

## Journey of Healing in Ministry

*“O LORD my God, I cried out to You, and you healed me.” Psalm 30:2*

God has been molding me so much throughout this process in full-time ministry. If I’m being honest, I didn’t fully know exactly what all I said yes to in 2015. My focus was on “them” but now I see that God had much more planned. I’ve known for many years that my passion and gifts lie in the realm of encouragement and serving others. However, I have only seen part of the picture of how God wants me to use these gifts to serve Him and His kingdom. When meeting struggles, confrontations, and seemingly impossible challenges, I so often hit the brakes, consumed by discouragement rooted in my own internal pain and underlying feelings of worthlessness. The hurt and deep insecurity stems from a combination of past experiences & trauma, choices, and lies from the evil one, ultimately to keep me from doing the Lord’s work. (*“This battle is not against flesh and blood!”* Ephesians 6:12) However, by the grace of God, I have acknowledged this fully and am pursuing healing.

Since college, when I made a decision to give my life to the Lord, I have been growing and understanding more of my purpose, while stumbling all along the way. While I’ve learned a lot, nothing has been more deeply impactful than my healing process these last few months. I’ve been seeing a Christian counselor who has been teaching me how to live free, completely surrendered to a life in Christ. With the guiding of God’s word and the Holy Spirit, it is an experience that is completely changing my life. First, I’m truly understanding what it means, that “I no longer live, but **Christ lives in me**” (Galatians 2:20). Therefore, I am not my master, but Christ is in me, and so I must deny myself and allow Him to fully work through me (Luke 9:23). Denying myself daily is already incredibly challenging, but even more because of layers of deep hurt that I have not allowed God to heal. So through God’s abundant grace, I have been learning what it truly looks like to forgive, not to simply say it, but to mean it and actually give it fully to God. It has been (and certainly will continue to be) a challenge, especially when I am hurt again. So just like Peter asked Jesus about how often to forgive, I am learning that I must be in a continual posture of repentance and forgiveness (Matt. 18:21-22). How else can I allow Christ to live in me and freely submit to the will of the Father? Let me tell you fellow brothers and sisters, I HAVE SEEN the walls come down and reconciliation take place in my life by adopting this posture! It is amazing! Also, yesterday during training, I got to share my life story with my fellow first and second year staff. Because of God’s transforming work, allowing me to be vulnerable, walls came down and several other staff humbly shared their current struggles and feelings of desperation. We finished training feeling unified and encouraged (1 Thess 2:18). **BAM: The Lord is at WORK!!**

The other thing I am learning is how to completely surrender, that denying myself means I truly have no rights, and must relinquish control to my heavenly Father; I am secure in His hands (Romans 8:28). **My willingness is only due to God’s faithfulness and abounding love that He would not give up until the point that I would fall to my knees, acknowledging my desperate need (Psalm 51).** I share this with you because I am so thankful for your prayers and support. And I continue to plead for intercession on my behalf, for obedience to Christ, boldness, and endurance in this wearisome, but undoubtedly worthwhile journey to share the immense love of Christ with teenagers.

All over, kids are drowning in sorrow, hurt, loneliness, depression, fear, distracted by worldly cravings, and therefore NEED something that will truly fulfill their wandering hearts. I may not have experienced the exact same troubles, but just like them I too have felt deep hurt and a longing for authentic relationships. Therefore, I feel a deep sense of compassion and urgency to reach them with the only news that will save. Please continue to join me in praying for discernment in relationships with kids we know and for kids yet to be reached. **If you know of someone who would also like to hear the story of what God is doing in my life and in this ministry, please let me know. I would love to spread the word!**