

Inspirational thoughts from Mike Steury & Dan Good

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Preacher: Mike Steury & Dan Good

[0 : 00] Good morning. Good morning. So it was kind of short.

John said he was feeling sick. I wonder if I have something to share. So I'll go through a few things that I've been glad to put on my heart as a challenge to me, not just to you, but it's to me as well. And so the things that I have, a couple of things that I have written down, was about unity as a brotherhood.

To me, that's something that is very special and is very unique, the way God has created it to be for us to worship and to unify in the spirit, not just to unify physically.

You know, from our culture that we grew up in, the unity was more just physically. We would look across the brothers and the sisters, and we would see unity in just the way we dressed and the way we would do things on a Sunday.

[1 : 11] And so that's become kind of special to me, to unify in the spirit. And so I looked up the definition of unity, what the definition is of unity. And so the Strong's definition would give oneness or unanimity or come back to unity.

So as I think of unity and a brotherhood in the spirit, I think of just for instance, let's say when we build a house, so we put drywall on the walls, right?

Before it's plastered together, we can still see all the splices. We can see all the individual pieces. Once it's plastered together and it's all painted, it looks like one. It's solid.

There's nothing that's going to come through it. So I think if we let Satan come into our lives or come into any aspect of our life, it creates a crack.

It creates a place for Satan to get into our hearts. So I think the strength that we have in unity and brotherhood is something that can't be bought and it can't be gotten any other way but through Christ in us, transforming us.

[2 : 17] And it's just something that's beautiful. So for the scripture that I had is in John 17, starting in verse 21 through 26.

And Jesus kind of gives us some clarity on what this oneness is. And he also gives us what this oneness does, the power that it gives us as a body, as a brotherhood.

And so starting in verse 21, it says that they may be one. So it's Jesus' prayer for the believers. It says that they may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou has sent me.

So the power that we show in unity, that the world may see it and believe in Christ. It says, and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.

So he has given us that glory and oneness in the spirit, that they may be one even as we are one.

So Christ has wants us as brothers to be one as he and God are one in us.

[3 : 31] So I think that that gives us, I don't understand the depth of it, but I think it's something beautiful that we cannot acquire unless we are broken and submitted to him and his word.

And then in verse 23, it says, So I think God has had a plan.

He has had a plan all along. And when the fall came into the world, he had a plan, and that was him becoming flesh and redeeming us. And another word would be paying the ransom for us, that we may be released from the bondage of sin and death.

O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. I believe if we are true followers and we are one in the spirit, we do know that he has sent Jesus.

And I have declared unto them thy name, and we declare it that they love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them. So I was just inspired by that, that the oneness that we can have in the spirit and the authority that we can have through Christ is something beautiful that we cannot buy or just, or it has to be, I don't know how to put it in the word that I want to use, but it has to be acquired through God and through his spirit.

[5 : 15] It's not something that we can just all gather together and we're going to just say we're going to be unified, right? Now let's be unified in the spirit. It's something that each and every one has to submit and give to God. It's our self, giving our self a way that the spirit may flow in us.

And so then I was just looking up some of the qualities. What are some of the qualities of unity in a brotherhood? And one that I came across is respect. And in 1 Peter, I'm going to be going across some verses here.

You don't have to turn to all of them. They're just kind of random verses to support what I'm sharing. So one is respect. So in 1 Peter 2 verse 17, it says, Honor all men, love the brotherhood, and fear God, and honor the king, which earlier in that chapter he was also talking about honoring our authority, like the government or whatever.

And number two is I think we should have empathy. And in 1 Corinthians 12 verse 26, it says, And whether one member, and whether one member, and if one member suffers, all members suffer with it.

Or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. So we rejoice in our triumphs. And we support each other in our times when we're down and in despair and struggling.

[6 : 34] And then three is compassion. Having compassion, and that is in Colossians 3 verse 14.

If I can find it.

It says, So I think that we should have compassion for one another.

When somebody is down and is struggling, that we pray for one another. And to me, that's also near to my heart.

If somebody is having a problem, we pray for them. We ask God to help them to overcome these trials and these tribulations. And it's just something beautiful that we cannot find anywhere else.

[7 : 45] And number four was understanding. To be understanding with one another. And I have a reference in 1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3 verse 8.

It says, And in verse 9 says, Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrarywise blessing, knowing that ye are there unto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

So I think to be understanding of one another and to understand that we all have our own walk and we all have our own trials. Just because I don't struggle with something that you struggle with, I think it's, why is he struggling with that?

That should be simple. Well, to him, each person, we have our own struggles. We have our own weaknesses. So I think it's a beautiful thing to be understanding of one another in our walk.

And then another one was open communication and honesty. In Ephesians 4 verse 25, it says, Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

[8 : 58] So if we go back to John, where it says that we are one as he is one in Christ, then I think to be open with one another and to be able to share with one another what we have in our lives, the struggles that we have in our lives.

And it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what it is. You know, we should be able to be open, to be free. Honesty. And I think honesty goes in every aspect in our life, not just in our spiritual walk, but in every aspect, in our physical life as well, to be honest, to be open, that people can see that we, when they speak with us, that they're seeing our heart.

They're seeing who we are. Not that we have to do anything special to make them see who we are, but that Christ is revealing himself through us, through living in us. And then another one, quality, I guess that you might call it, was Matthew 18, was accountability, which I have Matthew 18, verse 15 to 17.

I think everybody's very familiar with that. It says, Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. And if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

It doesn't say, go and tell him after you've told two or three other people, or after you have told the person that you really wanted to tell it to, before you go to him. It says, go to him alone. And it says,

if thou brother, here's you, you have gained thy brother.

[10:24] It's not about gossiping about them. It's not about trying to find fault. It's about, hey, this lays on my heart. Maybe you haven't thought about it this way. Maybe you can share something that I didn't see.

But it builds up versus tearing down. And in 16, it says, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. So we can tell that Jesus wants to go a long way.

Not just say, well, if you don't hear it my ways, or just all of our ways, just we're going to be done with you. But he pleads, you know, this is what the word of God says. This is the way, this is our heart.

This is why we're saying this. It's not because I think so. It's because the word of God says this. And then another one was support, that we support one another.

[11:18] In Galatians 6 verse 5, it says, bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It says by bearing one another's burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ.

Christ. And so that was just, those were things that just spoke to me, I guess, and that I thought I would share. And then another, a couple of verses about unity.

In Ephesians 4 verse 3, it says, endeavoring to keep the unity. It says endeavoring. So it's something that we continue to do, right? Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit.

But how? It says in the bond of peace. And also in verse 13, it says, till we all come, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I'm not sure I understand what the stature of the fullness of Christ looks like, but I believe that that's all our heart here today. And that was on my heart.

[12:21] And I just, I think through the unity of a brotherhood is where we have power over Satan. And that's how we gain, continue to gain victory and grow. I think just to do it by myself can be dangerous.

And so it's near to me and it's dear to me. And then I had one quote in closing. It was from one of the early church fathers, Irenaeus, which I believe was discipled by Polycarp of Smyrna.

And Polycarp was actually discipled by the direct apostle John. And this was one of his quotes about, you know, more or less about being redeemed and having communion and union with God. It says, the Lord thus redeemed us through his own blood, giving his soul for our souls and his flesh for our flesh. He has also poured out the spirit of the father for the union and communion of God and man.

He indeed imparts God to men by means of the spirit. On the other hand, he has attached man to God by his own incarnation. He bestowed true and enduring immortality upon us at his coming by means of communion with God.

[13:33] And he was around 180 years, I think after Christ. And so they, it's clear that there's, that they, that's how they understood. You know, they understood, they were, they were discipled.

And I think sometimes we can learn from some of their quotes on what they understood and how they, how they interpreted it, interpreted some of the scripture. And so, so I think that would be all that I have for this morning.

Hopefully that can speak to us and blessings to you all. Well, thank you, Mike.

Appreciate that. We can, we can learn a lot from those men and what their vision was. And I, I, I appreciate your burden as well this morning.

I just could sense your heart for that. And, you know, as we all, as we all carry that burden, we will, we will strive for that.

[14:40] And I think that's so important because it's not, um, something that we didn't come up with. This is Christ. It was his heart, right?

And his burden, his plan. And, and we, we simply want to say yes, work with him and overcome the enemy. And, uh, I'm thankful for that.

I, I told my wife this morning, I'm expecting something great today because, you know, he works sometimes when we come to the end, uh, no, John probably had to felt that this week.

He just in sickness. And last night, I, I just got so tired at the end of the day. I just was simply wore down. And, uh, you know what, when we give it to God, when we give things to God, he can take and, uh, use things in our lives and use us in ways that, uh, he multiplies.

And I appreciate that, you know, how many, how many of your mothers have got to the end of the day and your multiple, multiplied tasks finally got done and you were, yeah, you just had to give, give that day to God and say, Lord, you know, take what, what I've got done today.

[15 : 56] You take it and use it because it probably sometimes seems endless in your, your duties there, but the Lord can bless it and he does and your family's grateful for that.

Um, yeah, to go from here, I'm thankful, hey, the two of you shared this morning and grateful for that. It just, uh, I had to think how the story of Noah affects, you know, that's something that if you've been taught that from a child, that sticks with you.

It's something that's lodged in there as a reminder of a man. How many, who would say you're, you're a Jonah today, you're running from God? You know, yet in times in life, we realize that some place we did take a course that Jonah stands up and kind of speaks to us, right?

He, his action and his, the journey he take, it speaks to us and thank the Lord for that. He, he, um, he did turn back to God.

He did, uh, go and preached to Nineveh and he was effective there. Um, so we have that story and I'm thankful for that this morning.

[17 : 11] Thank you, Mike, for sharing that with the children. I want to just look at a little area here this morning. Um, you know, unity is not always all of us being on the same subject.

So I'm not going to have the same subject burden that brother had here this morning, but it's, it's where God takes and uses our lives and brings things together.

And if you think of the four, the four gospel writers, they all wrote from a different viewpoint. And so, you know, sometimes, some type that want to, some men in their, their wisdom want to look at that and say, well, it contradicts itself, but it doesn't because, we need different viewpoints.

God uses different viewpoints. God uses different men in the way we look at things and he uses that to, uh, to bring out a beauty and to bring out a fullness in the life of Christ.

If he had won, that would, maybe he could have sufficed with one man who wrote the life of Christ, but he had four men, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We have those on record and those four men gave their picture of Christ and his life and we, we need all of those.

[18 : 24] It balances it out and, uh, there were many others that testified of him and, um, you know, if you, if you remember reading of, uh, there's a, there's a man that was a detective, uh, he was a investigative detective and he, he used that to study the resurrection.

I can't think of his name now, but, uh, case for Christ and, anyway, he, he used that to look at all the different facts around the resurrection and that's, that has been an encouragement to me that we, we have so much about the life of Christ and, you know, you today, you and I today are still part of that testimony and that witness of Christ that he lives in you and I, you know, as he comes in and dwells in us, we're still that testimony today.

We're still another witness of who Christ is and as we, as we live that out in what we've been given. So, you know, I, I want to look at a little bit of a something here.

The value of, the value of a life, um, I had a, an uncle that lived 99 years and he kind of stood out to me.

I, I was able to spend a summer with him. He had a dairy farm and he, uh, brought my brother and I, let us spend some time on that farm and he gave me a wrist watch.

[20 : 00] It was the old Timex wrist watch that you just, you know, you wind that thing up every so often. Young people don't know about that maybe, but, and things started to change.

You got the electronics and the batteries and so forth, but you still had to wind this thing up and that was, to me, that was the first time I had a watch. He gave me that Timex watch. It was a good timekeeper. It, it kept perfect time as far as I could tell as a, in my youth and, and, um, I lost that thing.

I lost that somewhere in the house and I looked, I would go back time and again to look for that watch because it was so important. That, that time, that, that watch was important to me.

It was given as a gift and, uh, from my uncle and I, I, I used it and I looked and looked for that thing when I lost it. So my, my losing started way back then because I still am pretty good at losing things.

My wife knows. My glasses have been found already on my face when I was looking for them. That, I, that's pretty pathetic but, anyway, um, you know, his life, 99 years and to think about, um, what, the value of a life and compare 99 years to the life of Christ.

[21 : 16] He had 33 years to live here but what he accomplished in those 33 years stands at the pinnacle of time we know because, uh, in Galatians Paul said when the fullness of the time was come, he said there God sent his son.

That time was right and his life was though only 33 years it, it, it accomplished so much. So what is a life and what is my time today?

Um, you know, I was reminded Tim, I had written down, I wrote down that you just mentioned a little bit in a devotional here you had about time and how it is, uh, it, it, it does show where we spend our time does show what we value most and it, it's, um, it is important how we use it not only for God but for those around us how we use our time and I remember as a, man, as a young father before I, I tried hard to, to, to balance my time out with children and just wanted to make sure they got the right amount of time and quality time and we was here in all kinds of these teachings that, you know, as parents we've got to give time for this and time for that and I was laboring over that too many times laboring to try to make we had all the good quality time and so forth and, uh, we need that, we, we need to, we need time for our family we do and yet I had, I look back at that and I had such a, I think, I think I was trying to, yeah, in, in laboring so much for it, it'd been a whole lot easier just to give them time rather than try to space it out and make it all perfect, you know, and anyway, that, that's, I look back at that and, uh, it was valuable to learn that I can't really manage my time very well.

I can't manage it. I, I've found that giving it to God, he can take our, our years and make them worthwhile, um, make them something of worth.

[23 : 28] I'm going to mention a couple men here. David Brainerd is, uh, known in history of America here as a, um, uh, evangelist to the Indians, uh, in the New England states.

He went out to the, the, the, uh, the Indians not knowing their language, but simply relying on what all he had and that was the power of God and he, the, the testimony he had was that he would spend days in prayer, um, until he, until he felt that God could use him to preach to these Indians. And he, at one sermon, he used, he could not speak their language. He used a, a drunken man to interpret his message that day and many of those Indians were saved because of the power of God in his life.

But David Brainerd spent time among the Indians, but he lived a short life. But his testimony affected many others and, uh, he, it, it was a, it was a fire that fueled the, the missionary movement, uh, in the early 19th century where many started going forth to other countries.

And William Carey was one that read the life of David Brainerd. He, he went to China, gave his life and spent it there. Others, I'm sorry, he went to India.

[24 : 59] I said China, I believe, but he went to India and spent his life there as well-known. other men read his testimony and they gave their lives to some field. Uh, so his life was short-lived it, and in, and maybe in the, the men of his day, um, it probably didn't count for much, but he gave it for what God wanted him to do.

And he used it among the, the Indians and, uh, many Indians got saved that, you know, maybe we don't know about those Indians today, but they got saved and born again and God knows them because one man went and gave his life for that.

Again, you, this is name you're going to hear often, we've heard it often, Jim Elliot, um, very short life, but he spent it for God.

He went among the, he went to South America, um, to try to reach a tribe, he and four others, and his wife, writes a lot about his life, though, through Gates of Splendor is an excellent book if you want to read about Dave, about Jim Elliot, but he made this statement, a man is no fool to give what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

Am I right? Is that his statement? I'm thinking it is, I wrote it down, I believe it is. A man is no fool to give what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. And he simply, I think he's referring to what Christ says, if we, if we seek to hold on to our lives, we're going to lose it.

[26 : 35] If we will surrender our lives, we will find it. If we give up our life, we will find it. And he, he was a testimony of that.

And you know, because of Jim Elliot and because of those other four men that went and gave their life, lost their lives, many others rose up. Their testimony is that many rose to take their place and to be used to reach, to take the gospel to other peoples.

And so today I'm saying our time, can we, can we really take our time and give it to God? Giving our lives means we give our time. We give what we have to, to him and let him multiply it.

you know, God ordered time from the beginning creation. He used seven days there, six days to create and a seventh day of rest. So he, he used time.

And then, you know, later after the flood, he said, again, he, he kind of established a, a law here. I believe it's a law. We could say, but in, in Genesis he said, while the earth remaineth, this is after the flood and after he's blessed Noah now, he said, while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease.

[28 : 02] He established something there that we still see today. It's, it's, it's a firmness, something that we rely on, a faithfulness, I say, maybe that we rely on. But, as I, you know, I want to read a couple of verses here.

What is man, Psalms 8 says, what is man that you're mindful of him, or the son of man that you would actually come and visit him? And then in Psalms 144, he says again, Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him?

Or the son of man, you even make an account of him. Man is like to vanity, his days are a shadow that passeth away. And I want to look at that word vanity.

Ecclesiastes, he really looks, he uses that word often. I want to read there a couple verses, how he, how he uses this word.

Okay, he starts out, Ecclesiastes, he says the words of the preacher, vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. And he uses that word probably more in that book, that short book of 12 chapters than any other word.

[29 : 20] He looks at a lot of things in life and he comes up with an emptiness. And so, you know, that word vanity, man, what is our life then?

What is our life? He said it's but a vapor. At one point the psalmist says it's just a vapor, a puff of wind. If I could, you know, something that so quickly it just blows off and you see it no more.

Something that's hollow, empty. We use the word, not so common today, it's another word for zero but it's zilch. I don't hear that used, there's other words taking place but the word zilch, nothing, it's just gone.

And so, what is man? The psalmist cried out that you're mindful of us Lord, we're just vanity. We're here and then we're gone. So, when I begin to see that time, then, if I've been given time, if I have been given time, it's a premium, really it is.

And I'm realizing that more and more. I've had 66 years and time becomes more and more premium because I realize my days are numbered much more than I did 30 years ago and so forth.

[30 : 37] But it just more, it becomes more on you. So, I I'm, this week I heard a news guy, newscaster speaking about Israel, what's going on in the Middle East and I don't know if you've followed any, I didn't much until probably Friday night realized some things were happening in their war against their enemies there.

but they made, they made some, they covered some ground, in other words they gained some ground, Israel did, against their enemies. And this newscaster was saying, this is the time, you have a short window right here to make another step.

And he was, he felt an urgency on him, he said, this is the time, right now is the time, you will not have this opportunity again. He, as a newscaster, that was just what he was saying, make use of this time, the enemy's down, step in now, you've got to gain this moment.

And I thought, yeah, there's something about that. We look at life that way. There's those seasons in life or certain specific times when we realize now we have to move. Now we have to move.

We have to gain the ground here. And, you know, I think there was, there's, all of life is that. I would like to turn back to Job and read here.

[31 : 58] His, some of his words and Job, I'm going to look at Job chapter 28 and 29 a little bit here.

Sorry, 29 and 30. I want to start with Job chapter 29. Job, this is called Job's defense. He, he gets set before his friends often and he, they, they have their words but Job then comes back many different times but I, you know, here he's, he's, he's using something, oh, that my, though that I

were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me.
and he's doing something that we all do. We look back at a time in life, a season or something in our lives that we remember and Job is doing that right now.
He's looking at these days and past and, you know, we, we use time in this way. We all do. children get driving down the highway we were trying to get somewhere.
Is it, are we there yet? Are we there yet? You'll hear that often, you know, and so that's something we just, you know, you can't really tell them time doesn't make sense.
[33 : 26] Just, we just get there, right? If it's a day or if it's three hours, get there. That's, that's the point that a child wants to get there. He's tired of being in that car. So, oh, that I was in the months past, as in the days when God preserved me.

And he goes down when his candle shined up on my head. Verse 5, when the Almighty was yet with me and my children were about me, when I washed my steps with butter and rock poured me out rivers of oil, when I went to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street, and so forth.

And he uses that word when again and again through this chapter because he's remembering, it's a time in his life, when. And that word, it just brings back, he's bringing back those memories. All through here, this chapter, he's saying, back then, when, that's what's going on in my life. time, and that's a critical time, it's an important time for him.

And so then you go to chapter 30 and he says, but now, and we know where he is. Now, I'm at this place. Now, God's hand is heavy on me.

[34 : 36] Now, things are all changed. All, everything's different now, he says. The younger have me in derision. Fathers, whose fathers I wouldn't have even had with my flock, he said, and so forth.

He said, now, it's all changed. That was back then, but now, I am the song of the, and a byword for the basement and so forth. And he's comparing this and we, you know, there's something about how we look at life in different seasons and so forth.

And Job brings us that picture, how he realized, there was a good time in my life. He couldn't at this point yet see that this was really a blessing to him.

He was going through that deep, dark trial and he couldn't see God was going to reverse this thing. And, you know, probably the most important thing I get out of this is that Job met God.

You know, a lot of times we'll sit and talk about Job in the jail and the first thing that come out of those guys' mouth is that God doubled on Job, you know, because, and I think that where it comes, prosperity preachers love Job.

[35 : 55] They like to go to the end and say, man, just give it to God and he'll double everything back, right? He's going to double you back. But he met God at the end. And I think that's the most important thing that I see in Job.

That now he said, I thought I knew you, God, but now I know you. Now I know you. So that's what in his life there, you know, that was of great value to him that now he knew God in a way he hadn't before.

And so it is for us. Can we, I guess I'm thinking this morning, can we lay our lives down and as Amos said, prepare to meet God. whatever it takes to prepare to meet God because we are, we're here for him.

And if we allow him to order our life, order the days that he's given us, he can multiply them. And he can make them much greater than we, than we can imagine.

I want to refer to something here in 1 Corinthians. Brother Enos, you got my attention on this this morning because of, if we could see, if we could know what God has prepared in this.

[37 : 22] I want to just look at that verse this morning. 1 Corinthians 2, and it is written, as it is written, I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that loved him.

And if I just stop and think on that, for them that love him, he's given you and I a choice to love him with our lives.

and he has prepared something for us. The things that God has prepared for them that love him. He has much prepared and I anticipate knowing, finding more and more of what he's prepared for us.

That just comes from out of our love. He just says, out of our love for him, I will love him. If I will follow him and love him, he has so much prepared for them that love him.

I want to be a part of those that love him. It goes on there to say he's revealed those things by his spirit and that's how we're going to experience those things. We're going to find that unity of the spirit through our following on to know him.

[38 : 49] He's going to reveal those things more and more. He searches those things out. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God.

So let's amen. I just say let's give God all that we have and let him multiply those things. He has so much in mind for us. Let's pause for prayer.

Father, we thank you for your many promises, your many rich words to us.

Lord, may you just increase your word in our lives, increase the spirit of Christ within us and come Lord and take our sacrifice.

Though it sometimes is very weak, we feel like we have little to give you. Lord, take our sacrifice of our lives, each one here today that comes to you in sincerity and truth.

[39 : 55] Lord, and use it in your kingdom for your purpose and your glory. That still that men might know you in our day, in our generation, that men around us could yet see that revelation of Christ that you're working in your people.

Just have your way, Lord, today in our hearts and lives. Go before us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.