

## ***An Expanded Vision: More Lives to Reach – Dan Hitz***

*Dan has been the director of Reconciliation Ministries since 2003. This article describes his journey from growing up with sexual abuse and emotional brokenness, to reaching out to others who are hurting and walking with them to Jesus. Dan shares his expanded vision to reach more lives for Christ and invites you to join him in the journey.*

**I stand in amazement as I ponder the vision the Lord has birthed in my heart to reach more lives with the healing power of Jesus Christ.** None of us have the ability to do anything of any eternal value, yet together in Christ we can accomplish great things for Him. I wanted to share my journey from the depths of despair to where the Lord has brought me to now. I also want to invite you to share in the calling He has given. The calling to reach out to those who are bound by sexual sin and the trauma of abuse. You can have a part in seeing the transformational power of Jesus Christ set captives free and restore their lives. Everyone has a story. Everyone can have a testimony of God's redemption and restoration. Your journey can bring hope to others.



**I was the fifth child to a paranoid schizophrenic mother and an overwhelmed father. Before I entered kindergarten I was sexually abused by my mother.** My heart was shattered in the process and I dealt with the abuse by trying to turn off my emotions. When I was in junior high school, the abuse started up again and grew progressively more aggressive. I was pretty emotionally and sexually messed up and began to struggle with homosexuality, emotional isolation and bulimia. **I was in complete bondage to these things – my mind was constantly fixated on gay images and I couldn't go more than three days without a food binge. I wanted to be dead, but I was afraid to kill myself.**

**I got saved a year after I graduated from college. The bulimia ended right away so I thought that the same-sex attraction issues would be gone too.** I meant business with God. I was devastated when I realized that the sexual issues didn't just go away. My heart and emotions were still pretty turned off at that point and I was afraid to let God access my heart. **I stuck to the Christian disciplines and the Lord began to do a slow work of change. By His grace, I got married two years after salvation.** Marriage doesn't fix sexual issues, and I was pretty broken for a lot of years. **After 14 years of trying to get God to fix me on my own terms, I finally surrendered to Him and admitted that everything I had tried to do to fix myself hadn't worked. I asked Him to help me His way.** Shortly after that I met Tom Cole, who directed Reconciliation Ministries before me. I went through some of our programs as a participant. I finally begin to find freedom from the compulsive homosexual thoughts that caused me to hate myself so much.

**The Lord began to convict my heart. He told me that He had given me a glass of water to drink while I was dying of thirst in the wilderness, and He wanted me to give that same water to others. Knowing what it was like to be in such bondage to sexual sin and find freedom in Christ gave me a passion to see others set free.**



*Dan Hitz with Tom Cole, 2003.*

**I became the director of Reconciliation Ministries in 2003. It is a ministry that helps men, women, and adolescents overcome a wide variety of sexual sin and the pain of abuse.** I am blessed to see God set people free. I've seen guys who spent so much time watching pornography that they lost their jobs and their families break free from sin. I've seen other guys who were bound by adultery and sexual addiction and about ready to lose their wives find freedom in Christ. I've seen marriages restored. I also seen women who thought the only value they had was to give men sex because that's what their brothers and fathers taught them learn who they really are in Christ and stand in their true identity as daughters of the King. **My heart burns with passion to see more and more people set free.**

**After a few years of working with people struggling with LGBT issues and heterosexual addictions, the Lord started working on my own abuse issues at a much deeper level.** One of my favorite sections of Scripture is where Jesus says that He came to heal the broken hearted. In the original language, the



phrase brokenhearted means shards of glass as if you broke a mirror. (You can see me during junior high in the picture on the left with my mother.) **I began to realize that abuse shattered my own heart into many fragments and I still had a lot of healing to do.** God continued to transform my heart more than I could ever imagine. He began to send many others who were fragmented by abuse and I saw their hearts come back to life.

**Over the past three years, the Lord has been increasing my burden to reach people with a deeper level of brokenness than we've seen before.** More people just like me have been fragmented by abuse. I've got an intense burden for people who have been wounded deeply by chronic abuse to the point where they can barely function and hold down a job. **We've done a lot already to bring healing to people, we offer license counseling and individual prayer ministry, and a discipleship group called Living Waters.** We've been able to

bring sexual healing in Metro Detroit and so many other places including Southeast Asia, a federal prison, inner cities, and other people that you might interact with every day but have no idea how much they're actually hurting on the inside. **With God's help we can do so much more. It's time to expand the ministerial offerings that Reconciliation Ministries provides.**

**Last November, my wife and I ministered in Ubon Thailand for two weeks.** We helped a missionary who was starting a brand new Living Waters group there. It was a smaller group, but the level of brokenness was overwhelming. I saw people whose hearts were in fragments being restored by the mercy of Jesus Christ. I could relate to their journey. **The whole experience stirred my heart deeply and the Lord spoke to me that He was going to raise up two, three, or four people in that room to touch thousands. We can help make that happen.**



*Dan and Marianne in Thailand, 2016.*

The trip to Thailand and all that the Lord has been showing us in past few years in the US compels us to expand the ministry to bring a deeper level of healing that we've seen in the past. **Reconciliation Ministries just started a new twelve-week program for abuse survivors called *Mending the Soul*. Right now we have to charge a tuition so that we can pay our expenses, but I want to increase our funding so we can offer that program free of charge to abuse survivors who desperately need healing and can't afford our tuition fees.** Together we can reach out to chronic abuse survivors and to those who have been trafficked and offer them the healing that Jesus Christ died to give them.

**Another door has opened up to allow us to return to Thailand for six months in 2018 to continue the work that we did last November with Living Waters.** We can have a part in the Lord raising up those two, three or four people to reach thousands. We can do this in a way that strengthens our local ministry offerings and also allows us to bring an extension of our ministry to Thailand. In the US, you can find an AA group or a Celebrate Recovery group every night of the week. There's nothing for people struggling in this part of Thailand. **We can change that. We can share what we've learned here in the US and use it to raise up Thai nationals and equip them with healing tools to set captives free.**

**That's our burden. To bring freedom to people struggling with LGBT issues and heterosexual addiction issues. To bring healing and restoration to people who have been shattered by years of terrible sexual abuse.** To help men and women find freedom from sin and healing from trauma so that they can be the men and women that God created them to be. **And we have the opportunity to do this right here in Metro Detroit, and half way around the world in Ubon Thailand. Please join our monthly support team and together we can bring the redemption and restoration of Jesus Christ to those who desperately need Him. You can join our financial support team by [clicking here](#), and join our intercessory team by sending an email to [DHitz@recmin.org](mailto:DHitz@recmin.org).**