

PASSION CITY CHURCH

People, Get Ready

Full Transcript

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Introduction: Joshua Is a History Book

- 0:00 Well, we are going to take an incredible step today. We are journeying through the book of Joshua. And as you came in today, you got a little study guide that you can use to take some notes along the talks. You can scribble in it when you're at home or at the coffee shop or wherever you're diving into the word. And I know you have the word. But we put it all in this little booklet for you so that you can have something to steer you on the journey. And I just want to remind us all as we're getting into the message today that Joshua is a history book. That fire, anybody up? Did that not fire some people up?
- 0:41 On the other hand, I remember going to a college at Georgia State in my pastor, Charles Stanley, encouraged me to be a history major. He said, if you're gonna be a preacher and lead a church, you need to know history. So you should be a history major. And I loved history, I thought. And so I became a history major. Anybody a history major? Undergrad? Okay, thank you so much. One person. at Cumberland, maybe we had a lot more at 5.15 in Trillith, but what I learned pretty quickly was, you know, I'd go to class and we'd be all sitting around the student center during breaks, and I'd be looking at everybody and I'm like, where's all your books?
- 1:22 And I'm like, this is my textbook for my economics class, and I'm like, that's the textbook. I'm over here with like this many books in every history class. They're all like 600 pages of whoo. So I became quickly a history minor.
- 1:41 Which I am. And the communications major. Hello, duh. That worked out a lot better. Joshua is a history book. So there are going to be some big moments in it. And then there's going to be a little bit of the grind. Because you're going to go, what am I reading? And you're reading history. You're reading your history.
- 2:04 You're reading the history, the people of faith. You're reading the history of the story of God. And what I love about some of the grind that you're gonna see and grind maybe is pejorative in my sense because there's nothing in God's word that's ancillary in any way. But when the land gets divided up and a whole bunch of details are coming at you, I just, I love it because I want you to remember that God's placing the story of salvation in real space and time. It's kind of like your family's history. It ain't all great. It's not all interesting. It's not all. Wow, that's amazing. A lot of it's just the details of what happened in your family's life.
- 2:48 And I love that we're not here talking about a devotional idea today, but we're talking about a real God who worked in real time in history through real people. to bring us to Jesus, and to bring us to salvation, to bring us to life. And we see that through the book of Joshua. Today, we want to get ready because we're going to cross the Jordan River with the people of God. We had some backdrop last week. We're jumping over chapter two for the time being. We're going to come back to that in the journey. And we're coming to chapter three today where it's time for God's people to finally do what he had promised to them that they would do.

People Get Ready: Profession vs. Possession of Faith

- 3:33 And that is to enter into the promised land. Get ready. Maybe that's the title of this talk today. People get Ready. In Joshua 1, we saw that Moses is dead, but there's a new leader on the scene. In Joshua 1, we see that Joshua understands that it's time. And so this is what it says in Joshua 1, verse 10 and 11. So Joshua ordered the officers of the people. Go through the camp
- 4:05 And tell the people, get your provisions ready. And that's what God's saying today. Get ready. Are you ready? because God wants to lead you into the fullness of what He's promised you for your life three days from now. You will cross the Jordan here, right here, to go in and take. Remember, we talked about this last week, to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you. So he's giving it, but you have to take it. God's giving you a land of promise, but you have to go in and possess what God is giving you for your own. He's giving you the land for your own. We said last week that Joshua, the book of Joshua,
- 4:57 Is not simply about a profession of faith, rather it is about the possession of faith. In other words, Walking with God and knowing Jesus isn't just about praying a prayer, raising your hand, filling out a card, coming down front, getting baptized even and saying, I believe in Jesus. I put my faith in my trust and the finished work of Jesus. Fantastic. That is amazing. Everyone needs to make a profession of faith.
- 5:30 But a lot of times we stop with the profession of faith. And we don't fully actualize the possession of what that faith really means. In other words, there are a lot of people, I bet, in church right now who know for sure when and where they made their profession of faith, but they are still living on the east side of the Jordan River, in less than what God promised them on the day that they put their faith in him.

6:02

Joshua 1:10-11

So Joshua ordered the officers of the people, 'Go through the camp and tell the people, "Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own."'

Wilderness Laps: Where Are You Stuck?

- 6:50 He's given you the land. And he's saying, people get ready. to go in and take it. Maybe for you, I don't know. It's not, you know, the wilderness over here in the desert. Maybe you're stuck in a season of drought. And maybe for you, it's just been barren. But it's been barren on the inside, and you don't know how you got there, and you're not 100% sure how to get out, but you've just been making laps in a dry place, and God's saying, get ready. Maybe for you, you've been stuck inside your head and you just can't get out. You get sort of like stuck in your own thinking and your own thoughts, paralyzed by all the fears that are going on inside of you.
- 7:36 There's somebody in this gathering and you're stuck in a trap of sin and you've just been going round and round and that same habit. that same sin. And God is saying that people get ready. There's more to possess than just the faith that you profess. Some people are stuck in a spiral of depression and darkness.

Somebody in this gathering stuck in a wilderness of doubt. And it's just been compounding doubt on top of doubt, on top of doubt. Somebody stuck in unhealthy patterns Stuck in shame, somebody in this gathering, you've been stuck out in the wilderness of pride.

8:19 Just making laps in your own estimation of who you are. Somebody is stuck in to do more, get more, have more. And God's saying, now I've already given you more. somebody stuck on yourself. It's just all about you. Somehow can't shake it. Can't let it be about anything but you. Everything ultimately revolves around you. How do you feel? What do you want?

8:51 What do you think? And you need to understand today, you've been making laps out here around yourself and God saying people get ready. There's more to life than just living for yourself. somebody's stuck in meaninglessness, just not bad,

9:11 Just meaninglessness, just foolishness, just trivial. I'll remember, and I will probably edit this out also because I don't have permission to tell this story, but it is funny. would drive our guests and speakers to and from hotel to passion to the bends or to state farm arena. And so every now and then you'd get in a car with people you didn't know. So maybe I don't know, Christine Cain and her husband would get in a car with I don't know, Grant and Maggie Partrick, and all of a sudden now they're on their way to the bins. And on this one occasion, John Piper, Dr. John Piper, I don't know if you know who that is or not, if you don't just think very, very smart, bright, theologian, pastor, leader.

9:58 A formative thinker, very serious man in his relationship with God. He's in the car, and then there's some younger artists, musicians in the back. And they're just talking away about this Netflix thing, just like on and on and on and on, just all about whatever it is. And the car stops, and they come to a pause. And in the front seat, he says, riveting.

10:32 Oh, come on, if you knew him, and you knew them, if I told you who they were, and oh, my word, I left thinking about it all the time. And I think sometimes the Holy Spirit

10:45 Would like to inject that, riveting, and we're just all up in it. Meaninglessness, just circling out here. And God's saying, I have something for you. I've got more for you. I've promised you a land of abundance, a life of abundance, a life of purpose and meaning.

Joshua 3: The Crossing of the Jordan

11:14 Somebody just stuck over here scrolling. I think it to end of the day for our generation right now. I don't know what's coming in the future, but I know for this moment in time right now, it's possible that we're all gonna stand before God and not even know what happened in life.

11:33 Not even really understand what time it is and what are you saying to me and what would you like to lead me into because it's not right here and we can't even have a conversation with each other over dinner much less enter into the promised land that God is giving us. And I just hear God saying again today, like he said in Joshua chapter one, go through the camp and tell the people, get your provisions ready. Get your stuff together.

- 12:08 Three days from now, you will cross the Jordan right here to go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God is giving you for your own. And we see this unfold in chapter three. Let's look at it together. And I'm going to just do a little bit of Bible study if that's okay. Just going to dig around a little bit. Make some observations. First, I'll read chapter three. Early in the morning, Joshua and all the Israelites set out from shidam and went to the Jordan where they camped before crossing over.
- 12:46 After three days, the officers went throughout the camp giving orders to the people. When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, your God and the Levitical Priest carrying it, you were to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about 2,000 cubits between you and the ark. Do not go near it. Joshua told the people, consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, the Lord will do amazing things among you. Joshua said to the priest, take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people. So they took it up and went ahead of them.
- 13:42 And the Lord said to Joshua, today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel. So they may know that I am with you is I was with Moses. Tell the priests to carry the ark of the covenant. When you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and stand in the river. Joshua said to the Israelites, come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God. This is how you will know that the living God is among you. and that he will certainly drive out before you all these enemies that are in the land. See, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you.

Observations from the Text: Following the Way Maker

- 14:24 Now then, choose 12 men from each of the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. As soon as the priest who carry the Ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap. So when the people broke camp across the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest, yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached
- 14:58 To the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge. The water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap, a great distance away, at a town called Adam, in the vicinity of Zarathan. while the water flowing down to the sea of the Araba that is the Dead Sea was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho, the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.
- 15:46 What a day. Just to give you a little bit of a backdrop here, a census had been taken prior to this. And in numbers, it says that the fighting men at this juncture were 600 in 1,730. So maybe you're thinking 200 people crossed over. or a thousand, but the fighting men crossing over 600 and 1,730 of them, and they had with them, their families, their children, all in all, something like 3 million people are crossing this river.

- 16:28 What a day. What a moment. God is saying people get ready. It is time to take possession of the land that the Lord, your God is giving to you. Let's make a few observations. And then I love where this talk is gonna land. I can't wait to get there. Just a few observations. Don't wanna fully tease all these out. Don't wanna read too much into the text. Just let the text speak. It says that just as we'd seen before in verse two that after three days, The officers went throughout the camp giving orders when you see the Ark of the Covenant start moving. So the word comes, we're going in, but the word in chapter one was in three days we're going in.
- 17:12 Now it's the third day and we're going in. Why don't they just go in the first day? Why didn't you just say we're going in? Hey, everybody, we're going in! Why three days? A, get your stuff together, break down your tent, break down your camp, pack up what you need because we're moving out of here and we're moving into there. But also because Joshua is a picture of the person of Jesus Christ.
- 17:39 And this whole story is a story of Jesus leading us into the fullness that He has provided for us. In His death, burial and resurrection, He's the one who's conquered everything that we're gonna face in life. He's the one who is the provision of everything we need in life. So Joshua, we talked about last week, it means Yahweh is salvation. It's where we get to the name Yeshua and from this same word, the equivalent and the New Testament is Jesus. So Joshua and Jesus are interwoven together and then we see when are we going to cross the river on the third day. What is the third day? That's the resurrection day. That's the day Christ came back out of the tomb victorious over death, hell, sin and the grave.

Joshua 3:1-17

Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. After three days the officers went throughout the camp, giving orders to the people: 'When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Levitical priests carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about two thousand cubits between you and the ark; do not go near it.' Joshua told the people, 'Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.' Joshua said to the priests, 'Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.' So they took it up and went ahead of them. And the Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: When you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and stand in the river.' Joshua said to the Israelites, 'Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God. This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites. See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you. Now then, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the Lord—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.' So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Dead Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stopped in the middle of the Jordan and stood on dry ground, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.

- 18:39 Summation of how many days before we're going in, he's saying God is doing this, God is at work here, God is the one who is providing the victory for you and for me. We're going in on Resurrection Sunday. We're going in on Easter morning. We're going in to a conquered land with a God who has already done it.
- 19:03 And that's true for you. Whatever you're up against, you still have to cross the river, but you've got to cross the river knowing that God has already done it.
- 19:15 The second thing I think it's important to see here is that you don't have to know the way, but you do need to know the way maker. He says, when you see the priest move out, verse three, then you follow. You follow the ark of the covenant. Now, I think everybody understands the ark of the covenant. Most all of us have seen the movie. And so everybody knows what that means. This is the holiest thing on the earth. It's a representation of God's presence with His people. If you were ever to walk up to it and touch it, as you'll see in generations that follow in the Promised Land, you would die instantly because it is God's glory on earth.

20:03 And it's carried now on these poles through this gold-covered chest. And as it goes, it represents the holiness and the righteousness and the glory of God. We'll see that in just a moment. And so he says, you'll see it going, but stay back a thousand feet or so and don't go anywhere near it. But go with it and follow it. Why? Verse four. Then you will know which way to go. Don't you love this since you have never been this way before? God's wanting to say that to somebody today. You're waiting to understand where God's leading you and God is saying, you don't need to know the way, you know the way maker.

20:50 You don't need a document. You have Almighty God leading you. So when I move, just follow me. When I take a step, just follow me. Don't look for the plan. Look for me. Don't look for the footnote. Just look for me. And when you see me move, you move. Because where we're going, you don't fully know where we're going. Because you haven't been there before. And we're like, oh, I don't like going places I've never been before. Some of you loved that. Most of us don't. I don't want to go somewhere where I understand where all my questions have been answered where all the blanks have been filled in. And he's like, I don't fill in blanks and I don't answer questions.

21:36 I just make promises. I'm going to go with you as I was with Moses. I will be with you as I was with Joshua. I will be with you. Keep your eyes fixed on me because you haven't been this way before. Does that make you nervous or is that make you excited to think that God knows the way? from today to the fulfillment of His plans for your life,

The People Belong to God: Captives in Christ's Triumphal Procession

22:02 And you know God. And all you have to do is stay tethered to Him. Verse 5, Joshua told the people, another observation that I love in this text, he said, consecrate yourselves for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you. We have a tendency to want to consecrate ourselves after we see the Lord do the amazing thing.

22:31 Like God, you do it and then we'll come in line with it. And what he's saying to us today, and we don't use this word in our nomenclature as followers of God in the present time, consecrate yourself. What does that mean? It meant when he said it to the people of God, it meant in your mind, set your heart apart unto the Lord.

22:58 In your mind, devote and commit yourself to God into the plans and purposes of God. Don't just bring a gift, a tangible thing, bring you and say, God, here I am. Fully surrender to you. What happened when they did that? Nothing. What was going to happen was going to happen the next day, but when it happened the next day, they were ready for it because of two days. And I think sometimes a lot of us are waiting for God to move before we move and he's saying, no, consecrate yourself today in faith for what God will do tomorrow. In other words, be ready now for what God's going to tell you to do then. And maybe today that's a simple freedom for someone in this place.

23:47 God isn't going to do it today, but he's saying get ready today. Consecrate yourself today. Set yourself apart to God today. Enter into a participation with God today. Make yourself available to God today. I

think a fourth observation is that holiness was the way. The arc of the covenant went into the waters. Take up the ark and pass on ahead of the people, so they took it up and went ahead of them. And then when they reached the water's edge, they went into the water. And if you can see in the text here, the Levites, with the ark of the covenant, went into the water, the waters rolled up. We'll talk about that. And then they stood on dry ground and all three million people passed the ark of the covenant.

24:38 Not the ark of the covenant is the mighty thing. It's going to go in first and we're going to set up a new tabernacle for it in the promised land. No, every single person who crosses out of the wilderness and into the promise is going to have to pass by the holiness and the glory of God.

24:59 Because God's holiness goes first in every great miracle move of God. And I just wanna call us to that today. I wanna call us to who we are today. There's been so much back and forth about this and that and that thing and this thing and this music and that music and God's just saying, be holy. as I am holy

25:31 And let the rest of it be riveting. Get such a view of the glory of God that the rest of it is simply riveting.

The Passion City Church Story: Stepping into the Unknown

25:47 I'm sorry, riveting. Every person who walked into that land got an eyeful of the glory of God. And his holiness, that ark ultimately is going to end up in the temple in the holy of holies, a place that only one person enters into one day a year. A place where a veil is going to be ripped into when Christ dies for the sins of the world and pays the ultimate price that we can come to a holy God.

26:31 That holy of holies is in the middle of the Jordan River. And it's in the middle of whatever river he wants you to cross today to get to the promise he has for your life. You gotta go by the holiness of God to get into the promise that he has for you. And when we do, adjustment happens in our lives. Another observation that I love in this text is that they had to step into the water.

27:01 When you get there, step in. And so it says in verse 15, when they got there and their feet touched the water's edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing and piled up in a heap, a great distance away. And I love this because this is how God leads. There's going to be a moment in time where he speaks to you, speaks to me, and we're going to say, God, I need you to stop the water. I need you to pile up the water. I need you to dry the river bed. It's flood stage right now. This water is fierce. No one could cross this river on their own right now, certainly not with a family.

27:36 So I need you to do all that. And he says, I will, but you've got to put your feet in the water first.

27:44 You have to come up to the promise and actually believe in it enough to take a step towards it. And so it wasn't like the red sea where it was just hold up your staff and the water's parted. This one was, you got to put your feet in and as soon as you put them in, then I'm going to do the work. And God is calling somebody today to put your foot

28:08 In the water's edge and to see what God will do. Another observation that I loved is that God had parted water to deliver them, and he's now parting water to deliver them.

- 28:24 He parted water to deliver them out of, he parted water to deliver them into, in both cases it was God providing what no man could provide. And that's dry ground, in a sea, in a riverbed. a symbol of the fullness of the work of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in us. A bigger symbol of the baptism that we celebrated today, of God parting waters and making a way for us to enter into what God has for our lives. And in this case, the water piled all the way up streamed with this town called Adam or Adam.
- 29:03 And that awesome. I mean, it could have piled up to Macon, but it didn't. It piled up to Adam. And when the water's piled up to Adam, to picture, I'm seeing in my mind, because I'm reading this as somebody who is a westerner, I'm saying the water's piled up to Adam. Oh, it's probably Adam.
- 29:25 Adam, who's Adam? We know who Adam is. And God's saying we're to pile the waters up to the first man so that you can understand that what's happening here today isn't what man can do. This is what God can do.
- 29:40 And then lastly, and I love this, the land belonged to the people, but the people belonged to God. This is so powerful. The land belonged to the people, but the people belonged to God. And I've seen sometimes in my life, it's like God, I want you to give me the promise. And then when I get the promise, I wanna act like I'm in charge of everything in life now. And God is saying, no, Louis, I wanna lead you into more, but as I lead you into more, I want you to understand that you belong to me.
- 30:21 That's what we saw last week in Exodus three when this call came to Moses. Look at this, we're gonna come back and close with this, but the Lord said, I've indeed seen the misery. We talked about this last week. I've seen the misery of who? You see this? I've seen the misery of my people. Can you say that with me? My people. Whose people are they? They're not their people. They're not their own people. They're God's people. I've heard them crying. I'm concerned about their suffering. I've come down to rescue them. And so then he says, now the cry of the Israelites has reached me. I've seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now go.
- 31:05 I am sending you Moses to Pharaoh to bring who, to bring my people. the Israelites out of Egypt. God gave them the land, but the people belonged to him. And he's saying that to you today, I want to lead you in to a full life. But you got to understand right now that if you're in Christ, you belong to me. So I'm not working over here as an agent on your behalf to get all the things you want out of life. Now, you are working as an agent on my behalf to possess the land that I've given you and bring glory to God. completely different viewpoint, and it leads us to Paul in the New Testament.
- 31:43 This is you and me. This is now our promised land. Paul preaching about Jesus going from place to place, telling people this new gospel power. It says, but thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession. and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere. That is our cross in the Jordan River today. That is you and I getting ready to go in and take possession of what God is giving us. And how do we do it? We understand that we're captives. that we belong to God, that we've already been captivated by and captured by the grace and the love, the forgiveness and the mercy of God, and we no longer belong to this world, and we no longer belong to ourselves, we belong to God.

32:42

Exodus 3:7-10

The Lord said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.'

33:31 We're moving in His authority. We're moving in the fact that He's seated at the right hand of God and has a name that is above every name.

33:43 We're moving His captives in His triumphal procession. You say, Louis, it does not feel like that. It feels like I'm underwater and there's not a lot of triumphal, anything in my story. You need a new story. You need to realize there's another story going on besides just what you can touch and feel. And that is a Jesus kingdom story, and you're in it. And maybe there's setbacks, health, challenges, death, some defeats, skirmishes,

34:18

2 Corinthians 2:14

But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.

34:44 I belong to him. And he's using us, even, I mean Paul, what all did he go through? My word. Beat up. Left for dad. Destitute, hungry, cold, abandoned. Yeah. He said, I'm in Christ triumphal possession.

35:09 I'm not dead yet. You gotta hate a guy like that. Man, we left. She by the side of the road, we didn't think you were coming back. I know, but ain't it great that I did. Praise God. I'm his captive and his triumphal procession and he's using me to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.

35:41 Wow. So how do we do this? It's simple. This talk ends kind of like this. It starts out, we're crossing the river, we went through a bunch of stuff, but it ends down here at this little bitty checkpoint. that's so simple.

35:59 It ends by understanding that all I have to do to possess all that God has for me is the same thing that these people promised in chapter one that they would do.

36:15 They promised to Joshua in chapter one When he said we're going in, in three days, they said, whatever you have commanded us to do,

36:32 Commanded us, we will do, wherever you send us, we will go. Whatever you command, we will do, wherever you send, we will go. Wow. Big story all comes down to this simple

36:56 Checkpoint. Whatever you command, I'll do. And wherever you lead, I'll go. That's how you possess the land that God has promised to you. I've shared the story a lot, but a lot of you wouldn't know this, but today, hello, Cumberland, hello, 515, hello, Trilleth, and everyone in church online, hello, DC. Today is the anniversary of the very first gathering of Passion City Church, February the 15th, 2009.

- 37:37 We're 17 years old today. Happy 17th birthday. People get ready. Most of you would have heard me say this and I'm closing people are wondering.
- 38:05 Shelley and I were in a crab apple after church walking around this middle school. on this trail. And God had been saying to me as an older guy in life, I want this chapter of your life to be about leading a local church. We'd been doing events all over the world.
- 38:30 And I was like, surely you're not saying that to me. I'm like 45 years old. And by now it's been some wandering and some circling. I'm getting close to 50 years old. Still, no church planted. This layer is getting peeled off of me. A lot of them from this youth guy who spoke something over me that was not of God. And he wasn't trying to say it was of God, but back in the day when I was a young youth speaker in Texas, these guys are talking about me at lunch. I think I've told you this, but guys like, what do you see yourself doing in the next 10, 20 years? And I don't have a 10 or 20 year plan, and I'm trying to come up with an answer in my mind, and this other guy goes, I'll tell you what he's not going to be doing." I was like, whoo, okay.
- 39:21 And the guy says, what? And he goes, he won't be local church pastor. The guy's like, why not? Because if you heard him speak, well, I'll come here that every week.
- 39:32 And the other guy's like, my good point. And I thought, I don't want to be a local church pastor. I'm pretty happy leading a movement, trying to reach a new generation of people, live for the glory of God. I love church, we go to church, we're part of church, but it's all good. And somehow that stuck on me,
- 39:53 From whenever that was, 30 years old probably, until 45. When God said, I never said that to you. That guy said that about you.
- 40:06 *Make sure you're not taken laps in a wilderness today, circling around something somebody said about you.*
- 40:17 When God said, I never said that. And I'm like, wow, okay. No, I'd like you to be a local church pastor. So I talked to Shelley about it. Shelley had a lot of responsibilities. She's managing a lot of artists and running a record label. a whole bunch of responsibility, and she was like, yeah, no, we're not doing that.
- 40:40 And I'm not throwing shade on Shelley by saying that. Shelley's the smartest person I know. The wisest person I know. I said, babe, I think I gotta do this. No, no, no. She knew that if I started it, she would have to finish it.
- 40:59 Amen, ladies. Anybody? So we're walking around this middle school after church, and man, during church, something just, it was like the Lord was saying, get ready. Get your stuff together. Get ready. It's time to cross over into what I have for you. And I, somewhere along the first or second lap, I said, baby, I think it's time. She's like, no, it's not time.

The Simple Checkpoint: Whatever He Commands, Wherever He Leads

41:33 So I ran. She was walking, and I ran, came back around, and I used all my undergraduate degree in speech communication while I was taking the lab to figure out how to convince her by the time I got back stopped. Fantastic speech and presentation. She says, not now. So I took another lap, thought, okay, well, I took a class at Georgia State in propaganda and persuasion. That was one of my classes. I know how to use it, came back around phenomenal

42:05 Presentation, not now. I took another lap and during that lap, I said to the Lord, I'm not gonna ever mention this again. And it is so incredible how God's timing was in all this. His goodness was in all of it. His wisdom with Shelley and all of it turned out to be so beautiful. But I made a lap and I said, I'm never going to mention it again. If you want us to take a step in playing a church, you're going to have to talk to both of us about it because I'm not going to be doing any more talking. Several months later, long story short, a lot of you've heard me say this. We were on the other side of the earth

42:43 At a conference. had not talked about it since months had gone by. And God moved in a way that was so specific to Shelley and me.

42:56 It was as if he, person was talking and leading into a ministry moment as if they were recounting the conversations we'd had going around the school.

43:08 And God just landed and we both knew. Now is the time. During the break at that conference, I was speaking in some other session, but we were in this guest lounge where all the other speakers and leaders were. And we got way back in the corner of the room by ourselves and just sat. I'll never forget it. And we just stared at each other. We couldn't even talk. We just were like, my God.

43:50 And it took us a little while to figure it out. I'm not the smartest person in the world. And it took us a little time to figure out how do we get here from there? Whatever he says, I will do. And wherever he leads, I will go. Wherever he leads, we will go. And whatever he says, we will do. And somehow now blow out the candles on 17 years of passion, city church from a moment in time where it was time to stop making laps over here.

44:49 Into crossover, to put a foot in the water and see if he won't stack the river up

45:00 So that you can cross on dry ground. Leading this church has been the hardest thing I've ever done in my life by a factor of 100, way more than world tours and events on multiple continents and architecting a movement with Shelley hundreds of times harder but praise God to be a part of His story.

45:29 We left Texas ministry behind and stepped into the unknown in Atlanta. A father's dead, a grave has been dug, but a vision is born.

45:48

1 Thessalonians 5:24

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

45:56 First Thessalonians 5:24. We sat in the Bank of America on Highway 9 and opened a checking account for our fledging little ministry that was not anything. And the guy said, you can start with any number, pick a high number so people think you've been around a while on your checks. Don't get 0, 0, 1.

^{46:23} You said, we'll take check number 1, 5, 2, 4 to start. Because faithful is he who calls you, and he will do it. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. All you have to do today is consecrate yourself and do what he says and go where he leads and you will find yourself possessing everything God has in store for you.