

PRAISE FOR

My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point

My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point is a brilliant and insightful look into the ability to triumph over tragedy. It's a must-read for all. Ricky has a wonderful writing style that welcomes his readers into the family. This book will strengthen you, encourage you and, simply put, "make you feel like you can win again." It's a home-run experience for your heart.

Gordon Banks

Senior Pastor, Overcomer Covenant Church, Seattle, Washington
Former NFL Player, Dallas Cowboys

The redemptive story of Ricky and Cyd Texada has challenged me to realize that God is sovereignly in charge of even the disappointments of life. God has worked a miracle and has thrust the Texadas into a fruitful ministry after devastating disappointment. If God can bring together such a "dynamic duo" from the brink of devastation, what can He do for you to turn your "mourning into joy"? Read this book and let God open a new window of opportunity in your heart: *The best is yet to come!*

Larry Stockstill

Director, Surge Project
Pastor Emeritus, Bethany Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Richard Exley once said, "I want to read books that sing." He would love this book; it sings almost every kind of genre and then some. I've known Pastors Ricky and Cyd Texada for two decades, only to discover in reading his story—I didn't know him at all! There are songs in this book for weeping and songs for rejoicing. You'll do both as I did.

Joseph L. Garlington, Sr.

Presiding Bishop, Covenant Church of Pittsburgh

This book will inspire you to believe that God can and will work all things out for those who love Him. It is filled with hope and the promise of restoration for any situation. Let *My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point* begin the healing of your heart and brighten your expectations for the future.

Donald Driver

Author, *New York Times* Bestseller, *Driven*
Super Bowl Champion, Green Bay Packers
Dancing with the Stars Winner, Season 14

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Some can inspire, some possess eloquence, and some can write compellingly, but only a rare few are blessed with all three. My dear friend Pastor Ricky Texada is such a man, and this searingly honest book will transform and uplift every reader. With his wife, Cyd, a vital part of this valuable volume, Pastor Ricky provides powerful inspiration and compelling guidance. We all need it in our libraries.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin

American Alliance of Jews & Christians

There are some people who write books because they have something to say. Then there are people, like Ricky Texada, who write books because their life is a transformational example that others can benefit from. Within the pages of this book are more than just principles you can live by, but words that will *transform* your life. Ricky is the real deal who will help you deal with your real—so that whatever you *go* through, if you will *grow* through it, you will create a *breakthrough*!

Keith Craft

Pastor, Elevate Life Church, Frisco, Texas

From the moment I opened this book I experienced the liberating presence of God as I laughed, cried and worshiped. No doubt many comforting answers will slip from heaven and accompany the reader through the painful and beautiful saga of Ricky Texada's journey—oh, for grace to trust Him more.

Brett Jones

Pastor, Grace Church, Humble, Texas

This book is a gem: powerful, impacting and inspirational. Ricky Texada shares his compelling story that is certain to bring healing to all who join the journey. *My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point* will strengthen your faith in a loving, faithful and powerful God. You will be forever changed!

Frank King, J.D.

Pastor, Refreshing Waters Worship Center, Kansas City, Missouri

My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point is all about hope and the fulfillment of Jeremiah 29:11: "I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for" (*THE MESSAGE*). The image we have of ourselves and our future is not always what God has planned. Pastor Ricky and Cyd are very real and transparent in telling their story of tragedy to triumph. They show us the importance of trusting in God when it does not seem practical or realistic. It is a book about finding the strength to get up one more time than you fall and knowing you will make it.

Darryl Carnley

Senior Pastor, Celebrate Life Church, Nampa, Idaho

Founding Pastor, North Pole Worship Center, North Pole, Alaska

Readers who are yearning to reestablish trust, understanding and compassion after devastating loss will embrace *My Breaking Point, God's Turning Point*. As Ricky Texada takes us to the heart of God's restorative and redemptive love for us, we are given insight into God's ability to turn even the darkest days into light. As he painstakingly reveals his journey from tremendous loss to a life beyond measure, Ricky shows us that God is faithful: God speaks to us about our responsibility in our relationship to Him, about His abiding promise of provision through His relationship to us as well as the relationships He puts in place for us. I highly recommend this life-changing, feel-good, brilliant book to those in need of a mental, physical and spiritual comeback!

Cyndi Miller, CEO

The Miller Companies, Dallas, Texas

MY
Breaking Point

GOD'S
Turning Point

EXPERIENCE GOD'S AMAZING
POWER TO RESTORE

RICKY TEXADA



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This book is dedicated to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because of Your love and commitment, I'm a free man. The story I tell is not my own but Yours. You have allowed me to be a part of it.

To my sons, Seth and Caleb, you are the "Appointed" and "Faithful" kings, respectively. When I look at you, I'm reminded that God has an appointed time and place for everything and He is faithful forever. The times we share, making up songs and our bedtime conversations are invaluable. You both are destined for greatness!

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Foreword

I was honored to be asked to write the foreword for this book for several reasons. First, because of what I think of the author. Ricky Texada is one of the most outstanding men that I know—a man of principle, loyalty, character and kindness. Secondly, I know the story that he tells is true, touching and will be life-changing for the reader. Finally, I know that Ricky’s greatest desire is to encourage you in your struggles in life by telling the story of God’s faithfulness to him in his.

This is an amazing story that begins with a young man from the bayous of Louisiana who married his college sweetheart and headed to Dallas to begin his career and build a life. That was when I first met Ricky. He began attending our young church and eventually served in youth ministry under the watchful eye of my wife, Kathy.

Ricky was living a happy, successful life and planned to continue reaching for his career goals and looked forward to starting a family. Then life dealt him a sudden and tragic blow that changed his vision of his destiny in a moment, and set before him the most difficult choices a man could possibly have to make. I have watched Ricky walk out God’s plan for his life—including the dark times—to emerge into the light of victory and fulfillment. His story will inspire you to accomplish all that God has planned for your life.

I am sure that, as you read this book, you will experience the same things that I did: hope, encouragement and determination to push through anything that is designed to slow our progress toward the ultimate joy of understanding that God is in control, and the plans He has for us are good! As you read this powerful book, prepare to be moved, challenged and ultimately uplifted.

Mike Hayes
Founding Pastor, Covenant Church and
Churches in Covenant International

Introduction

A Question of Healing

Restoration requires you to release your resistance to change.

Restoration begins the moment you stop defining yourself by your pain. It begins when you accept that you can't keep going as you have been and instead you allow God to give you the power to move on. It begins when you ask Him to give you a new perspective, a larger, timeless glimpse of how your breaking point can become a turning point.

Now before you stop reading and dismiss what I have to say as just another version of "let go and let God," I want to ask you a question that Jesus asked someone before He healed him. In this story of an ailing man, notice Christ's response, in the form of a question, to the man's suffering before He restored him:

Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "*Do you want to get well?*"

"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked (John 5:2-9, emphasis added).

I don't know about you, but if I had been that lame man, an invalid for 38 years, and had been laying near this pool known for its healing properties, I might have been a little upset, even

insulted, by Jesus' question. "Really? You're asking me if I want to get well? As I lie here, unable to stand or walk, barely able to crawl, You're curious to know if I want to get well?"

But we know that Jesus' question was not a cruel or insensitive one; the Master clearly had a sincere and caring reason for posing such a query to this man. I suspect His question has something to do with the Lord's understanding of human nature. Jesus knew that the lame man could not be healed unless he was willing to move beyond the suffering that had defined him for the past four decades.

His question resonates in our hearts today: "Do you want to get well? Do you want to be healed and restored? Are you willing to allow God to transform what feels like your breaking point into a portal of hopeful restoration?" If we truly desire healing from our heart's pain, then we must go through the process of allowing God to work in our lives. We have to be wholehearted in our desire for God's restoration.

Like the lame man, we need more than just one kind of healing. This man was likely focused on his physical limitations and sufferings, but Jesus addressed all areas of the crippled man's life with His question about getting well. Christ knows that when we suffer a major loss or disappointment in life, it affects our entire being—spirit, soul and body. And He also knows that if we are to heal and to experience the strength, hope and purpose that come from God's restoration process, then our healing must also be comprehensive.

As I reveal my bittersweet story with you in the pages that follow, I hope you will see that I share this with you because I believe that God's loving power is the only way to keep going in the midst of life's trials and tragedies. My loss threatened to consume me when it occurred, but God intervened in my situation in ways that I couldn't ignore. Although I wasn't waiting beside a pool to be healed, I might as well have been asked the same question that Jesus asked the lame man. I knew that I had a choice to make about how to face the devastating loss that forever altered my life.

I could choose to get well. Or I could choose to remain paralyzed by the crushing weight of my grief, pain and sorrow.

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And that choice would have to be made daily—sometimes hourly—through those darkest days as God began restoring my strength, hope and confidence in His sovereignty.

You face the same choice. If you're reading these words, there's a good chance that your heart longs to experience the healing touch of God's hand. As scary as it may seem, admit the truth about how much you long to be restored, about how desperately you want to believe that God can surprise you.

Because He can if you'll let Him. He has a new life waiting for you. It's your choice, my friend.

Do you want to get well?

Then turn the page!

Step Out in Faith: Seeing More Than Meets the Eye

If you were to follow my family around with a camera as if we were part of some reality TV show, you might wonder what I know about suffering. My wife, Cyd, and I have two sons—one teenager, Seth, and one preteen, Caleb—and we live in a comfortable home in a nice neighborhood outside Dallas. Cyd and I serve together as pastors in the ministry of our vibrant, fast-growing church. We've been married over 15 years and still enjoy the passionate spark of connection that kindled our love in the first place.

Most days Cyd and I get started early with some personal time of prayer and reflection before we wake the boys and get the day going. Then the hours fly by in a flurry of getting the boys to school, working at the church, heading to sports and extracurriculars and arriving home for dinner, homework and whatever else we might need to do. Our tasks at work include Cyd coordinating a myriad of ministry details. I'm the visionary, manager and big-picture person; Cyd makes sure the details of vision implementation are identified so that our staff can carry them out.

Sound familiar? Regardless of the season we're in, most of us know how quickly each day seems to become a blur, spilling into

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the next day's demands and activities. It's easy for us to get caught up in the cycle of super busyness that pervades our culture.

Because of the demands placed on Cyd and me in ministry, our home is our refuge. Amidst the many books, Legos and Nerf gear, it's the place where we retreat after a busy day of ministry. Each evening as the boys prepare to go to bed, we share a Scripture reading and a discussion of the day's events together.

While our relationship with the Lord is preeminent, Cyd and I have consciously decided that ministry will never take precedence over family. We do our best not to openly discuss the issues or problems of people that we have encountered during the day in front of the boys. Ministry can be very challenging, but we want our boys to always have a positive view of ministry work.

Cyd is responsible for most of our meal preparation, home organization and homework (when school is in session). I'm responsible for coordinating family entertainment, which includes chasing the boys around the house, playing pool, dominating on Xbox (Seth might challenge that) and enjoying the mother of all fun—Nerf wars! Cyd makes sure that board games and movie nights and plenty of popcorn are also incorporated into the fun.

In our home we've tried our best to create an atmosphere in which the Lord is honored above all. As a result, our house is filled with lots of conversation and singing. My sons and I have been known to break into impromptu, lyrics-on-the-spot songs about anything and everything from the glories of the Lord to the joys of our favorite breakfast cereal. We usually keep going until we can't sing for laughing or until we start getting on Cyd's "last nerve."

Since Sundays are especially busy days, Cyd and I enjoy Monday as our day off and usually have lunch out together or go on some kind of date. And in our busy household, it's definitely important for us to have time alone. Whenever Cyd and I show any affection toward one another in front of the boys, they roll their eyes and act as if they don't like it, and they try to separate us. I'll push back and say, "Hey, she's my girlfriend! Mine, all mine!" They giggle uncontrollably, but I think they enjoy the shoving match that ensues as they try to push me away while I'm stealing a kiss from their mother.

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Swimming in the Dark

While I know that my family is incredibly blessed, please don't think that we're perfect by any means. We're like any typical family that has disagreements, disputes, discussions and discipline, but our goal is to always resolve conflict as quickly as possible and not hold grudges. We encounter most of the same frustrations and obstacles that everyone faces—demands pulling us in too many directions, chores around the house never getting caught up, and bills that seem to multiply from month to month.

But as I said, if you followed me around on a typical day, I could understand why you might question my credibility to write this book. As my story unfolds, however, I believe that you'll agree that the joyful normalcy my family experiences now is only authentic because it was born out of the devastation that first brought Cyd and me together. In fact, I'm convinced that the main reason my life fulfills me so much now is that I was forced to endure a loss that I never could have imagined surviving.

I think that this process of suffering and surviving unimaginable losses binds us all together. People say that no matter how happy someone else appears to us, we can never know the burdens that the person is bearing. Besides my own experience, my pastoral involvement with thousands of hurting men and women confirms this. Many people work hard to appear successful, happy and fulfilled, while inside they don't know how they will make it through the next hour, let alone the rest of the day.

If you want to experience healing and restoration from the losses in your life, I can offer you great hope. However, the only way to reach the shores of healing is to swim through the murky depths between the place you are now and the place you want to be. It won't be easy, but the process of moving from grief to grace will surprise you and reactivate feelings, dreams and hopes that you thought had been extinguished forever. Like swimming in the ocean at night, it will require faith.

Show Your Stripes

Most of us don't like swimming when we can't see where we're going. Similarly, we don't know how to integrate loss into our lives.

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Our culture has forgotten how to grieve and, consequently, how to heal. We seem to either run away from our painful losses or else get stuck in the midst of them. In the movies, on TV, in our songs and in our books, characters seem to find happy endings in neat story arcs and 30-minute segments. Perhaps it's not surprising then that the number of prescriptions for antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs has more than quadrupled in the past decade.

Today there's more pressure than ever for people to be successful, to have their lives together, and to be headed in a direction that's always higher and better. We can earn degrees online, hire a personal life coach, attend money-management seminars, read the latest self-help book from a motivational guru, cultivate our love life with online dating, and make friends with just one click on a social-media site. Since there are so many ways to better ourselves in all these areas of our life, why would we settle for less?

Even as our society becomes virtually global and our culture diversely multi-ethnic, we still feel the urge to conform to some ideal of excellence. We've all heard that we have to put our best foot forward, look the part if we want to get the job, dress for success or even "fake it till we make it." With technology we can spin our success in countless ways, impressing everyone around us with not just who we are but also who we're becoming. In fact, I recently heard a friend refer to Facebook as Fakebook, because he's noticed that everyone seems to provide only great pictures of themselves in luxurious settings and change status only to indicate the next successful person they've met.

My friend doesn't feel as if there's room to be, well, human on such sites. Looking at a photo of a smiling, perfectly made-up face framed by a beautiful hairstyle is not the same as sitting across from someone and looking at the stories hiding in their eyes. There doesn't seem to be a lot of room these days for us to show our scars, our pain and the stripes we've earned from life's battles. But how we respond to our wounds will determine how we live our lives.

Chasing the Wind

At some point in our lives, most of us will experience a traumatic event that will change us forever, an encounter that will leave our

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body gasping for air and our soul grasping for meaning. For some people it may be dealing with the childhood betrayal of a parent or a trusted adult. Others may find this moment in an unplanned pregnancy, in the death of a spouse, in the loss of their job. It may be the jolt of a doctor's words delivering a frightening prognosis. It could be the ache of loneliness caused by divorce or the anguish of losing a home in a tornado, hurricane or wildfire. It could simply be waking up one day and realizing that a special opportunity has passed us by.

When faced with a powerful, unexpected loss, we naturally ask ourselves, "Why? What could I have done to deserve something so devastating?" We question God, crying out to Him, sometimes shaking our fist at Him, always asking for Him to take us out of our pain. We wonder why He didn't intervene and how such human suffering can be part of His divine plan.

As we lie in pain, writhing in whys and struggling to get back on our feet again, we wonder if it's worth it. Are we only getting back up just to be knocked over again down the road? During these times the words written in the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes echo with new relevance: "All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind" (2:17). We can be walking through life one minute, enjoying the satisfaction of all our hard work paying off, and the next minute, the same dream that appeared to be just within reach suddenly slips through our fingers.

Any time we lose something in our lives, however, we also gain new perspective. I remain convinced that these crossroads of crisis always offer an individual choices: We can either lose hope completely and give up or we can gather the scattered remnants of our dreams, trusting that somehow God remains sovereign and has a plan for our lives—a plan that in the end will produce the intricate design of a beautifully woven tapestry, a magnificent mural of maturity that uses the fibers of pain to enhance the texture of our lives.

More to My Story

You may be saying, "I appreciate that you're a pastor and that you have to bring God into it, but you don't know what I've been through. You don't know what it feels like to have your entire life unravel into a knotted mess of broken threads. You don't understand how hard it is for me to get up in the morning and go through the motions

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of another day while I carry around this painful weight of loss inside me.”

You’re right. I don’t know your specific losses. But I ask you to trust me until I share more about my own experiences, which I think will reinforce my credibility. And forgive me if this notion of trusting God in the midst of loss seems abstract and flowery, because to make it sound that way is not my intention at all. The world doesn’t need another book that teaches us to deny our feelings and cover them with a veneer of Bible verses and religious jargon. We don’t need more feel-good self-help books to tell us how we should handle our emotions.

My goal in writing this book is not to gloss over the wounds inflicted by life’s traumas. Nor is it to revel in them, sinking into despair and refusing to fight the good fight. My hope, our hope—for my wife, Cyd, and I both want to share our joint story with you—is that you will learn to reframe the way you see your life’s losses. My goal is that you would be challenged and inspired by what we’ve learned so that you will be able not only to get back on your feet but also to run the race of life with purpose, determination and joy. My prayer is that you would give God a chance to prove His faithfulness to you.

I don’t have all the answers. And I don’t claim to know why God allows suffering. But I do know that no matter how painful our circumstances may seem, God never abandons us. I know that no matter what happens to us, we still have choices as to how we will respond.

How do I know this?

Keep reading, my friend.

Just as in everyone’s life, there’s more to my story than meets the eye.

RESTORE AND RENEW

At the end of each chapter, I’ve included a few questions for you to consider as you embark on your journey of restoration. You might want to consider using a journal, either an electronic/virtual one online or the old-fashioned kind with pen and paper. Keeping your

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thoughts, feelings and responses together in one place will allow you to see how God is leading you to experience healing in your life over time. Even if you don't keep a journal, I encourage you to reflect on your responses to each question, allowing God to enter your pain and to heal your wounds.

1. What's the biggest challenge you're facing right now? What blocks your path toward God's restoration and renewal in your life?
2. How would someone meeting you for the first time today describe you? Would they be able to see your heartache and distress, or do you usually keep them hidden?
3. How would you describe your relationship with God presently? Do you pray each day? Do you spend time in Bible study or meditation on Scripture? Are you part of a church or community of believers?
4. Do you trust God right now? If you could ask Him any question about what you've suffered in life, what would you ask?
5. How would you answer Jesus' question to the lame man: "Do you want to get well?"

RECONNECT AND REVIVE

After you've considered your responses, conclude your thoughts and reflections on each chapter by sharing them with God in prayer. Toward that goal of reconnecting with the One who remains committed to your heart's resurrection, I will provide a sentence or two to help you get started. There's no magic formula or "right way" that you must pray. The key is simply to open up the lines of heartfelt communication between you and your Father. Be honest, be real, and be open to what God has for you as He begins the process of restoration in your life.

Dear God, my heart is sore, and I'm so very tired. You know better than anyone the burdens I carry. I'm struggling to get back on my feet, Lord, and I need Your help. I surrender to You and ask You to come into my life and begin the process of restoration that only You can carry out. Amen.