

From Cocaine and HIV to Rape and Abuse, Former Homosexuals Share Radical Encounters With God

Edward Byrd and Joshua Buchanan emanate light and joy. They laugh easily, encourage freely and share what God has done for them without hesitation.

They're friends now, bonded over how Christ set them free from homosexuality.

In the last episode of *Overcomers: Leaving LGBT*, the duo joined *Charisma News* to share their testimonies.

"From the time I was 13, I got physically abused by a close family member," Byrd says. "And I will always wonder, like, why was I the target of his anger, like, he would lash out on me? ... All those things just created this, like sadness, this brokenness, this emptiness, this abandonment. And so I totally started to create a whole other person. I changed my name, I lost a lot of weight, I started dressing more feminine or becoming more gender fluid. My name was Remy at the time. I started wearing makeup, my hair was long eyelashes, I was doing the whole thing. And I was just out here having this whole persona, being very promiscuous in the clubs, like going to the club like Sunday to Sunday, like partying."

But God has a way of shining High light into the darkest places.

"While I was in this club, and this lady had comes in the club and she touched me, prophesies to me while I'm in the club. And she says, 'You know that there's a light inside of you. And God has a purpose and a plan for you,'" Byrd recalls.

Buchanan's story started out a little bit differently.

"When I was 10 years old, my parents ended up splitting up and getting a divorce," Buchanan says. "And coming from a broken home, it really takes a toll on you, even at a young age. Because I felt like I couldn't do anything. There was nothing that I could do, and was just a part of life. And it kind of hit me really quick. And so in the process of all of this, not growing up in church, and not having a relationship with God, and not really knowing who He was, I turned to so many things to try to find love.

"So my journey kind of started out with experimenting with drugs," he continues. "At that point in time in my house. I grew up with my dad and I was exposed to marijuana at a young age. And so I kind of saw that, and there was something inside of me that wanted to try it. And so I ended up starting with, you know, smoking marijuana and taking pills and snorting pills. And just getting into this whole place of trying to fill these voids in my life."

Buchanan was diagnosed with HIV in his early 20s, which led him to the altar and an incredible experience with the One who made him.

Listen to the podcast to hear what God did next for each of these men.