

God's power and grace to break sexual addiction

TRANSCRIPT

NOTE: This transcript was AI-generated and has not been fully edited.

[00:00:00] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Welcome. This is the Denison Forum podcast, and I'm Mark Turman, executive director of Denison Forum and host for today's conversation. We seek at the Denison Forum to equip the followers of Christ to think biblically, to live holy, and to serve eagerly with their spiritual gifts and their opportunities everywhere and anywhere that God can.

Might lead them to be apart. We're grateful for your following of our podcast and we're gonna have a great conversation Today as we seek to again just help you to walk with christ and to be salt and light with him and for him So my friend today Is the husband of one of my coworkers today. Our guest is Pedro Reyes.

Let me tell you a little bit about Pedro. Our paths have crossed the last few years in a couple of places, but Pedro was born originally in Havana, Cuba. And I know Pedro just by saying that that causes some people to perk up within my circle of family. There's enormous curiosity around Cuba just overall.

And so that's going to immediately just cause people to sit up and pay a little bit more attention, I think in some ways, but Pedro's family moved to the United States in January of 1960. He lived first in Delaware. And as he started to grow up as a young boy, he didn't know how to speak any English, but in 1965, he and his family relocated to Texas.

He ended up going to high school in the Dallas area, attended what we call UTA, which is formerly known as the University of Texas at Arlington. He became a Christ follower in March of 1971 while he was in college. Graduated from college 1974 and then joined the staff of what in those days was known as Campus Crusade for Christ and today is known as CRU that continues to minister across the nation on college campuses.

When he went to work for CRU in the early seventies, he ended up being assigned to serve and minister at a junior college in Phoenix, Arizona. where he met the best thing that he could ever meet, which was his wife, Susie, who works with us at Denison Forum. They married 1976 and moved back to Dallas.

And today they have four grown children. And are also the proud grandparents of 10 grandchildren. Pedro today also owns a construction company and volunteers as a chaplain for

the Texas Rangers baseball organization. And we're going to talk about that for sure, because we're both anxious for baseball to come back into season, which is.

About Pedro, how far are we away from spring training?

[00:02:52] **Pedro Reyes:** Five weeks, five

[00:02:53] **Dr. Mark Turman:** weeks. And some of us are counting it by both weeks, days, and hours, but Pedro, welcome to the Denison forum podcast. And thank you for sitting down with us.

[00:03:03] **Pedro Reyes:** I appreciate the invitation, Mark.

[00:03:05] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Give us a little bit of clarity.

Were you an infant when your family moved here in 1960, or were you a little bit older than that?

[00:03:13] **Pedro Reyes:** I was almost eight years old.

[00:03:15] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Okay. And can you share some of the circumstances that prompted your family to move from Cuba to the United States?

[00:03:23] **Pedro Reyes:** Sure. Fidel took over in January of 59. And my dad had some sort of epiphany in like April of 59 and said that Fidel was going to be worse than the previous dictator by the name of Batista.

So we were going to move to the United States and he was fortunate enough to work with a company that did import export. So he had some contacts in America. He approached them and said, Hey, can you give me a job? And they said, sure. And they sponsored our family up here to the U. S. And we were supposed to come here in August of 59, and then my sister got sick with the mumps, and they let my dad leave and move to the States, and I was supposed to get sick with the mumps.

And once I got over them, they would let us go, but I never got sick with them. So in January of 1960, we boarded a plane, flew to Miami, got on a train, and headed up to Delaware and went from it being nice and balmy and to about some freezing weather in a matter of 24 hours wearing short sleeve shirts.

[00:04:36] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Wow, that, yeah, that's, that's a culture shock on several levels, starting with the weather, for sure.

[00:04:42] **Pedro Reyes:** Yes, and then one thing that happened too, my dad was supposed to meet us in Washington, D. C. on a train. And he wound up because of his limited English, he wound up taking the train going to Miami instead of from Miami.

So here we are, my mom, my sister and I, and none of us know how to speak English. And somehow or another, my mom found a way to get us in touch with a person that worked with my dad. And we got taken to his house. And then my dad found me, finally shows up and I would have loved to have been a fly on that wall with the Bernadette.

[00:05:20] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. And then in those days, there was no handy technology in your pocket that could translate for you and all of those kinds of things. You either had a translator or you somehow just, you know, did some form of sign language or you had a dictionary in your pocket.

[00:05:36] **Pedro Reyes:** Yeah. And we didn't have any of those things.

My mom Through just her wisdom decided to keep a letter that my dad had written which contained the letterhead of the company he worked for in the States. And she presented that to the head guy at the train station and he, through that, found someone that worked with my dad,

[00:05:56] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Oh, fantastic. Quite a,

[00:05:58] **Pedro Reyes:** quite a baptism into the U.

S.

[00:06:00] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yes, absolutely. Do you still have extended family relatives in Cuba?

[00:06:05] **Pedro Reyes:** No, they're pretty much all here. And so I don't have anybody that I know of that still lives there. We, we sponsored several families to come. 'cause when we left in, in January of 60 several of our family members told us, Hey, you're, you're doing wrong.

You're leaving. It's gonna get better. It's get better. And you know, the miraculous thing of it, mark, was that my mom agreed to leave because her mom was sick. And Oh wow. All of her family was there. And, she decided to move with us and about a year and a half later, all those people who were telling us that things are going to get better are calling us saying, please get us out of here.

It's terrible. Wow. So that's how we sponsored quite a few of our family members to get here.

[00:06:49] **Dr. Mark Turman:** And, and what are your just, just kind of off the cuff here, but what are, what are some of your hopes for Cuba? In the, in the now, you know, we're now 65 years past when you came here are you still holding out certain hopes for Cuba as a country?

[00:07:06] **Pedro Reyes:** I am they're, they're very diminished right now because of the situation there my hopes are, I've been to the Dominican Republic through the baseball ministry. And landing in Santo Domingo and seeing that island, I thought, why can't Cuba be this way? And so my hope is that somehow or another, the government is replaced with a government that cares about its people and wants to do the best.

And that somehow or another, The U. S. will start having diplomatic and business relations with Cuba.

[00:07:44] **Dr. Mark Turman:** And one of the things that kind of winds our lives together, Pedro and I serve on the advisory board of a ministry that is serving in Cuba, and we'll include that ministry in the show notes of this podcast.

But there are ministry and mission efforts that continue this day. Into the country of Cuba, we know some people on the island that are making a real difference for the kingdom of God. They are starting churches and training ministers and doing all kinds of incredible work all across the island.

And God is, is not at all abandoned the people of Cuba. We are praying for every good day. They have suffered and continue to suffer a lot. They've had enormous power outages in their power grid. Food is very scarce today in Cuba. Health care is a massive, massive challenge and very rudimentary for most of the citizens of Cuba.

But still God is very much at work and there is oppression for the Christian faith in Cuba but there are also a lot of opportunities. And so if that's something that touches your heart and you'd like to know more you can again, click on the link that we'll share in the show notes.

for the ministry that we are involved there. Our founder, Dr. Jim Dennison has been to Cuba more than 10 times to minister and to serve. I've had a privilege to go in the last couple of years and there are some incredible things happening there. But Pedro, we wanted to talk Susie shared some of y'all story together in a setting that I was in a number of months ago that just was astounding learn about and to understand the grace of God that has been at work in y'all's lives and in your marriage and your family And we just discussed that thought that there might be some real value in you sharing your story and y'all's story in some ways And how that might be helpful to people who follow our podcast.

So I don't know where you want to pick up the story. But how would you like to start?

[00:09:51] **Pedro Reyes:** Okay I was raised in a very sexualized family from from the get go. I, I remember being five or six years old and one of my mom's sisters decided it was a good time to take a shower with me and her two young daughters.

And that just started everything in the wrong direction. My then we moved to the States and it calmed down a little bit. And then you know, I had buddies who would steal their dad's Playboy magazines and we'd look at them and all that stuff. And, and then at the age of 12, one of my other aunts, she decided it was a good time to take a bath together.

So that happened about two or three times And I never mark I never felt like a victim I just thought I had the coolest aunt in the world, but I had no idea the damage that she had done to me and then Oh gosh We moved to texas And my dad thought I, my dad thought I'd had my first girlfriend, so he bought me my first condom and was jubilant when he thought that I had used it, which I hadn't.

But I didn't have the heart to disappoint my dad, so I didn't, I didn't say anything. So then we started with my dad getting magazines to me that were a little stronger. Then Playboy magazines, and then I, at the age of 16, an adult female family member came home, came to my house and decided it was a good time for her to get naked with me.

Or get naked, not with me getting naked, but she was. And that, that just kept reinforcing all this negative stuff I had about sex. And then I actually got my first girlfriend and had my first sexual experience when I was 16. And then we broke up, got another girlfriend and then continued the same pattern.

And then I was in college. Jesus found me and I went cold turkey. I mean, I, I just stopped altogether and then graduated from college, went to UT, I went to administer at the college that Susie was at, and then we got married and came here, moved to Texas. The intention was for me to study at Dallas Theological, and I did get accepted, and then I sat out a year between the time we got married and I started seminary, and during that year my dad was killed in a in a work related accident, and it really, really just brought a lot of questions to me, and One day I'm driving around and I see this place that's a peep show and I go, I wonder what's in there.

So I went in there and that really started some negative stuff in my life. And that went on. I went into those places. Two or three times a month. And then in the sometime in two 1997 1998, I found out how to access pornography on the internet. My addiction just went into overdrive. And for about ten years, I, I mean, it was terrible work.

I'd, I'd probably spend ten hours, twelve hours a week looking at it. I isolated myself from my family, my kids, my friends. And felt terrible the whole time. Sometimes, Mark, when I'd act out,

worship songs would play in my head. I mean, it was so confusing. And then, finally, in 2000 2007, I think, I was so bothered by it that I I prayed Psalm 51 back to God.

I said, creating me a new heart. I don't want to do this anymore. Please help me. And about a month or so later, Susie saw a website that I had looked at on the internet and she confronted me about it. And I tried to throw one of my sons under the bus, but eventually I just said, no, it was me. I did it. And I got started in a group called Celebrate Recovery.

Had good success for a while and then in January of 2008 I went off the rails and just started acting out again horribly and in March of that year, I was in Arizona and I was at spring training for the Rangers. I, I was not working with them at the time, but I was just a fan. And my son, my youngest son found another website that I'd been looking at.

And Susie called me and she was just livid, right? Rightfully and cause I promised her I'd stop and I didn't. And so then I came back and I really dedicated myself to getting better. And I joined a group at a church, local church, and another Celebrate Recovery group. And I got in with a group of men that were having different issues, not, not the same one that I was having.

Some of them did, but not all of them. And started and met with those guys for about three years. And it was really good. It helped a whole bunch to have, to not, to know that I wasn't alone, because I think that's the, one of the biggest. Lies that the enemy tells us is that I mean, I remember sitting in church marking listening to a sermon and the Enemy kept accusing me.

How can you how can you be sitting in a pew here when you know when you know what you do? When you when you're alone at home, you know what you do How how dare you sit in here and there are lots of times that I agreed with him and said, you know I shouldn't be here. I'm i'm a gross disgusting sinner and you know, I The Lord, after the March of 2008 situation, gave Susie and me an opportunity to have a do over, as we call it.

And there is a verse, I think it's in the book of Amos, that says that the Lord will restore what the locust has eaten. And we, we thoroughly believe that God has done that for us. So that's pretty much my story. Let's see, how long did I do this? From December, give or take, of 1976 to March of 2008. It's a long time, long time to be involved in all this stuff.

And I'm just so glad that I don't do that anymore. Oh my gosh.

[00:16:44] **Dr. Mark Turman:** That is so great to hear God's deliverance in that way. So talk a little bit more, Pedro, about the do over that began in 2008, where there are some key things that happened for this, this experience of restarting.

[00:17:01] **Pedro Reyes:** Between me and Susie?

[00:17:02] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yes.

[00:17:03] **Pedro Reyes:** First of all, we, I had to apologize to her for, for what I did, because I know that this kind of sin really impacts your wife. And I had to apologize to her for doing what I did. And then she had to forgive me. And which he did, and that just started us talking and spending more time together and doing things together and basically almost falling in love all over again.

So Is

[00:17:38] **Dr. Mark Turman:** that Go ahead.

[00:17:40] **Pedro Reyes:** No, I mean, that, that was very, very nice. Refreshing and rewarding for both of us in, in our, in our marriage. Cause when this first happened in 2008 her, one of our daughters and her husband were living with us and we were, Susie and I were still having some strife about my, my issue that she had come to know.

And our daughter thought that Susie was mad at me cause I'd had an affair. And So one thing that Susie recommended that I do is that I tell all four of our kids what I had done then That was a difficult thing to approach my children with him and tell them. Hey your dad Your dad's a screw up.

He's he's severely flawed and but you know, I mean Susie and I just Did that do over? We went on vacations together again and just spent a lot of quality time together. No. Renewed our commitment to go to church. She was always a church goer. I stepped away from church for a long time I just renewed my commitment to get back and right standing with the lord

[00:18:57] **Dr. Mark Turman:** So i'm kind of piecing the story a little bit together in my mind.

So was it was it a consequence of where you were that you ended up not going to seminary? Because of this, or were there other factors that led you away from seminary?

[00:19:13] **Pedro Reyes:** You know, incredibly enough, the time that I was in seminary, I didn't act out at all. Didn't go to any of those places. And it just, I just realized that I don't have the calling to be a pastor or a missionary.

And I didn't want to take up the limited space that they had at seminary for students that were there. Because get rejected because they all the spots were filled. And so here I am. Why am I doing this? Because this is not what God called me to do.

[00:19:43] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Okay. Tell us a little bit more about how you approached your children and how they responded.

Did you, were those one on one conversations or did you have one conversation with all four of them together? How did y'all approach that?

[00:19:57] **Pedro Reyes:** It was all one on one. I think with my daughter, I spoke to both her and her husband. Then my two sons, I spoke to them by themselves. And then my youngest daughter, I spoke to her.

By herself and they were very gracious very forgiving And you know this said just be the man. God wants you to be dead So and it was very good to start seeing the forgiveness of people mark Because I hated myself for so long for doing what I was doing and right That to see god's forgiveness that you read about but to see it Working out in the lives and through the lives of others is very, very encouraging and very humbling.

[00:20:48] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah, and then kind of an astounding thing. You're talking about that sense of isolation, even while you're surrounded by you know, a loving wife and kids and sitting in church, but feeling very alone. In the environment of a church. Can you kind of unpack a little bit more? Just the pressure that you feel to stay isolated when you're in this kind of a dark place and how you, you just felt like for whatever reasons you couldn't reach out to, you know, somebody that was leading the church or some of the other men at church.

Talk a little bit more about how the devil works that sense of isolation and loneliness to keep you in these places of darkness.

[00:21:36] **Pedro Reyes:** He uses shame a lot in what he does. Cause what you're doing to isolate yourself that you, you don't want anyone to know because you don't think anyone else is struggling like this.

It's you're alone. There's no one else, but you, you're, you're the loser. You're the one that has decided to go against God and basically just turn your back on God. So he makes you think that you're alone. And then you don't want to talk to others about it because you don't want to be judged. And you don't want to be thought of as a lower level Christian, I guess, is the way that I would put it.

So you don't, you don't share with others and you stay isolated and it's, it's a lonely, lonely world to live in.

[00:22:28] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Today's a pretty big moment in some ways, which is to talk about your story in the context of a podcast that goes out to a large number of people. But I get the sense that this is not the first time that you've told your story and sought to help people who might be in similar circumstances.

What's that been like for the last 10 or 15 years?

[00:22:52] **Pedro Reyes:** It's been very refreshing. I encourage guys to let every, let others know what's going on, to build a community of guys that they can reach out to in case they're ever tempted to act out again. My basic question to guys when they approach me about it, when it, when it occurs is the same question that Jesus asked the guy who had been crippled for 38 years.

Do you want to get well? You know, and you get lots of excuses you know, this and that. It's like, do you want to get well? And sometimes, maybe more times than not, the question is, no, not really. I don't want to get well. So you really can't help those people. And those, those were the answers that I was given to, to myself, giving to myself when, Laura would ask me that.

Do you want to get well, Pedro? No. No, I don't want to get well. And the thing is, Mark, that God never, ever abandoned me. I could always feel the pressure of, you know, the hound of heaven, the Holy Spirit chasing after me and barking at my heels. Where you going, man? Where you going? You don't need to be doing this.

Why are you doing this? It's very encouraging to have a loving father who will never abandon you.

[00:24:17] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. Even, even when he's coming after us strongly, and like you said, in, in the words of CS Lewis, the hound of heaven coming after us in that, that sense, that. From that time that you became a Christian in, in the seventies and there in the season of college that God said, no, you're mine and I'm going to keep coming for you and, and keep reclaiming you in every good way.

Talk a little bit. Pedro, what is do you have concerns in this current season and over the last 15 years since this pretty significant shift that happened for you and Susie in 2000 and eight? Are there are there rhythms of, of just of wisdom? Are there practices of accountability that you have given yourself to that you have found helpful that help you stay in a healthy and holy place.

[00:25:12] **Pedro Reyes:** One thing that Susie did for me after in 2008 was we got on one of these filtering systems Covenant Eyes.

[00:25:22] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yes.

[00:25:23] **Pedro Reyes:** And that, that helped a lot to whenever, if ever I was tempted, I couldn't because it would report everything to her. And so she was the person that would see everything that I looked at.

And and then just, you know, just having friends that I can talk to in case there's ever the temptation to do something. And fortunately, I haven't had to reach out to very many guys, which is cool.

[00:25:49] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Have you found that, I mean, you've mentioned this a part of your story as well, is that kind of off and on it sounded like the church was a place that might have been a place of hope, but sometimes maybe wasn't as intentional as maybe a church should be.

If, if church leaders, church pastors are listening to this. Do you have suggestions, recommendations of what churches could do to be more more helpful, more intentional about ministering to people who have been confronted with sexual abuse as you were as a child? Some of the things that are going on relative to you know, sexual exposure in young ages or in teenage age.

Problems with pornography are often talked about. If you were advising local church leaders, what would you share with them?

[00:26:41] **Pedro Reyes:** well for For the men who struggle with this particular sin I would recommend churches have groups set up that deal with sexual addiction and So that guys can show up now that I tried to get A group started several times at the church.

I was attending and I think in all the times that I made an appeal to the men Only one guy showed up, and it's because the guys don't, don't want to admit it. The wives would get mad. They may get divorced. Who knows? But I would ask the guys to, to be able to establish a group where the men can come and feel free to share their issues with sexual addiction.

Because I've been, you know, I've read in the past, Mark, that 68 percent of the men who sit in church pews or chairs. struggle with pornography in one form or fashion.

[00:27:40] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Let's go, let's go back a little bit to some of the childhood experiences that laid a foundation for this. Pedro, when did it really start to become clear to you that what had happened within the context of your extended family, these aunts and, and other family members, where did it start to become clear to you that that was really evil?

It was destructive. Were you well into your adult years at that point? Where did that become clear to you?

[00:28:10] **Pedro Reyes:** Probably well into my adult years. And it's just one of those things, Mark, where, where you keep bumping your head up against the wall and you go, why, why am I this way? What, you know, what, what's happened in my life to make me want this, to make me act out this way?

What, what is going on besides the fact that, you know, I was born a sinner. It wasn't probably until after I dealt with my born issues that I realized, okay, yeah, I see. You know, you finally realize, oh yeah, this happened, this happened, this happened, that happened. That's how I got

here. Yeah. You know, if there's any guys out there listening who are struggling with this stuff, man, seek somebody out and don't be ashamed.

God loves you. I, I've tried to find the word shame in the New Testament, Mark. And I think I found it a couple of times where the apostle Paul says that Christ has removed the shame of our sin. Why am I looking for something that God already removed?

[00:29:19] **Dr. Mark Turman:** And, and just, you know, kind of thinking back to the, to that statement that you quoted from Jesus, you know, do you want to get well, I, I just wonder sometimes if people are stuck in these deep places of darkness that part of the reason they might answer no is they just Don't think that there could ever be a place of wellness for them.

[00:29:40] **Pedro Reyes:** What happened to me is when I was in the midst of all this addiction, I remember thinking God, I don't, I don't know if I'll ever get out of this. This is stuck in this until the day I die. Please, please protect my sons. Don't let them fall into this trap. So if I have to live this way, I'll do it.

But I didn't realize that God said, no, you don't, you don't have to live this way either. I've got a way out for you if you want it. It was a surrender that didn't need to be.

[00:30:19] **Dr. Mark Turman:** So do you anticipate, Pedro, that there will be ministry opportunities around your story that extend even into your grandchildren's lives as they get older?

[00:30:33] **Pedro Reyes:** Yes especially with the boys. And I have four grandsons and, you know, I, one of them is You know, the two of them, or three of them, I don't know, are actually getting to the point where they're interested in girls and I've had one of them, I sat him down and I said, Look, you have to look at dating this way.

Treat the girls that you're going to be dating or friends with the same way that you would want guys to treat the woman that you're eventually going to marry. So that's, you know, that's how I'm starting with them. And I'm just, just asking questions and trying to give some advice that I wish somebody had given me when I was their age.

[00:31:18] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. And just trying to, to be more intentional within our families and where possible within our churches, just to, to help our, our friends and our family members understand that God has a much more beautiful plan. And that if we will if we will seek him and also seek that plan that he has a beauty and, and a blessing within the context of our sexuality that is beyond anything that the world has ever tried to offer us.

And and that's something that I think all of us as Christians and as churches, we just have to get better at.

[00:31:56] **Pedro Reyes:** Yes, we do. And I think it's a good idea for pastors to talk about it from the pulpit. I remember when I was it was towards the end of my time. Like in 2005 or six, I was sitting at a church and listening to a pastor and he talked about pornography and addiction.

And man, I just felt so guilty and it got, we just need to talk about it because it's out there and we can't ignore it. And the unfortunate thing is that more women are becoming addicted to pornography, which absolutely surprises me, but it, you know, we're all fallen and that's, that's the way the enemy hits us.

[00:32:37] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Yeah. And we're, we're all vulnerable to all kinds of, of temptation and darkness for sure.

[00:32:43] **Pedro Reyes:** Yeah.

[00:32:43] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Pedro just kind of thinking through this did you ever feel inclined to pursue like formal counseling? Have you encountered people that have found significant help by seeking out counselors to help work through these kinds of addiction issues.

[00:33:01] **Pedro Reyes:** Not really, Mark. I have not. So

[00:33:06] **Dr. Mark Turman:** that's that can be one of the other pathways. Most most pastors are not fully trained or equipped, but they can be resources and connectors. And that's what I would encourage our pastors and church leaders.

[00:33:20] **Pedro Reyes:** That question, I'll get, you know, kind of the backtrack on my answer here.

The night that Susie called me when I was in Arizona and confronted me about our son, finding the website that I'd looked at. I happened to be staying at the house of a long time friend who was a sexual addictions counselor. And after. I hung up from talking with Susie. I went to him and I said, Hey can we dinner tomorrow?

I got something I need to talk to you about. And I've Mark. I fully expected him once I, once he found out what was going on, I fully expected him to tell me you need to pack up and get out of my house.

[00:34:04] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Oh, wow.

[00:34:04] **Pedro Reyes:** And when I ate dinner with him, I started to explain to him what was going on and he said, Hey, Hey.

Don't worry about this. I'll help you get through it once I will be eternally grateful to him for that. So an answer to your question Yes, I have found that this particular gentleman who he and I are still friends Helped me greatly and giving me some ideas as to what to do what not to do So and so yes, definitely there is help out there and some guys like me Need it.

[00:34:42] **Dr. Mark Turman:** That even in that is An incredible example of grace. You know, that it was providential that you, you weren't just at any house. You were at his house. And he was particularly equipped to be a person to come alongside you at that moment. You just, you kind of see the fingerprints of God even in that in that reality.

Exactly.

[00:35:04] **Pedro Reyes:** Yeah.

[00:35:04] **Dr. Mark Turman:** But also in. You know, pretty courageous humility on your part to decide to open up and share with him. You know, that that's pretty good. I remember trying to assist a person a number of years ago around this, and they asked me to go to the counselor with them, help them find a good counselor and then go with them.

And I remember a counselor said something I've never forgotten. He looked at my friend and said to the degree that you're willing to be honest is the degree to which you'll get well. And, and if you can be, if you can combine those two things of humility, faith and And honesty, you'll be amazed at what God can do.

[00:35:43] **Pedro Reyes:** Yes, sure.

[00:35:44] **Dr. Mark Turman:** In every way. And we, we want people to walk away with hope in that way from this conversation.

[00:35:52] **Pedro Reyes:** There's hope. There's lots of hope if you just reach out. Yeah.

[00:35:57] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Before we land our conversation I know there's, I got a, I have curiosity about your involvement with the Texas Rangers as a chaplain.

Tell us a little bit about that and how did you get into that? And what does that look like for you as a ministry?

[00:36:11] **Pedro Reyes:** It to, to be honest with you, Mark, when all this went down in March of 2008 I thought that God was mad at me. And you know, that I'd walked away for so long. That he was, he was done with me.

So I expected kind of like the, when is it, when is the shoe going to fall? When is God going to let me know how angry he is at me? I had what I call a my lake experience and I was fishing with a friend. And it was a, it's March 31st, 2008. Never forget the date. And it was a particularly rough day on the lake.

Lots of wind, lots of, lots of waves. And I'd lost my balance in the boat and I thought I was going to fall in the water. I was dog tired. We'd been fishing for three hours, gotten beaten up by the wind, by the waves. And I was dog tired and I thought I was going to fall in. And I remember I lost my balance.

I'm rocking back, walking backwards. Fixing to land in the water, I thought and I say to God, this is how this is how you you're going to punish you. You're killing me today. I'm going to drive today. And all of a sudden before I go overboard, I feel a pressure on both my shoulders and they sits me down in the boat.

And I looked at my friend. who was with me. He had no idea what was going on. So I feel like that was the Lord touching me saying, I'm not going to kill you today. I love you. I have something for you to do. So I'm about two weeks later, not even that long. Really? I'm sitting in front of my computer and the thought comes into my head.

Call the Rangers about being a chaplain. What? I don't even know what a chaplain did. So, I'm sitting there again. That, that, no, that crazy. I'm not, no. And then it hits me again. call the Rangers about being a chaplain. And I said I've heard it twice. I better do it. So I called, found their number, called.

It happened that the lady who answered the phone knew the chaplain for the Rangers, the main team chaplain and knew how to get in touch with him. So I called him and I said, Hey, I don't know, man, I'm I'm supposed to call you about being a chaplain. So he guided me. into filling an application with a, with the group called Baseball Chapel.

And I met, I first was told, Oh no, we just filled a position. So we're not looking for anybody, but we'll keep your application on file. Okay. All right. It's fine. And then I get a call not too much later. They said, Hey, we're looking for a Spanish speaking chaplain or the Frisco Rough Riders, which is their double 18.

I said, okay. So we met and about the 10th of April or something like that. I went to my first chapel with the, on Sunday and I've been with them ever since. Fixing to begin my 18th year with them. And it's been great and it's been awesome. I get to combine my love of Jesus with my love of baseball and my love of sharing the gospel with these boys.

[00:39:25] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Wow. And what a, what a great, great testimony that is that when, when you think that God is angry with you, when you think that God can't and won't use you, he turns things around and you know, it makes me, makes me think of that verse out of Psalm 37, it gives you the desires of your heart. Yeah. To be able to align.

Three things that you love like that and, and to bring it into this season of your life after a lot of struggle and a lot of pain.

[00:39:53] **Pedro Reyes:** Yeah. To, to, to realize back then that my secret was finally out, you know, that I've, 'cause you live in fear. You, you live, you know, is she gonna look on the computer and then see something that I've looked at that then, then she's gonna get mad at me.

Will my children find out and that's exactly what happened. And then you go, okay, my secret's out. Thank God It's lost its power But now god, you're you're pretty much done with me, aren't you? i'm i've wasted my life and then he goes I'm, not done with you yet.

[00:40:28] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Uh before we before we finish i'm gonna I want to give you a a moment It's just you know part of this story is a big part of this story is just the love and loyalty that susie has walked with you in as your faithful wife.

What do you want to say about her before we finish up today?

[00:40:47] **Pedro Reyes:** She is God's greatest gift to me and on earth. And she's the mother of our four grandkids, our four children, grandmother to 10 grand, great grandmother to 10 grandchildren, a good helpmate. She takes care of me. Way beyond what I deserve and like I like to tell my friends and my friends like to tell me that I Outkicked my coverage when I married her So she has definitely been God's gift and it is a way that they He puts flesh on his forgiveness when when she can forgive me for doing what I did for so long So

[00:41:33] **Dr. Mark Turman:** yeah And it's a good word.

And I know that there'll probably be some spouses, some wives that listen to this podcast and they're living this experience right now. And they're wondering if there can ever be a different kind of life for them and for their marriage and that type of thing. And we, we hope that y'all's testimony will give them hope to reach out and to seek God's help and to find resources.

In and beyond their church that can be helpful to them. And as we finish up today, just want to thank you, Pedro, for being open and sharing your story with us and your journey of grace and how God has worked through all of this to bring you to such a wonderful and great place. Both in your marriage and just in your heart and soul and also in ministry We're just so grateful for that.

We will include in the show notes a link to covenant eyes. It's a great resource we will also try to connect you to some other resources that we have On our website at denisonforum. We've collected some other podcasts as well as some other writing that we've done in this area how to become free from sexual addiction how to live in the beauty and In glory and freedom of God's plan.

We have some articles that might be helpful to our listeners and in that way as well. And before we go when I want to just offer a prayer and maybe Pedro, would you be willing to offer that prayer for our audience? As we wrap up today.

[00:43:02] **Pedro Reyes:** Sure. Jesus, thank you for this time that Mark and I can be together and that he's willing to listen to my story without making all kinds of faces at me.

And I just thank you for your gift of grace and forgiveness as we walk through life and encounter various trials and temptations and just difficult times in life that you are always with us, that you have promised to be with us. To the end of the age that you promised to never abandon us or forsake us.

And you're, you're right there with us. You're the father in Luke 15, waiting for the prodigal son to come back. So thank you that you never gave up on us and father God help us to never. For us to never give up on ourselves. Thank you for this ministry that Denison Forum has. Pray that you are glorified through this time and that others will be blessed and be able to overcome this addiction that impacts so many of us.

Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

[00:44:07] **Dr. Mark Turman:** Thank you, Pedro. And thank you to our audience for following and being a part of today's conversation. If this has been useful to you, please rate and review us on your podcast platform, share it with others, obviously family and friends that might find this conversation helpful. And as always, we're grateful for your prayers as well as for your financial support.

You may remember that Denison Ministries, Denison Forum is a donor supported ministry. You enable us to offer biblical, relevant, and free resources to others because of your support. And we're grateful and we hope you have a great new new year. Pedro, thank you again. We'll see you soon.

[00:44:46] **Pedro Reyes:** Thanks Mark.

Appreciate the time.