

Finishing well ... Hey everybody it is wonderful to be here tonight with you! For Tonight is a very significant evening, because we are going to be sharing with you, some of what God has been doing in our hearts and the future of our church in terms of some very important decisions to where His Place is headed. Therese and I want to start by telling you how deeply we love you and care about you and how much you have impacted us...we are far better people because we have journeyed this thing call life and served together to help people know the love of God and to build their lives upon the Rock of Jesus. God has great things for our future

So to begin I want to bring you in our world in the present, so I need share some of my and our story with you in this church.. ...and like all Stories there is a beginning...

Therese and I have with intention journeyed with God 40 years, I say with intention because all our lives God has journeyed with us, I was just unaware of that until I was 29... I have also journeyed with Therese 48 years, and married to her 44 years. And have been the Pastor of this church for 29 plus years.....and I want to share some of my and our story with you in this church.. ...

• **God has spoken into my life on a regular basis my whole journey with him..... Through the word, others, my conscience, circumstances, His Spirit, in trials, yet there have been five times which changed the trajectory of my life... five the number of Grace...**

1. **first before my conversion and in my addiction**.... Thou shall love the Lord with all you heart, mind and soul....the call

2. **After conversion ....You will have a powerful ministry...** I had many ideas what it meant... until I realized it is a journey not

a destination, but those words gave me a sense of destiny!!

....the belief that I had a destiny to fulfill a powerful a Purpose for my life

3. It became “my viewpoint on life” ... “To make a difference for good in my generation and I must do it all the way to the end”

*ESV Pro 29:18 Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.*

- This life perspective has also shaped the great ministry of His Place... “To make a difference for good in our generation” everyone has a purpose and destiny in this generation...we teach it always..

4. The next life changing word....was at the OCRM...observing the corrupt Christian leadership and pleading with God ... ....I’m showing you him, so you will not do that when your in that position....

5. 4) Then At little His Place.....at a time I was so discouraged in ministry.....nothing I tried in the human realm of church growth was working...and the Lord spoke to me.... I will bless you if you stay and I will bless you if you go....but I gave this to you...I knew he would bless me either way, but I also knew he desired me to develop what he gave me.... and God has fulfilled his word to bless ...

- This church and the people who have been a part of it over the last three decades have become ...became family! have have been some of the greatest blessings of our lives!

- **We have given to you our love and hearts and service to you introducing many many people to our Lord, all the baptisms, weddings, memorial services, Sunday services, hospital visits the thousands of teachings, all the counsels, all the births and deaths and watching people meet here fall in love and start families! everything in between, ....being there in the hardest of times for people, loving people when they could not yet love themselves, giving help to the hopeless, necessities to those in need... ...leading countless people to the Lord, the deliverances ..rejoicing with those who rejoice and grieving with those who grieve...many of my closest friend are here now and some have moved on but still great friends!**
  - **But it was always a two way street! as you have given your love and hearts and service to us...also... For this community was their for us in our hardest times...at the loss of our son you loved us, at the loss of our daughter you carried us in every way... we are truly blessed! It was never easy but it was certainly worth iT...Therese can tell you these 29+ years I ate slept and drank this church! it was one of my greatest passions**
  - **About two years ago, I began to get uncomfortable with a stirring going on in my heart... something was shifting but I could not put my finger on it and it began a season that became a most difficult time of personal inner conflict ...I**
6. I thought it must be me... am I getting lazy? is it my flesh? Are you trying to tell me something Lord? Is it the enemy? what is going on? **I was not certainly disgruntled with the church...**

7. **I shared with Therese through many discussions** my angst and uneasiness...have therese share ,

During this time I also shared with the Board, and pastor Chris and a few other individuals, sought counsel, prayed a lot, a ton of self reflection ....**it became apparent God was starting to prepare us for a change**

- **But I needed clarity from God! I began to sense a change coming...and had already started...**

8.) **then our Lord finally spoke and** And it came Through Therese, we were having another conversation, about what was going on inside me..... **She reminded me ... what the Lord had told me over twenty years ago...he would bless me if I stayed and bless me if I go...but he gave this too me.....She said you stayed and God has fulfilled his word to bless you ...and now is the time for the second half of that blessing...to go and be Blessed! I am freeing you to be with Therese!!**

I am in the fourth quarter of my life and I have three boys to raise, Therese has laid down her life so I may serve, I owe her good years...

**But I needed a word from the Lord himself ...and he spoke and said... I have more work for you...and like Paul, we have had the grace to finish well our journey as your lead Pastors!**

*NLT 2 Tim4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. <sup>8</sup> And now the prize awaits me—*

**So I am retiring from being your lead Pastor on July 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**This is unbelievably difficult to wrap my head and heart around in so many ways ... I will never again lead pastor this church or any church...for three three decades of our lives We have given to you our love and hearts and you have given your love and hearts to us... We have no intention to leave our church family, we need to change our role here.**

In the pastoral world they say when a Pastor steps away the family should leave the church... well this church is not your regular church ...and we are not regular pastors...so there is that... we will take some months off...to refresh and for you to settle in to the transition...

**WE have been able to pastor so many wonderful and great people. There have been many wonderful leaders since Therese and I came here three decades ago, some for many years and many for some years. Many have gone one to their own destinies to influence lives for good.....**

To our precious God chosen Leaders! There have been many wonderful leaders since therese and I came here 29 plus years ago and many have gone one to influence lives in many ways for good.....

For only leaders have been hand picked by God to facilitate this closing season of our leadership and usher in a new fresh season and work of God in our generation...

**but you all! You all are something special!! And you are the only leaders and friends chosen by God to lead during this time of the ending of one season and the start of a new season. That takes an especially anointed group of people and you are them.... Reminds me of Queen Esther**

*NIV Esther 4:14 And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"*

## **The future of His Place Church is Powerful!! How do I know?**

**God took me to Moses and Joshua...**

**At the end of Moses life...God told him ...he was not going to lead the Israelites into the Land of Milk and Honey...he showed him the future ...and God has revealed this also applies to HP**

*NLT Deut 34:1 Then Moses went up to Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab and climbed Pisgah Peak, which is across from Jericho. And the LORD showed him the whole land, from Gilead as far as Dan; <sup>2</sup> all the land of Naphtali; the land of Ephraim and Manasseh; all the land of Judah, extending to the Mediterranean Sea<sup>[a]</sup>; <sup>3</sup> the Negev; the Jordan Valley with Jericho—the city of palms—as far as Zoar.*

**Moses. Was not going to lead the Israelites into the promised land, one of his major jobs was to train the one who will .**

*NLT DEUT 3: 28 Instead, commission Joshua and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead the people across the Jordan. He will give them all the land you now see before you as their possession.'*

**God showed me a while ago...that he is passing the mantle to someone who loves you like I do! And cares for this community like I do...Some one who earned his place and respect of our church. Someone the board trusts, who has served you well, someone who has demonstrated over and over his commitment to the mission of our church and earned his place of respect and trust in our church.**

**Pastor Chris has served God faithfully alongside me for seven years and I have mentored him for years, and has been loyal in every way to God, me, God and this church, he has served next to me in every baptism, every trial, preached in every time of need, available at the most inconvenient times, was part. Of every success, and suffered at our failures and losses ... someone I completely trust to carry on this work...and most importantly has God's anointing to lead this church ... finishing his schooling, loves his wife Tracey who supports him fully ...**

**As I have trusted Chris ..I ask you also to trust him...as he bears the burden of this church in the human realm I ask you to uphold his arms like you have upheld mine...**

**He is a workman worthy of the call and you are the armor bearers to support the ongoing work of the mission God has put us on to build lives!**

**Pastor Chris come on up two stories...my couch...and Christmas eve...**

**9. Pastor Chris share a little of your heart... Open up for comments and questions...**

**Close with our tag line...building lives one at a time...**

**But the key is building our lives on who? It has never been about me Joe nor Chris ...But on Christ the solid rock this church has stood and been built and that will not change...**

*NLT Matthew 7:24-25 "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house **on solid rock**.*

*Though **the** rain comes in torrents and **the** floodwaters rise and **the** winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is **built on bedrock**.*

**Can we stand together on the foundation of this church built upon the Rock of Jesus ...and surrender ourselves to God's call here...**