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Intro

have ADHD. (WARNING: You may find it difficult at times to follow my train of thought. Like a movie that bounces back and forth between the past and the present, I write like I live ... ALL OVER THE PLACE!) When I grew up in the 1970's it was just called Hyperactivity. I couldn't sit still. I still can't. Why is that important? You're about to read my story so far. If you can read through the lines you'll see a current beneath the surface. I wouldn't describe it as a riptide in the ocean. I'd say it's more like a river with twists and turns, beautiful serenity, boulders and rough spots. As I write this I'm reminded of a description of life being like the Rogue River in Oregon, from my 3rd favorite book "Life on the Edge" written by Dr. James Dobson founder of Focus on the Family ...

"Life is like the beautiful Rogue River in some ways. There are long stretches when the water is calm and serene. You can see your reflection as you lean out of the raft. The scenery is gorgeous, and the river carries you peacefully downstream. Then without warning you are propelled into the white water. Suddenly, you're gasping for air and struggling to keep your head above water. At the moment when you think you might be drowning, you float right into the turmoil of the Coffeepot. It gets its name from the narrowing of the rock walled banks that create an unpredictable, bubbling current that has been known to suck small boats and their passengers below the surface without warning."

Dr. Dobson compared this description with a ten year period in a young persons life. He called it The Critical Decade. He said it applied to the years of our lives from 16 to 26 ...

"Some of the most dramatic and permanent changes in life usually occur during those ten short years. A person is transformed from a kid who's still living at home and eating at the parents' table to a full-fledged adult who should be earning a living and taking complete charge of his or her life. Most of the decisions that will shape the next fifty years will be made in this era, including the choice of an occupation, perhaps the decision to marry, and the establishment of values and principles by which life will be governed. What makes this period even more significant is the impact of early mistakes and errors in judgment. They can undermine all that is to follow. A bricklayer knows he must be very careful to get his foundation absolutely straight; any wobble in the bricks at the bottom will create an even greater tilt as the wall goes up. So it is in life."

The current in my life that is always moving me is my energy. But within that energy lies a kind of a lighting fast decision-making process. Most folks take time to decide to get married, have children, choose a career, where and how to live their lives, and especially what to believe. I have pretty much made all of those decisions in the time it takes an MLB player to assess whether or not to swing the bat at a pitch. That really isn't much of an exaggeration. Here's a couple examples. When I took my wife to a concert on our 3rd date I ended up proposing to her during the last encore song. Before the song started I wasn't even thinking about doing such a thing. When I decided what my vocation would be I started with a trade school. I had sent a postcard showing interest in their program. They had four selections

to choose from. I had somehow missed checking the box as to which course I wanted to take. They called me and asked which field did I want to pursue. I thought about it for a moment and gave them the answer immediately. So, for two of the biggest decisions I would make in life I deliberated for a split second on each. And so it has gone for every other!

This kind of pattern has put me almost indefinitely into several coffee pots in the river! The crazy thing is, I make it through every time! That's why I like to think of it as GOD's Big Show! Yet still, when I've got the chance to enjoy the calm parts I grab my kayak, go back up river and do it all over again! That's the current you'll see as you read through my story so far.

Chapter 1.0

have several memories of my early childhood of family gatherings. It seems we used to visit relatives and enjoy our time together catching up over some good home cooked meals. I also remember the funerals of my two Grandpa's both of which passed away by the time I was five years old, or maybe six.

Around that same time my Mom and Dad divorced. I wouldn't realize it then but this event would affect my whole life. I understand by my experience why GOD hates divorce. I hate it too.

My older brother and sister were deeply affected as well. But they took on a new responsibility ... me. They did their best to watch after me. I was a hyperactive handful. It seemed there was no end to my energy. Since the divorce I had become angry. It simmered deep inside where the hurt was. At the same time I was a very happy kid. I was very active riding bikes and learning sports in pick up games at the park we lived near. I played baseball and football growing up in the 1970's and early 80's. Looking back, I think my energy kept me distracted from the hurt. But from time I would still lose my temper.

In my teenage years I had been jailed at the police station four different times. Thankfully I did not end up incarcerated in Juvenile Hall. I got drunk for the first time when I was 10. When I was 12 I started to shoplift to get pints of hard liquor. Sometimes it'd be for me and a friend to drink. Sometimes it was just for me.

Only a few months after getting my drivers license at 16 years old I was arrested for DUI. This wasn't enough to get my attention and at 17 years old I was arrested again for DUI. Another night while driving home drunk I committed a hit and run of a parked car in a residential neighborhood. That had happened when I was driving a rental car while my Mom's car was getting a new transmission. It needed one because I shifted her Ford Escort into reverse while driving 80 MPH. Why on earth would I do that? I had too much to drink. I collected enough points on my driving record that the CA DMV sent me a letter notifying me that I was among the worst 3% of drivers in the whole state and they suspended my license for a year. The combination of alcohol mixed together with my energy always put me on the edge of destruction. Blackouts were the closest to the edge I would ever come. Though I would experience this several times in my teenage years, two of the blackouts were life-threatening to me and others.

My 2nd DUI was the first time I ever blacked out. My friend and I dropped my sister off at a bar, called Whiskey Flats. While we sat there waiting for her I blacked out. When I came out of the black out I was driving! I had just hit a curb and broke the frame on my Mom's car. One of the hub caps went flying and almost hit a couple nearby. My friend later told me that I had basically turned a busy parking lot into a race track and he feared for his life.

The other blackout happened in Tempe AZ. I had moved to Phoenix when I was 18 years old to attend a Tech school to learn architectural drafting. One night after having way too much to drink I drove a classmate home from Phoenix to Tempe. We stopped at a liquor store on the way and I was supposed to wait outside for him. When he returned I was no where in sight. Apparently, I had wandered into the

turning lane of a four lane road and had passed out face down on the pavement. Someone saw me and carried me to the side of the road to safety and called the police. When I came out of my blackout I was staring at a bright flashlight with a tall cop who said I had just one more chance to tell him my name or he'd have to take me to jail for sure. In that moment I couldn't remember my name! I remained quiet and hoped it'd come to me and it finally did! The cop was very gracious to me and let some friends come pick me up and take me home.

As I was pretty much on my own and often times out of control, my wife was raised in a stable home in AZ. Her Mom and Dad raised her and her older brother in Church and around a lot of family. Yet she still rebelled and ended up in a relationship with a man who was in his midtwenties while she was still in high school! The relationship lasted about 4 years. This was wrong in so many ways. She could not figure out how to get out of what had become a very abusive situation. Her Dad and brother intervened and brought her home to be safe. But the damage had been done. While trying to put the pieces of her life back together she decided instead to end it at just 19 years old and attempted suicide. Thank GOD her brother found her in time to get to the hospital to save her life!

Fast forward forty years or so. I've met and married my wife and we've had 2 sons and a daughter. They have grown up, married and have families of their own! We've got 8 grandkids! In the midst of those years I was sober for the first 15 years, an alcoholic for next 10 years, and sober

again from then until now. A lot happened in those decades to say the least.

Looking back now I think my energy almost never gave us enough time to reflect. Since getting married in 1987 we have moved an average of every 1.35 years! Thats a total of 28 times! As I write this we have lived in our new place in AZ. for only 7 months. We didn't know what it was like to be stable. Actually, we've never known what that's like, except for my wife. She had lived in just one house before she met me. Aside from the cemetery we hope this was our last move! If we stay put and live to be 100 years old we will increase our average to 2.89 ... Woohoo! (Wait until you see what happens in chapter 2.0!)

It's hard for our kids to clearly track where they lived and what school they were going to when growing up. The early years were what I like to call the good old days. We did a lot together as a family and made some good memories. But life was still a blur and what's worse, I made it even more of a blur when I became an alcoholic for 10 years. This decade of drinking came right smack in the middle of the years when our kids were in school and as they started their young adult lives. These years would leave a lot of emotional scars on our kids. Still, I never stopped long enough to reflect on my life.

Recently I realized something that I hadn't recognized before. I am now old enough to see the full circle of my life coming back around. I can tie things that are happening in my life now in my mid to late fifties to choices I made decades earlier. While I hope to live a long, full life for a few more decades, there are no guarantees. What I'm seeing come back around now could be it. What if it is? Lord have mercy! I have spent 57 years running at break neck speed and this is the first time I've pumped the

brakes! I can only hope and pray that GOD will grant me the grace and mercy to live out each day just **one day at a time.** If I can do that it's possible that I might have a shot at finishing well. I've said it many times over the years that it's not how you start that counts ... it's how you finish!

"So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Romans 7:21-25

At this point in my life I am seeking GOD to learn how I can slow down what I call my blessed rage to live, ADHD. Maybe I'll figure something out before the end of my days. I know my wife would really appreciate it! I really don't know what I'm going to do about that. But I am sure of one thing ... I will **just trust** in GOD through it all.



Usually, when someone tells you their story or as it is often called their "testimony", it's told in two parts. Your life before you trusted in Christ and then the rest of your life and how you're different now because you trusted Christ. I can't draw that line. I have been all over the map including many highs and lows and it's really hard for me to tell how or when GOD did this or that.

I am certain of one moment though. At 19 years of age, just a few months after my wife and I had been married, we went to church. We thought it might help us learn to get along better. I had proposed to my wife at a Journey concert a month after I had turned 19. We were both drunk. I had to remind her the next day that she had said yes! We were married just 3 months after that. So, of course, we were having trouble getting along. We hardly knew each other! Church seemed like a good place to start. While at Church one Sunday something real happened to me.

We had went to the college group and they were studying through the book of Romans and were on chapter 12. The pastor liked to use illustrations as he taught. The Sunday we were there he read Romans 12:2 ...

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is –his good, pleasing and perfect will."

To illustrate what it meant for us to be conformed he took some Play Dough and pushed it through a mold and out came a new shape. He said that this is what the world wants to do to us. But GOD had a different way, transforming us from the inside out. At the end of the study

we got into small groups and talked about what we had just learned. Then the pastor asked us to pray. He asked us to bow our heads and close our eyes. Then, instead of asking us to pray out loud he instructed us to listen. I had never done this before. So, I bowed my head and listened. Unlike anything that has happened in my life before or since, I "heard" the words "I love you son." When I raised my head from that wordless prayer I wanted to know GOD.

That desire has went through many ups and downs since then but it has remained true. Even 10 years of alcoholism and the pain that it has caused since hasn't wiped it out. I can remember days when I sat with my coffee and Bible completely hungover from heavy drinking the night before. Clinging to GOD with whatever life was left in me, I would still dare to believe in the love of GOD in Christ. I felt like I knew this wasn't the end of my story. Why? Only one thing could give me that kind of hope ... the cross. Thank GOD! I've been sober since September 29, 2013!

The desire to know GOD has given me an unusually extreme appetite for studying the Bible. No other book has affected me this way. I was never much of a student growing up. I hated elementary school. I didn't care about junior high school, but in the 8th grade I applied myself to learning and was awarded the Most Improved Student of the Year for getting all C's! I got D's and F's through all of 6th and 7th grade. I was such a handful that becoming average was impressive, Ha Ha! In high school I maintained a solid C grade point average of 2.0. Even though I was good in sports there were no scholarship offers in my mailbox.

I used to joke with my friends in high school about owning a liquor store. I said it so much that after I graduated I went to a local community college and took classes focused on Business Management. Ironically, I dropped out after a month because of being hungover so much!

There's two things I'm trying to contrast in the last few paragraphs. My struggle with school because of ADHD and my inexhaustible desire to study the Bible so I could know GOD. I grew up hating school work ... did I say that again? HaHa! I told my 4th grade teacher as much. She asked me what did I think I was going to do when I grew up? I told her I'd rather pretend to be blind and collect money in a cup than to try to learn at school! I couldn't sit still! At times, I still have a hard time sitting still! But one thing I have been able to do is to sit and study the Bible for hours, and study it in depth for decades! I can't put it down! But I couldn't do that, and had no desire to until after GOD had changed me from the inside out that Sunday morning at church.

Now, you might be wondering, "Is there a time when you became a Christian?" It happened when I was 5 years old. My Grandma was a Sunday school teacher who loved to teach children. She would tell me stories from the Bible all the time. She would read different verses to me about how GOD loved me. She would explain how Jesus died on a cross for me and rose from the dead and that was how I could know it was true. We prayed, I was forgiven and the cross was proof.

I have wondered about how much of that I really grasped at that age. It's likely that I didn't really understand it. But I always knew that I believed that I was forgiven. Maybe that's all anyone needs to know ... Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Odd as it may be, I believe today all these many years later that the cross is the ONE THING that I'm sure of ... and it is still more than enough!

So far my story has mostly been about my childhood and adolescence. I haven't delved too deeply into the many years of my adult life. My intent in doing so is to respect our kids. They should speak for themselves and tell their stories if they want to. Besides that, it's hard for me to tell that part of my story. I had always wanted to be a family man, so it cut deep that I had undermined that which was most precious to me. I will say that the relationship dynamics of our family were complicated. My wife and I are very proud of our kids, their spouses, and their kids. They are dear to us and we want the best for them. It is our hope and prayer that they will all find their way in this world with GOD's love and help.

Where do I go from here? My story is far from over ... I hope! What does GOD have in store for me next? I don't know. But I think all I need to know for the rest of my life here is summed up in this verse:

"For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

1 Corinthians 2:2

Why? Because ... Jesus Christ and him crucified was and is still the single greatest demonstration of love by any GOD from any religion in the REAL WORLD ever. Life has been inspired by one question: Is GOD love? In the most UNEXPECTED way GOD has answered that question, by being crucified.

How can I be so confident? Not a single one of us can guarantee what's going to happen when we meet GOD. One thing is certain ... it is the differences of our beliefs that makes it all so very interesting! In the least we can all agree if GOD exists THAT is not us. That's why I'm going to spend

my days asking people to describe the Bible in jus2words. I'm studying for that day and am willing to lay it all on the line believing that GOD is love and the cross is proof. Moreover, I am also convinced that Christ has left us with an empty grave so we can wake up every day filled with wonder and awe because ...

GOD's not dead, He's surely alive!



Chapter 2.0

t was 4.20.25 Easter morning and I prayed what I thought would be a fitting request matching the magnitude of this holy day. "Good morning GOD. Let this be the first day of the rest of my life. AND, make it an adventure like no other." Has anyone ever warned you about praying like this? They should! I was unaware that I had just pushed everything in my life to a tipping point so that GOD would show up and tilt the scales!

I was on a mission that day. You see, it was 4:30am and still dark. Yet there I was, on top of a mountain kneeling and praying this simple prayer. What prompted me to do this? I love mountain biking, but that only explains why I was on a mountain top before the sunrise. A better question is who prompted me. My brother in law had bought 100 little Jesus figures. They stood about 3/4" tall and had the words "Jesus loves you" written on the front. I had placed one on this mountain top a couple of days earlier. I stacked a rock on top so it looked like a tomb. You could still see little Jesus but he was mostly out of sight. The place where I did this was a trail side shrine of sorts where folks left painted rocks that had words of encouragement on them. Some of them were religious, others were about recovery and hope. One that caught my attention just said "Dude."

My brother in law had told me on Saturday, "You can't leave him there! You have to go back and resurrect little Jesus. It's Easter Sunday this weekend." I loved the idea, so

that's exactly what I did. When they picked us up for the sunrise church service, I held up little Jesus and said "He is risen!" Not many days later things would start to happen that would make me look at this Easter as the beginning of chapter 2 of my life. I got the concept of an adventure like no other from my 2nd favorite book Holy Sweat written by Tim Hansel.

"You thrill me, LORD, with all you have done for me! I sing for joy because of what you have done.

O LORD, what great works you do!

And how deep are your thoughts."

Psalm 92:4-5

My Mom had this saying when she would talk about what kind of day she had. It didn't matter to her what kind of day it was either. She would say "I've had the best day in the whole USA!" She'd say it with such sincerity that you'd believe her. One Sunday night she called around 8pm just to say hi. As she talked and I listened (This is how most conversations went with my Mom), she spoke about enjoying a walk on the pier at the ocean and watching a beautiful sunset. Then she said she'd discovered that she had locked her keys in her car. She called a tow truck so they could unlock her car. They did but it took about 2 hours to get to her. Most people would be frustrated but Mom realized that she would have someone else to talk to, a captive audience! She said she had such a wonderful conversation with the tow truck driver concluding "I've had the best day in the whole USA!" I wish I could look at life like that! Her rose colored glasses were one-of-a-kind.

Having a Mom like that helps you to be positive and optimistic, but sometimes it's just unrealistic. I am thankful

to GOD for giving me the Mom I had. It does help to think of how she would respond to things. It usually makes me laugh and have a good feeling inside. Which is exactly what happened to me once after I had been struck in the mouth by some 2x4's I had just loaded into the back of my truck! I started to bleed so I got some napkins and applied some pressure. My mind quickly added up several frustrating things that happened that day culminating in this moment. I thought of Mom's saying "I've had the best day in the whole USA!" I began to laugh out loud in the Home Depot parking lot. If anyone witnessed that they probably thought I hit my head too hard. Thanks Mom!

Now back to the story: "Suddenly" (Acts 2:2) ... I got a call from my daughter on May 8, just a few weeks after I had prayed on Easter morning. It really surprised me when she called as we had been estranged for the past couple of years. For now, I'll suffice it to say that her situation was an emergency. The kind that changes everything. Like the Psalmist wrote about catastrophic ...

"times of trouble ... when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea."

Psalm 46:1-2

They are the kind of times when you know a line has been drawn and there's no turning back. Times when you are thrust into a new reality. It's scary. It's crazy difficult to know what to do. THE PLAN changes almost daily. It seems like you can barely hold on. You have exactly ZERO % control of your life. Or at least it feels that way. But GOD is at work.

In response to this situation my wife and I are moving back to MI. to be there for our daughter and her son. There goes our shot at increasing our average stay at a new home up to 2.89 years! Regardless of how many places we end up living in, the future is full of uncertainty. What will we do?

What else?



Chapter 2.1

have an idea! Every time I say that I can see Tim Allen in the movie "Christmas with the Kranks" as he introduces a plan to his wife about skipping Christmas to go on a cruise. That's kind of what happens with my ideas. They sound exciting (to me) at first but they go through all sorts of challenges and changes that end up in one way or another being a good story. At least that's my point of view (POV).

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

I'm going to write about my story as I go. I'll be trying to make sense of what GOD is doing in my life. That'll be quite the adventure since that's kind of an impossible thing. Every story needs a plot. So, I'm thinking mine will be figuring out THE PLAN which will refer to the way GOD does things. I know I'll be guessing the whole time. The fun of it is that I will get to sit down with GOD when everything is said and done and we can go through it together. I picture myself sitting in silence and listening with my jaw dropped to the floor listening to what THE PLAN actually was. I am fully persuaded that GOD will blow my mind!

"Accept the way God does things, for who can straighten what he has made crooked? Enjoy prosperity while you can, but when hard times strike, realize that both come from God.

Remember that nothing is certain in this life."

Ecclesiastes 7:13-14

"Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother's womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things." Ecclesiastes 11:5

I figure that chapter 1 in this book is about chapter 1 of my life. The way I'm seeing things today, that's the first 57 years. Now, I'm living out chapter 2 which started when I prayed that simple but dangerous prayer on Easter Sunday on 4.20.25. Chapter two will be broken down into short stories. I'd like to think of them as pieces. It's like I'm working with GOD on a puzzle that only HE KNOWS. He's got the picture and I can't wait to see it one of these days!

When I finally get to meet GOD that'll be when I start chapter three.

Chapter 2.2

s I have stated in chapter 1, we have moved a lot. That is an understatement! I've moved 39 times in my life and my wife and I have moved 29 times since we married in 1987. Like I said, we have moved a lot!

It didn't dawn on me until this move to look back over the last 8 years and count how many times we've relocated out of state. All at once it hit me. It has been 5 times in the last 8 years! As it relates to THE PLAN I'm really not sure how to look at this.

"From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us."

Acts 17:26-27

In context these verses are talking about the boundaries of nations and not the square footage of our home and or property. So maybe we move as much or as little as we want within those boundaries, and THE PLAN is just that we stay within the borders of the nation we're in? This reminds me of another verse about moving.

"Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit." How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone. What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that." Otherwise you are boasting about your own plans, and all such boasting is evil."

James 4:13-16

Now that's more specific than Acts 17. It seems to say that GOD's will could possibly include all of our moves or at least some of them.

"We may throw the dice, but the LORD determines how they fall." Proverbs 16:33

Perhaps it's a mixture of THE PLAN and our plans? GOD only knows. Regardless of what it really is, it fascinates to me to no end. That must be why it's an adventure like no other!

Now, that sounds like all this moving feels somewhat reasonable to me. But that's probably my ADHD Brain. It sure doesn't feel reasonable to my wife!

GOD help us!

Chapter 2.3

hat's around the next turn? GOD only knows!