

TERRI KELLEY

Terri Kelley grew up a youth minister's daughter in Texas during the 70s and has loved God since her first memory. While growing up, she dreamed of someday marrying a minister, having a big family, and serving people. She loved her church but as she grew older, the teachings always seemed focused on God's wrath and condemnation while offering little on a relationship with Jesus grounded in love, forgiveness, and grace. *"The foundations of my faith were being rooted in a fear of God... always questioning whether I was good enough, loved, and going to heaven,"* she remembers.

Fear would play a significant role in her life starting at a young age as she dealt with the confusion and trauma of sexual assault. Silenced by her offenders, she felt alone in her secrets and often wondered if God saw her and if he did, was he angry or disappointed in her. At 17 years old she would become pregnant and terrified, thinking she had nowhere safe to go. *"It felt as if all roads led to judgment, rejection, and pain... so to survive I went looking for a way out,"* she says. Her way out would be a doctor, a lie, and an abortion decision that would shatter her heart and send her spiraling down a path of destruction for many years.



As the shame of all her secrets took root in her soul, they became what she filtered every thought, every decision, and relationship through. This filter would lead her into other abusive relationships adding additional layers of trauma and leaving her to live a life of survival. She felt alone and convinced God had left her and would never love her again.

"To survive, I had to bury the secrets, forget, and move on. I learned to paste on the smiles and appear to have it all together, but inside my heart was broken and grieving as I searched for love and approval. Many days felt as if I was walking along the edge of a cliff trying to keep my feet on solid ground, and the nights were plagued with nightmares of falling off the edge. I felt very alone and invisible to everyone around me... especially to God", Terri says.

After the end of her 25-year marriage, her heart lay shattered at the bottom of that cliff. It was then that God showed up and revealed He had been with her in every painful moment of her past and was now inviting her on a journey that would lead her out of the darkness and into freedom. With nothing left, she curled up in His arms, and let Him take her into the dark and broken places of her soul.

Today Terri uses her story to speak life back into the broken hearts of women and brings a message that Jesus still works miracles today. Her story tells of the difficult journey of coming face-to-face with the demons of her past and the miracles Jesus did along the way to break the chains that had her heart tethered and bound for so many years. Terri tells us, *"My biggest regret is spending most of my life believing the lie that God could never love a girl like me.... the truth is I was seen, pursued, and healed by the Creator Himself. That changes you! I do not want any woman to believe the same lie that I did or live in exile from her Creator. He wants us free and living life fully connected to Him... the one that gives life and loves us more than our human heart could ever understand. I tell my story to connect with other wounded hearts and say... You are not alone... You are loved!"*

If you would like to contact Terri, you can reach her at the information below.

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