

## 1. Phases

Mike talked about the first 3 beatitudes being about tearing down and the last 5 about building up. When we think about construction, there is new construction, renovation, and rebuilding. In order to rebuild, something must be torn down. Sometimes it can just be a wall or taking a room down to the studs. Sometimes the whole thing needs to come down.

### 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

## 2. I Bring Nothing

In Beatitude #1 Mike introduced us to the Greek word **Ptochos** which means not just poor, but begging poor. We bring absolutely nothing to the equation when it comes to salvation.

### Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.

## 3. It's My Fault

In Beatitude #2 Mike talked about sorrow and shared John MacArthur's statement, "Godly sorrow is linked to **repentance**, and **repentance** is linked to sin."

### 2 Corinthians 7:10-11 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. <sup>11</sup> See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

"Find your 10% and own it 100%." – *D. Mike Collins*

We need to be bold and ask the Lord to search our hearts and reveal any unfit ways within us. If we earnestly seek Him in this there is a good chance He will reveal more than 10%.

### Psalm 139:23-24 (NIV)

<sup>23</sup> Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

**Questions:** What do I need to own? Am I willing to ask the Lord to search my heart?

## 4. I am Here and Ready, but not Arrogant About It

In Beatitude #3 Mike taught us "**Meekness is not weakness**. Instead, meekness is being an unashamed fully armed Man of God, trained and ready to engage in all forms of spiritual warfare, yet unquestionably submissive to God's high command to live life with a gentle and quiet spirit . . . until called to do differently." – *D. Mike Collins*

This makes me think about the United States Marine Corps soldiers who guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. They are quiet yet disciplined, focused on their task. They might come across as meek, but stand guard and ready to maintain order and protect those under their care at a moment's notice. Step out of line and you will swiftly find out that they mean business.

## 5. Fulfilled

In Beatitude #4 Mike talked about being fulfilled.

### Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

**6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Think about the word, fulfilled. What does it mean? Break it up and then reflect on it. Fulfilled. Full. Filled. Filled Full. Fully Filled.

**Questions:** Am I filled full? Am I fully filled? (These may sound alike but are certainly different.)

## 6. Every Hidden Thing

Mike talked about the final verdict in Ecclesiastes being clear.

### Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (NIV)

**13** Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. **14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

**Questions:** What am I hiding? Who is holding me accountable?

## 7. Being Famished

Mike talked about being famished and asked us how to know if we are “**famished**” for the righteousness of God. **1.** You seek for it without being told. **2.** It’s there when you awake and go to sleep. **3.** The search for it never ceases to command your time and attention. **4.** Sin not only loses its luster, it is like vomit to you. **5.** To the extent sin repulses you, righteousness consumes you.

**Question:** What am I famished for? What consumes my thoughts (this will give me an idea of what I am famished for)?

## 8. Brain Freeze

Mike taught us about what it means to be satisfied. “The result of hungering and thirsting for righteousness is being **satisfied**. *Chortazo* was frequently used of the feeding of animals . . . they were allowed to eat until they were satisfied . . . The giving of satisfaction is God’s work. Our part is to **seek...** Again there is a marvelous paradox, because though saints continually **seek** God’s righteousness, always wanting more and never getting all, they nevertheless will be satisfied... **It is the very satisfaction that makes us want more.**” – *John MacArthur Matthew commentary page 184*.

We have most likely experienced a brain freeze. We are enjoying a frozen snack or drink so much that we don’t pace ourselves and BAM; it hits us. BRAIN FREEZE! We fight through the pain and, as soon as it is gone, we go right back to that frozen delight! That is what I think about with a satisfaction that makes us want more.

**Questions:** Do I hunger and want more? Am I willing to pursue the hunger that can only be satisfied by the Lord?

## 9. Knowing the Difference

I have lived my life blissfully unaware that the difference between beef ratings is so significant. My neighbor told me he made the mistake of buying Prime steaks a little while ago. I asked why it was a mistake, to which he replied, “because now I know the difference.” Similarly, our Christian walk can be the same way. We might have grown up in the Church and felt just fine but took a while to make our relationship with Christ our own. Once we did and we surrendered to His will, we quickly learned the difference. Just like with the steak, I now know the difference and never want to go back. While I can’t afford to eat Prime steak all the time so I settle for lower quality beef; I also can’t afford to go back to a life that is not surrendered to the Lord.

### 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

**Questions:** Is there anything in my life that takes my attention off the Lord? What do I need to surrender to Him today?

## 10. Making a Choice

Mike talked about three people who hungered for righteousness and were filled. 1) Jacob, when he wrestled with the Lord. 2) Ruth, when she followed Naomi. 3) The thief on the cross next to Jesus who believed. I love the story of Ruth as she shows us what it looks like to be all in; to “burn the ships” so to speak.

The phrase “Burn the Ships” is most famously attributed to the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés during his 1519 expedition to Mexico. As the story goes, upon arriving on the shores of what is now Veracruz, Mexico, Cortés ordered his men to burn the ships that had brought them there. This act was symbolic and strategic: it eliminated any possibility of retreat, forcing his troops to commit fully to their mission of conquest.

### Luke 14:25-35 (NIV)

<sup>25</sup> Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: <sup>26</sup> “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

<sup>28</sup> “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? <sup>29</sup> For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, <sup>30</sup> saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’

<sup>31</sup> “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

<sup>34</sup> “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? <sup>35</sup> It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.

“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

**Questions:** What do I need to leave behind? What is keeping me from doing so today?

### **11. Painting Grass**

When Michael was teaching about the seed scattered on the road he commented on my back yard and how the soil is a thin layer on top of granite which makes it nearly impossible for the grass to grow. There was one summer where I was at my wits end with how bad it looked that I found yard paint (yes, there is such a thing) and I painted the brown grass. It looked surprisingly better as it was no longer brown, but it was nothing more than a cover-up. While I was spraying on the paint, I felt God telling me, "You know this isn't about the grass, right?" It was a perfect example of my life and made me pause and think about what else I was painting to make look more appealing. Kind of like the saying, "you can put lipstick on a pig, but it will still be a pig."

**Questions:** What am I trying to cover up? Am I trying to make it look acceptable to God or those around me?

### **12. We are a Product of our Environment**

Michael did a great job helping us visualize the parable by drawing the grid that had a quadrant for each of the four scenarios. This picture made it very easy to see that we are a product of our environment. There is a saying, "If you want to see what you will be and who you will become, take a look at your five closest friends." This is frighteningly accurate. Think about the saying, "if you want to boil a frog, you don't put it in boiling water, you put it in tepid water and slowly raise the temperature." We must be intentional about who we allow to speak into and be an influence in our lives. It's time to take a look around us.

**Questions:** Who are my closest people? Are they drawing me closer to the Lord or away from Him?

### **13. Pine vs. Oak**

When Michael drew the image of the seed on good soil, he drew the root longer than the stalk. What a beautiful image as our roots need to run deep. We have experienced very strong winds this winter and some of us have been impacted by them causing trees to fall down. One of the prettiest trees I have seen is the Bradford Pear. It is beautifully full and has a nearly perfect shape. The problem is they have a weak core. Once the tree reaches 10-15 feet in height, it becomes very susceptible to wind and will split down the trunk. One of the problems in the PNW, is the trees are more susceptible to falling over when the soil is saturated. When we see pine trees fall, we oftentimes see the entire root ball come out of the ground as well. These trees can reach upwards of 50 feet, yet have a relatively shallow root structure. Compare that to an oak tree. Squirrels like to bury acorns in our yard. As soon as we see an oak seedling appear we must pull it out, or it will be too late. The taproot of an oak seedling can be 5-10 times longer than what is seen above ground. While I have seen countless pine trees fall over the past 13 years of living here, I have not seen any oaks fall.

#### **Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup>So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

#### **Ephesians 3:14-21 (NIV)**

<sup>14</sup> For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup>and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

**Questions:** Where am I rooted? Where are those around me rooted? (Sometimes weak trees will knock down a stronger one when they fall)

#### **14. Mountaintop Experiences**

There are times in our life where “seeds” respond differently to the environment we are providing. I have heard people say (and felt this myself at times), “I really felt the Lord at Church this morning”, and other times say, “I really didn’t feel anything at Church this morning.” These are sometimes referred to as a “mountaintop experience”. While these can, and do happen throughout our lifetime, we need to be careful about seeking “mountaintop experiences”. Let the Holy Spirit move in us how He wants to. If I go to Church expecting “mountaintop experience” but do not “feel” one, that is OK. It is when my attitude shifts to thinking He wasn’t there, or He must not care that I have a problem. This is similar to the seed that falls on the rocky ground. Searching for that “spiritual high” every Sunday might mean whatever moved me last week might be wearing off so I need another dose.

#### **Matthew 13:20-21 (NIV)**

<sup>20</sup> The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. <sup>21</sup> But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.

**Questions:** What moves me? Am I savoring God’s Word, or am I simply scarfing it down?

#### **15. Brotherhood**

Returning to my back yard, while the grass does not grow well, the weeds certainly do. I can spray them, but then nothing else will grow so, I need to pull them. Weeds can literally appear overnight and can become overwhelming. Sometimes I don’t notice them until they are huge, sometimes I don’t feel like pulling them because there are so many other things I would rather do, and sometimes they get overwhelming and I need help to pull them. The same is true for the weeds in our life. Sometimes we don’t see them, we avoid them or are overwhelmed by them. We need others to help in all three scenarios. This is why we have a brotherhood. We need men we can trust to point out the weeds we don’t see, encourage us when we ignore the weeds, and help us pull them when we are overwhelmed.

“Find your pack. Expect attack. Have their back.” – *D. Mike Collins*

#### **Luke 17:17-20 (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup> One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. <sup>18</sup> Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. <sup>19</sup> When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

<sup>20</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

**Questions:** Do I have men who I trust to help keep the weeds away? Have I invited them to do so?

#### **16. Seasons**

In the parable of the Sower, we talked about seasons in our lives. Each of us is in a season right now; some are flourishing while some are struggling. That doesn't make us different than each other; but it does make us rely on each other.

**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NIV)**

- 1** There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:
- 2** a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to **uproot**,
- 3** a time to kill and a time to **heal**, a time to **tear down** and a time to **build**,
- 4** a time to **weep** and a time to laugh, a time to **mourn** and a time to dance,
- 5** a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to **embrace** and a time to refrain from embracing,
- 6** a time to **search** and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,
- 7** a time to **tear** and a time to **mend**, a time to be **silent** and a time to **speak**,
- 8** a time to **love** and a time to hate, a time for **war** and a time for peace.

**Questions:** What time is it? What do I need to start (or stop) doing today?

**17. Pullers and Planters**

Michael talked about the weeds and how their seeds are oftentimes already in the ground waiting to spring up. What do seeds need to be able to germinate? Water, warmth, and sometimes sunlight. (Think about mushrooms, they are kept in the dark and fed manure to flourish). Sometimes we can inadvertently provide the right environment for weeds to grow. We need to be careful that we are not planting weeds, rather pulling them; in our life and the lives of those around us. Veggie Tales had a great visualization of this in the episode, *The Rumor Weed*.

**Matthew 12:30-37 (NIV)**

**30** "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. **31** And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. **32** Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

**33** "Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. **34** You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. **35** A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. **36** But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. **37** For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

**Question:** Am I pulling weeds or planting them?