

How a Single Statement Helped Redirect Tenth Avenue North Frontman's Life

Tenth Avenue North lead singer Mike Donehey knows a little about mistakes. He says that even as a preschooler, he was “a monsoon with feet.” On a trip to Disney World when he was 3, he says, his mother put him on a leash to help keep him safe.

“She looks over, and a kid who looks just like me goes walking past her. She looks down at the end of the leash, and I had taken the leash off and put it on another kid,” Donehey tells Dr. Steve Greene on a popular episode of the *Greenelines* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. “That’s the sort of mischief you’re dealing with—a mastermind at 3 years old.”

And Donehey kept on what seemed to be a course of destruction until seventh grade, he says, when his middle school principal played a big part in changing his life. This man had plenty of opportunity, because the future Dove Award winner was sent to his office a record 42 times.

Despite this, Donehey says, that principal treated him not as he was, but as he knew he could be. When the principal caught him stealing candy by snaking his arm up through the vending machine, Donehey expected the worst.

“Michael, you’re telling me your integrity is worth 50 cents. I always thought it was worth more than that,” Donehey says the principal told him. “And then he just walked out.”

To this day, Donehey can’t steal even a drop of soda from a fountain machine, he says. “His voice rings in my head: ‘Is your integrity worth \$1?’”

“And it wouldn’t be for years later that I would write a song

that says, 'You are more than the choices that you've made/ You are more than the sum of your past mistakes/ You've been remade,' Donehey says, referring to his popular hit "You Are More."

For more from Mike Donehey about dealing with mistakes and regret in a healthy way that allows you to live out God's divine destiny, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* here. And be sure to subscribe to *Greenelines* for more inspiring, encouraging stories. {eo}

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