

**“Crossing Over Pt. #1 – RELEASE THE PAST”**

**Joshua 1:1–2 (NIV84) — 1** After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: **2** “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, **get ready to cross the Jordan River** into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.

**I. Joshua lived in the shadow of the great deliverer, Moses****A. Moses was raised with royalty growing up in Pharaohs household**

1. He was trained in the best schools in Egypt... he was an educated man
2. He was prepared for leadership as an adopted son of the Pharaoh

**B. Aside from his earthly qualifications, he has some awesome spiritual experiences**

3. He received his call to lead the people of Israel as God spoke to him through the burning bush
4. He was given a “Rod of Authority” from the Lord, which he used to bring forth signs and wonders
  - a) He used this rod to reveal the power of the true and living God
  - b) He used the rod to bring forth the plagues on the Egyptians
  - c) He used the rod to make a way through the Red sea
  - d) He struck the rock in the desert wilderness with the rod and the rock brought forth water, enough to quench the thirst of the people
5. You will remember that Moses was called up to the mountain and spent 40 days and nights in direct fellowship with the Father
  - a) When others were forbidden to set foot on the same mountain, Moses was invited up

- b) **While on the mountain God revealed a small portion of His glory and spoke His name to Moses**
- c) **When Moses came down from the mountain, his face glowed with the glory of God so strongly that he had to cover his face with a veil so people could look on him**

6. **Joshua was one who stood by Moses side**

**C. Joshua was Moses assistant**

- 7. **He was loyal and obedient to Moses**
- 8. **Where ever Moses went, you could find Joshua at his side... offering assistance and strength to the leader**

**D. Now Moses is dead, and God speaks to Joshua and says that he wants him to lead his people into the Promised Land**

- 9. **Joshua certainly did not have the credentials of Moses**
- 10. **As far as we know he was not an educated man... he grew up as a slave in Egypt**
- 11. **He did not get a rod of authority from God... he didn't even get a stick**
- 12. **He never had a burning bush experience**
- 13. **He did not see God face to face, nor have the intimate communion with the Father like Moses had**
- 14. **Yet, God was calling Joshua to a new place**

**E. God wanted to take Joshua and His people into the Promised Land**

- 15. **They would have to cross the Jordan River in order to cross over into God's purposes**

**F. Would Joshua rise to the challenge?**

- 16. **Would he be willing to walk in the destiny that God had created him for?**
- 17. **Would he be willing to make the necessary adjustments and allow God to bring changes in his life in order to fulfill his call?**

**G. Can you imagine what Joshua may have been feeling at that moment?**

**H. Fears that could keep him from crossing over into God's purposes**

18. fear of failure
19. fear of the people, would they accept his leadership?
20. fear of the unknown

**I. Added to these fears, Joshua was in the throes of grief over the loss of Moses**

21. There was a tremendous vacuum in his life now... Moses his mentor and leader was dead

**J. Joshua stood at a doorway**

22. it was a place of decision for him personally
23. Whatever decisions he would make would not only effect his life but also the lives of millions of people
24. God was calling Joshua to a new level of obedience
25. God was placing new demands on his life that he never faced before
26. God was challenging him to strive for greatness and to be a vessel of honor.

**K. God is calling all of us to cross over**

1. He is calling us to a new level of obedience
2. He is challenging us to greatness for His name's sake
3. He desires to use us and make us vessels of honor that He can pour His life through

**L. Let me speak to you individually...**

4. This is not just about the church corporately because it begins with each of us individually.
5. The church is not this place on Riviere Road... it's you and me who come to this place

6. **The transformation and change doesn't start in the walls of this building it starts in the hearts of those of us called to this community of faith**
7. **It's an inward transformation that impacts how we live our lives**
8. **It brings a realignment of our priorities in life**
9. **It transforms how we perceive ourselves and the world around us**
10. **When the Holy Spirit is moving in your life things change; all of a sudden you find yourself desiring to be more like Jesus in thought, word, and deed.**
11. **Prayer becomes a passion instead of a forgotten moment.**
12. **Hunger for the truth of God's word fills your heart and you can't wait to get alone with Jesus to hear what He has to say**
13. **You find yourself saying and doing things with boldness and courage to impact other peoples lives for the sake of God's kingdom**
14. **The fear of the Lord becomes a driving motivation in how you interact with God and with others**
15. **WE all need a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire.**

#### **M. God is calling you to cross over**

**N. As we face this challenge from the Lord we can learn from the things which God spoke to Joshua to prepare him to cross over into the Promised Land**

1. **God instructed Joshua as he prepared the Children of Israel to cross over the Jordan into their Promised Land**
2. **If we are going to transformational change as a individuals and as a church, we need to hear the voice of the Lord and obey Him**
3. **Let me share with you five things which will help you, individually, and our church to cross over**

**O. The first thing God says to prepare His people is...**

**I. RELEASE THE PAST**

**Joshua 1:2 (NIV84) — 2** “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.

**A. If you and I are going to realize our full potential and move into the new things God wants to do in us and through us... we must release our past**

1. **Moses is dead**
2. **Joshua had to stop holding onto Moses**
3. **Joshua would have to rise to the occasion and bury the past**
4. **The people could not move forward as long as they held onto Moses**
5. **Changes had to take place if they were to move into the Promised Land**
6. **The people would have to let go of the wilderness, and the way God did things in the wilderness, if they were going to move ahead**
  - a) **That manna business was over...**
  - b) **There are a lot of people who never enter into the fullness of what God has for them because they are living in the past**

**B. There are lots of churches which were at one time vibrant ministries and a witness to their communities, but then died off and no longer exist...**

7. **Why?, because they refused to let go of the past...**
8. **You want to kill a move of God in a church... “We’ve never done it that way before...”**
9. **That’s not how we did it at my old church...**
10. **God is taking us to a new place in Him, God is going to do things differently**

**Isaiah 43:18–19 (NIV84) — 18** “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. **19** See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

1. **I am sure there were some Israelites a bit shocked that 1<sup>st</sup> morning when they walked out of their tents with their bowls expecting to collect some manna for the day...**
2. **No more manna... does that mean God is not going to provide for us...**
3. **No, it means His provision is going to come in other ways...**
4. **Got to let go of the past... release the past**

### **C. What do I have to release... what do we have to release?**

### **D. Release past failures and sins committed**

1. **Some folks don't move ahead because they are stuck in their past**
2. **They committed some sin, had some failure... and they live under a cloud of guilt and shame**
3. **Things like divorce or abortions and abuse**
4. **Maybe it was you who had the affair... and it was your actions which caused the breakup of your family...**
5. **if you are ever going to move forward in the Lord you are going to have to release your past failures and sins committed**

### **E. How? How do I release my past failures when I am so filled with guilt and shame?**

### **F. Accept God's forgiveness**

**1 John 1:9 (NIV84) — 9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**Isaiah 38:17 (NIV84) — 17** Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.

**Isaiah 43:25 (NIV84) — 25** "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

**Micah 7:19 (NIV84) — 19** You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

### **G. You release your past by accepting God's forgiveness...**

### **H. FORGIVE YOURSELF**

1. **if God can forgive me, then I must forgive me**

2. **one of the greatest ploys of the enemy is that of reminding us of our past failures and trying to keep us focused on them**
3. **you must break this cycle if you are going to be free and move to the next level**
4. **Break these chains holding you to your past by the truth of Gods word**
5. **Jesus said... the truth shall set you free**
6. **If our holy, righteous and just God can and will forgive you of your sins and not bring them up again... then you need to do the same**
7. **Look in a mirror and say to yourself... I forgive you, and bury those sins and failures under the blood of Christ**

**I. If you are going to release your past you will also have to**

**J. FORGIVE OTHERS**

1. **You will never be free of your past until you forgive others who have wounded or offended you**
2. **So your mother did not love you like she should have**
3. **your father was abusive**
4. **your husband ran off with another woman**
5. **your kids don't bother with you anymore**
6. **your old pastor had a moral failure and left the ministry**
7. **if you don't forgive, and hold onto that offense, you will be bound by your past**
8. **Unforgiveness leads to bitterness**
9. **Bitterness will poison the well of your heart and affect all your relationships.**
10. **YOU GOT TO GET THE HATE OUT!**
11. **Get it out with forgiveness**
12. **I won't preach long here...**

13. **But let me just say this is the single most important issue for your spiritual health after receiving the Lord as your Savior**
14. **Because we have been forgiven by the Lord for all of our sins and transgressions, He expects us to do the same with any and everyone no matter how big or how small the grievance**
15. **We are to forgive**

**Matthew 6:14–15 (NIV84) — 14** For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

16. **you break the chains of the past when you forgive... you can't move forward while you hold onto your past**

**K. Here's another thing you must release...**

**L. if you are going to CROSS OVER you must**

**M. RELEASE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES**

1. **you have to stop rehearsing the "if only's"**
2. **If only I had gone to college**
3. **If only I had taken that job**
4. **If only I had moved back north**
5. **Sweet Jesus, belly up to the bar and order up a bowl of grits honey, you're in the south... you didn't move back up North... move on in the Lord**
6. **you waste precious moments every time you think back and dwell on lost opportunities**
7. **This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it... Ps 118**

**N. Here is another thing you have to release...**

**O. PAST LIFESTYLES**

8. **you cannot move into your promised land if you keep looking back to Egypt**
9. **you cannot take possession in the promised land if you keep revisiting Egypt**

10. **you can't live for the Lord on Sunday and for the devil on Monday**
11. **the most miserable person in the room today is the one who is trying to walk the line between two kingdoms, the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness**
12. **you have got to turn away from your old lifestyle**
13. **you can't go to the same places you use to hang out**
14. **you can't go to the same movies**
15. **you can't go to the same vacation spots**
16. **you can't keep some of the same friends**
17. **if you want to move forward, you have to change direction...**
18. **The bible calls a change of direction "repentance"**
19. **Sometimes you have to make a complete break from your former life in order to move on in the new life**

**Philippians 3:13–14 (NIV84)** — **13** Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

**P. If you and I are going to CORSS OVER into Gods Purposes, we must release our past**

1. **Release past failures and sins committed**
  - a) **Accept God's forgiveness**
  - b) **Forgive yourself**
  - c) **Forgive others**
2. **Release Missed Opportunities**
3. **Release Past Lifestyles**

**Q. How will you respond to this word today?**

1. **Maybe you need to come to this altar, and get on your knees and repent before the Lord**

2. **Maybe you need to ask one of the elders to pray with you to help break some soul tie to your past**
3. **I pray you will invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you and look into your heart to be sure you are free of your past.**
4. **Maybe it's time to renew your desire to have Jesus be the true Lord of your life?**

**R. Friends, we are at a moment where if we will respond appropriately to the Lord we will cross over into a place in our walk with the Lord individually and as a people that we have never been before.**

5. **It will be rich and fulfilling and more than our wildest dreams.**
6. **To see Him move into the circumstances of our lives, our families, our church, our community our nation in power and grace.**
7. **The Holy Spirit is inviting us to cross over... will you come...**

**S. Let's pray**