

it's **GOD'S
BIG
SHOW**

and this is
DJ'S STORY
so far ...



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Intro

I 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 lightning 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

I 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 to 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 mid-twenties 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! That's 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

It 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, who is also my best friend in this life, 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

I 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 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

As 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 I think 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

One morning at about 4am after around 36 years of marriage, I found the coffee pot full of water. That'd be the first time my wife ever did that! I thought to myself how sweet she was to think of me like that. I poured it into the coffee maker without a second thought and pushed the button to brew myself some dark, strong coffee - just the way I like it! Then I poured myself a cup, raised it saying good morning to GOD, and took my first sip of the day. The bitterness of that cup was unmatched by anything I'd ever had before! I had to rush to the sink and immediately spit it out! I rinsed out my mouth for at least a minute before I got any relief. "What was in that water?" Well ... she had simply forgotten to rinse out the pot after she ran it through a cleaning cycle using vinegar. What I thought was water, was actually a pot full of vinegar! What a surprise!

I got a lot of years of experience telling me what's in the coffee pot of life. Then all at once "*Suddenly*" (Acts 2:2) ... in a moment, GOD shows me how foolish I am. And I'd say the person He has used the most in my life to speak to me is my wife. It has taken me years to learn this.

Let me tell you a little about my wife. She grew up as a quiet little girl who struggled to be seen. When I met her she was still quiet. Almost too quiet. I worked hard at getting her to talk. Then one Sunday at church we were singing this song about how GOD is our refuge, our shelter, our deliverer. In a moment I got this picture in my mind

about how she had been set free. As if GOD had led her out of her shell she had been in all of her life and locked the door behind her! I laughed out loud at this thought. My wife asked me “What’s so funny?” So I told her what I thought. “GOD just brought you out of your shell and locked the door behind you. You can never go back!”

From that point on, little by little, my wife began to change from being quiet and unseen to having confidence and courage to have a voice. After years of this she has become more confident and able to speak up for herself. Yet, it has been the last couple years that it seems things have been coming together in the most beautiful way. I’ve always known of this beauty inside of her. It’s what I fell in love with from day one. Now she responds from her heart that is full of GOD’s Love. In fact, those are her two words to describe the Bible ... GOD’s Love.

To say that she is one my heroes in the Faith is not overstating how I feel. **How far she has come in life has been one of the most amazing things I have ever seen.** I thank GOD for letting me see her the way I do.

“Who can find a virtuous and capable wife?

She is more precious than rubies.

Her husband ...”

Proverbs 31:10-11

The word *find* in this verse means to uncover something unseen. We all know that beauty is more than skin deep. This kind of beauty is written about in the New Testament too.

“You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle

and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God.”

1 Peter 3:4

Something I learned early on in our marriage was the fact that it is my responsibility to draw this beauty out of my wife. I have to find a way to encourage her every day. I figured GOD meant it exactly the way it was written in Proverbs chapter 31 ...

V.10 *“Who can find a virtuous and capable wife?*

V.11 *“Her husband.”*

That was and still is my job.

Life has had its ups and downs for sure. Our love for each other has went through a lot but has remained strong. My wife has always loved me, whether I was at my best or my worst. And I have tried to love her always, no matter what. One constant challenge for us has been how different our thinking is. But it's not so much that we look at things so differently, we do have a lot in common. Rather, it's our individual approaches to making decisions. My pace is lightning fast and appears to almost always be in a hurry. While hers is much slower, even cautious. Risk enlivens me, but it scares her to death. It's honestly hard for me to fully grasp the impact of this on her life. Not that I haven't tried to be understanding but my ADHD Brain makes it hard to slow down. My motor is always going at a pretty good clip.

One time that shows the dramatic difference of how we make and process our decisions was when we were on vacation in MI. We had taken a road trip from CA. To MI. and were staying in my Mom and Dad's cabin on the lakeshore. Of course we were having a great time! MI. is

beautiful in the summer and walking out your back door to fish, go for a swim, ride a jet ski or just sip some good coffee while taking in GOD's beauty all around you is like the greatest time ever! So what did I do? Come up with the idea ON THE SPOT to move there! (ADHD Brain!) I do a quick search for a job and somehow manage to get an interview. That was probably only a couple of hours after I decided. When do I tell my wife? Honestly, I don't remember exactly. It was somewhere around the moment I got the interview I think. Talk about going from one extreme to another! We were all having a great time on vacation and then "*Suddenly*" (Acts 2:2) were making plans to move. Seriously? Yup.

All we could talk about for the rest of the trip was what life was going to be like in MI. When we got home it was all-consuming. There was great anticipation and excitement about it. For all of us except my wife, that is. She was quietly terrified inside. This was years before she would come out of her shell so she just kept how she felt to herself. It bothered her so deeply that her body processed the anxiety for her in the most unexpected way. One morning while I was at work she called me and said she couldn't stand up on her feet and walk. She said her legs didn't hurt, they just didn't work. After a lot of tests and eliminating scary diagnoses, the doctors said it was caused by stress and anxiety. It took about a month but she was able to get back to normal physical activity on her feet again. Through this whole experience we decided not to pursue moving to MI. The storm had passed, we had survived. But my poor wife! She had to wonder what in the world would I come up with next! LORD have mercy!

After that whole experience I had quite a spell for a few years where I'd look up ministry jobs online. I wouldn't

submit my resume until I had “talked it over” with my wife. I don’t know how many times we talked it over those few years but it ended with a church in MI. that wanted to interview me to be their pastor. OF COURSE, we visited the church while we were vacationing. So, another vacation where we’d leave with all of this anticipation and excitement and again, my wife would suffer stress and anxiety about it. I really can’t fathom how she must have felt. “Here we go again” became a familiar saying for her. She has told me several times that she didn’t sign up for this. But she keeps loving me through it all, thank GOD. I think I’ve been a hyperactive handful from the beginning. GOD bless my wife for being so good to me all these years. Especially during my drinking years.

Some people should never drink. I am definitely among them. There are SO MANY warnings in the Bible about how destructive alcohol can be in our lives. They are all very true for those of us who end up being alcoholics. I could have definitely written my account for the big AA blue book. When I drank I didn’t want to stop. It was destructive then and still to this day. I live with the consequences but I am forgiven. The grace and mercy of GOD are real. Forgiveness is what sets apart Christianity from all other religions of the world. But it’s forgiveness that we cannot earn and do not deserve. The GOD who is love has unmistakably shown us through the cross of Christ that we are loved and forgiven. Know what? It’s so good it’s ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE! Only Christianity has a message of redemption through a Savior. If you’ve got to be your own redeemer, working for your own redemption, then ... it ain’t redemption, is it?

We are all sinners. Marriage should be redemptive. Our spouses ought to make us better. That’s what my wife has

done all these many years. She has stood with me through it all and that kind of faithful love is absolutely divine.

I love my wife and thank GOD for her every day. I found “*a virtuous and capable wife!*” (Proverbs 31:10-11) I pray to GOD that I can stand with her through it all as she has done for me. Though I may not be able to stand STILL! And if I could possibly reel in my ADHD Brain, that unstoppable energy, and that lightning fast decision making roller coaster ride of a life ... I know she would appreciate it!

LORD have mercy on us all.

Chapter 2.4

I wonder, what's the point to THE PLAN if I cannot trace where I've been and know where I'm going? How do I make sense of it all? How quickly I have forgotten the following verse.

“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

My daughter has said that nothing makes sense in this world except for GOD. I like that perspective. Why? It helps me to take a step back from trying to understand the work of GOD. Perhaps I have spent much of my life seeking the point of THE PLAN instead of accepting why THE PLAN exists at all?

GOD just wants to be with me through it all.

But still, there's more to it than that.

I've been reading through the Bible this year with my family. Our group is simply named “Community” on the Bible App we use. We read the same chapters every day and then comment on what stood out to us that day. There's a question to stir our reply: “Based on today's

reading, what is one thing GOD is saying to you?" The things that everyone writes about are unique, but it seems we all relate to each other pretty well. And it is so very encouraging! The impact on our lives that this has had is profound. It leads me to broaden my view of my relationship with GOD to add the following words.

GOD just wants to be with me and my community through it all.

"Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate?"

Philippians 2:1

If we are living in community with one another we would most likely be able to answer yes to the questions in the verse above. Those are the kind of things that happen when folks seek to help each other find their way in life. None of us has it all figured out. Perhaps that's the key ingredient, humility. Having the kind of attitude that says, "Life is messy and we just need to be there for each other through it all." To me, that's what the law of Christ is.

"Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone, you are only fooling yourself. You are not that important."

Galatians 6:1-3

If the point of it all is relationship, then knowing THE PLAN is NOT my purpose in life ... **knowing GOD is.** There's no better way to do that than to live in community with one another and to read the Bible together. And we should go ALL IN! I think that's the **only way** to approach the Bible! (My ADHD Brain may not let me do it any differently!) Not in such a wooden, literal sense that we miss out on the inspiration. Over time we will learn the historic Christian doctrines. GOD takes care of that here a little, there a little by the Holy Spirit. What is most transforming is when we humble ourselves before GOD and others.

Then, we can be there for each other through it all no matter how messy life gets!

Maybe that's what "*to live is Christ*" means? (Phil. 1:21)

Chapter 2.5

We've been in MI for five weeks now. We've got one box left to unpack. My wife told me that she doesn't want to move again until I retire. I understand how she could feel that way. I wonder how that fits into THE PLAN? I'll just have to wait and see.

In the meantime I hope I can be of some use to GOD where I'm at.

“So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

Chapter 2.6

I remembered a prayer that I prayed when I was 20. I asked GOD to use me like he used Moses.

That has to be why we move so much! Moses moved more than anyone in the Bible! We've lived in a lot of places so far, but when do I get to the part where I get to share my faith with millions? That was my prayer when I was twenty years old. A young man's vision. Yes, I actually prayed that. I know that sounds crazy but I've always wanted others to know the love of GOD.

“May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.”

Ephesians 3:19-21

It's verses like these that inspire me to think BiG. Is that just my ADHD Brain? Maybe. But then again, maybe not.

Maybe BiG prayers are what we're supposed to pray sometimes. After all, **it's GOD's BiG SHOW**, isn't it?

EVEN IF our prayers don't get answered the way we think they should, it doesn't mean we shouldn't ask GOD. We believe the message of the Bible and it is FULL of crazy stories.! BUT ... EVEN IF I don't get to share my faith with millions I know that I will never impact one life for Christ if I don't try. Honestly, I hope in the very least that I can encourage others in their faith. But I'd still receive it if GOD DID the miraculous! I mean, He did answer my young man's prayer literally by moving me so many times! **Maybe** a young man's vision is an older man's dream? Notice I said "older" HaHa ... I won't say I'm old until ... well, I'm not really sure.

*"In the last days,' God says,
I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.
Your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams."
Acts 2:17*

Maybe? At the pace I'm going, it'll take me about 250 more lifetimes to share my faith with that many people! These kind of numbers reminds me of one of my favorite lines from the movie *Dumb and Dumber* ... "So you're saying there's a chance!" That's me! HaHa!

Moses' life was a good example of what it means to be on an adventure like no other. It was no easy path. Following Jesus never is. But the reward of knowing GOD in a greater way is incomparable.

“He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his great reward.”

Hebrews 11:26

I guess I'd better stop writing for a while and go ...



I've got about 1,999,810 people to share my faith with! I should probably ask for some help with that. You think?

After all, why should the Mormons have all the fun! But I ain't wearing a tie when I ride my bike. **Send me LORD!**