

Even Rockstars Can Make a Difference

By Vance Ginn, Ph.D. (11/14/2023)

There's much to every person's story. Mine has many cycles that made me the man I am today. Here's a key story that highlights a peak, trough, and subsequent peak.

I was a drummer for a heavy rock band, "Sindrome," from about 1998 to 2001. We had concerts at venues like Fitzgerald's, the Mausoleum, Engine Room, and several others in Houston. We recorded one 10-song album (unfortunately, I don't have a copy). It was a blast! (Pictures below: first with one guitar player on my right and the singer on my left and second is of me rocking the drums at a show in Lake Jackson.)



I was living the "rockstar" life and was heading in the direction of either prison or death. After not caring much about the direction of my life and living as though I didn't care whether I lived or died, I was in a major car accident on May 25, 2002, that changed all that. God certainly has a way of waking us up. I was the passenger in a 2002 Acura RSX that my friend had purchased only days before. Being young and stupid, my friend started racing another car. The last time I looked at the speedometer we were going 120 mph! An SUV exited the highway and pulled into our lane. We clipped them, rolled at least six times, and skidded upside down for about 40 yards (see pic below). I was the last one to wake up and exit the car.



I was sent by life-flight to Hermann Hospital in Houston with a possible head injury. By the grace of God, I had no serious injuries (or maybe the hit to my head is what got me interested in earning a doctorate in

economics...ha!) and was released that night. I laid in bed for about a month with deep contusions all over, black eyes (see pic), and had physical therapy for two months. During that time in bed, I had plenty of time to think and pray about the direction of my life. I felt compelled by God to help others.

The previous semester at San Jacinto College I took my first economics course and found it fascinating. It made sense. It was a simple way to explain how people act in a complex world. I decided to use it as a tool to help others—through less government of course! I gave up the "rockstar" life and was redirected to a person with direction, care for whether I lived or died, and with a purpose to help others. After being a first-generation college student, an associate's degree was my initial goal. Twelve years later, I walked across the stage at Texas Tech University and was awarded my doctoral degree in economics (pics are of my mentor Dr. Ronald Gilbert hooding me at graduation and Emily (wife) and I at graduation).



Now I have a beautiful family, have worked at the White House, a top state think tank in the country, and now own my flourishing consulting business. Life is truly an amazing blessing. Make every moment count; you never know when it will be your last.



Moral of the story: Even "rockstars" can make a difference!