

# How to Bring Heaven in Healthcare

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## Episode 1: God's Dream for Healthcare Full Transcript [Episode Length: 27:48 minutes]

**Pete Carter**

Hi, I'm Pete Carter, I'm a medical doctor, the founder of HiH and one of the senior leaders of Eastgate church here in Kent in the UK.

At HiH, our heart is that the world of healthcare will be transformed by the presence of God and the resources of heaven and we believe that now more than ever, the healthcare systems of the world need hope-filled, confident believers who will do that very thing. In these videos we will discuss some of the foundational beliefs and values that will help to set you up as a healthcare worker (or anyone with a passion for that world) to go out there and bring transformation wherever you are in a way that we find is increasingly valued and welcomed.

In this session I'm joined by my friend, Mike Von Fraunhofer, who is also a medical doctor, and we're going to explore together God's dream for the transformation of the world of healthcare.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

From your point of view, where did all this come from? When you look at where we are now, where did it start for you?

**Pete Carter**

I think it's a great question, and I've often reflected upon that. I became a Christian at 16, but I'd already decided I wanted to be a doctor. So I loved the idea of actually helping people be well and healthy, and that was around the age of 15 I made that decision, having been a recipient of good healthcare - I used to suffer a lot of sports injuries and benefited from that care, so I thought actually, I'd like to give myself to that as a vocation. So, having decided that, I then became a Christian a year or so later, and I thought, Wow, I can do excellent healthcare and with God's resources alongside it, surely that's a winning combination.

It started off right back there for me with the idea that the God in me; the HS inside of me is a phenomenal resource - literally a river flowing - that would enhance any healthcare provision that I could provide to my patients and to the people and staff around me. So, right back there I just decided that my Christianity should make a difference, and I think that most Christians going into healthcare start off with a dream of making a massive difference - not just by being good doctors or good nurses - but by actually being Christians in that place as well. I'm sure you had the same thoughts when you went into it?

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

Yeah, well I was a Christian when I got into medicine, but I think probably I was, at the very beginning, just about doing my job well. But then I got involved in a church movement – The Vineyard movement, and they were all about healing and suddenly I thought ‘hold on a minute, I could do both’, and that’s what really set me off with how can I marry this and that and you know, I was up in the north at the time, and you were down here, and I suddenly discovered that no-one else was doing it. No-one else was interested in trying to marry the two but it was definitely on my heart. I thought OK it has got to be possible to do this, and one time God just said to me “I want you to do Monday to Friday what you re happy to do on a Sunday morning” and I just thought ‘Wow, that’s quite a challenge!’

**Pete Carter**

Yeah, I guess for me, similarly, when I set off on this, I was looking for like-minded people, and it wasn’t easy to find people who had the same degree of confidence in the ability of God to deliver within the workplace what is freely available; what the Bible teaches us is available for Christians. And again, if you think of the verse that talks about God has not given us the Spirit of fear, but love, power and a sound mind, so I’ve always thought well it’s possible to have a loving attitude towards patients, making the power of God accessible but in a very wise way, and accessing God’s thoughts to help us. But what I did find was that a lot of people were afraid of how to use their Christianity or whether they were even allowed to use their Christianity; whether it had to be hidden away. They were certainly frightened about the idea of actually introducing anything like healing or miracles into that workplace. So I think the prevailing culture of fear was something that affected people as Christians, and I think many Christians went in with the dream but then they lost it under this cloud of maybe fear and uncertainty. I think that a the reality.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

...and I think also for me, what I found was as much as I was at home in the denomination I was part of at the time, I couldn’t find church leaders that were wanting to engage in it. You know, they had their idea of how they wanted to do things, and the idea of trying to sort of get an occupational component to it, and trying to encourage people who were out there in the workplace how to do that – it just was something that they, at that point in time, weren’t really engaged with and I think sometimes you can find that – when you are isolated you are trying to find people to help and encourage you and lead you on the way. So, for me the major change was in the move south (which I did in 2008), and then in 2010 you and I met up at a conference.

**Pete Carter**

We did, I remember it very well!

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

...it makes me laugh because the power of faith that I had. I remember you had a dream at that point to have a health centre in the same building as the church, and I looked at that and thought this is amazing, I need to meet this guy and talk to him. But you were running this big conference at the time, and I said to my wife and she said “Ooh, why don’t you go and speak to him?”and I said “Well he’s running this huge conference, there’s hundreds of people, he’s

not going to have time to have a chat with someone he's never met before!" And then lo and behold, I sat down with a couple of doctors that you knew, you came and sat down next to me and suddenly we had four people on the table – all doctors, all GPs and I suddenly thought 'this is unique, I've never been in a moment where I've had four Christians, all in the same profession, all at a conference about God and healing', and I got my chat with you, it was amazing...and it all went from there.

**Pete Carter**

...and it was the start of a great friendship/relationship, and our friendship certainly flourished, but it has also helped us create something and along with one of the other doctors who is actually here at Eastgate today, part of the dream unfolding for heaven in healthcare.

I guess for me another part of this was that I became a partner in general practice in 1987; it was a busy practice but one which I loved, and I was very happy and I loved my medicine...I loved helping patients, but about a year after I became a partner I started to lead a very small church in a village not far from where my practice was. So, I was a full time GP and I started to lead this small church with about 25 adults and 10 children and I thought, well, I don't want there to be any what we would call a 'secular/sacred divide' – I just don't believe in it; I've never believed in it; I've never believed in it in our workplace. I believe God is just as relevant here as he is there, and I also want our Christianity to be relevant to everyday life. So in our mind within the church we have always led it with the thought that all of our life is Christian, not just 'meetings', and actually most of our life is not spent in Christian meetings, thankfully. So, our job is to help people live their lives as Christians, and that Christian life enhancing the life of everything around them. I think what was/is probably unusual about our church was that it actually grew up with this reality of my work as a doctor sitting alongside leadership of the church, and there was never a conflict between the two. So for us, that has always part of the strength of our church and I think that's one of the reasons we have got to where we have got to right now.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

Yeah, and I think one of the other things, because of that is there are some practices that go on in some churches who are very well-meaning and very Godly but they do some things that if you are in any way involved in healthcare, are just nonsense! It just puts you off as a healthcare professional. You know, one of the classic ones – and I've seen it done many times – is that they get you to sit down and you put your legs out and they want to see if one is longer than the other, and then they pray for them and they say 'Oh, the leg has got longer' and if you're a healthcare professional you think it's just bunkum; it's just nonsense. If you get anyone to sit down and put their legs out and say one is shorter than the other, and then you pray for them and one lengthens, it's not that their leg has necessarily grown, their whole pelvis could have shifted...and it's just simple things like that – if you look at it from the point of view of a healthcare professional you just think well, that's just rubbish. What happens then is that you lose credibility and that means that the church becomes isolated, and certainly provides something for

Christians and people who want to come, but you would never be able to get to a point where a healthcare professional or a GP or a Consultant would be willing to send a patient to that, because they would just go 'Well, they're just quacks'. And that was the common dream that I think you and I both had: we wanted to do something where we could say to the NHS, 'look, we're safe, we talk the talk and we're credible.' We do a governance process that you would recognise. So that started this conversation – we had that amazing meeting – do you remember, I think it was about 2011?? We had started to get to know each other, and you called us all together to try and set up a meeting.

**Pete Carter**

Yes, breakfast at my house with bacon sandwiches (which all the medics went for) and then the fruit which everybody else seemed to head to...which was interesting!

Yes, I think one of the other things is that sense of being credible, but also actually one of our things is that we recognise that medicine is a gift from God, and we celebrate medicine and miracles in the same way. Because the aim of our interventions with people, whether it be through medicine or prayer for healing, is that they are well. It's not about our kudos as a Christian or as a doctor...my/our motivation has always got to be the patient or the person's wellbeing. And I think that's one of the things that's been confused in Christianity – there's almost been like a fight for the rights of which bit works. And we've always said, well both work, and they can both work together, and if we put these together collaboratively then we will enhance it rather than separate it out...and I think that was probably the key bit.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

There's a powerful phrase that I remember you saying at the time, which for me pretty much summed it up, which is: if someone's got a headache and you give them some paracetamol or some ibuprofen, and you pray for them, and then an hour later the headache's gone, if you need to work out which worked – the prayer or the ibuprofen – then you haven't understood the point. They had pain, and now the pain is gone – that's the point – not which modality was the one that did it.

**Pete Carter**

I think it's a really important issue that...that actually both need to sit alongside one another – obviously medicine is phenomenal and the advances in what can be done nowadays are extraordinary – but there are limitations, and we know that. But also, it's not just the miracles is it? God's given us love, power and a sound mind, but He also gives us joy and peace...and to help create an environment of joy and peace for people to work in, and for patients to benefit from is quite extraordinary and hugely beneficial. I was always glad – particularly when I was working in hospital medicine with all those hours, but also in general practice – that I was always known as 'The Happy Doctor'. Now that was a phrase [label] that I was very happy to have, and I think it's possible, or more than possible for Christians to be the ones who are producing the joy and the peace in their environment, because that enhances the whole workplace and the whole experience for staff and patients alike. So all those things, I think, make us credible. I think miserable Christians doesn't

help...I think anxious Christians, again, doesn't help.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

...and also, I was chatting to my own appraiser, only a month ago, and we were talking about some of the stuff we have been doing for the healing centre and me praying for patients, and one of the things I said to him was 'you don't have to park your brain at the door of the church'. We can do things in an intellectually credible way.

**Pete Carter**

I think again, when it comes round to healing – we know, here at Eastgate, we have seen remarkable healings happening on a very regular basis. We've got some fantastic stories. We saw that young lad who had a deformed oesophagus and then Eosinophilic Oesophagitis, and he came here and he was set free in an extraordinary way. You and I have seen so many, so many miracles that have taken people into a place of freedom, yet we make sure that this co-exists with great medicine, and we are not asking people to choose one or the other; we say these things work together. So I think we've got to learn how to put these things together in a constructive way so that people feel there is a very effective collaboration of these two.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

I was thinking Pete about the way HiH began, which was that first conference we ran on Medicine and Healing, back in 2012 wasn't it?

**Pete Carter**

Yeah, I think it was. We'd had this dream of gathering people, and stuff was starting to happen in our church with a number of people coming together, and we were training for the healing centre but we decided we actually needed to make something more accessible for anybody who works in the world of healthcare. So, we put on this conference....

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

We didn't even have a building then, we had to borrow a church!

**Pete Carter**

No, we didn't have our own building at that stage...and so, I remember talking to God very clearly. I asked him 'What would success look like from this day conference?'. He said to me 'Pete, give them their hope back'. And I thought, OK, I think we can do that, because I think generally the environment we live in is filled with hope, but I did look at the world of healthcare and thought actually, for Christians within that, most of them probably have lost the hope and dream that they may have started with. So we set out with that objective, that at the end of the day, could we have raised these people's hopes to a level where they started to have their heads higher.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

I remember when they came, it was just astonishing. Everyone's attitude was down; they were quiet, you know, they looked downtrodden – do you remember?

**Pete Carter**

They looked very downtrodden, I said they looked 'bedraggled' was one word I used, it was a bit of a shock to be honest. But by the end of the day, through

worship and the presence of God, testimonies, teaching, we actually had the great joy of seeing their heads lift up and by the time we ended the day, these people went out with a hope rekindled I would say. The dream started – oh, this could be possible! We just started to see God breathing on the embers of the fire within their hearts. And then we came to the second year (we did it the following year) and we talked to God and said ‘What would success look like this year?’ And He said ‘Now you can give them faith’. And I thought OK, because faith is the assurance of things hoped for and once people have lost their hope it’s very difficult for their faith to rise into the endeavours that God has for them. So, I remember the second year we said it was another day where we had helped people to grow in their faith, and that happened, and then subsequently we built on that year by year. Then we had that extraordinary year. – 2016 I think – and we were aiming towards what we call ‘The Power of the Common Dream’ – do you remember that year?

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

I do, yeah, and it was such a contrast. One of the years before I did this little breakout session on people’s dreams, and I just put ‘Dreams’ up on this flipchart, and basically went round the room, and I wanted everyone to share what their hope and their dream was. Basically what it turned into was them saying sorry for the fact that they hadn’t achieved it, and I wrote ‘guilt’ up on this board, and we ended up with this session dealing with the fact that they just felt guilty for failing. And yet at this 2016 conference, you deliberately again put flip charts up on the wall at Eastgate and got people to write what their aspirations were, and it was astonishing!

**Pete Carter**

It was. We collected at least 150 dreams. We dared the people to articulate once again the dreams that they had for their own personal lives, and broader than that, for healthcare. We got them to do it in just small groups of about 5 or 6, where they felt a bit safer and then we said, let’s put this altogether and we collected the dreams – and then do you remember, as we were doing that, what happened in the room?

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

Aw, it just became alive. Because as we put them up on the wall, people started coming forward to this wall, adding bigger and bigger dreams and hope just came alive... and then the pleasure of God turned up.

**Pete Carter**

Ah, it was extraordinary! For me it was, I must say, a unique experience of the intensity of the pleasure of God. Now I’ve known the joy of God, but the pleasure of God just descended into this room, and I thought well this is powerful, because God loves us to dream. It gives Him great pleasure when he sees his children rising up in the dreams that He’s given to them.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

It was so funny, because I was in a breakout group and we were just preparing to pray for people before they left, which is what we often do. So there was about, I don’t know, 10-12 people just standing on one side. You were talking to the rest...

**Pete Carter** Yeah, I was trying to get people into a good order, and you were having a different time!

**Mike Von Fraunhofer** We were just getting into the presence of God and suddenly I just thought 'I feel hot...I am wearing too much' and I started to take my jumper off, and I looked around and literally everyone in this prayer group were all taking stuff off, it was so hot...and we just suddenly realised it was incredibly hot just where we were. It was just our area, it wasn't that the heating had gone wrong... we just felt, this is so hot!

**Pete Carter** It was an anointing of God coming to rest on that group of people...

**Mike Von Fraunhofer** ..and you turned round, you took one look, and knew what was going on!

**Pete Carter** Yeah, I just thought you were being a bit sort of chaotic/disruptive while I was trying to organise this group of people and then I thought 'Oh, God's doing something here'. I guess in the Bible, you see when God comes down eg. it talks about the fire of heaven on the day of Pentecost, so I thought, oh there's an anointing coming upon them. And then we had the prayer time and everybody in the conference got prayed for, and everybody was - well, I don't know how to describe it - 'impacted' would be too small a word - 'overwhelmed' by the pleasure, the presence, and the power of God. And I watched for about 30 minutes while everybody literally lay there in the awe of God, and we knew something very special had happened.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer** That was a breakthrough moment. I think most people would say they've never encountered something like it.

**Pete Carter** I think probably that helped us understand that what we had been looking at until that moment in time - because we had really concentrated on making healing accessible to the health world, and so we'd talked about medicine and healing...

**Mike Von Fraunhofer** ...and how to pray etc...

**Pete Carter** ...but we realised the dream was bigger than that and that's when we really started to use the term Heaven in Healthcare probably for the first time very intentionally and realised that HiH is really God's heart for every Christian working in the realm of healthcare to be heaven on earth, and what does that look like. That's why we've created HiH, the organisation to equip, encourage, give hope and dreams back to every Christian who works in the realms of healthcare to literally deliver heaven on earth wherever/whenever they are, and we just see that exploding all around us don't we?

**Mike Von Fraunhofer** We do, and I think it's also trying to share lessons learnt and wisdom gained so that people don't have to go along the same road, and that's the advantage

of Community. I think that's the point of these things [these videos] the HiH website, and the conferences and the Locality Groups...and that's what really taking off now, the Locality Groups.

**Pete Carter**

It's extraordinary. We are now looking at local groups gathering to talk about HiH; to discover the potential of their own Christianity, across three Continents - US, Africa, Europe. More and more interest is just coming from further and further afield; people gathering around us, and we just see that God seems to be gathering His army. Also there was a really significant prophesy by Shawn Bolz not long ago about how God's gaze was on the world of healthcare, and so we are confident that God is on the move in this realm and we are just delighted to be part of it and with the ability and the resources that we have here at Eastgate through HiH to help equip anybody who works in the world of healthcare to see extraordinary things.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

I think, Pete, it might be worth talking about - we've talked a bit about the power of a common dream a little bit - and I think one of the practical things before HiH became what it was - was the dream to operate a Healing Centre that was compatible with medicine and with the NHS. It might be worth just sharing how we did that - the process. Not necessarily because everyone is going to reproduce it, but it just shows basically what you can do when you place a heart's dream before God.

**Pete Carter**

We basically had this dream within our church, Eastgate, of having a place where people could come to be prayed for for healing. We decided that a Saturday morning was a good opportunity for that. But we realised that we needed to train people and instruct them and have it in a way that would be compatible and accessible to the health services, not putting stumbling blocks in their way - some of which we've already talked about. But there is a lot of stuff there where people within the health world would look at the Christian world with a degree of scepticism - understandably unfortunately. There are practices that we have that are unhelpful I think within the world of Christianity that make people go 'Oooh, I don't think I trust them'. So we had to work hard to create an environment which would gain the trust of our local health services.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

...and put in place a governance process that they would recognise and feel assured by so that they could say 'Yes, this is a service...' Our dream was that local healthcare professionals could say to a patient 'I know a place you can go that I trust that will pray for you...'

**Pete Carter**

Yeah, and again, one of the things that we said was that we realise if you want to do medical research - say you find a new drug and you say oh it's brilliant at curing asthma and you say yes, that's good, but and it has, unfortunately, a really bad side effect of killing you with a heart attack - you'll think that's not a good drug! And I think sometimes Christians sometimes make the error of saying 'well, it works..healing works..we've prayed, and it works' without



considering the possible and perceived side effects that are out there. So, we actually addressed that by looking at the perceived side effects of Christianity, didn't we? We devised a feedback questionnaire which you and I actually worked on together – to get some research into people's experience of our healing centre.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

Yeah, we did, and I think on that score, we basically gave it out anonymously and people sent it back anonymously and we asked the usual questions like, how did you find it, were we pleasant, were we supportive, did we treat you with respect, did we explain what we were going to do? The usual things you'd expect from almost any kind of service questionnaire. But the other thing that we specifically said was 'Did you feel in any way pressured or asked for money' because obviously one of the things that's important to us is that people didn't come out of it all you're going to want is money out of these people. We specifically asked 'Did you feel any pressure to change your religion or religious beliefs?' because again, we don't want people to say, 'well if I send people to that Christian church, they're going to try and change everyone into Christians'. And that was one of the things – we weren't there to try and proselytise people; we weren't trying to make them Christians. We wanted to say You have pain. We have a God who wants you to be pain-free. Let's deal with that. That was the purpose of it.

**Pete Carter**

I think learning to be unconditional in what we offer to people rather than actually being seen to be offering something that has strings attached to it. I think that's where broadly speaking, the world is wary of Christianity because it perceives it as having strings attached or getting its hooks into people.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

I think one of the important questions to ask was whether the clients felt pressured to change their medical advice. Which is key for us. One of the key things was that we needed healthcare professionals to feel that their patients are safe. I have got a patient who has broken his neck and has a hard collar on. Now if someone told him to take the collar off and wag his head around, that would be it, he would be paralysed for life. So it's important to us that people weren't pressured at all to do anything that they had been told not to do.

**Pete Carter**

Yeah, I think one of the key things is that we actually get people to read through what they can expect from our Healing Centre, and we get them to sign a document to say that they won't actually change any medical intervention without going back to the appropriate medical practitioners. That's really important. We are there to work alongside the health service. We are not providing health care services in that sense; we are there as a very much 'complementary' health service. We celebrate medicine as much as miracles, and I think that's really important to get across. The feedback questionnaire was quote extraordinary in terms of the satisfaction of the people that came and also what we demonstrated there was the long-term benefit of coming to the Healing Centre in terms of people's pain relief and

we've got some before and after statistics on that. One of the things that we were able to talk to the health services about was actually we can save the health services a lot of money.

**Mike Von Fraunhofer**

Yeah, I mean visually, we are used to the classic 10 point pain score – and not everyone that came to the Healing Centre had a painful condition – but about 80 odd people had filled in a pain score, and just visually you could just look and see where the pain scores were before they got prayer, and then it drops. You know, it visually drops. I remember one person: their pain score before they got prayer was ten. Absolute agony. And after, it was zero. And if you think how many thousands of pounds are spent on spinal injections, or how many hundreds a month are spent on painkilling drugs. That's just been saved!