

## *The Comeback King*

The first quarter of 2007 is in the books. I trust it has been a good one for you. For us, it has been very busy and exciting with the pending birth of our first child and ministry that has taken us to 3 countries and 8 states. As we minister and talk with Pastors and leaders we see God is doing awesome things. We also notice that many people have recently been through or are in, as they say, "the biggest and toughest fight ever for them, the ministry, business".

As we build the Kingdom of God, we all may go through these trying situations at times. Most we have learned to handle but some can seem down right overwhelming and staggering. As the dream we have invested so much in, has appeared to have had a "setback," "taken a hit," so today, I want to encourage us all with an incredible story of perseverance and triumph. Of overcoming incredible obstacles to reclaim the dream.

If your God-dreams have ever taken a direct hit, I believe this story about Francisco from "Unstoppable" will encourage you to never give up and edify you to keep on course and empower you to push through.

**THE DREAM:** as a young boy, Francisco always dreamed of being a doctor. Not just any doctor but a surgeon, in private practice. He was a good student, studied hard in pursuit of the dream through HS, college and medical school. His many hours of study, hard work and skill had earned him a residency as a plastic surgeon in the best hospital in Mexico City. He was a young man on the verge of achieving his dream of being a private practitioner.

**THE SERIOUS SETBACK:** One day in September, 1985 a great earthquake (8.1 on Richter scale) rocked Mexico City. One moment Francisco was doing his residency rounds on the 5th floor, the next instance, he was on the ground floor! Buried under tons of building debris. Awakening in the darkness, Francisco came to realize that his **HIGHLY** skilled right hand - his surgery performing hand - was crushed under a huge steel beam. He struggle to free himself - but to no avail. He begun to panic knowing that the hand could turn gangrenous and have to be amputated. No hand-No surgeon.

The hours passed, Francisco went in and out of consciousness. Four days later the rescue teams with his family finally found Francisco. The family persuaded the rescuers not to cut off the hand to free Francisco but instead rescuers worked extra hours to free him. He was rushed to the hospital. Major surgery was performed. Over the next three weeks more work was done in attempt to save the hand. The hand was saved however, the doctors were forced to amputate all four fingers on Francisco's right surgery hand.

**KNOCKED DOWN:** There seemed no hope. But Francisco persisted, he would not give up on the dream. His quest lead him to a doctor in the USA who pioneered replacing fingers with toes. Francisco had his ring and pinkie fingers replaced with two of his toes. Think of it..toe-fingers?. the set back, the pain, the doubts... Where is the dream now? Francisco faced the decision all must make when knocked down. Stay down and quit on

the dream OR get up, determined, with new resolve to do all necessary to keep the God dream alive and going forward.

NEVER QUIT! There were many doubters and naysayers but Francisco threw himself into the intensive therapy and exercise program. Months after months he spent painful hours relearning the picking up and moving of objects, by tying and untying thousands of knots, rolling rubber balls between his new toe-fingers to build strength and dexterity into his thumb and toe-fingers. Finally, he was able to return to Mexico City and to perform limited duties at the hospital.

THE TOTAL COMEBACK: As he progressed, eventually Francisco was asked to assist in an operation. What a thrill to be back at the operating table, even at a minor capacity. He assumed he would merely pass the instruments but the lead surgeon had another idea. In the midst of the operation as he prepared a very delicate procedure, he turned to Francisco and said - you take it from here - you do it!

The moment of truth and testing. Complete or Partial comeback? The procedure required a lot of skill, it normally took 15 minutes. That day, it took Francisco an hour. But it was an hour of victory The procedure was accomplished with flying colors. Francisco was back in the dream. His surgery days began again.

Today he is highly regarded plastic surgeon with two locations. He also voluntarily performs corrective surgery on the poor and burn victims. He is a story of someone who never let go of the dream regardless of the setback and the cost to the comeback.

THE BIG QUESTION I trust this story has inspired you and encouraged you. Think of Francisco's example. What a horrible crushing setback he experienced. The excruciating comeback to learn how to do surgery with "finger toes." His will to thrive not to just survive. To reclaim his dream when it looked like it was stolen by the enemy. If a man can do that to be a doctor and God bless him for the pain he alleviates, how much more can we be overcomers to build the Kingdom of God.

JESUS; KING OF COMEBACKS: Like Dr. Francisco, my friend, you have too much invested in your dream, God's dream for your life, family and ministry to ever quit. No setback is permanent unless we let it be. When tough situations occur, you will not take a step back, nor stay down, you will always get up.

This Easter, let's remember and proclaim to ourselves and others that JESUS is the KING OF COMEBACKS and lives in us. Your dream may have been shaken.(ISAIAH 54:10) But you can arise from the rubble, do whatever rehab is necessary and resurrect the dream. For the Lord your God is with you. (ISAIAH 43:10-13)

God bless you richly as you build His Kingdom,

Robert J. Ricci MBA,CPA,CFP  
President/Founder

Financial Champions International