

THE PATH GOD MADE

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*A Testimony of Faith, Failure, and Freedom*

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*For Molly,*

*my Proverbs 31 wife,*

*who never gave up on me even when I gave her every reason to.*

*For my parents, who taught me that you don't need much to have  
everything that matters.*

*For every person carrying weight they were never meant to carry  
alone. There is a path. God already made it.*

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## FOREWORD

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As I write this, I may be shunned and turned away by many. I believe throughout history, both Jews and Christians have been persecuted for speaking up for what they believe in. I believe that when God performs miracles in our lives, it's important that we share these testimonies with the world. There are so many people that struggle with faith or struggle to find God themselves. While everyone may be on a different journey, and I am still on this journey myself, I share this story to praise God and not to judge others.

This book is not written by a pastor. It's not written by a theologian. It's not written by someone who had it all figured out. It's written by a man who was born in a cabin with no running water, chased the world with everything he had, nearly destroyed the most important things in his life, and was rescued by a God who never stopped pursuing him.

I am still early in my studies, but I am convicted by what I have felt and seen. I do not believe religion is meant to be pushed on others. Jesus never taught with fear or hatred. He taught with love and compassion. This book is written in that same spirit.

If you are struggling with faith, struggling with purpose, struggling with sin you can't seem to shake, or wondering if God even cares about your mess, I wrote this for you. Not to preach at you. To show you what God did with mine.

Everything in my life, every struggle, every failure, every victory, every impossible moment that somehow worked out, was part of a path I didn't design. God made the path. I just had to learn to walk it. And the hardest part was learning to stop trying to walk it alone.

Chapter One

## BORN IN THE MOUNTAINS

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I was born in a cabin in the mountains outside of Republic, Washington. Homebirth. No hospital. No doctor. My dad delivered me all on his own. The midwife hadn't made it to the house before I came out.

We lived completely off the grid. No running water inside, and there still isn't. No electricity. No indoor plumbing. My parents were hippies who had a dream of building a cabin in the mountains and living off the land, and that's exactly what they did. And they still live that way today.

My dad used the lumber on the land to build the house from scratch with no prior building experience. The only tools he used were a chainsaw, a come-along, a hatchet, and a hammer. He did this completely on his own while my mother took care of two children up on the mountain with no amenities. It was a basic two-story cabin. We had to carry jugs of water in for drinking, cleaning, and bathing. We had a wood stove that heated the house in winter, and from spring until fall, we would cut down trees and buck firewood out of them. That was our heat through winter.

My dad had put together a very basic solar system with a few batteries and a few solar panels. It didn't power much, but it would run a small twelve-volt light and a few smaller appliances. In summertime, we could usually get away with watching a movie, but usually we had to start the generator to watch an entire film. Any power tools or bigger appliances had to be powered by the generator as well. We had a phone in the house, and that about topped the list for our amenities.

I was the youngest of four children. Two older sisters and a brother, who was the oldest. All four of us were home births, and my dad delivered all of us.

While my parents lived this way willingly, as a child, I hated my upbringing and our way of living. I always thought how nice it must have been for people that didn't grow up like us. I could never understand why we couldn't have a normal house like everyone else or live a normal lifestyle. This feeling escalated the older I got and the more I saw. Looking back now, I'm grateful for my upbringing and the way my parents raised me. It is what made me the man I am today.

As a kid, I was sick constantly. From the time I was a baby until I was about eighteen, I battled asthma and breathing problems that kept me struggling just to keep up. I missed school. I missed out on things other kids took for granted. There were seasons where just getting through the day felt like a fight.

But here's the thing about growing up like that. It builds something in you. I didn't know it at the time, but every cold night, every trip to the outhouse, every moment of watching other kids live in houses with lights and heat and running water, something was forming inside me. A hunger. A fire. A refusal to accept that this was all there was.

*“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” — Psalm 139:14*

Even in that cabin, even with no plumbing, even with asthma that made me fight for every breath, God was building something. I just couldn't see it yet.

Chapter Two

## FIRST PRAYERS

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The first vivid memory I have of praying happened when I was five years old.

I was floating in a swimming pool in the middle of an inflatable donut ring. The sun was beaming down on a hot summer day. My older brother was out there with me, but he went inside the house. As I sat there, I'm not sure what happened, but my arms gave way and I slipped between the inflatable and shot towards the bottom of the pool. I had no idea how to swim, and the only thing I could think of was to pray.

It was the first time I remember consciously reaching out to God. And I felt my body rushed back up to the surface and somehow back to my inflatable. I don't remember what happened next, but that moment shaped my image of God from that day forward. I always knew I could pray to God and it would work out. Whether it was something I was going through, worrying about, or a life-or-death event, I would pray and trust in God about it. I lived my life by that principle.

*"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."*

— James 5:16

I wasn't righteous. I was five. But God heard me anyway. And He kept hearing me.

While we were poor growing up, I tried to show gratitude to God and thank Him for what we had. We grew up hearing, "Don't complain about your food, there are starving children in Africa." That always kept me humble and grateful. I knew my life was rougher than everyone I knew, but I also knew there were people struggling much worse than us. I thanked God daily for having a family, food, and a roof over my head. I knew we had what we needed, and that meant more to me than what we didn't have.

The story of Job always stuck with me. Job was healthy, had money, and had a great family. He was blessed with so much and had a love for God like no other man. When everything was taken from him, his fortune, his family, eventually his health, he continued to pray and believe in God. That story carried me through hard times all through my childhood. Whenever I was faced with anything, big or small, I would think of Job and pray. I knew that if Job could endure all that he did and still believe in God, I could handle these things I was facing.

*“I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” — Job 42:2*

At the same time, I would pray to God that I could give my family a better life than I had growing up. And God gave me more than I ever could have imagined, and He is continuing to bless me each and every day.

Chapter Three

## MONEY, FEAR, AND THE FIGHTS THAT SHAPED ME

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Being poor, my parents had their fair share of arguments. Many of them, maybe most, would get very heated with a lot of verbal abuse from both sides. While I don't think my parents ever got physical, the verbal abuse was very serious and affected all of us children. My older sisters basically moved in with friends at a young age and my brother spent a lot of time with friends as well.

What really stuck in my head as I got older was the subject of the fights. What was the number one cause of all their arguments? Money. My parents were very non-materialist, almost the exact opposite of me, yet they were constantly stressed, worrying about money, and whether they had enough to purchase basic necessities.

This alone was one of the main driving factors of my future. No matter what, I knew that I would never fight about money. I've seen many couples have serious fights over money. According to a poll by Money Magazine, seventy percent of married couples over the age of twenty-five argue more about money than chores, intimacy, snoring, time spent together, and what's for dinner.

While everyone is familiar with the phrase "money is the root of all evil," many forget that the whole quote is "for the love of money is the root of all evil." 1 Timothy 6:10. Greed is created from the want or love of money. Having money will only create more of what you are. If you are greedy, money will make you more greedy. If you are generous, money will make you more generous.

*Money does not change people. It only amplifies where they are in their heart.*

As a child, I wanted to help feed starving children in Africa. That desire never left me. The question that kept burning inside me was: how much more could I do with more resources?

Here's the math that drives me today. When I build a billion-dollar net worth in assets, and those assets pay five percent a year, and I donate twenty percent of that, I can put ten million dollars a year into causes that need help. Where I'm at currently, I couldn't do that with one hundred percent of my income. This is why creating wealth matters to me. It's not how much money you make. It's what you do with the money.

I always heard people describe the wealthy as greedy. I'd hear things like "the rich sell their soul to the devil" or "every single rich person had to screw over somebody to get where they are." The more I heard things like this, the less I wanted to become wealthy. I would rather be poor and humble than rich and greedy. The problem was that I wasn't content with being poor either.

The closer I got to wealthy people through hard work, the more I realized how false these stories were. The mentors I was following wanted to help others become successful. Everything they did, they did with gratitude to God. Almost every single one of them thanked God for their success. They were selfless, hard working, and all around good people.

The people telling me the rich were greedy were jealous that they weren't in their shoes, or they were making excuses for why they weren't successful. The number one reason people don't become successful is because they don't want to put in the work. It's easier to complain about why their life is the way it is rather than work constantly to build their own success.

*"Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth."* — Proverbs 10:4

I also thought a lot about two sayings I grew up with. "Treat others as you would like to be treated." And "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Teach him to fish and he'll have food for a lifetime."

Now replace the word fish with money. "Give a man money and he will have money for a day. Teach him how to make money, and he will have wealth for a lifetime." The value of teaching wealth creation is more valuable than money itself.

Chapter Four

## THE YEARBOOK AND THE DREAM

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In my senior yearbook, every student wrote down what they wanted to be. Most people wrote normal things. I was the only one who wrote, "I will be a billionaire one day."

I wasn't joking. I honestly, truly believed it.

But somewhere between that yearbook and my late twenties, I lost the vision. Social conditioning crept in. Limited beliefs took root. I started telling myself the same lies most people tell themselves. Money doesn't grow on trees. I grew up poor, so there's no way someone like me could become wealthy. Rich people are greedy. The system is rigged against people like us.

I believed every one of those lies. And they cost me years.

The material items I wanted in life are what made me push through each obstacle to get to the next step. Even though I had a desire for material items, I never had a greedy mentality about it. I always wanted to help people in any way I could, and the older I got, the more I wanted to do for the world on a larger scale.

*"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it." — Habakkuk 2:2*

I wrote the vision. I just didn't know yet that God would rewrite it with His own hand.

My mother recently told me something that shook me. She said that before each one of her children was born, she prayed that they would make an impact on this planet. That was just more validation that I was on the right track. Even from before I was born, God was planting the seeds.

Chapter Five

## THE JEWISH BOY AT THE PREP SCHOOL

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I had a strong desire to attend a Jewish preparatory boarding school called the American Hebrew Academy. A few years earlier, my sister had met a couple in our small community who were connected to the school. The chances that a couple visiting from California ran into my sister was fate.

I didn't excel in school, so my test scores did not come back in my favor. I would have never been accepted, but by the grace of God, it worked out. The school wrote me a letter saying my scores weren't good enough, but they enjoyed my sister's presence so much that they would hope I would follow in her footsteps. They gave me a scholarship because they knew we could not afford the school.

I went from living off the grid, walking to an outhouse and getting my own firewood, to a luxury boarding school. We had catered meals, nice living quarters, and amazing activities right on campus. It was the most amazing experience I had ever had. On top of that, I was surrounded by kids who came from wealthy homes. Their parents would fly me home with them on school breaks. I went to sporting events. I even got a ball at a Yankees game.

I started to see houses and ways of living like I had never seen before. If I had a want for material things at a young age, I had now seen so much more.

I was also proud of my Jewish faith and embraced it, though I struggled with many points. I was attracted to orthodox cultures and prayers, yet didn't know the language well enough to understand what I was saying. At the age of fourteen, I chose to get circumcised on my own, fulfilling the commandment that God put upon Abraham and his people. It wasn't something my hippie parents had done at birth, but to me, it mattered.

Sophomore year I got more involved with having fun than studying. My grades dwindled. I made a habit of sneaking out of dorm rooms. One night I put together a plan with about eight other students to drive the school's golf carts around. I was labeled the mastermind and suspended for a week. I ended up failing English and was not welcomed back.

If I thought it was hard growing up the way I did before, it was even harder coming back to that way of life after living in luxury for two years. I was back to the outhouse. Back to sitting on a quarter inch layer of ice on the toilet seat in the middle of winter. Back to sleeping in my old stiff spring hospital bed. Back to waking up to mice chewing at my feet in the middle of the night.

I wondered how some people had such luxury lives while we lived so poor. The answer was that this was the life my parents wanted. They grew up in cities and suburbs and wanted a life without the stress of the modern world. It was hard for me to understand then, but as I grew up and got into the busy world myself, I began to understand where they were coming from.

*“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

That contrast between the prep school and the outhouse was part of God's design. It gave me the hunger and the humility at the same time. Most people get one or the other. God gave me both.

Chapter Six

## THE HOLY LAND

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The worst part about being asked not to come back was missing an opportunity of a lifetime. The junior class always spent a semester in Israel. I was devastated.

I prayed to God that if there was a chance for me to go, to help me figure it out. I worked hard, wrote letters for scholarships, and applied for a later semester. Everything came together. I was able to get scholarship money and my grandmother helped fund the rest of the trip. Although I didn't get to go with my class, I was able to experience it.

Israel was an amazing experience and one of the moments I was able to truly connect with God. I remember stepping off the plane in Tel Aviv and feeling this overwhelming presence come over me. It truly felt like the presence of God. I could not believe I had landed in the Holy Land. I got down on the ground and kissed it.

The most powerful moment was visiting the Western Wall of the Temple in Jerusalem. We went before Shabbat, and the area was full of beggars asking for money. It was sad to see. We spent Shabbat in Jerusalem and walked to the Wall Saturday morning. All the beggars were gone, and it was a truly amazing feeling. There was an overwhelming presence of God. The experience of praying where people had been praying for thousands of years was unlike anything I had ever seen.

*“I rejoiced with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.”* — Psalm 122:1

This trip happened because of God. There was nothing I could have done on my own to make it happen. The school I shouldn't have gotten into, the trip I shouldn't have been able to afford, the land I shouldn't have been standing on. God made the way through every impossible door.

I was confused by these experiences. How could I get to experience things that only the wealthy got to experience, but still have to live in the conditions we lived in? If I could go back and change how I grew up, I wouldn't. The hardness of our home life gave me strength to persevere through hard times. Yet I was still able to have experiences of a lifetime thanks to the help of others and the hand of God.

## Chapter Seven

# FINDING MY WAY

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As I neared graduation, I tried to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. I had applied to a few colleges, including Yeshiva University in New York, where some of my friends were going. I also tossed around joining the military or even the Israeli army.

I sat down with an Army recruiter. He asked me my top three reasons for wanting to join. My number one reason was patriotism. He said, "That's interesting. Most people don't join because they're patriotic. They usually leave the military patriotic." Then he said, "You know, you can be patriotic without joining the military. Even picking up trash in your community is patriotic." I appreciated his honesty and really thought hard about what I wanted to do.

I signed up for Wyotech for diesel mechanics, a nine-month course. I graduated my high school career with a measly two-point-nine GPA. I had semesters where I finished with a four-point-zero, but usually I didn't try that hard.

At Wyotech in Laramie, Wyoming, I did my fair share of partying. In March of 2008, I snuck into a bar, blacked out, and got a DUI. I went to jail that night and really reflected on my life. That experience was a major turning point. I quit drinking for the rest of my time in Wyoming. I shifted my life and started to realize who my real friends were. I actually had more fun in my last three months in Wyoming than the previous six months.

I started to reflect on God more. I started going to religious events and connecting with God again. I realized that whenever I asked God to help lead me, great things happened. When I was getting in trouble, I wasn't asking God for help. I was turning my back on God and hoping He wasn't watching.

*“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

That became real to me. Every time I submitted my decisions to God, the path straightened out. Every time I tried to do it my way, I ended up in a ditch.

After Wyotech, I fought fires for a third summer. Then came two job offers. One in Hawaii at five thousand a month. One in Houston, Texas at thirty-six hundred a month. Hawaii paid more and seemed more secure. But I prayed and felt pulled toward Houston.

Six months later, the economy collapsed and I was laid off. I went back to Washington, worked at a bakery, fought more fires, worked for Lampson International where my uncle was CFO. I refused to use family connections for special treatment. I wanted to earn my way.

Then Global called again and asked if I wanted to go to North Dakota. For ten dollars an hour. In the middle of winter. Less money than I was making. Most people thought I was insane.

*“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”* — Proverbs 16:9

I prayed and knew I had to go. I flew into Williston in December of 2010. It was midnight. Desolate and cold. The man camp was in the middle of nowhere, and I thought, "What did I just sign up for?"

But God knew what He was doing. He always does.

## Chapter Eight

# "YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT ON A RIG."

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One night at a bar, a group of guys were bragging about how great the rigs were and all the money they were making. I was still fairly slim and scrawny. I said, "I don't know if I can handle it." One of the guys said, "You'll be fine."

As I headed to the bathroom, one of the roughnecks stopped me, grinned, and said, "You'll never make it on a rig."

At that moment, I said back to him, "Watch me."

My friend and I went to Sun Well Services to pick up applications. He was hired immediately because he had a CDL. I only had a permit and couldn't get anyone to call me back. I kept calling every day until they finally answered. In the interview, the first question they asked was, "Are you scared of heights?" Having loved climbing trees and jumping off rocks as a kid, I immediately answered no.

The first few days, they kept me on the ground to learn the basics. Two days in a row, two different derrick hands dropped a hang of rods from seventy-five feet up. Those rods are seventy-five feet long and one inch in diameter. When they drop, you have to act quick and get out of harm's way. I was starting to think this was just a normal part of the job.

After the second one fell, the tool pusher screamed at the derrick hand, told him to get down, looked at me, and said, "Looks like you're the new derrick hand."

I climbed the ladder seventy-five feet up to the rod basket and realized for the first time in my life that I truly was scared of heights. It was a lot different than the bodies of water I usually looked over from a cliff. I couldn't go back now. I thought of the guy in the bar telling me I'd never make it.

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”* — Deuteronomy 31:6

I pushed through. After a few hangs, the tool pusher climbed up himself to show me the ropes. He was the first boss I really looked up to. A few weeks later, he quit to start his own rig company. That planted a seed. From that day forward, I told myself every day that I would own a rig one day.

In my first three months, I got three pay raises. Within six months, I had received eight dollars an hour in raises. One day they told me I was the top hand. I argued that the other hands had more experience. They said, "Yeah, but you're the only one that knows what's going on."

*I never did drop a hang of rods. Not once.*

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”* — Colossians 3:23

That was my approach before I even knew that verse. Work hard. Show up. Never quit. And let God handle the rest.

Chapter Nine

## THE WHITE COWBOY HAT

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One night at a bar in Williston, I met a woman named Molly who had a glow to her. I didn't know what it was at the time, but there was something about her. It was almost as if there was a gravitational pull. She had a glow that was obviously not present on anyone else in the room.

She was clearly not interested. She was going through a divorce and had four kids. I had always told myself I could never be with someone who had kids. But we got on the topic of God, in a bar of all places. While I was Jewish and she was Christian, our values seemed to click.

A few weeks later, she agreed to come hang out with me in my man camp. As she walked into my room, she noticed a white cowboy hat sitting there. I always had cowboy hats and was always drawn to white ones. Later, she told me a story about her grandfather. She was at her grandparents' farm getting ready for church. Her grandpa walked out wearing a white cowboy hat. Her cousin asked, "Grandpa, why do you always wear white cowboy hats?" He said, "Only the best men wear white cowboy hats." At that moment, she had a connection to me she couldn't let go of.

We started getting closer. She introduced me to her kids. One day, she messaged me: "What do you want out of this? What are your intentions?"

I was in a service truck heading out to a location about an hour from town. I had to really think about it. I knew this relationship was unlike anything I'd ever had. She had kids, and I knew I did not want to make those children a temporary part of my life. I either had to break it off or commit to forever.

I closed my eyes and prayed. I said, "God, I do not want to bring hurt to this woman or her children. If this isn't meant to be, give me a

sign so I can break it off before it gets too serious. If it is meant to be, help me know that this is the one."

A few hours later, a feeling came over my body that I had to commit to this woman. I told her I wanted to be with her and her children.

We moved in together. I was walking out the door one morning and she whispered, "I love you." I had told her I wouldn't say it until I really meant it. When she said it, I felt something I had never felt before. I said, "I love you too." She laughed and said she was just kidding. I told her I wasn't.

A few months later, I blew up my truck seven miles from her parents' house on the Fourth of July. She let me borrow her minivan for months. Looking back, I know that truck had one purpose. It was our connection. Once we hit a threshold, God no longer had a purpose for that truck.

On Christmas of 2011, I awkwardly hid a ring inside a sweatshirt in a Walmart bag. When she opened it and saw the ring, I said, "Will you marry me." It wasn't the most special proposal. If I could go back, I'd have figured out a bigger ring and a grander moment. She chuckled and said yes.

Our first child together was born September 1st, 2012. While I loved all our children, it was such an amazing moment to have a child of my own blood. He was and still is a spitting image of me.

Over the next few years, God continued to grow our family. Molly had four children when I met her, and I made a decision early on that I would love them as my own. They weren't stepchildren to me. They were my children. Period. Then God gave us two more together. Six kids total. A full house, a loud house, and a blessed house.

Becoming a father changed me in ways I didn't expect. These kids didn't just need a provider. They needed a man who showed up, who was present, who led with patience instead of frustration. I didn't always get that right. There were seasons where I was so consumed with business that I gave my kids the leftovers instead of the best of

me. That's one of my biggest regrets. But fatherhood also became one of God's greatest tools for shaping me. Kids don't care about your net worth. They care about whether you're in the room. They care about whether you're paying attention. They teach you humility faster than any business failure ever could.

*“Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.”* — Psalm 127:3

Every one of those six kids is a reward I didn't earn. And raising them is the assignment I take more seriously than any deal I'll ever close.

*“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.”* — Proverbs 18:22

God didn't just give me a wife. He gave me a family. He gave me Molly. And she has been the anchor of this entire story ever since.

We were finally married June 18th, 2016. After four and a half years engaged, we were ready. We moved into a house that we had admired driving past for over a year. It had seemed impossible, but everything came together. The house was listed almost two hundred thousand dollars less than it had previously sold for. My boss asked me, "Are you crazy buying a house right now? We could all lose our jobs in a week." I told him, "Well if that happens, I guess we'll move back into our other house."

At that point in my life, I had an amazing job, an amazing house, and most importantly an amazing wife and six children. My life was feeling like it was becoming meaningful, and I was starting to see all the amazing and tough things that had come together to create that exact moment.

*“The Lord God said, it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”* — Genesis 2:18

God sent me a helper. He sent me a partner. He sent me a woman who would later save my life by staying when she had every reason to leave.

## Chapter Ten

# GOD'S DESTINED PATH

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While I was nervous switching companies when work was slow, I prayed to God once again and asked for help. I felt that same energetic pull that God had used every time before.

You see, the more you put your faith in God, the easier it is to trust what He has in store for you, even when you can't see it yourself.

In early 2015, the oilfield slowed down and I was asked to go work for a company called Dynamic Well Services. But they were offering me less money and a demotion. Everyone thought I was crazy. But I asked God for guidance and I knew this was the direction I needed to go.

The day I started, oil dropped even lower and I no longer had a rig to run. I went to work as a hand. I told myself I would keep my head down, work hard, and keep my mouth shut. I would not argue with anybody. I would do what I was told.

After two months, the owner called me into the office. She asked me to start pushing the rigs. I agreed even though I wasn't sure I was ready. I went out there and worked hard with each crew. I constantly told them I'd help in any way possible, get whatever they needed, and do whatever I could to make the job easier. I respected each and every one of them and they showed me great respect.

*“Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honor and life.”* — Proverbs 22:4

The humility of going backwards, taking a demotion, starting over, that was the soil God needed me in so He could plant something bigger.

By 2017, the owner called and asked if I could run the entire company. Every manager before me had been fired for embezzling. I

told her I wasn't sure, but I'd try my best. She promoted me to manager and I was running the whole operation.

The first thing I had to do was take back pay raises that the previous manager had given everyone. Going to each rig and telling men I had to cut their pay was one of the hardest things I'd ever done. Some said, "You're a piece of garbage." Others said, "I completely understand. I wondered how you could afford those raises." The guys who understood stayed. The ones who quit only cared about the money. Most of the original guys who stayed still work for me today.

I cut wasted spending. I grew the company. We shifted trucks, bought equipment, and multiplied our revenue. One day the owner came into my office and said, "This is the first time in six years this business has made any money. Now you just need to figure out how to buy me out."

I laughed. But after she left, I thought about it. For seven years, I had been telling myself every day that I would own a rig one day. I had been speaking that over my life. But I had no idea how to make it happen.

Sometimes God has bigger plans for you than you have for yourself, if you trust and believe.

A few weeks later, she came back and said she was serious. She needed a business partner and a million-dollar down payment. I asked my sales manager to be my partner. We talked to every bank in town. We applied everywhere. Nothing worked. We almost gave up.

One group offered to fund us, but they wanted two hundred thousand dollars upfront as a finder's fee, twenty percent interest, and a lien on equipment that didn't belong to us yet. The stress of running the business and trying to buy it at the same time was overwhelming.

I started to have doubts. I didn't know if this was a test from God or a lesson. So I prayed. I didn't ask God to deliver the business to me. I said, "Whatever is meant to be, let it be." I knew God had everything figured out. As soon as I gave it to God, my anxiety went away.

The owner agreed to use her equipment as collateral so we could get the bank loan. Other than a lot of debt hanging over our heads, we literally had no skin in the game. God delivered something I thought was nearly impossible.

We signed documents on August 1st, 2018. Our sixth child was born October 9th, 2018.

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* — Philippians 4:6-7

No matter how unrealistic something seems, if it's right and meant to happen, God will come through every time. And if He's not coming through, it's because He's building strength for something even bigger.

## Chapter Eleven

**THE PARTNERSHIP AND THE WALL**

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When I took over the business, I made a decision that would haunt my marriage for years. I told my business partner that we should not include our wives in the business. I didn't want to see their marital problems affecting our company. But what I failed to see was my own marriage.

I put a wall between my wife and myself. Between my wife and my business. I should have discussed business more with her, but instead I kept it all between me and my partner. Meanwhile, his wife was influencing his decisions, and mine was left on the outside looking in.

I had told Molly multiple times that I didn't want her part of the business. I told myself it was about optics, about professionalism, about protecting the company. But the truth is, I made my wife feel unimportant. I made her feel unwanted. I caused self-worth issues. She felt that she could never get a job if her own husband wouldn't bring her into the company she signed off on with him.

I felt horrible. I felt as if I had abandoned my wife.

*“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” —*

Ephesians 5:28

I wasn't loving her as myself. I was protecting the business and neglecting the person the business was supposed to serve. Your home is your first ministry. Your wife is your first priority after God. And I had gotten the order completely wrong.

Our marriage suffered. We tried counseling. We tried communicating. But the damage was deep. And on top of it, I started to realize that my business partner didn't believe in God. One morning during Covid, when business had tanked and I was sitting with my

feet up smiling, he asked me how I could possibly not be freaked out. He said he couldn't even sleep at night.

I looked at him and said, "Because I believe in God, and I know that whatever is meant to be will happen."

He shook his head and said, "That's why I don't believe in God."

That was the moment I knew I had to buy him out. I was shocked to learn he didn't believe. For me, after everything I'd been through, there was no denying God was real. I knew if God got me into the business, the business needed God to get to the next step.

Over the next few years, I tried to buy him out. The first attempt didn't work. The timing wasn't right. I prayed, and God showed me we weren't supposed to be partners. Eventually I approached him again, less aggressively. I ended up buying him out for half the amount and better terms than I'd offered a year and a half prior.

Again, towards the end of the transaction, things weren't working out. I moved out of the way, prayed, and put it in God's hands. And it all worked out.

But then I did what I always did. I yanked the reins from God. I thought I needed to work harder and do more. The harder I worked, the worse the business seemed to do. I thought maybe I wasn't supposed to buy him out. Maybe I was a failure.

The one thing I wasn't doing was giving control back to God. Finally, when I had run the business so far into the ground that it seemed impossible, I surrendered. I said, "God, take this. Whatever is meant to be, let it happen."

Out of nowhere, the business started to thrive again. Miracles were happening before my eyes. And every time I tried to take control again, the business would struggle. And I'd have to pass the reins back to God.

Just as the Israelites on their journey from Egypt kept going back to idol worship, away from the God who parted the Red Sea and provided manna each day, I kept trying to take control of my own life.

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”* — Proverbs 3:5-6

I had to learn that verse the hard way. Over and over and over again.

Chapter Twelve

## BUILDING COOPER CAPITAL

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We had bought an auction home in 2019 with no access to the inside. We were excited to get into the flipping business. But when we gained access to the house, it was worse than we could have imagined. The floor was unlevel. Three of four basement walls were completely caving in.

Many people suggested slapping lipstick on a pig and dumping the house. While that would have been the easiest thing to do, we couldn't consciously put together a half-finished house to leave for the next person to deal with.

We decided to rebuild the entire house from the ground up. We moved the house, dug out the old basement, poured a new one twice the size, gutted the upstairs, moved the stairs, and added on. We almost doubled the square footage.

While I couldn't see a vision for the house, my wife said she could. I put all my faith and trust in her and let her completely design and plan the house. She designed a house worth over triple what we originally bought it for, with an upside of over fifty thousand dollars. My wife is absolutely a visionary.

We kept the house as a rental rather than selling it. Everyone warned us about terrible renters. My wife did her due diligence and found a family with great references. Over a year later, the house was in immaculate condition. We were cash flowing on the property while it appreciated.

That was the beginning of Cooper Capital. Molly and I continued to acquire properties, fix-and-flips, rentals, and acquisitions, building the portfolio into a firm managing over ten million dollars in assets.

Proverbs 31:16 says of the virtuous wife, "She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard."

That's Molly. She saw what I couldn't see. She built what I didn't know how to build. And together, we were creating something that would outlast both of us.

Chapter Thirteen

## THE SUMMIT OF EMPTINESS

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2023 was my best year on paper. We bought multiple real estate properties. I bought out my business partner. The business was growing. The numbers were incredible. I had accomplished everything and anything I wanted to accomplish.

And I ended the year feeling depressed and empty.

I started that year asking how I could serve, and I ended it feeling completely unfulfilled. I didn't understand why. I had everything I thought I wanted. I had the company. I had the properties. I had the numbers.

*“Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind.”* — Ecclesiastes 2:11

That's exactly how it felt. I had been chasing the wind. And the wind doesn't fill the hole in your heart.

I had a massive void, and I couldn't pinpoint it. For years, I had been chasing everything and anything. I wanted and needed success more than anything, partly from what I didn't have growing up, partly to fill insecurities, partly to drive my ego and show people what I could accomplish.

The more I chased, the more empty I felt.

While I appeared to live a godly life on the outside, inside I was filled with greed, lust, temptation, and the love of money. I was constantly chasing and desiring more because what God blessed me with wasn't enough for my selfish desires. And the more I got, the more I felt I needed.

*“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”* — Matthew 16:26

I was learning the answer to that question the hard way.

Chapter Fourteen

## THE CRUSHING

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2024 was a year of self-destruction.

By the fall, I was caught up in a sextortion scandal. While I tried to lie to myself and tell myself that what I was doing wasn't harmful because nobody knew, I was actually destroying what God had blessed me with.

When my wife found out, I admitted to all of it. And then slowly, painfully, I started to come clean about other times when I had been mentally unfaithful. I had allowed thoughts into my head that had no place there. Each confession created more issues in our relationship. I felt a tension in my heart that would not go away. I didn't understand why there was this pain and why I couldn't be free.

I felt like I had destroyed my marriage and betrayed my wife. I also felt that God would never forgive me for what I had done. I prayed and prayed and asked for forgiveness and asked God, "Why me? What is wrong with me? Why do I keep doing these horrible things? Why can't I be a true and faithful man of God?"

I could not make myself stop sinning. Every time I asked for forgiveness, I continued with the behavior. Then I would ask God again, "Why do I keep doing this to myself?"

I was trying to follow rules just to follow rules. Not because that was what God truly wanted for my heart. Just like the Pharisees that Jesus confronted, I was checking boxes on the outside while rotting on the inside.

*"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."* — Psalm 51:10

That was my prayer. But I couldn't create a pure heart on my own. I needed help. I needed a Savior.

You cannot love two gods. You can either love money and hate God, or love God and hate money. I was thinking I needed money. I needed safety for my family. I didn't recognize that God had been providing my daily bread each and every day.

*“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” —  
Matthew 6:24*

I had been trying to serve both. And it was tearing me apart.

Chapter Fifteen

## FINDING JESUS

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In November of 2024, Molly and I attended a Christian couples ministry called "I Still Do." At that event, I released more of what I'd been carrying. A server told me that if I believed in the things Jesus had done in his life, He would walk alongside me.

I thought of the moments throughout my life when I felt Jesus walking beside me. As a ten-year-old boy, walking down a dark alley with a bag of cash after attending a Christian youth ministry night, I had been scared. They had said that night that if you accept Jesus into your heart, He will always walk by your side. I thought about that as I walked, and I felt as if Jesus was walking alongside me.

My mother had spoken of the wonderful teachings of Jesus and how they were closely similar to their hippie beliefs of peace and love. I admired that Jesus was a Jew, just like me.

But as most Jews do, I was extremely concerned with the Trinity. The Ten Commandments specifically say there shall be one God and no other God before Him. So how could people pray to a man?

A month later, I watched a movie called *The Forge*. It talked about giving something up to follow Christ. I asked God what He wanted me to give up, and instantly I felt a release from drinking. I never thought I had an issue with alcohol, but that was what God asked me to give up. In that moment, I said done, and I lost my desire to drink.

The server at the ministry had mentioned a Men's Encounter coming up in January. I had plans to attend an event at Mar-a-Lago that same weekend. I prayed to God that if the ministry was the same weekend, I would cancel those plans.

It was.

I cancelled Mar-a-Lago and went to the ministry instead.

On January 24th, 2025, I was so broken and lost that I fully submitted and surrendered to Jesus for the first time in my life.

All the guilt and shame of everything I had ever done and felt was washed away that day. I felt a true forgiveness from God that I had never experienced, even though I had asked for His forgiveness many times before. The difference was that this time, the pattern broke. I didn't just feel forgiven. I felt freed. I lost all desire to continue the behavior that had been destroying me.

I felt an overwhelming love come over my heart. The tension that had been sitting there for months, maybe years, was gone.

I finally understood the Trinity. Not as three different beings, but as three different parts of the same being. Someone once said to me, "If our God was so simple that we could fully understand Him, would He be somebody worth worshiping?"

I've always experienced God. But Jesus took away my sins, my guilt, my shame, my burdens. The heaviness I had been carrying my entire life was lifted that weekend. And when I released all of that, I felt overcome with the Holy Spirit, a part of God I had never experienced in my entire life.

*"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."* — John 8:36

*For the first time in my life, I was free.*

I couldn't make myself stop sinning. But God could. I wasn't following rules for the right reason. I was following rules because they were rules, not because I understood what God truly wanted for my heart. When I finally surrendered, it wasn't about rules anymore. It was about relationship.

As a Jewish man, this was hard. I wondered if I was supposed to leave behind my heritage. But as I looked at my path, I knew God had led me to where I was. God led me to my wife. God led me to church. God led me to this ministry. If I was meant to live a fully Jewish life, I would have attended Yeshiva University and married a Jewish woman.

Instead, God sent me to an amazing Christian woman with a beautiful soul and a troubled heart so that we could help each other grow and strengthen.

My wife had attended this same ministry for women a few years prior. She told me it was more impactful than anything else she had experienced. I didn't believe her until I was sitting in that room myself.

Chapter Sixteen

## THE TRANSFORMATION

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Since that weekend, everything has changed.

Jesus took away desires of lust. I quit drinking. I quit cussing. Anyone who knew me on a personal level knows that was a big shift. I feel true freedom. My friendship groups completely changed from going out to the bars to going to ministries. God surrounded me with Godly men who are seeking His Kingdom.

In the fall of 2025, I went through a twelve-week men's discipleship framework that taught me how to put Kingdom Order into practice. Not just as an idea, but as a daily operating system for the rest of my life.

The order is this: God first. Then your spouse. Then your children. Then your business or workplace. Then ministry work and friendships. Then everything else.

That order is not optional. When you get it wrong, everything breaks. When you get it right, everything flows.

Today, I am a captain in that program, helping guide other men through the same twelve-week process that transformed my life. I get to walk alongside men who are broken, searching, and hungry for something real. I get to tell them what I know to be true: you cannot fix yourself. But God can fix you. And Jesus is the door.

Instead of attending success events and reading success books, I've dedicated my time to reading the Bible and attending ministries. My life has radically shifted this past year.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” — 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Even though there is still healing to be done, I believe our marriage is in the best place it has ever been. Walking into 2026, I

can honestly say that everything that had been in the dark has been brought to the light, and I am so grateful for that.

I recently asked God why I had to go through all of this. Why did I have to hurt Molly? She's perfect. She's amazing. She didn't deserve what I put her through.

He said, "You had to go through all of that to become the man I need you to be."

I cried and said, "But why did she have to go through it?"

He said, "So she can become the woman I need her to be."

I hate writing that because I do not feel my wife ever deserved what I put her through. But I know that even through our troubles, we are being led by God to be examples to others. Not as self-righteous people, but to show that even people with the messes we've had can still do God's work.

I am so grateful for my Proverbs 31 wife. She trusted in her vision from God and continued to walk by my side even when I gave her every reason not to. I'm grateful she never gave up on me. And I'm committed to making sure she never has to question that decision again.

Chapter Seventeen

## THE PATH AHEAD

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I've always had a confession to make. I've always wanted to be wealthy. And I will be a billionaire one day.

But the reason is different now.

Growing up with no running water, electricity, or indoor plumbing, I always had visions of living a wealthy lifestyle. In my senior yearbook, I was the only one who wrote that he would be a billionaire. Through lots of social conditioning and limited beliefs, I lost that vision for a while.

Now I have it back. But this time, it's built on the right foundation.

I still believe wealth is important. With the right intentions and the right heart posture, you can do great things for God's Kingdom with wealth. While my gratitude and love for God comes way before money, I know that I do not love money. I would rather have a happy, healthy family than any amount of money in the world.

There was always something deeper.

I think about how much more impact I can make with more resources. Starting on a smaller scale locally is great, but how do you make a massive impact? The more money I help create for myself, for others, and for everyone I get connected with, the more impact we can make on the world.

*“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”* — Proverbs 11:25

My goals now are less specific than previous years when it comes to numbers. I want to continue to grow my soul and my family closer to God. I want to continue to strengthen my marriage and make it unbreakable from the foundation up. I want to continue walking boldly for God. I want to help guide other men to Jesus. I want to empower those around me, both in business and in life.

With everything I do moving forward, I want to do it for the glory of God.

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”* — 1 Corinthians 10:31

I look back at what God did in just ten years and it still shakes me. In 2015, our family of seven was living in a small trailer house in Williston. We were cramped, we were stretched, and we were just trying to make it work. By 2016, we moved into a house that was way above our means, but it fit our family. We converted it from five bedrooms to six, built a shop on the property, and made it home for nearly a decade. Then last fall, we moved into the largest home in Williston. Nearly fifteen thousand total square feet. Seven bedrooms, seven bathrooms. People call it the Castle on a Hill. I don't say that to impress you. I say it because if you had told that kid hauling water into a cabin and using an outhouse in Republic, Washington that God would put him there, he wouldn't have believed you. That's the power of a ten-year vision surrendered to God.

But that house is not the treasure. The family inside it is. The marriage that almost didn't survive is. The six kids who get to see their parents pray together every morning before the sun comes up, that's the treasure. The house is just evidence of what God builds when you finally stop trying to build it yourself and let Him hold the blueprints.

*“Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.”* — Habakkuk 2:2

Write the vision. Make it big. Surrender it to God. And then watch what He does with it.

I look back at the kid in the mountains of Republic, Washington. Born in a cabin his dad built with a chainsaw. No plumbing. No electricity. Asthma that made him fight for every breath. Writing "billionaire" in a yearbook while everyone thought he was dreaming.

That kid was right. He just needed to find the right foundation.

The path was never straight. It went through outhouses and prep schools, through derricks and dark alleys, through bar nights and bankruptcies of the soul, through a marriage nearly destroyed and a heart finally surrendered.

Every single step of it was made by God.

I am not here to tell everybody that you must believe in Jesus Christ or you will go to hell. I am not here to judge. I am just here to share my own testimony and the transformation I've gone through. Jesus never taught with fear or hatred. He taught with love and compassion.

If you're seeking more in life, if you have questions about Jesus, if you want to break chains from the past, reach out. I would love to share more about my testimony and my experience. If you want to break chains from the past, let me tell you how I did it.

As I said in the beginning, I may be shunned for speaking up. But I believe when God performs miracles in our lives, we are called to share them.

This world is about learning and becoming the person that God needs you to be. This earth is temporary and not our forever home. But while we're here, we can build something that matters. We can create wealth that serves. We can lead families that thrive. We can be testimonies of what God does with broken people who finally surrender.

*“The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.” — Psalm 37:23-24*

I have stumbled more times than I can count. But I have never fallen beyond the reach of God's hand.

The path was always there. God made it before I was born. I just had to stop trying to build my own road and start walking on His.

If you're standing at the beginning of your path, or if you've wandered off it, or if you can't even see it right now, I want you to

know this: the path is still there. God didn't remove it. He's waiting for you to step onto it.

Faith first. Fire second. Consistency always.

And when you don't know the next step, surrender. That's where God does His best work.

## A FINAL WORD

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My name is Lev Cooper. I was born in the mountains. I was raised with nothing. I chased the world. I nearly lost everything. And then Jesus found me.

If He can save me, He can save you.

If anybody is struggling and needs prayers, or just wants to talk about something that's been on their mind, feel free to reach out. Without judgment. I want to help guide others as God has put people in my life to help guide me.

*“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.”* — Proverbs 16:3

Now go build. But this time, let God hold the blueprints.

Lev Cooper.

Williston, North Dakota.

2026.