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Your story

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# Finding my voice

A line, not chronological with different points and moments. His journey to find his voice. Definition of voice = you as a human being and how you express who you are. Met at 19, got married at 21. They jumped into full-time ministry, he wasn't heading there. Nothing against it, but he loved being a pastor's kid. Tribute to the ability to raise well.

He was going one direction, but then suddenly all his desire went away and he changed direction, moved home and was trying to figure out what was going on. He then decided to do a bible college, no ministry school and found his wife.

Defining moments of finding his unique expression. He is not done, in 20 years he knows he has more to share in the future. 5 helpful things to have his voice.

# Integrity

Proverbs 4:23 (ASV) Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life.

Integrity is a lost art in our generation. When you talk about integrity it is one of the simplest things, but so profound in our generation. Integrity for a lot of people is a new concept; why would I be integrious?

When I was a young politician an older politician took me aside and asked me this question: before you get into politics you need to make this decision: do you want to eat well or do you want to sleep well? She chose from early on that she would sleep well. You go to bed every day you know what it was and that it was good. Eat well is doing whatever it takes to get more political power.

Before we do anything in life do we do the right thing no matter the cost? Or are we doing the thing to get more power?

Easy to be integrious in BSSM, but it gets harder down the line. It doesn't change with 90 degrees, but it starts small. Brand new chairs, they started squeaking. Integrity is not something you set one time and don’t have to pay attention to it anymore. Am I doing the right thing or do I not mind what I do anymore? Anything that comes from you is pure, jaded or a mixture of the two

**Do the right thing!**

Sand is a rock that lost its integrity. Jesus uses sand and rock. Sand was what once was.

# Authenticity

If you have integrity down, authenticity is an automatic thing next. First thing is to admit the truth, not when you're wrong, but admit the wrong. Whenever you have a culture with a political or a religious spirit at work the right answer is more important than the truth!

Everyone gives the right answer, not the truth. We develop great Christian actors, Christian art is lame, because of the right answer, not the truth. You will always be hindered if you need to have the right answer, instead of your unique expression. How are you? Great! How is your marriage? Awesome! Not telling everyone bad stuff, but we need people with the truth! You should be concerned about this! You can pray all these world-changing prayers, but you'll never grab a hold of it if you can't tell the truth!

Pain is irreparable, you were waiting too long! Have to have guts and courage, to tell the truth! What are people going to say, think? It does not matter! You're not going to end your life standing in front go them but in front of Him! Where is your value? On people's opinion or on God?

# Fear of man

It is a wonderful thing to talk about. His first job was being a youth pastor. On staff for 2 years, helping Banning. Also in charge of all the missions. After that they ended up in Weaverville, he went to the church he was raised in and now lead the people that he was raised by.

What do youth pastors do besides loving kids? They preach every week! He wanted to skip the part, he did it for a long time. He needed to step into preaching, he just didn't want to do it! His wife said to him: “Hey worship is really long these days!” God give me a desire to preach, talk in public, that was his internal conversation. This went on for 3 or 4 years. 6 weeks later Judah Smith came to town, 15/18 years ago. Judah was younger than him, how in the world can he communicate that well and be younger than me?

He comes to town preaches an incredible message with clay pots, he has a secret dialogue with God, at the very end he did something he had never done before, he went into ministry mode, while Eric was in pastor mode and covering people. Then he asked where is pastor Eric? The first thing God said was: The Lord is going to change the way you study and the way you preach. The desire was there the next morning, I want to preach right now. There is a big difference between desire and skill. 2 different universes.

Every week he would go at it, he created an addiction to what people thought. Not just I am scared of you, but I want to know how you think I did more than God. He was trying to find his rhythm and groove. He would listen to anybody that encouraged him. I didn't do that well tonight, then somebody said that was amazing! He was sabotaging himself. God confronted him and made it very clear I had an issue with this. He went into this; never addicted to a substance, but it took a long time for him to be stripped from that addiction. The moment I got off the stage I needed to think: do I care about wat people think or do I care about what God thinks!

I want to be a Son of God, not a preacher!

When you begin to express who you are, where is value coming from? When you covet someone’s assignment you get your value from somewhere else than this. If I find myself coveting your assignment you're getting value that I am not getting in my own assignment and I want that!

Monday morning especially, but then you need to think I am awesome because I am His Son. I do have an internal discussion of knowing what I did. People praise me: great if people ridicule me I don't care.

**Confidence comes from knowing Who you’re rooted in**

# Define who you are to them

You need to define who you are to them. If you do not do this, you're setting yourself up for some very awkward moments. Whether it is a one on one, I quickly asset who I am to you. If you think I am a father, and you're thinking a son everything is wrong. If I am a stranger and you're a stranger that is alright. Hey, my name is Eric, what is your name? Introducing yourself! People do this all the time! He got back from a trip last week, with this group: BSSM it is very logical, another time it is who am I to you? 2 different events, one of them way more intense with a leader summit with heavy stuff. I better figure out who I am to them; crazy uncle, father, grandfather, son, stranger? Once I dial that in I can step into the place of the favor of man.

If I am a father I will come in as a friend, and then grow into it. I never come in hard as a father. I am your dad you better respect me as your father, determine who you are to the people expressing your voice.

# Articulation

Ability to preach was in another galaxy. That became very apparent in the days and weeks afterward. Incredible desire, but very frustrated afterward, not doing justice to what I know is inside of me. I can't figure out how to get this stuff out! Sitting in his office, having a conversation and talking with God. Get a piece of paper, yellow legal pad. Holy Spirit said: Write down what you’re thinking. He doesn't remember what he wrote down, he wrote down a thought and underlined some things. Wrote it all down, then he stopped and looked at it. That is how your brain processes information, that is how I speak to you! It was so liberating to him! Changed his life, and ability to articulate and get out of me what is inside of me! Before he felt like he needed to get everything in order, in preaching class he did well, but it wasn't good, it was their model!

Banning is the most linear person he knows, presets of his radio are in order, Banning plans what is going to wear ahead of time, Monday I will wear this. Document once. Wow, that is intense, his sermons are color coded! That is how his mind works! Scott Harrison does this, I have to start in the beginning and all the way to the end. I need to go all over the place, 3 thoughts. One creates many thoughts. He was trying to be linear, have a story, if it wasn't yours, steal somebody else’s. Eric that is not it for you, this is how I speak to you.

Years after that he would get up and talk and people would walk out more confused than ever. Steve Backlund gives you feedback when you don’t ask for it. He says hey can we meet, can I give you some feedback? When you preach, you kind of need to know where you're going. He says I always know where we’re going, we fly over the galaxy. Just follow the leader! ;) Getting an idea of how you process information, some of you realize that is how my mind works. Not saying mine is better, but saying: find your groove, rhythm, who you are!

Bono: “I’ve still yet to play a song the way it sounded like in my head”

Don’t know if that is encouraging or depressing, you owe the rest of your life to this thing! I am so tired of half-baked expression, lyrics, painting, stuff! Don’t put it out until it’s been thought through! Too many people about mass content! We need to end that!

This is a big deal! Some of us are complaining about our own story, I don’t have a life like that! Quit complaining! You have a story! Tell it well! The world tells their story through pain, you have God! Let that verse work in you!

Some of us are complaining so much about our story that we’re not giving Him all the glory! Take your time and do it well! Expand your language! Not work, but power! IT is as important! The use of words, the expressions, you can’t replace them! Why look at history and quote favorite speeches? Because they articulated perfectly!

Martin Luther King most favorite! Took the time to articulate it and it changed history! Take your time! Develop your story! You might not have a story of pastors, it isn't your story! You have your own story! Stop getting stuck in your story! But God rich in His mercy, the greatest collision of all the world, that was great! Be creative about it! Slow down and think it through! The God of the universe decided to live within you! Most absurd thing! We’re standing here complaining about our lives! But God! This is my life, But God!

Become the best articulator! You owe yourself and the people around you, nobody will ever hear that word through you, do it well! Take your time! Don’t ever compare it to someone else’s expression!

He is not filling his dad’s shoes, those are his! They are his shoes! We got this mentality of following or being someone else! Forget it! It is a waste of your time to be like someone else!

Find out who you are and find your voice! You owe the world your voice! Nobody has had the life that you had or the composition of who you are.

He had to write 180 pages on 5 verses, took 6 months to do that. First part is methodology, your upbringing, the past, circumstances. The world you came from affects how you see the world. 650 different worldviews, you throw God into that mix we have a lot of things going on.

Take the time to learn about yourself, figure out why does this bother me, make me happy. The why behind the why. That is the beginning of articulation.

# When you’re stuck

Amazing to see what happens when people that feel so stuck at one point decide to tell the story, everything that happened until that moment. I want you to hear this. I am a little tired of half baked stuff. We don’t have to give away half baked stuff. Become the best at what you do! Whatever you give your life to, you owe it!