



In August of 2017 I hit the road with Josh McDowell as his personal assistant. Over the next two years, we spoke in 14 countries, slept in countless beds, and spent over 600 days on the road. Little did I know, God was developing a calling in me over those two years that I had felt from a young age. Growing up in the church, I knew I was called to ministry, but I never wanted to be a pastor. I wanted to speak and write. When I received a call from my dad that Josh McDowell wanted me to travel with him, a door opened that can only be described as divine.

Over those two years, I found freedom from an 11-year addiction to pornography, I vividly understood my call to share my story, and Josh personally mentored me in my communication skills.

As I researched and connected with many young people, I was burdened with their hurt and pain. I saw my story in their lives. I was given the opportunity to speak truth and life into their pain and brokenness. God has given me a story in which I can authentically proclaim His message.

Wholeness

The Covid 19 pandemic has exacerbated the already consuming problems of loneliness, anxiety, and depression in young people's lives. What is often their struggle, pornography and the comparison of social media, easily becomes their medication, thus creating an unfulfilling cycle of shame and harm. We are all searching to satisfy our God-given desires of acceptance, love, intimacy, and gratification. Yet more often than not, these longings go unmet and lead to unhealthy behavior. Consider the stats:

- *70% of teens say that anxiety and depression are major problems among their peers.*
- *91.5% of men and 60% of women have view porn in the past month*
- *Around 40% of the world struggles with internet addiction.*

The solution? Recognize the hurt. Understand the wound. Stop the unhealthy medication. Replace the lies we believe with our God-given identity. And surround ourselves with healthy connection and relationships. This is the solution I am called to proclaim through my story.

Want to hear more? Check out my story on [Long Story Short](#) (podcast).

Apologetics

Month after month it seems that another prominent Christian deconstructs their faith. We are often told *what* to think but are not taught *why* we should believe it or *how* to experience it in our lives. We have beliefs, but not convictions.

A belief knows the 'what', but a conviction knows what one believes, why they believe it, and how they have experienced it in their lives.

Progressive Christianity is infiltrating our churches. It lures people who once sought a biblical version of the Christian faith into a form of Christianity that accommodates American secular values. Contrary to progressive beliefs, love and sexuality are defined by God's standards, not the worlds. The Bible is not just human opinion,

it is the inspired Word of God. God's design is good and leads to an abundant life not based upon man's desires but upon the will of God.

- *84% of Christians 18-29 admit they have no idea how the Bible applies to their field or professional interests.*
- *60% of Christians under 40 do not believe that Jesus is the only way to salvation.*
- *63% of young adults said they would attend church if it "presented truth in an understandable way that relates to my life now."*

I am called to mold the next generation by equipping them to live, share, and defend their faith.

Evangelism

I used to cringe when someone would stand on stage and simply say that the gospel will solve your hurt and pain. I tried to confess my sins and ask Jesus to heal me, yet I continued to walk in addiction. It wasn't until I fully understood the weight of my sin and the holiness of God that the gospel became vividly clear. I believe this is the answer. Jesus not only came as a Savior, but He also came as a Healer. Those dead in their sin need the saving work of Christ – who else will share it?

I will never forget the moment I asked to speak in high school. I shared my testimony, and the Holy Spirit drew 18 people to accept Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. It was clear, God had given me the gift of evangelism. It grounds everything that I do.

My speaking, writing, and counseling with the Josh McDowell Ministry rests on these three pillars: Wholeness, Apologetics, and Evangelism. They each play a vital role in the story that God has written in my life. My response to His call is to vulnerably and confidently share this with others.

C.S. Lewis stated that "Pain is God's megaphone to a deaf world." We all know this world is broken. Yet there is an answer to our pain, and we are all called to make Him known.

Let's do this together

As a Communicator for the Josh McDowell Ministry, a branch of Cru, it is my responsibility to raise support for my ministry expenses and personal costs. As I serve as a missionary, I am trusting the Lord for supporters to partner with me through prayer and monthly financial support.

Would you support me through prayer and monthly financial partnership?

Gifts may be given at: give.cru.org/austinfoods

Thank you for your prayerful consideration – Let's give them Jesus together.

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