

Elite SEAL Team 6 Operator Shares His Powerful Encounter With God

Eddie Penney, a Marine and Navy SEAL who served with [the elite SEAL Team 6](#), had previously opened up on The Shawn Ryan Show about his dramatic transformation from a life defined by violence to one centered on faith in Jesus Christ.

Now, his testimony is going viral yet again.

Penney admitted that before his conversion, he viewed Jesus as someone to fear. "I didn't know you," he recalled saying to God during his first real prayer. "You know my past. You know how you scare me."

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His story, shared in his book *Unafraid*, describes years spent in combat zones where killing became second nature. He said he reached a point where he was "addicted to taking the evil off this planet," but the trauma and guilt that followed left him searching for something more.

After returning home, Penney's life began to unravel. He battled anger, alcohol and isolation until his then-girlfriend urged him to attend a men's retreat in Oklahoma. "I didn't know it was a Christian camp," he said. "It just sounded like a bunch of guys shooting, eating and hanging out."

The retreat, based on John Eldredge's *Wild at Heart*, focused on the idea that men are designed to be protectors and spiritual leaders. Penney said the teaching about fatherhood, leadership and the battle between good and evil started to affect him. "Every movie has three things," he said, recalling

one session. “There’s a hero, a villain and a love story. That’s exactly what the Bible is—Jesus, Satan and God’s love for us.”

During the weekend, Penney noticed many men breaking down in tears as they prayed. He struggled to understand it until he faced his own moment of surrender. “You can take a blade and stick it in some flesh, but you’re going to have a hard time going outside by yourself and praying,” he said. “And I had that conversation with myself. I went out there and said my first words to God ever.”

He described sitting on a rock as the morning sun hit his face. “This warm sunbeam just nailed my face and warmed my whole body,” he said. “It just happened right when I started talking to Him.” Though he brushed it off as coincidence at the time, he later recognized it as [the first moment he felt God’s presence.](#)

On the final night of the retreat, a young man approached him and asked to pray over him. “As soon as he put his hand on me and started praying, I lost it,” Penney said. “It was starting to make sense. It was all making sense to me.”

The next morning, as the worship team played “10,000 Reasons” by Matt Redman, something inside him changed. “The beat of that song and the words of that song rocked my body,” he said. “It was different. Something changed. I felt different and I started to smile. That’s what God did to me right then and there.”

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By the end of the retreat, the organizers publicly recognized him for the transformation they saw. He was given a cross-shaped pen carved from olive wood from Israel. “They said, ‘We can tell a change in you,’” Penney said. “I started crying right there on stage in front of all these men, and I didn’t care.”

Driving home afterward, Penney said he couldn’t stop crying as he tried to tell his girlfriend about the weekend. “I felt so loved,” he said. “It was just making sense to me. I could feel it inside.”

Later, still unsure if his salvation was real, Penney asked God for a sign. “I was sitting at a red light saying, ‘Show me I’m saved,’” he said. “And I look over to this sign, and all I see is one word: saved.”

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Today, Penney says he knows that moment confirmed everything. After years of living by the sword, he found peace in surrendering his life to God. “I was about 80% sure that I found God,” he said. “But now I know—I did.”

To listen to Eddie Penney’s testimony, [click here \(viewer discretion: strong language\)](#).

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a background in journalism from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of [The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man’s Commentary](#) and a contributor to Charisma magazine.

Egypt's 'Great Transfiguration' Project Threatens Ancient Mount Sinai Monastery

For more than 14 centuries, the stillness of the Sinai desert has guarded one of Christianity's oldest treasures: St. Catherine's Monastery. The ancient sanctuary rests [at the base of Mount Sinai](#), where Scripture tells us that Moses encountered God in fire and cloud. The monastery has survived empires, invasions and the slow crawl of time, continuing its sacred rhythm of prayer and preservation while the world around it modernized. Now that silence is being drowned out by bulldozers and blueprints.

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According to recent reports discussed on the Ninjas Are Butterflies podcast, the Egyptian government has seized dozens of land parcels surrounding the monastery in what it calls the Great Transfiguration Project. The sweeping plan aims to "modernize" the region with hotels, shopping centers, villas, cable cars and visitor attractions. The move followed a May 2025 decision from Egypt's Court of Appeals granting state control over 71 parcels long associated with the monastery. What the monks once cultivated as holy ground and refuge is now being prepped for concrete and commerce.

The monastery, built in the sixth century, is not only a cornerstone of Christian heritage but also a UNESCO World

Heritage site. It is home to ancient manuscripts, chapels, gardens and the graves of generations of monks. Despite its protected status, large portions of the surrounding landscape have reportedly been demolished or altered, with graves relocated to make way for parking lots. Egypt's leaders insist the project will boost tourism and revitalize the area, but to those who understand the monastery's spiritual weight, such plans feel more like desecration than transformation.

The Orthodox Church of Greece and many in the Christian world have condemned the move, calling it a violation of sacred history. For them, this is not just about land. It is about reverence. It is about what happens when the modern appetite for development tramples the timeless sanctity of places where heaven once touched earth.

The podcast's hosts reflected on how strange it feels to see holy ground treated as commercial real estate, especially when the site has stood for more than a millennium as a refuge of faith. The irony of naming the project "The Great Transfiguration" was not lost on them. The title, drawn from one of Scripture's most radiant moments, is now being used to justify luxury hotels and malls. To many believers, it feels like a spiritual inversion, turning a mount of revelation into a monument of profit.

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Their discussion also raised questions of power and ownership. Who really controls these ancient places? Organizations such as UNESCO, while preserving history, can also represent a global management of heritage that feels increasingly detached

from faith and meaning. The world may protect these sites in name, but not necessarily in spirit.

There was also mention of an ongoing debate about [whether the traditional Mount Sinai](#) is the true one described in Exodus. Some researchers believe the real mountain lies elsewhere, its location obscured by centuries of misidentification. Yet even if the site in Egypt is not the biblical Mount Sinai, the monastery's historical and spiritual value remains undeniable. The sacred should not have to prove its authenticity to deserve protection.

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In the end, the loss being witnessed at Sinai is not only architectural. It is spiritual erosion. What is being built in its place may dazzle the eyes, but it dulls the soul. When sacred history is paved over for modern convenience, humanity loses more than old stones and desert silence. It loses a piece of itself – a memory of what holiness looks like when it stands unmoved by the tides of time.

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Christian Ministry Founder and Daughter Killed in Tragic Plane Crash

A tragic plane crash in Coral Springs, Florida, claimed the lives of Christian ministry founder Alexander Wurm, 53, and his 22-year-old daughter, Serena, as they were en route to Jamaica on a humanitarian mission.

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As reported by Fox News, the Beech B100 aircraft went down about five minutes after taking off from Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport on Monday morning. The plane, which was headed to Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay, Jamaica, crashed into a waterway in a residential neighborhood. Aerial footage showed downed palm trees and wreckage scattered across yards near a retention pond.

Wurm founded Ignite the Fire Ministries, an organization dedicated to spreading the gospel and providing aid to those in need. The ministry said in a statement that he was “known for his warmth and unwavering kindness” and had “tirelessly worked to bring faith, compassion, and support to those in need.” They added that “his legacy of faith and compassion touched countless lives.”

[His daughter, Serena, was following in her father's footsteps](#) and was described by the organization as “a beacon of empathy

and hope, inspiring all with her commitment to humanitarian work.”

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Alexander and Serena are survived by Alexander’s wife, Candace, their son James, 17, and daughter Christiana, 20.

The Coral Springs Police Department confirmed to Fox News Digital that two people were killed in the crash at approximately 10:19 a.m. on Nov. 10. “The investigation is ongoing. We are working closely with the Federal Aviation Administration,” the department said.

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[As their community grieves this heartbreaking loss,](#) Christians everywhere are urged to lift the Wurm family in prayer, that they would find comfort, strength and peace in Christ amid their sorrow. Let this tragedy also remind us of the sacred call to live—and, if necessary, to lay down our lives—in faithful pursuit of the mission God has placed before us.

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'Gonna Look Like a Genocide': Florida Man Arrested After Allegedly Threatening Church Attacks

Authorities in Florida arrested a man accused of making violent online threats toward churches, raising renewed concern about the growing wave of hostility [targeting Christian institutions in America](#). The arrest comes as faith communities continue to mourn tragedies like the 2023 Covenant School shooting in Nashville, where a gunman targeted a Christian elementary school, killing six people.

According to a Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office affidavit, Michael Iaboni, 32, was taken into custody after a tip was sent to Crime Stoppers. Investigators said Iaboni had posted alarming videos on social media after being fired from his job, expressing violent intent toward places of worship.

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As reported by Fox News, Iaboni posted and later deleted a video on Nov. 4 in which he said, "I got fired and I'm fired up." Authorities said he went on to make threats such as, "It's all kill shot," while mimicking holding a rifle and making gunfire sounds. In another video, he allegedly stated, "Christ Fellowship is on my list to hit also," and added, "My end game is taking you out... It's the ones that no longer fear death. I expect death to come fast and very violent."

Investigators said he made another threatening post on Nov. 7, writing that it was “gonna look like a genocide.” The report also noted that Iaboni lived about 1.5 miles from Christ Fellowship, and had recently signed up for a church event on Nov. 2. Church staff told police they had seen him “frequenting the church recently.” He is currently charged with written threats to kill or do bodily harm and is being held on a \$250,000 bond.

These threats highlight a growing and sobering reality: faith-based organizations—churches, schools and synagogues—are increasingly becoming targets. As hostility toward believers rises, churches across the nation are taking proactive measures to safeguard their congregations.

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Practical steps include:

- **Establishing safety teams** trained in both security response and de-escalation.
- **Installing security cameras and controlled entry systems** to monitor who comes and goes during services.
- **Partnering with local law enforcement** for regular patrols, active shooter drills and community coordination.
- **Training ushers and greeters** to identify suspicious behavior and maintain communication during gatherings.
- **Creating clear evacuation and lockdown plans** to ensure safety without instilling fear among worshippers.

While security measures can help protect the body, the greater battle remains spiritual. Scripture warns that [violence and persecution will escalate](#) as humanity nears the end of the age. Jesus foretold that in the Great Tribulation, believers

will be hated and even killed for His name. The increasing hostility toward Jews and Christians today foreshadows that coming period, when persecution will reach its global peak.

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Christians, this is a time for both vigilance and faith. As evil grows bolder, the church must remain steadfast—both in physical readiness and in spiritual endurance. These events are not meant to inspire fear but to awaken faith, reminding the faithful that Christ's return is near and that His followers must stand firm, shining light into a darkening world.

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Big Tech, Big Money and the Hidden Spiritual War for Our Kids

SkyWatchTV CEO and author Joe Horn says America is in the midst of a "Luciferian assault," a global effort to corrupt, confuse, and [destroy the innocence of children](#) through technology, pornography and spiritual deception.

“The reason that I called it a Luciferian assault,” Horn said in an interview with Charisma Media, “is because this is everything from big money, big tech, big AI, the attempt to normalize this stuff to purposefully indoctrinate them.”

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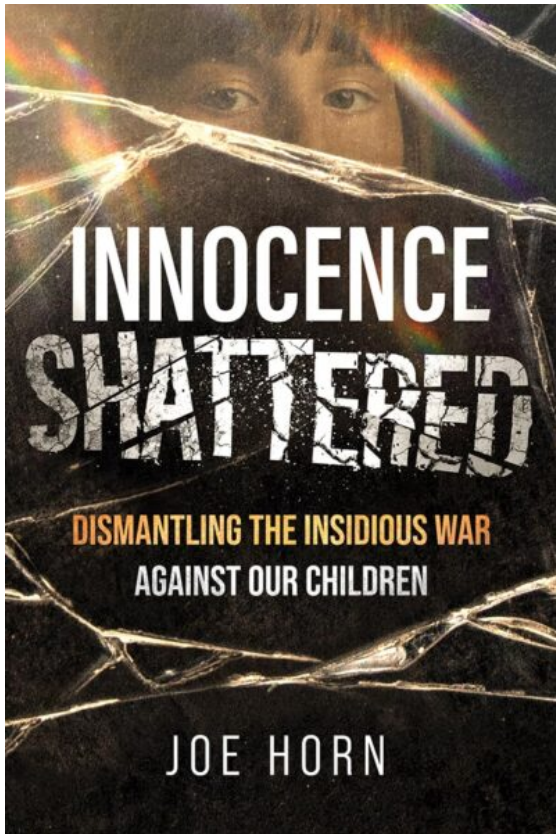
Horn described a growing system that works to “intercept a child before he’s familiar with his calling,” dismantling the family structure and replacing it with artificial intelligence, addictive entertainment and digital isolation. “Lucifer takes pleasure in the suffering of children because of their innocence,” he said. “It is his ultimate treasure. It is his most coveted win.”

The Foster Care Crisis

Horn highlighted the foster care system as one of the most vulnerable fronts in this war. “There’s 420,000 children in the foster care system right now,” he said. “Ninety percent of these kids are statistically guaranteed to experience at least two to five types of abuse.”

He said that eight to 12 children go missing every day from foster programs across the nation, often without any record or investigation. “No chain of custody. Nobody’s looking for these kids,” Horn warned, calling it a “system beyond a system” that allows abuse and disappearance to go unchecked.

While acknowledging that the foster care system itself is not the enemy, he said it is “exploited by predators” because of underfunding and lack of oversight. “People have made an expertise out of exploiting those blind spots,” Horn said.



[Order Joe Horn's New Book, "Innocence Shattered" on Amazon.com!](#)

Pornography and the Church's Silence

Horn also pointed to pornography as one of the chief engines driving this spiritual decay, describing it as "an industry that fuels the demand" for exploitation. "This is why mass murderers and people that have enacted assaults would admit on death row that porn was one of the fastest ways that they progressed in their mental deterioration," he said.

Even more alarming, Horn noted that the church has become complicit through silence and hidden sin. Citing Barna Research, he said, "Fifty-seven percent of our senior pastors and 64% of our youth pastors admit to at least currently or sometime in their past struggling with pornography."

He warned, "With every click, with every view, you're indulging in an industry that is responsible for the demand that is on the rise for paid-for interactions with children."

The Church's Calling

Horn said the modern church has replaced compassion and outreach with spectacle. "We've made it about fog machines and rock concerts," he said. "But what is the gospel? If you look at the most fundamental, day-one responsibility of the church, [it's taking care of the orphans and the widows.](#)"

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Quoting Scripture, Horn reminded believers that Jesus calls His followers to care for "the least of these." He added, "Where is the church with this massive crisis? We are entertaining ourselves to death."

Real Hope and Restoration

Horn's message is not without hope. His family's Whispering Ponies Ranch, a ministry underwritten by SkyWatchTV, provides rehabilitation for abused and trafficked children. "You cannot divorce the supernatural," he said. "True rehabilitation comes only through Jesus Christ."

He encouraged viewers to take action through prayer, ministry and support for organizations defending the vulnerable. "Father God, I'm ready to give you my yes," he wrote in [Innocence Shattered](#). "Maybe I can't build a ranch, but I can start a prayer group at my church. Prayer changes things."

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Horn's challenge is simple yet profound: recognize the battle, reject apathy and return to the mission of protecting the innocent. "We battle not against flesh and blood," he said, "but against powers and principalities. And it's time the church starts acting like it."

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Michael Knowles Praises Nicki Minaj for Backing Trump's Stand for Persecuted Christians

Political commentator Michael Knowles didn't hold back his admiration recently—for both President Donald Trump and an unlikely ally, pop icon Nicki Minaj. In a recent segment of The Michael Knowles Show, he celebrated their courage for spotlighting one of the most overlooked crises in the world today: [the mass persecution of Christians in Nigeria](#).

“It takes courage to come out if you're Nicki Minaj and endorse Trump in this way,” Knowles said. “And it's so beautiful to see her care about this issue and really promote this issue.” He praised Minaj for showing genuine compassion at a time when few in entertainment dare to speak openly about faith or Christian suffering.

Reading this made me feel a deep sense of gratitude. We live in a country where we can freely worship God.

No group should ever be persecuted for practicing their religion. We don't have to share the same beliefs in order for us to respect each other.

Numerous countries all... pic.twitter.com/2M5sPivi0u

– Nicki Minaj (@NICKIMINAJ) [November 1, 2025](#)

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Knowles read from President Trump's statement declaring that Christianity faces an existential threat in Nigeria, where thousands have been slaughtered by radical Islamists. Trump vowed to designate Nigeria as a "Country of Particular Concern" and ordered Congress to investigate, declaring the U.S. "cannot stand by while such atrocities are happening."

To Knowles, Trump's stance wasn't just political—it was philosophical. "When Donald Trump says he's America first, some people hear that and they say that means he's an isolationist," Knowles said. "No. I've long said Trump is an imperialist. He recognizes America's role throughout the world."

Knowles argued that Trump's foreign policy shows prudence and strength—a willingness to defend American interests while standing up for moral truth. "He wants to preserve America's capital, maintain the world order, establish peace and prioritize American citizens over everyone else," Knowles said. "But he does care about everyone else."

He also tied Trump's call to action to America's moral

identity. “We’re a Christian country and they’re Christians, and we have a solidarity with them because of that,” Knowles said. To him, protecting persecuted believers abroad isn’t interventionism—[it’s moral responsibility.](#)

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The host went further, noting how this moment challenges old divisions between “isolationists” and “interventionists” on the right. He suggested that many who once opposed “forever wars” might now support limited humanitarian missions to stop atrocities like those in Nigeria.

Knowles also drew a striking historical parallel, saying America’s current turmoil—economic strain, social unrest and political chaos—feels eerily familiar. “It’s the ’70s. We’re living in the ’70s,” he said. “Everyone’s on drugs, there’s political violence in the streets and we have radical ideologies.” Yet amid the instability, he argued, Americans are rediscovering their sense of purpose and principle.

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Knowles closed his remarks with a reflection on Trump’s political instinct and philosophical depth, saying his leadership defies the usual partisan labels. “Every time you try to pin Trump down into some stupid faction or ideology, he slips away from you,” he said. “That means he’s a good politician and a good statesman—something conservatives would do well to learn from.”

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[Common Man's Commentary](#) and a contributor to *Charisma magazine*.

Glenn Beck Delivers a National and Spiritual Warning About America's Future

"Hello, America. Tonight, I want to issue a warning," Glenn Beck said in his recent special on Glenn Beck TV. "There are multiple things happening in the world right now, and I think they're all building toward one really, really super devastating outcome."

Beck said the world is facing "a manipulation campaign and a spiritual campaign." "We are meant to be divided," he warned, pointing to New York politics and Africa's violence as examples of the same unseen struggle.

Political Islam and the New York Race

"New York City just had the most important election they've ever had. Socialism," Beck said, referencing state rep. [Zohran Mamdani's win](#). He played comments from activist Linda Sarsour: "It is our Muslim American communities... The unity and justice fund PAC, which is the CAIR super PAC, was the largest institutional donor."

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“So the majority of the money... came from CAIR,” Beck said. He called it part of “the Islamist cooperation with the radical left and groups like the Democratic Socialists of America. Even Antifa marches side by side with people like this in the streets.”

“Never before in this country have Marxists and Islamists joined forces as they are right now,” he added. “This never ends well and history has proven it.”

Nigeria’s Overlooked Genocide

[“They are systematically killing the Christians in Nigeria,”](#) Beck said. “They’ve killed over 100,000 since 2009. They’ve burned 18,000 churches.”

Bill Maher was quoted saying, “This is so much more of a genocide attempt than what is going on in Gaza. They are literally attempting to wipe out the Christian population of an entire country.”

Author Johnny Moore told Beck, “If you are a jihadist... the place you go in this time is to the Sahel in Africa. They go to entire villages. They kill people in the most grotesque ways possible.” He described one family—Patience, Revelation and Rejoice, ages 13, 6 and 4—who “were mowed down” with their village.

“In this part of the world they don’t even give them the chance to convert. They just kill all of them,” Moore said. “It has been the most dangerous place in the world to be a Christian.”

Beck noted, “The jihadist attackers include groups like Boko Haram and the Fulani Muslim herders.” Yet, he said, “Al

Jazeera... feels so adamant on stating that this isn't as bad as it's being reported."

Manipulation and Distraction

Beck argued that the same Middle Eastern states funding extremism abroad are influencing American institutions. "The Middle Eastern Gulf Kingdoms... collectively give way more money than AIPAC and directly have their fingers into our universities to the tune of multiple billions," he said.

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He warned that "political Islam marches on in places like New York, Michigan, Minnesota, everywhere. And the leftists are shoulder-to-shoulder with Islamists in the streets all across the country."

"Take Them at Their Word"

Moore said moderate Muslim nations have been pleading with the West to recognize the threat. "Yes, there is a global coordinated effort led by certain Islamic activists," he said. "The people warning Americans the most are our Muslim friends and allies around the world saying you're not taking this seriously enough."

"When people say that they want to kill you, you should take them at their word," Beck concluded. "That's why I've been right about a lot of things... when people like that say they're going to kill you, take them at their word."

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"This is a global strategy," he said. "We are watching Islamist forces positioning all over the world in the Western

world and just ready for the right time to stand up and say, 'You're ours.' If we don't wake up now, history will repeat itself."

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Fox News Host Jesse Watters Reveals Spiritual Transformation After Charlie Kirk's Death

When tragedy strikes, it often reveals the hand of God working behind the scenes—turning what the enemy meant for evil into something [that brings people closer to Him](#). That's exactly what Fox News host Jesse Watters says happened after the shocking assassination of his friend and fellow conservative voice, Charlie Kirk.

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In a heartfelt segment on Fox & Friends, Watters opened up about how Kirk's death changed him on a personal and spiritual level. His remarks have since been featured in a CBN News

reaction video that highlights how God is moving across the nation in the aftermath of the tragedy.

“You’re very perceptive,” Watters told the Fox & Friends hosts when asked about the change they saw in him. “I didn’t think I showed myself that clearly, but it has. It has made me seek a deeper connection with God.”

Before the assassination, Watters admitted he considered himself what he called a “C&E Christian”—someone who only attended church on Christmas and Easter. But now, that casual faith has turned into something real. “I went to Sunday school as a kid,” he said. “But I found myself reading more about Jesus Christ. And you know, [my life has changed since this happened.](#)”

Watters went on to describe not only his own spiritual transformation, but also a broader awakening he senses across the nation. “The country has changed since this happened,” he said. “And you can’t not feel that. Everyone feels it. I know you guys feel it, too.”

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He encouraged others to protect the spark that’s been ignited. “It’s something that you have to nourish, like a flame, and protect and keep,” Watters said. “Because that spirit of Charlie Kirk is still alive in all of us.”

As CBN News reported, Watters’ words come amid an undeniable cultural shift—Bible sales are up, church attendance is rising and even Gen Z’s interest in Scripture has spiked. Out of unimaginable loss, God is breathing life into a generation

once thought to be drifting away.

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Watters' story is a living reminder that the Lord can use even the darkest moments to awaken hearts. Through tragedy, He is stirring revival. Through pain, He is revealing purpose. And through it all, the flame of faith—once dim—is burning brighter than ever.

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Former Adult Film Star Jenna Jameson Leaves Sinful Past to Follow Jesus

Redemption is the central thread woven through Scripture. None of us come into God's love clean. Every one of us has a story that includes sin, shame, weakness or rebellion. The beauty of the gospel is that Jesus specializes in taking broken, messy, sinful people and making them new again. That redemption is not hypothetical. We see it every day in real lives being transformed. There is no such thing as too far gone when God's grace breaks through.

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Jenna Jameson, once one of the world's most recognized adult film performers, has stepped into that story of redemption. She shared openly about her past, and about her new passion: pointing others to the hope she found in Christ. "After decades of being known for my body and sin, getting baptized and helping others find Jesus too," she wrote over a video posted to Instagram Reels.



[View this post on Instagram](#)



A post shared by Jenna Jameson (@jennacantlose)

Jameson's representative told Fox News Digital, "Jenna is being loud and proud about her walk with Jesus Christ. She believes that boldly proclaiming her love for Him is helping open so many people's eyes to the truth that no one is beyond redemption," as reported by Fox News.

Her story has not been linear. She converted to Judaism in 2015 during her relationship with Israeli businessman Lior Bitton. She left Twitter – now X – after antisemitic attacks and attacks on her sobriety. "My sobriety and faith are the most important things to me. I am being attacked for my faith. Being Jewish. I must protect my love for G-d above everything," she said at the time.

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Jameson also battled addiction for years and publicly marked her recovery journey, celebrating four years sober in 2019. "We do recover. We do overcome. We do rebuild," she wrote. "We still have scars. They fade. The sun begins to shine and close out the shadows. Trust returns."

People like to believe fame, wealth or notoriety disqualify someone from the grace of God. But her story exposes that lie. If God's forgiveness cannot reach people who have been where she's been, then the cross is not strong enough. But it is.

Scripture says God delights in showing mercy.

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Jameson's transformation is a reminder: the grace that saved her is the same grace available to every person reading this sentence. No matter where you've been or what you've done, Jesus still restores.

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Church Leaders Allegedly Beaten and Tortured Before Being Jailed for Christ

Three leaders of an [unregistered Christian house church](#) in Xi'an, China have been arrested again on fraud charges by Chinese communist authorities, raising renewed alarm about religious freedom in the country.

Pastor Lian Xuliang, Pastor Lian Changnian and church member Fu Juan were taken into custody last Sunday "by the First Branch of the Xi'an Municipal Public Security Bureau," according to ChinaAid. The group says the three are currently held at the Weiyang District Detention Center.

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This development is a repeat of their previous arrests, as reported by The Christian Post. The same three were detained on similar charges on Aug. 17, 2022, and held for nearly three years before being released on bail in April 2025.

Their church, known as the Church of Abundance or Fengsheng Church, said the case was already tried this summer. “What is shocking is that while awaiting the verdict, the authorities took the three individuals away again and detained them,” the church said in a statement.

ChinaAid reports that authorities have used standard tithes and offerings from house church members as the basis for fraud accusations. One witness identified by prosecutors as a victim has publicly said she was forced to testify and is now seeking to clear their names.

The 2022 closure of the church was tied to a broader national strategy to force Protestant congregations to join the state-run Three-Self Patriotic Movement. At the time, the church was labeled an “illegal social organization” and accused of “endangering national security.”

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Relatives have reported violence throughout the case. The wife of Pastor Lian said her husband showed visible injuries after being beaten. “His eyes were bloodshot and there was dried blood in the corner of his eyes,” she said. “His arms and

hands were bruised and swollen.”

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[**U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio**](#) condemned the move, saying the actions show how the Chinese Communist Party “exercises hostility towards Christians who reject Party interference in their faith and choose to worship at unregistered house churches.”

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