

It was a crazy storm! Wind seemed to come from all directions. The road had enough curves and bends I couldn't tell what direction I was going. Now in the down pour with dark skies, on unfamiliar roads and that day some years ago with no GPS either- I was lost!! Ever happen to you??

Now I know I have had times when my life felt just like that. Lost! Confused. What is the next direction, do I head in?? Am I in the center of God's will?

Today I ask, "are you in the center of God's will today??"

God tells Jeremiah (1:5), "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you. I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

God gets even more specific about our lives. "For I know the plans I have for you, 'declares the Lord;' "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Now I think we need to back up a bit here; so these words of God become practical in your and my lives.

I want you to think back over you life and remember a handful of times (pivotal moments) that God showed up big time in your life, or you received His direction, as the song goes "a way were there seems to be no way". Maybe even write them down. 3, 5, maybe even 7 events.

Some times God seems far away and we are struggling for direction and We call out to God, "I need a sign!" Up close to Midland MI, I remember on time driving on the expressway seeing a big black billboard, it said, This Is A Sign—God. Oh we want God to give us that BIG of message.

I will take a few moments to show you my list. Pivotal points in my life. First a disclaimer, if I would think a little longer- some other events/ experiences probably take over a spot here or there.

1. 4-5 yrs old fell off the wall at the culvert of Shook Drain (Picture on the screen.) Clinging by my finger tips to the top of the wall trying to keep my toes on the slippery rock and not fall into the stream. Calling out for help for anyone, God included, to come and rescue me. My playmate ran and got her mother to come to pull me out.
2. Hospital bed— made deal with God. If you do this, I will do what you want me to do —preacher, missionary. I had had kidney surgery a few days before and experienced severe pain receiving morphine shots almost every other hour. “begging God to take me, but If God wouldn’t take me home, then He had to stop the pain and my deal was then I would do His calling.”
3. College filling out application for Seminary. A box marked MDIV or MAR had to be filled in. Become a preacher or teacher the choice had to be checked. God was calling in His marker and I was trying to weasel out from my side of the deal. My dad was a pastor and I knew I didn’t want to do that. I couldn’t sleep - so I wrestled with God for half the night on the eve of the application deadline. Finally I went in and checked the MDIV box, a preacher. Went to bed and slept like a baby, knowing I was in God’s will.
4. Bike fall on a bike camp part of the way to Niagara Falls —following my nephew very tightly drafting him, and he zigged and zagged and over the handlebars I went, I could hear the squeal of car tires behind me- know that I was about to be hit or at least my bike was to be

crushed as it was more to the center of the road, in those seconds my life flashed before my eyes. All those things I had done wrong, I could do better, or needed repenting— I shot off a flare prayer. “Save me!” Somehow the car missed, but the pavement didn’t miss and broken bones allowed time over the next month to contemplate my life’s direction.

5. Years later my marriage crumbled, I felt all my life was in ruin, the whole world seemed to be spinning like I was going down a whirl pool. How could I stay in the ministry? Could God use me? I could not see anything but darkness. But God restored me, and blessed further ministry.

6. God brought a beautiful young lady came into my life, and became my wife. God began to build a new family unit.

7. Navigating the twists and turns, lows and the highs of ministry God provided direction even on days when there seemed to be no way! Sometimes those directions took awhile..... Or for me to seek His direction.

8. In all things give thanks becauseHe cares for you!

Now there is almost 70 years of time in this list, with probably at least 100 additional moments that could have made the list.

Take a minute now to think about those moments that seared across your mind. Was God in it? I doubt you experienced them by chance.

In that moment Did God say “Perhaps you were born for such a time as this.” just like he told Esther. Or did he supply people to hold up your arms like He did for Moses as God provided the victory? Remember as long as Moses arms were lifted the Israelites were winning the battle.

God wants to be actively guiding you, “I will instruct you in the way you

should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” Psalm 32:8

But pastor you don’t know how tough my life’s been.

I believe God had put His hand on me years ago,

but All the doors seemed to close , and I have been drifting.

Or life threw curve balls and the vision I had seems impossible!

I want you to read the passage of the screen with me out loud. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways submit to him and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6

Remember the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations. Psalm 33:11

But pastor I messed up. I mean big time. I chose my own way—not his and now I don’t think I can be in His will. I am too old, too in debt, too weak, too sinful, too whatever—you can fill in the blank.

Listen. As Paul wrote in Thess. 5:18 “Give thanks in all circumstances, God’s will for you in Jesus.”

Do you realize what that is saying? No matter where on the map of your life you are at. *God has a perfect plan to be laid out before you in Jesus.*

All he wants is for you to turn to Him, boldly approach the throne of Grace, receive his forgiveness and follow His direction as He leads you into His perfect will.

Paul writes. “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good. For those called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

Lets revisit the Bible Coloring Book.

Some folk think that we are born with a clean slate and we are the captain of our own ship. But the truth is we are born sinners, and left up to our own directions total destruction.

God has had plans outlined for our lives while we were still in the womb. But for us to vividly fulfill His purposes we need to be centered in Christ and have His Holy Spirit burning like tongues of flames.

Pray with me-

Dear Jesus my life needs your direction, forgive me of my shortcomings, of my prideful self direction. Lead me in your righteousness. I give my life to you. Amen.