talk. You thought you were going home.
I thought I was going home. There's no arms. Some with no legs.
And then. Vietnam. I'm back with.
And then they come to me. And it says. You're going back.
You thought. And I'm saying. You know what? Going back to the ship.
They take me back to Vietnam. 45 days to do. And I say.
I'm in it. This is now. Late September.
And I've seen short timers. Get killed. I'm not going out again.
I only had like. About 40. I'm staying here.
I'm not man. I'm not. You know.
I'm a short timer. And I tell you what. I'll kill you.
Before. I go to the captain. I tell the captain.
I'm not going out man. This is it. And orders me.
To go to the name. The captain says. You're going out.
You're going to be. I said. I did the name.
By helicopter. And so he. Writes a piece of paper.
Psychiatrist. And I'm sitting there. I'm trying to see.
A psychiatrist. So I'm on my way. With that.
I'm not going back. And they dropped me off. And you know the name.
And I go to. You understand that. And he writes a piece of.
He's trying to be. Real nice guy. I said.
Let me put it this way. You're leaving tomorrow. I'm going home.
And if not. I'm going to kill you. Great.
I go back to the captain. Real fast. You know.

He gives it to me. He says. Go get your stuff.
You're leaving now. Right. I pack all my gear.
I'm on my way home. That's great. I get to the airport.
By helicopter. And I tell him. He's really ticked on me.
He's really mad at me now. And they put me handcuffed. They handcuffed.
I say goodbye to all my friends. You know. And I get.
And they strap me. And man. And they.
And what happens. The MPs take me. To Travis Air Force Base.
My hands. My feet. And they put me in the C-130.
From there. To the Naval Hospital. And from.
The Nang. Vietnam. Where all the crazy people are.
There's a paddy wagon waiting for me there. And they transfer me from. Just totally lock me up.
Oaks Naval Hospital. Project 49A. Where.
I totally rebelled against. And they locked me up for six months. Did they have to.
Yeah. They tell me. I'm not going home.
So I rebelled. Longer. But then I was.
Actually. A deputy. And so what I did.
I became really violent. So we talk about your problems. I ended up.
They put me in this program. Called sit and none. Which is.
I didn't care. You see. It's not a place for.
Therapy. You sit on it. With groups.
And you sit here. Man. You don't like anybody.
And everybody's better. Man. You know.
It's just. So not all the time man. I didn't.
I'm putting in. For the son of a. Doctor. Doctor Wilson.
Who goes. You know what it means. Six months.
Into Washington D.C. Nobody. Nobody likes you. I'm going to dismiss you.

I'm going to give you this. I don't know. Where I wait for my.
Underground. I don't care. Do it.
So. They sent to. Come back at this particular time.
You take me from Oakland. And they transferred me back to Camp Pendleton. All in love with each other.
With Sharon. So. Yes.
And I'm waiting for my. To marry her. And so what happened.
Why through Vietnam. My letters. We fall in love.
Discharge. Imagine that. So I'm in love with her man.
I'm thinking I'm going to marry her. You know. I did what I was.
Well. As my discharge comes back. With an honorable.
I go to Sharon. Sharon. Because of my.
Conduct in Vietnam. You know. Before marriage.
She's kind of back to the. Mm hmm. They let me go.
I go. Sweetest people. They never ever.
We go out. She gets pregnant. And so what happens.
In this particular time. Her mom and dad are the most. Baby.
No abortions. Condemn me in any way. Mm hmm.
But they love me. My wife and I will. Become your husband.
I take full responsibility. For my actions. I will keep the baby.
This particular luncheon. Is 20. And I'm.
I will go to work. I will marry you. You'll be married.
And. Full responsibility. For my actions.
I'm out of the war. I mean. One.
What happens. We get married. No rehabilitation at all.
I don't. I'm thinking man. This is a whole new life now.
I'm out of. The way it was. That's the way.
That's why it was. I don't talk about the war. I don't think about it.

But you really had no. You're in the bush. One day.
And then you're. Night. You're in Vietnam.
Next night. You're here. You're here.
It's such a shocking thing. To all of us. You know.
You're. You're a guy. You know.
Couldn't take it. You know what I'm saying. See you next day.
Wow. What the heck happened. You know.
32 hours. In the war. And I'm angry man.
With the protest. Ah. Mm hmm.
It's a total shock. And I think that's what. A lot of these guys.
I think that if anyone was. And so what happened is. I don't talk about the Vietnam.
I mean. I was protected by. You just stayed away from.
The guys that I'm protesting in. And I mean. In my mind.
I'm not a wife to anybody. And. I would have killed them.
I know I would have. But. I began.
Not only to continue. Yep. I stayed away from the whole thing.
Never talked about Vietnam to my wife. They married me. Then.
As time went on. We got married. I began to verbally abuse.
I began. My violence now. But this beautiful woman.
Other women. See. She gives her life back.
To the Lord. The reasons. Because.
I began. While. I'm training for.
My cousin. To physically abuse. I began to go.
I don't know. Without that. And I'm training.
Because I went up. Mm hmm. And this whole life of corruption.
Begins in my life. Mm hmm. While my marriage is falling apart.
With Jimmy H. Woo. I want to be the best. And so.

Four years go by. School one day. And I become the best thing.

What I'm doing. I have money. I have women.

I have. My lifestyle. You know.

My whole life is going apart. I have nothing in my life. I'm totally gay.

I have my black belt. I have my stupid dad. At this time.

We're dating. And I have no marriage. I have no wife.

I stay away from them. My wife's the one that wanted to go empty. And how was your relationship with your mom and dad? And they treat her so rotten.

Didn't get along. I mean. You know.

We fight all the time. I mean. I stayed away.

But you know. So we're not going to see them. Because she was a Christian.

And she wanted to love them. You know. And after four years.

You know what I'm saying? And I used to get so mad at that. My wife. And me.

And the whole thing. Because every time we do it. We get in a big fight.

But then the thing about it. I'm going to leave. Of all this garbage.

You know. From my parents. And her bags are packed.

It's Sunday. What's going on? I finally say. You know what? My wife says.

I've had you. And I see that. And so when I come home.

No man is going to have my wife. It's Easter Sunday. April the 15th.

1970. And Shane. Already.

She's already. Her bags are packed. And I know she's going to leave.

And I say. You know what? No. Five.

At this particular time. Kids. By this time.

Raleigh. So. And she arrived with the police.

And they were like five and six. I think four. And I'm waiting for Sharon.

And I say. You know what? I'm going to kill them. And then I kill my TV.

As I'm destroying everything. And I hit the. So I go in my closet.

I pick up my rifle. Put my rifle. It's Katherine Kuhlman.

Sharon do come home. And something draws me. And the people are on.
They're talking. The TV with the butt of the rifle. And the TV comes on.
And love. And God's grace. And God's mercy.
And our program. And Chuck Smith. And the Jesus people.
And I want to shoot Chuck Smith. And they're talking. And Chuck is talking.
About God's love. I hated this guy. Where is he talking? Man.
How he can forgive you. For what you've done. That stuff.
You know what I'm saying? And I'm trying to. Right through the TV man. I hate.
And the more he talks. It's seen about. You know.
I'm all. I mean. I mean.
What's his. Spirit. Was shooting me with.
Pull the trigger. I can't pull the trigger. Man.
Comes home. And I dropped to my knees man. Instead of me shooting him.
He was shooting me. The Holy Spirit. Come into my life.
And change. Love. And I just can't.
Pierce me. Yup. You're a second.
I mean. Thinking. You're.
I say. If you're really real. Jesus man.
Your wife. And your kid. You.
Amazing. Let me. Let me.
Back. Yes. Would leave them.
That they would just be dead. You were. Literally.
Thinking of murdering. There's nothing. Nothing.
You gave no thought. That there. You know.
That light. I have a concept in my mind. Of body.
So. You know what. I had killed before.
To me. Killing was no. Nothing left.

That's my. Life is cheap. You see.
Because. I didn't. Is that my wife.
You know. My children. Spirits.
You know. Saying. Once you die.
That. Into the Lord. Yeah.
The Lord. Is my philosophy. You know.
Humanist. And the thing about it. That when I was at home.
And that happened. Children. Were protected.
And they were hanging on to the Lord. Burden. Relief.
For my life. I mean. Incredible.
Yeah. And you know. What's so neat about it.
Out of my car. I went looking. For my wife.
And she had been hunting. To me. I got up.
So quickly. Man. When I felt it.
And she wasn't there. And this warmth. Came over my life.
Man. That I. Weeping. Because I had.
You know. Done. Hunting for my wife.
And I couldn't find her. I even went to the church. She went to the door.
She said. No. I can't open the door.
And so. I came back home. And I heard her inside.
Crying. I couldn't open the door. I went to the latch.
When she opened. After two years. For her.
To really. Man. She closed the door.
Right in my face. It was. A true conversion.
Like Paul. The apostle. She let me in the house.
And it took. About a year. And a half.
And a hunger. And a thirst. For his word.

Which actually. Changed my life. But you know what John.
I really. Kept me away from books. You could not.
So you know why. Because immediately. God gave me.
You know. Nothing. Nothing.
I didn't even know. You could not. And you know what blew me away.
Is that he gave me. Not keep me from reading the Bible. And prior to that.
You didn't do anyway. I went looking for a store. I could buy a Bible.
High school. Nothing. Nothing at all.
And you know what I mean. I went inside. And I saw these little Bibles.
Hunger. And this thirst. And the first thing I did.
The bigger the better. And I found the lighthouse. In Covina.
I went and bought me. A Jesus Christ. God's Son and Savior.
And I. Big Bibles. You know what I mean. to spend time with him.
So she watched. But she began to school. And well.
Suddenly I went to my old high school. I began to love her. And I began to love my kids.
And he called the police on me. And I'll answer. And she began to see that I went.
To my old high school. I thought God told me to go. You know.
And I went. And Mr. Bartholomew Hollenbeck. You know.
When they saw me. They before me. And he opened.
And I came. And they took me away. Told me to get out of there man.
I thought. I began to share my testimony. I began to share.
And God told me. Go back to your old high school. And God with me.
And God's word. And I got off his high school. And I began to share with the kids.
I began. Consuming the word of God. As I was going to Chuck Smith's church.
And was getting wounded and grounded. And so. As I began to share with the kids.
I was just. Man. Consuming the word of God.
Man. Threw milk at me. And cake.

And all of a sudden. I was learning. And I had this burning in my heart.

And one day. God said. Get up and speak to me.

Six months later. They wouldn't listen. They threw.

I began to. Not scream. I'm not screaming.

To kill him. His husband's aren't walking with the Lord or maybe for for anyone that may be listening to this tape of God working in their lives I was situations to Sharon Who's fully turned their whole life to the Lord and I mean what he had to say to them in the power of God sharing Couldn't convert me with them that they need to you know Just really fully working like it bite on those things and then read us in the Lord to do a work because you know What sure watch the love of Christ, uh-huh every day she never put tracks on my sandwiches So when I go to work, you know, I didn't like that, but she just but she you know what she did She loved me I watch father and her father And how she never forced me to go to church or anything conversion when you're praying for them for me and her grandmother and her Grandfather and her mother and that's how I would say today How can not anyone come to come wait on the Lord, but because there's power in prayer Yeah, you know I'm saying take the abuse the verbal what do your best commit the rest and wait up We're not divorce But should also say to them you don't have to take the if he's physically verbally a physical abuse Even if you have to separate you separate so that you can break for a while From your husband if you can go back to husband and wife you and you have right to that separation Sharon would have left me a for him that God will save him so that you can go from my life Each other that's what I would say Does it share for good? Yeah, and I think that for I wonder what kind of plan that God would have times and read it And he took something it was evil and he turned it for better by the power of God just and you know I've heard your testimony so many times Would you close us in prayer? Yes father it and so many things I'm still blown away just by the first he said for this time you've given to it to the tears When I hear it, but uh that Did you touch them thank you so much for your love and grace and mercy and in every young woman What I pray for every Vietnam vet that you would use father the anointing father For every young men worry and for your honor father that meets your love and your grace and your mercies It means that you're doing that you're going to continue Testimony for your glory Amen. Amen.

Thank you for this time for all the things by the way, you know John I can do in Jesus name. We pray and my mother is safe. Well, thanks a lot for Sharing with us here in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise God I just like to share and then with this and my father is saved also know if if they want our more brothers and my Sisters my whole family knows the look at the book fury to freedom I like to let the the listeners also my husband my maker walls testimony They can get to us at somebody loves you radio ministry by Harvest House publishers as well as Sharon's book my heart of freedom by gospel From Harvest House publishers. They can write to us has Rawls Vietnam testimony long and also Rawls Film if you would like any of that information, you can cause is available and a quiet hope which I had peel box 4446 other Vietnam veterans, so if you would like in six five This it somebody loves you radio ministry Diamond Bar, California nine one With your home I love it to me

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