



RAY EDWARDS

LIVE WITH JOY. LEAD WITH PASSION. PROSPER WITH PURPOSE.

How to Make a Huge Transition into a New Season of Life Episode 154

Hey everyone. This is Brian Holmes from BrianHolmes.com and the Strategic Living Podcast and you're listening to thought leader, faith builder, business innovator and overall great guy, my friend, Ray Edwards.

Welcome to episode 154. Again, if you missed last week's podcast, I did answer the question, hey, Ray, are you turning your show into an interview podcast? It seems like all you're doing these days are interviews. The answer is no that is not what's happening. It just so happens that I've had some great interview conversations lately and I want to share them with you. I'm also on the road, so we recorded these in advance. So this week's show will be a little bit shorter, but man is it powerful, I mean super powerful stuff.

Today, it's like one extended Spiritual Foundations podcast. So if you don't like that part of the show, if you're not into the Spiritual Foundations segment, you might want to just checkout and come back next week when we've got some more practical hands-on business stuff we're going to be talking about. However, before you bug out on me, let me just say this. I believe what is going to be shared in today's episode is more practical than any business tactics I could actually give you because this episode is about making transitions in the new seasons of life.

Many of us are going through a time or contemplating a time where we're going to make a big shift, a big change in our life and we don't know exactly how we're going to address that, how we're going to do it and we're scared. So if that is you, today's episode is for you. I have the great privilege of talking with my very dear friend and brother in the Lord, Brian Holmes who runs a site called BrianHolmes.com where he talks about getting to know God as your Father.

He shares some thoughts on what he calls 'Strategic Living' where he gives teachings, interviews, resources and other developmental content that helps you grow. It challenges you. It stretches you to become more of what God designed you to be. He has so many powerful things going on. He's got a fantastic book called *The Ties that Bind*. I just can't say enough good things about this wise and beautiful man, so let's go ahead and get to the interview with my friend, Brian Holmes.

Feature Presentation/Spiritual Foundations

Brian: Great to be with you on the program, Ray. Thanks again for having me, man.

Ray: I've had such a great time getting to know you and learning about your journey as you've been making a transition. That's what I want to talk to you about because so many people that I encounter today, these days, in this season, are in the midst of making a transition or thinking about making a transition. I had coffee with a gentleman today who is in a transition period and he's uncomfortable, he's nervous. He's not sure that he's

going in the right direction and he's afraid of, well, what if I make a mistake and I head in the wrong direction and transition myself right into a bunch of trouble.

You've been on this journey of making a big, huge shift in your life and the way you spend your days, so maybe you could share a little bit about that and what that's been like for you.

Brian: I would have to go back to, I guess, my early childhood and explain to your audience that I was born and raised in a 03:42. My grid was Christian service and so I knew that if I was ever going to be used in any way by the Lord to do something good in this life it must be related to the church or church ministry, vocational ministry or full-time ministry, those types of things. In Western church mindsets, we aspire to become the evangelist, the pastor, the missionary. Well, not so much the missionary maybe, but those are the roles that we see serving God in and there's the sacred and the secular.

As a backdrop, I grew up with this framework and so early in my life I felt a call of God on my life. I knew that there was something significant I would do and would contribute to the world and my path really led me down the path of being in church ministry, pulpit ministry, youth pastor, evangelist, which means itinerant traveling, staying in other people's bedrooms, things like that. Eventually, we went on staff of a church in the Dallas/Fort Worth area back in 1989-1990 and served in so many capacities there.

By the way, during all these years I was traveling. Traveling always seems to have been this common denominator where I was being called out to certain places to do certain things to help certain groups to accomplish something or move in some way. So I recognized early on that there was something about me moving around and traveling, just kind of bookmark that, but in 1990 I joined this staff. In 2000-2001, I began to recognize there's something more. It's a new season coming now and I'm supposed to be doing something different. Eventually, we planted a church and I became a senior pastor of a local church.

Those 11-12 years, between 2003 when we planted the church to about 2009-2010, were just awesome years. Everything that you would expect to do as a pastor I did, weddings, funerals, counseling, all those things, but there was something missing in me. I'm not degrading or demeaning the role of pastor at all. I believe in the local church and I really celebrate those who are involved on that level, but for me, for my life, I felt as though the years that I was involved in that particular engagement was for a purpose and with a purpose, but it was not the end game.

So in 2009, I began to sense a transition. Didn't know much to do with that, really, because I was scared. I thought if I move away from pulpit ministry then I might not be accepted by my peers, accepted by those that I respect and those that I hoped to have their respect. So it was a bit of a battle for me because of insecurities, because of the need for man's approval. I'm just being very honest about it.

In 2012 with this whole backdrop, I went away on a time of retreat. I really just shut everything down and went away for a week. Actually, it turned out to be three or four weeks, but one particular week I went away in a structured environment where I had a really powerful encounter with God and there He began to show me path. He really invited me on a journey and it wasn't abrupt, it was an invitation.

Since 2012, Ray, we've been walking that journey of transitioning out of traditional vocational "full-time ministry" to more of lifestyle ministry and getting back to more of the specific things that I believe God has called me to do.

Ray: When you say 'lifestyle ministry', I'm curious what it is you think you mean. I think for a lot of people that means I'm just a good person at my job and, eventually, somebody looks at me and says, well, you're just a good person and you're just happy all the time, why is that. Then you get a chance to minister to them or evangelize them. Is that what you're talking about or are you talking about something different?

Brian: It might be inclusive of what you just described, but I think it would be more. What I mean by lifestyle ministry, to be very honest, may rub some people the wrong way. I struggle today, not so much three or four years ago, but where I am today I struggle with this idea that there's the secular and there's the sacred. I struggle with this mindset that there is full-time ministry and then there's everybody else.

I've come to understand, I think, in my journey, that every person who has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, who has accepted Him, who has endeared their heart to the love that He has for us and decided to go on a journey with Him, I believe we were born, all of us, for full-time ministry. By that I mean, whatever your assignment, whatever sphere of influence, whether it's the business sector or the marketplace, whether it's a school teacher in a classroom or on a university campus, whether it's someone who is functioning and working in the halls of government or someone who is in Hollywood or on Broadway or in Nashville in the music industry.

Whatever grace, gift or design that God really crafted you in, contained within that design is ministry and so I believe that we're to be about our Father's business by being about what He created us to be and do. In doing that, opportunities to touch people's lives, to heal people, to speak love to people, to love them to life, to just do life with people, those opportunities are present with us everywhere if we're looking for them.

Ray: So just to be clear, you're not only saying if I'm a musician that I would be in a Christian band or if I was a physician that I'd be working at a Christian hospital, you're saying wherever we are. I might be in a rock band or a rap group or I might be working at a grocery store or in an accounting firm.

Brian: That's exactly what I'm saying. In fact, this is nothing new to those who listen to your podcast, I'm sure, but the reality is that the metaphor, the word picture that Jesus used is that we are salt and we are light. Well, salt is pointless if it's not introduced into an environment where change needs to occur. Salt sitting on the top of the table or in your seasoning cabinet does no one any good at all, unless it is applied to a dish, an environment, something that's being cooked up so that it fundamentally changes the environment and causes a different flavor to erupt.

The Bible says that if the salt has lost its potency or its purpose then it's good for nothing. The only thing that's going to happen to that salt is it's going to be thrown on the ground and trampled underfoot. Meaning, people are going to walk all over you.

I find in the Christian community that we find ourselves in a season of life politically, socially, economically, certainly morally, where Christians, the Christian faith and the Christian message is not changing anything because I believe we've applied it in the

wrong place. We've been applying it within the four walls of the church when it's not within the four walls.

The Bible says it's the sick who need a physician. I believe the rapper and the rap group that is non-Christian or the acid rocker who had dreads down to his backside, has makeup painted on his face and tatted up (I don't like tats, personally) I believe that guy, once his life has been transformed, needs to be right where he is -- being salt in that environment. That's where change needs to occur. It's the same thing with light. Look, light doesn't do light any good. You introduce light to any environment and darkness is dispelled, period.

So yes, I'm saying that we need to rethink **12:02** is that we apply the context and the content of what God has put in our hearts to be and to do in this world.

Ray: Oh, that is so good, so good. Now, you've gone through and are going through this big change still. What was the flag or the light on the dashboard that started blinking that made you realize oh, something is about to change and I need to roll with it?

Brian: Ray, I've looked back over my life, you know how you can reflect back over many years and you can see patterns or similar occurrences that seem to become patterns in your life?

Ray: Yes.

Brian: Each person has different patterns, I think. For me, I can look back on three or four distinct seasons in my life where, for whatever reason, I became discontent with my current circumstance or environment. Not in the sense of being ungrateful, unthankful or grumpy, that sort of thing, I'm just saying something inside was hungry for something that I knew was out there but I didn't know how to get my hands on it. In being hungry as I was, the unknown, what I presently had my hands around became no longer satisfying.

I saw my life going through these patterns of discontent which would eventually lead to disconnect where I would begin to again separate from and disconnect from maybe some old beliefs or some old ways of thinking. We call them paradigms, church folk call them wineskins. I began to disconnect from things I knew were so familiar to me so that there could be room for something that God wanted to introduce that was fresh and new. The Book of Isaiah says, "Behold! I'm doing a new thing; now it springs forth." You've never seen before.

I think sometimes we have to make room by disconnecting from what is consuming us and then from disconnect, in my case, I would spend a time of discovery where God would begin to give me glimpses into the future. I wouldn't know the whole picture. I wouldn't see the whole thing. I wouldn't, certainly, have an understanding of everything I was going to experience tomorrow, the next day, next week, but He would give me glimpses.

I began to discovery characteristics and things He wanted me to know about Him, things He wanted me to know about my specific assignment or a business He wanted me to go into or connect with. So it was just discovering the new, that whole discovery season, then there's always been a moment or a window where deployment happens. So it's discontent, disconnect, discovery and then, at some point, there is a grace to fully engage and become activated in this new season.

I've noticed this pattern over and over again and so, for me, since 2012 I've been going through discontent, disconnect, discovery and I sense that right now I am just about, again, to be launched into something fresh, new, beautiful, bigger and better, all those things. It's just an amazing process.

Ray: Do you think we're always, at some level in our life, going through that process, kind of like wheels within wheels?

Brian: I do, and a quote comes to my mind. I'm not sure who to attribute this to, maybe you would know, but living things grow and growing things change.

Ray: Oh! I do not know who said that, but whoever it was, brilliant, a genius.

Brian: Yeah, living things grow and growing things change. Nature teaches us that when something stops growing it stops changing and when it stops changing you can rest assured it's dying. The Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes that to everything, everything under Heaven there is a time, there is a season. There is a time to live, a time to die, a time to mourn, a time to laugh, all of these things. I love this one, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to search and a time to give up as lost. You read through all of those, it's pretty remarkable all the neat contrasts that are drawn there.

I think the answer to the question is yes, I do believe that we are constantly in this flow or rhythm of opportunity where God is saying I've got more for you. There are other opportunities. There are bigger contracts. There's another idea. There is some other group that I want you to serve and in doing so you're to grow into this so you can ready to do it. There's just always that cycle, I believe, happening in our life. The moment that cycle stops, I believe we begin to die.

Ray: What can be scary about that is I remember when I was still working in a corporate job and my life was very orderly. I knew exactly where I was going to be at any given moment in the day, in the month, in the year, when I was going to take my vacation, how much I was going to get paid, how much my raise was going to be and to step out into having my own business seemed like leaving safety and order and stepping into chaos.

Brian: Well, there's this concept I learned, back in 2007 as a matter of fact. I went to Seattle, Washington (your neck of the woods) and attended a class there; really a program by Lou Tice. I don't know if you ever knew of Lou Tice.

Ray: Yeah.

Brian: Tremendous mind and he had a training called Investment in Excellence. Really, the whole program was about changing your mind and changing your world, but he talked about this concept of out of order into order. Given the premise that I believe God is a God of order and we're to live our lives in order I get that, but sometimes if we're going to break free from the mediocre and the mundane, if we're going to be liberated from the familiarity and the normal that has held us in our present state, we have to almost be intentional about shaking things up and creating an out-of-order state so we can then begin to look at okay, God, what are you really doing. In what order do you want me to now move forward in.

That concept kind of grabbed me because sometimes what we perceive to be unknown, chaos or things being just really disrupted and our flow being messed up, that space is an opportunity to actually discover the new order God is wanting to get you into so that the new 'thing' can be revealed. Does that make sense?

Ray: Yes, that's fascinating. I don't know if this is the right time to ask you about this, but it feels like the right time to ask you about this experience you had with God recently.

Brian: Yeah, man. In 2014, just recently back in the month of September-October, somewhere in there, I did another one of these five-day-away things. Those seem to be really working for me, so I probably should do it more often, right?

Ray: Yeah.

Brian: I went away on about a five-day little retreat and one of those days one of my disciplines is, occasionally, I do fasting. I don't do it as a religious obligation. I do it when I really feel it's something God has called me to do for a purpose. I was fasting this particular day and I had hiked out into the central Texas hills. It's what we call the Hill Country, which you would laugh at because you live on the west coast, but it's Hill Country to us.

I got down by a river and it begins to rain, so I pick up my lawn chair and I find some shelter. I'm sitting there under the shelter now for an hour or two -- I'm on a river, by the way, and the river is maybe 50-60-70 yards wide -- and I just feel this urge. My gosh, I have to go to the other side of the river, but wait a minute. I'm not going to swim because it's deep and I'm out of shape, but I felt compelled to get to the other side. I didn't know why, I just felt it. I looked up stream a little ways, maybe 100-200 yards up stream and I saw a canoe that somebody had pulled up on the bank of the river. I thought well, man, in a little while I'm going to go across because I feel like I'm supposed to know what's on the other side of this river.

An hour or two later I decide okay, it's time to go across. So I looked back up stream, began to walk in that direction and realize that someone has beat me to the punch. Someone grabbed my canoe, but I still had to go to the other side. So I began hiking up the other direction of the river and I found this spot that was a little more shallow, there were some rocks protruding up and I thought, you know, I'm going to try to get across this river, just wading through it, walking over rocks, whatever I have to do. If I fall in completely oh well, I get wet. No big deal.

So I begin to navigate my way across this river and in five minutes or so I was across. Ray, when I stepped on the sand of the beach area of the other side there, the moment I did I heard God speak to me. I can tell you, I rarely, if ever, have heard God speak audibly, but this is about as close to audible. It might have even been, it was booming. Now, remember, I started this journey in 2012, this is now 2014. He said to me, I've been wanting you to cross over for two years, He said, but I could not let you use anything made by man to get over here.

Ray: Oh!

Brian: Reference canoe, reference my old roles and systems.

Ray: Yes.

Brian: Okay? Ray, you know me, man. I'm a softy, you know this about me. Literally, I melted to the ground. I just fell to my knees and began to weep. I knew the presence of God was there and God began to show me some things and that day here are some things that He showed.

You and I talked about this not too long ago, that in the church world especially when you think of the term 'pastor' -- I've been in that role for a lot of years, the role of a pastor, meaning I'm the senior leader of a local assembly of people who gathers regularly and has various programs that we administrate -- when you think of the Western church, you think of a pastor being a gatherer. The pastor's job is to attract and gather people and to keep them. The Lord began to show me on the banks of that river, He said, I never called you to be a gatherer of people.

I began to reflect on that and think about what a "pastor" in the Western church does. He said I didn't even wire you to have to strive to get a thousand people in a room so you could preach to them, He says you're not a gatherer. He said I created you as a father of hearts, a shepherd of hearts, not a shepherd of numbers.

Ray: Wow!

Brian: And, Ray, can I just tell you I was a sloppy, wet mess (not from the river) because in that moment it was like this weight came off of me. For those who might be pastors listening, there is this unspoken pressure that your success as a Christian leader is somehow gauged by or enumerated by, how many did you have on Sunday, bro, what are your offerings looking like, etc.

We have these qualifications and these standards that we somehow gauge effectiveness and in that moment God began to show me. I called you to build something 15 years ago before you ever planted this church, but you got busy doing the gathering thing. That moment was this massive turning point for me and I began to realize okay, let's get back to God. What did you originally say to me? Let me see that clearly one more time and, man, did it ever begin to come to me in the coming days after that.

We have a group of people that we meet with, we do life with, we shepherd their hearts. I do my best as a trainer and as a coach to pour into them and to help them to become everything God has called them to be and here's the piece. This might rub some people the wrong way, I don't even want to necessarily call it a church because I believe, more importantly, we're being the church.

Ray: Yes.

Brian: So that's the journey we've been on. We feel like we're at the precipice of really being launched out now to take our message of healing and transformation, our message of personal development, all the things that we talk about regularly on our podcast, to a much broader audience. Not in four walls, but wherever God would give us the platform to do it.

Ray: Wow! That is profound and it is for anybody. You may not be a church-going person and that's fine, it's probably good. I really would encourage people to connect with you on your blog, which is at BrianHolmes.com.

Brian: Yes.

Ray: I love your podcast.

Brian: Thank you.

Ray: Maybe you could say a paragraph or two about your podcast and what you aim to do with that. He's got the best podcast title ever.

Brian: The Strategic Living Podcast.

Ray: Yes, I love that.

Brian: I just really believe that God gave us so much creativity, so much competency, so much gift and ability and we sell ourselves short. We settle and we don't necessarily look at life from a strategic perspective, so our entire podcast, all of our work we do, is about personal healing, personal discovery, personal development and personal deployment. That's kind of the four cornerstones of what we're doing and within each of those cornerstones are, obviously, various bodies of work that we do in seminars, we do in online training courses and, of course, our podcast, our blog, etc.

The podcast has been a real blessing and, like you (I know you know this because you've been doing it a while) it's very encouraging to know that what God has put in your heart to share with people is reaching more than just a captive audience in a room. There are people that are being drawn to it by the Spirit and being affected by it, being changed by the service that God has called us to provide on that platform.

Ray: Well said and I highly recommend your podcast. If people are looking for steps on the journey especially, I think so much of it starts with the healing part.

Brian: Oh, yes.

Ray: In fact, before we finish up, I'd like you to talk a little bit about *Ties that Bind* and explain what it is and what it does for people.

Brian: You bet. *The Ties that Bind* really is a flagship teaching and I call it flagship teaching because it's really one specific area that God walked my wife and I through. You know a little bit about my story and they can certainly find out more about it on our website. By the way, we just launched our brand new website today.

Ray: Yeah, it looks great.

Brian: *The Ties that Bind* is a study on how to identify and how to break free from unhealthy, ungodly and debilitating connections we have with people in our present and in our past. It doesn't necessarily have to be past relationships, there are various kinds of these connections. There are sexual connections. There are relational. Obviously, all are relational in some form or fashion. There are things like business associations. You and I have talked about this. You can be in a business relationship or partnership with someone and it can be an unequally-yoked scenario and we don't realize how desperately that's affecting our ability to accomplish our potential.

I find that this study helps people to break free from things that are limiting them and holding them back from really moving into the full scope of what God has for them. So it's identifying and breaking unhealthy and ungodly connections and soul ties and we're taking that training all over the world in a live setting. We do live intensive emergent experiences with that. In the spring of this year coming up in just a month or two, we're going to be launching the exact same video training online, which I'm pumped about that, then we have a lot of things we do around that, as well.

Ray: Check out BrianHolmes.com. Brian, thank you so much, it's always a blessing when we get together and we share. You've been plumbing some deep waters and that encounter at the river, that's going to stick with me for a while. That's pretty powerful, thank you so much.

Brian: Thank, Ray, I appreciate it so much. God bless.

What to Do Next

Well, that wraps up this week's episode of the Ray Edwards Show. I'm so glad you were here with us, thank you so much. If you received something from this show that was of value to you maybe it would be valuable to others, too. How you could help us spread the word is by going to iTunes, subscribe to the podcast and give us a star rating.

We've got lots of five star ratings, but I want you to be honest and give us the rating you think we deserve and then write a review, let folks know why you like it. If you would do that it helps us be more visible in iTunes, it helps new people discover the show and we can help more people that way. So I thank you for that.

Until next week, may God continue to bless you and may He show you wonderful things that surprise you this week that are beyond anything you could ask or possibly imagine.

Remember, transcripts of the show are available with each episode, courtesy of our friends at SuccessTranscripts.com, a great solution if you need your podcast, sermon, seminars, interviews, workshop, book or other audio/video transcribed into text.