

RE-FORMED

Testimony of Aaron Forman

PART I: THE TREASURE

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

— Matthew 13:44

At eighteen, the spiritual framework of my childhood collapsed—not beneath the weight of any crisis, but through the slow erosion of a youth adrift. God receded into the background: a silent presence on the periphery of a life consecrated to the pursuit of self.

By twenty-two, I had fully embraced the liturgy of the modern secularist. I lived a life fueled by an insatiable hunger for more—and was having the time of my life.

Then came a Sunday morning. I woke in the usual haze, bracing for the familiar drag of the coming week. Instead, the atmosphere in my room filled with a presence unlike anything I had ever known.

It was undeniable. God was *there*. He saturated existence. The very air trembled with His nearness. I was so overtaken by the visitation that a joyful laughter erupted from within me. In that singular moment, the fog of unbelief evaporated. I realized, with a certainty that transcended life itself: God is real; He is the greatest treasure of all.

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PART II: TOWER OF BABEL

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Let not a wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not a rich man boast in his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me...’”

— Jeremiah 9:23–24

For the next year, I lived in the radiant wake of that encounter. The allure of the world didn’t fade; it vanished. In its place burned a ravenous hunger to know God. Latent gifts unlocked: my mind sharpened with divine clarity, and my humanity deepened—becoming, I felt, what God intended us to be. I overflowed with supernatural joy every waking moment. I embarked on a mission to know everything about God, so I could share Him with everyone. I wanted to see all things through the eyes of God.

I returned to church, enrolled in college, and attended a Bible school. Fueled by the Spirit, I took to the streets to proclaim the Good News. But as I reached out to the world, the world pushed back. My zeal collided with skepticism. People met me with questions—hard, jagged questions about morality, science, evil, and suffering.

Those challenges became my battleground. I no longer wanted to simply share my faith; I needed to defend it, to prove it, to win over the skeptical mind. I set out to become a Christian apologist who could penetrate any reluctant intellect with the irrefutable logic of a philosopher and the irresistible conviction of an apostle. My room became a training ground where I amassed a library of the faith's intellectual giants, clothing myself in the armor of knowledge. Every waking hour was consumed by the construction of unassailable arguments—all to demonstrate the existence of God and the supremacy of Christ. I believed I was becoming a bridge for the lost intellect; but beneath the surface, an idolatry was forming. I was building a tower of Babel, unaware it was destined to fall.

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PART III: THE GAZE OF ETERNITY

“Can you find the depths of God? Can you find the limit of the Almighty? It is as high as the heavens; what can you do? Deeper than Sheol; what can you know?”

—Job 11:7–8

One evening, a year into this quest, I sat at my desk analyzing the Word. Without warning, the whole of Scripture collapsed into focus—every doctrine, every promise, every thread of redemption snapped together in my mind like a lock turning open. And then, in the same breath, what had clicked inwardly exploded outward: the truth of the Bible pressed itself onto everything I could see, everything I could touch, until there was no gap left between the Word and the world. Reality had not changed—it had been *claimed*. A message was branded deep into my soul: *The Bible is not a book about the world, but the story that the world is living inside of—It is life, bound in ink.*

Then a voice spoke within me—soft and distinct: *‘You will be a pastor.’* The life of an obscure shepherd flashed through my mind and my heart sank. I wanted to be on a stage defending the faith, not a shepherd. Before I could fully register who was speaking, a definitive *No* answered back.

My attention was swept past the Earth, past the Solar System, all the way to the edge of the universe, and there I sensed God. Driven by a compulsion to understand, I sought a form—a shape I could recognize; but the harder I tried to grasp Him, the greater His intangible presence grew. After several failed attempts, the blood drained from my face; the hair on my neck stood on end. I could no longer contain the weight of His endless nature within my spirit. Fear compelled me to look away from the immensity being revealed to me. Though I looked away, I felt His gaze remain fixed upon me. I could not escape its scrutiny; I sat there stripped of all defenses, utterly powerless to hide, as He freely read the diary of my soul.

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PART IV: THE SOVEREIGN ONE

“Then I said, ‘Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, Lord of hosts.’”

— *Isaiah 6:5*

The rebuke was total. Within that gaze, God ripped away the veil, revealing the most devastating truths. I saw that I was not merely a captive of sin, but a willing worshiper of it. I felt the depth of my own lostness, and it was immeasurable. I understood instantly that humanity was incapable of choosing God—not in spite of their will, but because of it.

I was immediately confronted with the reflection of my true self—and it broke me. I was not a good man who merely committed sins; I was a creature of depravity. I was a spiritual Frankenstein: a grotesque parody of life—a dead man masquerading as a living one, stitched together with violence, idolatry, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, arrogance, lust, and self-worship. The horror was not necessarily in the sins I had committed, but in what I *was*—a spiritual monstrosity worthy of eternal damnation.

The vision passed in mere seconds, but the truths it deposited left me distraught for over a decade. Though I lacked the language to articulate it at the time, I had experienced God’s absolute sovereignty over all things and my absolute powerlessness. I realized that every destiny had been sealed according to His will before He breathed life into the first Adam. He knew the cost in souls—He knew how many would perish eternally—yet decreed it regardless. The safe, domesticated deity I thought I knew was replaced by a Sovereign so free, it terrified me. I had

sought to see through the eyes of God—to see the truth. Now I had. I closed the Bible and whispered in utter disbelief: *‘It’s all true.’* And I was thoroughly undone.

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PART V: THE EXILE

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.”

— *Psalm 139:7–8*

I walked away from it all: college, ministry, and Him. I fled to the world, desperate to forget my reflection and His presence. But the flight cost me everything. I didn’t just lose my gifts; I lost the Spirit that renewed me—and in so doing, I lost myself. Stripped of all peace, I was crippled by depression and anxiety. I became a ghost in my own life, hollowed out by spiritual desolation—forever changed, marked by a God I could neither follow nor deny.

A year into this fugitive existence, I hoped that in the noise of foreign lands I might find reprieve. I traveled through a dozen countries in a single year, seeking a softer reality; but every other belief crumbled under the slightest scrutiny; the sky was the same everywhere. Yet even in my waywardness, a tether to the Almighty remained. In rare moments of sobriety and honesty, a plea to the Lord would break through the wall of resentment and despair. All I could muster was: *‘Please, don’t let me go.’* This became the quiet refrain of my exile.

I returned home for one reason: my mother. She had been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer, and I remained at her side for six months, until her end. Her death crushed a soul already in pieces. I was still mourning the loss of the inner sanctuary I had found in the God I once knew; losing the woman who raised me was a weight I could not bear.

Seeking oblivion, I plunged into cocktails and carnality—driven by a maddening paradox: I felt betrayed by the God who fashioned me into a hideous creature fit for hell, yet compelled to punish myself for betraying Him. I knew, from the vision, that my destruction would be righteous; yet I remained. So I weaponized sin, desperate to prove to God that I was unworthy of His love—I tried to make Him forsake me. I embraced my fallen nature, daring Him to strike—my spirit screaming the silent, impossible question: *‘How could You love this?’* The viciousness of my rebellion was not because I thought God wouldn’t forgive me, but because I knew He

would. His love was all I truly desired, but I knew from the bottom of my eternal soul—I didn't deserve it. My rebellion nearly killed me. It took a near-death experience to sober me up. But sobriety itself didn't heal me. It did not bring redemption.

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PART VI: THE BEDROCK

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

— *Romans 8:38–39*

Sobriety saved my body, but my spirit required a longer convalescence. It took another ten years of wrestling with God to come to terms with the searing truths shown to me in that vision—proof that ultimate reality, when encountered rather than studied, is a substance that takes years to metabolize.

The final surrender arrived only when I could run no further. In 2023, my self-reliance disintegrated. A failing heart valve and a broken spine cost me everything—my health, my wealth, and my illusion of control. Broke, bedridden, and brought to my knees, I finally surrendered to God. Month after month, I cried out to Him.

Six months later, on Christmas Day 2024, He granted the mercy I had pleaded for. It settled into me like a gentle thaw—a quiet acknowledgment that He still loved me; that He *never let me go*. This time, there was no rush of ecstasy, no instant sanctification sweeping me off my feet. Just a second chance to walk by His side—an obedience I will never abandon again.

In the quiet of this restoration, I have returned to the Scriptures—not to conquer, but to submit. Through diligent study, I have been convicted that what I encountered in that vision is the bedrock of truth. I understand now why it cannot be otherwise. The truths that once shattered me are now the truths that sustain me; they anchor me through the storms of life, binding me to His Kingdom forever.