

Quiet Time Reflections



*Faith, Hope, and Grace
in the Shadow of Cancer*



MICHAEL DAUGHERTY



Foreword

There are some books we read because we are curious, others because we want to learn, and a few because we sense that the words were forged in a place where life, faith, suffering, and eternity meet.

This is one of those books.

Mike is my brother. Over the years, we have shared the ordinary experiences that shape a family: laughter, disagreement, loss, memory, and the kind of conversations that only brothers can have. We have also spent countless hours discussing faith, science, consciousness, suffering, and the ultimate meaning of human life.

Mike has always approached those questions through the lens of Christian faith. I have often approached them with the structured mind of an engineer, testing assumptions, examining evidence, and searching for a framework capable of holding everything we observe about reality.

Our conversations have not always led us to the same conclusions. But they have always mattered.

When Mike was diagnosed with cancer, those conversations changed.

Questions that had once seemed philosophical became immediate and personal. What does faith mean when the future becomes uncertain? Where is God when suffering cannot be explained? Can hope remain real when the body grows weak? And what does a person discover when the possibility of eternity is no longer an abstract theological idea, but a truth he may soon be called to face?

Mike has answered those questions, not through arguments, but through the way he has lived.

Cancer has tested his strength, his body, and his endurance. It has not challenged his faith.

That does not mean the journey has been easy. Faith is not the denial of fear, pain, or uncertainty. It is not pretending that suffering does not hurt. Authentic faith acknowledges the darkness while continuing to trust that darkness is not the final word.

That is the faith reflected in these pages.

Mike writes as someone who knows that life is fragile. He writes as someone who has experienced grief, watched people he loves suffer, and confronted his own mortality. Yet he also writes as someone who believes that God remains present, that Scripture remains trustworthy, and that every life possesses a meaning that suffering cannot destroy.

His reflections are not the thoughts of a distant theologian observing hardship from the safety of an academic study. They come from chemo rooms, quiet mornings, difficult conversations, personal loss, prayer, and the daily decision to trust God again.

There is a humility in that kind of faith.

Mike does not claim to understand every purpose behind suffering. None of us can. Some losses exceed our ability to explain them. Some prayers appear to go unanswered. Some circumstances remain painfully beyond human understanding.

But faith has never required complete understanding.

It requires trust.

The pages that follow reveal a man returning again and again to the source of that trust: the character of God, the promises of Scripture, the life of Christ, and the hope of eternity. Mike's reflections remind us

that faith is not simply something we profess when life is comfortable. It is what sustains us when comfort disappears.

As his brother, I have watched Mike's faith become more than a position in one of our long-running debates. I have seen it become his foundation.

There is something deeply moving about watching someone face an uncertain future while continuing to encourage others. Mike's desire is not merely to document his own spiritual journey. He wants these reflections to help people who are frightened, grieving, questioning, or searching for reassurance that their suffering has not separated them from God.

That may be the greatest gift of this book.

It does not offer a formula for avoiding pain. It offers companionship within it.

It does not promise that every question will be answered in this life. It points toward the One in whom those answers ultimately rest.

It does not ask us to deny mortality. It invites us to consider whether mortality is the boundary of existence or the doorway to something greater.

For those who already share Mike's faith, these pages will feel like the counsel of a trusted friend reminding them of truths they may need to hear again.

For those who are uncertain, skeptical, or still searching, I hope they will encounter these reflections with an open mind. Mike's faith has not been formed in the absence of suffering. It has endured in the presence of it. That fact deserves attention.

I have learned that the deepest truths about a person are often revealed not by what they say in moments of ease, but by what they continue to believe when life becomes difficult.

Mike continues to believe that God is good.

He continues to believe that Christ has overcome death.

He continues to believe that love, faith, and meaning are not temporary accidents of biology.

He continues to believe that eternity is real.

As his brother, I cannot read these reflections without hearing his voice. I hear his conviction, his compassion, his humor, his concern for others, and his desire that every reader understand that hope is still possible.

This book is part of Mike's testimony. It is also part of his legacy.

My hope is that you will not rush through it. Read it slowly. Sit with the Scripture. Consider the questions. Allow Mike's words to meet you wherever you are—in faith, doubt, grief, gratitude, fear, or hope.

And perhaps, through his journey, you will be reminded that even in the shadow of illness, life can still bear witness to something eternal.

David Daugherty

Brother, fellow seeker, and grateful witness to Mike's faith

QUIET TIME REFLECTIONS

From Daily Prayer Walks and Evening Prayer

Michael R. Daugherty

Introduction: A Journey of Faith Through Prayer

In 20, I received news that would change my life forever: cancer. Like many who face such a diagnosis, I found myself confronting questions about mortality, purpose, and faith. But rather than allowing fear to consume me, I turned to what had always sustained me—prayer, Scripture, and the presence of God.

These reflections began during my cancer treatment, born from daily prayer walks around my property and evening quiet times with the Lord. Each morning, I would walk the familiar paths near my home, talking with God, listening for His voice, and observing the lessons He taught through nature, memory, and Scripture. What started as a personal spiritual discipline became something I felt compelled to share with my brothers in Christ—men who were walking their own difficult roads and needed encouragement, truth, and hope.

Over the course of nearly two years, I wrote ninety-three reflections. Some came from profound moments of revelation during prayer. Others emerged from ordinary experiences—a bug bite, a lost squirrel, a childhood memory—that God used to teach extraordinary spiritual truths. Many were written during chemotherapy treatments, when physical weakness made spiritual strength all the more essential. Through it all, I discovered that God meets us exactly where we are, speaking into our circumstances with love, wisdom, and unfailing faithfulness.

How to Use This Book

These reflections are presented in their original order, preserving the chronological journey of faith they represent. However, they can be read in several ways:

As a Daily Devotional: Read one reflection each day as part of your morning or evening quiet time. Allow the Scripture, story, and reflection questions to guide your prayers and meditation.

By Theme: Use the thematic table of contents to focus on specific areas of spiritual growth—whether you need encouragement in prayer, clarity about God's truth, courage to persevere, or peace in the midst of hardship.

As a Continuous Narrative: Read the book straight through to experience the full journey of faith, including the ups and downs, the questions and answers, and the steady growth that comes from daily communion with God.

Each reflection includes:

- **The Original Reflection** lightly edited for readability while preserving my personal voice
- **A Key Verse** highlighting the central Scripture
- **A Focus Statement** summarizing the main spiritual truth
- **Reflection Questions** to help you apply the message to your own life
- **The Original Photograph** that accompanied each reflection

Ten Themes of Faith

As I look back over these **ninety-four** reflections, I see ten major themes woven throughout—ten essential truths that God repeatedly emphasized during my journey:

1. **Faith in Christ** as the only foundation for salvation and life
2. **God's Love and Grace** freely given through Jesus's sacrifice
3. **Prayer and Devotion** as daily communion with our Creator
4. **Spiritual Transformation** through renewed minds and changed hearts
5. **Service and Humility** following Christ's example of putting others first
6. **Peace and Rest** that transcends circumstances and calms anxious hearts
7. **Truth and God's Word** as our lamp, guide, and defense against deception
8. **Perseverance and Courage** to stand firm despite opposition and suffering
9. **Spiritual Discernment** to recognize God's will and avoid the enemy's traps
10. **Eternal Hope and Resurrection** promising victory over death and life forever with God

These themes aren't separate compartments of faith—they're interconnected threads in the tapestry of Christian life. As you read, you'll see how they overlap, reinforce one another, and together form a complete picture of what it means to walk with Christ.

An Invitation

My prayer is that these reflections will encourage you as they encouraged the brothers who first received them. Whether you're facing illness, loss, confusion, or simply the daily challenge of living faithfully in a broken world, I pray you'll find here a companion for your journey—someone who has walked difficult roads and discovered that God is always faithful, always present, and always working to draw us closer to Himself.

These aren't the words of a theologian or scholar. They're the honest reflections of an ordinary man who learned to see God in the everyday, to hear His voice in the quiet, and to trust His love even when the path ahead was unclear. If God can use my simple observations and experiences to speak truth into your life, then every prayer walk, every quiet time, and every moment of seeking Him has been worth it.

May you find encouragement, hope, and the presence of God in these pages.

In Christ, Mike Daugherty

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1. Someone Else's Shoes

My quiet time leads me to "Someone Else's Shoes" this morning!

We have all heard the expression "walk a mile in my shoes"!

As we get caught up in our lives, it is easy to become indifferent or insensitive about others around us. I am learning that God sometimes grabs us by the head with both hands and makes us truly look at our brother's or sister's plight! Especially those who are lost! In Christ, I have become much more stable and at peace, even in the toughest situations! Though I really must focus when physical pain is involved!

My prayer:

God, may we forgo anger, judgment, or indifference when dealing with those around us! May we see all people as you do—Very Special! I must look in the mirror sometimes to put my prayer in perspective!

Key Verse: Philippians 2:1-4 — "Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

Focus Statement: When we genuinely see others as God does—special and worthy of our compassion—we begin to understand what it means to walk in their shoes.

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life needs you to "walk a mile in their shoes" right now? What's preventing you from showing them compassion?
- How does seeing others as God sees them—as "Very Special"—change the way you interact with difficult people?
- What practical step can you take this week to demonstrate Christ's love to someone who is lost or hurting?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Someone Else's Shoes!

2. Humbly Serving Others

The Lord showed us how to live and what is most important! Being humble and serving others was one of his great examples! Today, I reflect on being more aware of the needs of others and less self-focused. Being a good listener will definitely help! In this holy week, when it comes to service, may we reflect that "talk is cheap"!

Key Verse: Matthew 20:28 — "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Focus Statement: Jesus showed us that authentic service flows from a humble heart, not from empty words—and in this holy week, we're reminded that when it comes to serving others, talk is cheap.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your life are you more focused on being served than on serving others?
- How can you become a better listener to those around you, truly hearing their needs rather than just waiting to speak?
- What specific act of humble service can you perform this week that requires action, not just words?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Humbly serving others!

3. The Perfect Place to Be

Have you ever asked the question about your perfect place? When thinking about the question, the first thing that comes to mind is a physical place like a panoramic view or the beach. In reality, though, the perfect place resides in our heart, and we can be taken there by God's spirit through our faith in Christ!

This place has all the best fruit that we are always striving in life to find! Today's passage speaks of the fruit! The perfect place is with our Lord where the fruit of the Spirit is in unlimited abundance! Joy in the moment or a continual joy regardless of circumstance. The greatest joy is usually looking right at us!

Key Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 — "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things, there is no law."

Focus Statement: The perfect place isn't found on a map or in a panoramic view—it resides in our hearts through God's Spirit, where the fruit of joy, peace, and love grow in unlimited abundance.

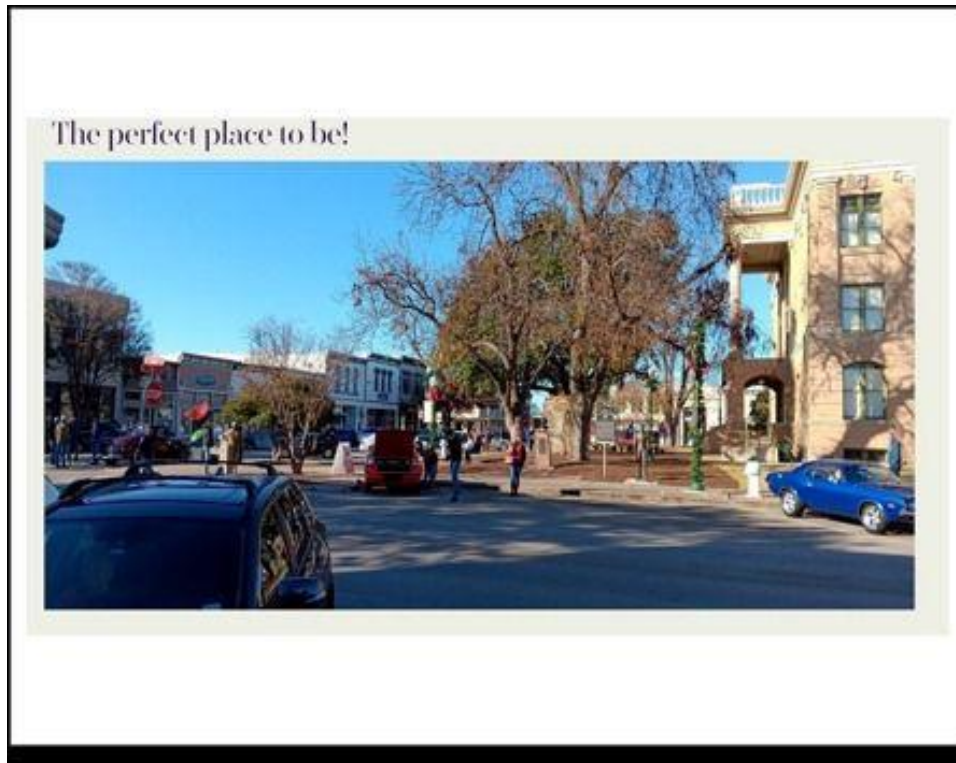
Reflection Questions:

- Are you searching for joy and peace in physical places or circumstances rather than in your relationship with Christ?
- Which fruit of the Spirit do you need most in your life right now, and how can you cultivate it through prayer and faith?

- How would your daily life change if you truly believed that the "perfect place" is already available to you through God's Spirit?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The perfect place to be!

4. Great Pain Equaling Great Love

We will always avoid great pain with abandon and at great cost if necessary! We hope and tell ourselves we will have the strength to sacrifice ourselves for the ones we love! Like jumping into a raging river or running into a burning building!

In truth, we will not know our courage until that moment arrives! Think about what Jesus knew and then did! He knew he would face the most horrific death imaginable and because of his love for us went through with it! At least, in the scenarios I mentioned earlier, the decision to put our lives at risk was in the moment. Christ knew from the beginning what awaited!

Thanks be to our Lord for our Salvation!

This Good Friday, let us really meditate on what our Lord did for us!

Key Verse: Isaiah 53:5 — "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

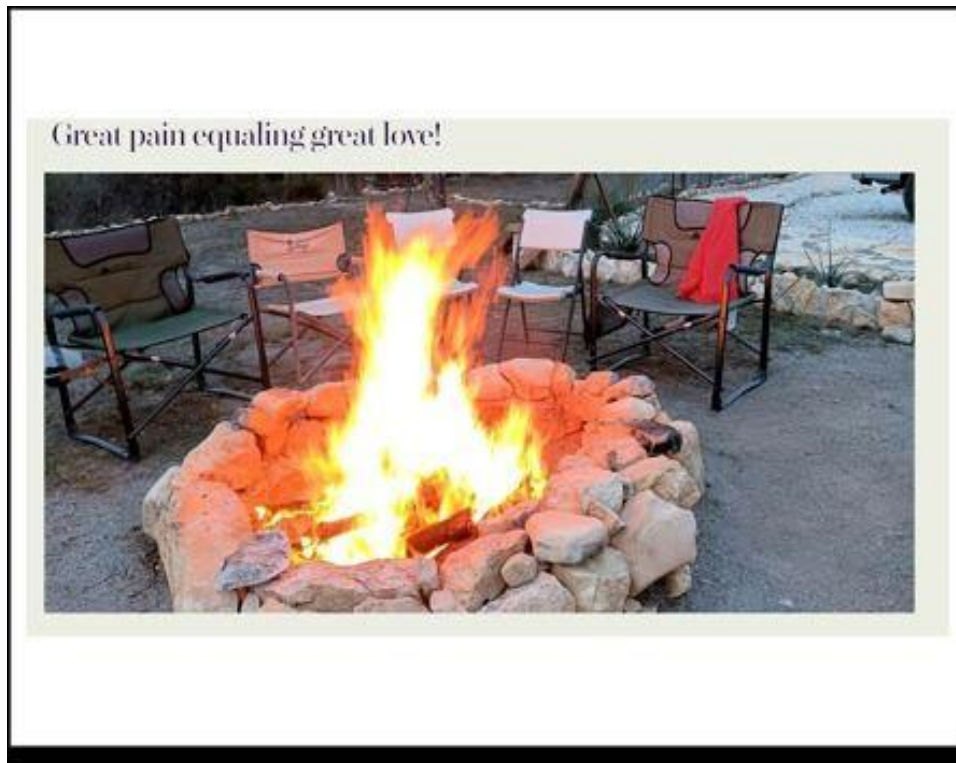
Focus Statement: While we hope we'd have courage to sacrifice ourselves in a moment of crisis, Jesus knew from the beginning the horrific death that awaited Him—and because of His love for us, He went through with it anyway.

Reflection Questions:

- How does understanding the depth of Christ's sacrifice—knowing what awaited Him yet choosing to go through with it—deepen your appreciation for His love?
- What "small" sacrifices does God call you to make for others that you've been avoiding? How do they pale in comparison to Christ's sacrifice?
- How can you honor Christ's sacrifice this week through your actions, attitudes, and relationships?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Great pain equaling great love!

5. A Heart of Song

Be Encouraged!

God woke me up early again this morning with the thought of salvation on my mind and truthfully ringing in my heart! A prayer of song was the source of the ringing!

A Heart of Song is my quiet time reflection this morning!

I was thinking about holidays and Easter! Easter with Salvation and what Christ did for us in mind and heart is the crowning jewel of holidays!

Our Song!

Joy and all the fruits of the spirit are at its center! May we celebrate the holidays with this song in our hearts this year and every year going forward!

My Prayer of Song!

This may sound familiar Lord, you are our "Hope," and you make things right with your sacrifice of love! I "Praise" you for your unfailing love! You are the "Guiding Light" at our feet! Lord, in you, I can find my "Peace of Mind!" A peace that truly passes all understanding! "Jesus," I don't ever want to say I'm sorry, Lord! I don't want to say I have failed, but when I do, you pick me up! Your love is all I need! You are our "Road Home!"

Amen!

Key Verse: John 14:6-7 — "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'"

Focus Statement: Easter with salvation and what Christ did for us in mind and heart is the crowning jewel of holidays—a celebration that fills our hearts with a song of joy, hope, and unfailing love.

Reflection Questions:

- What "song" is in your heart when you think about what Christ has done for you? Is it one of joy, gratitude, or something else?
- How can you make Easter—and the reality of salvation—more central to your daily life rather than just an annual celebration?
- Which phrase from the prayer of song resonates most with you right now, and why?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: A Heart of Song!

6. The Most Important Thing

In today's quiet time, I focus on "The Most Important Thing!" If you had a baby and were getting ready to take a road trip, the most important thing, before you left, would be to make sure the baby was safely secure in the car!

If you were jumping out of an airplane, the most important thing would be to make sure you have a parachute and to know it was packed properly!

Putting God at our center and truly reflecting on what that means, we see an infinite, all powerful beyond our comprehension, God, and his son who taught us life and sacrificed himself for us and the most important thing he asked of us! It is noted in **Matthew 28:19**! It is really simple if you think about it! God wants as many of us around him as possible and does not want to lose anyone!

So, in faith, let's put the baby in the car seat!

Key Verse: Matthew 28:19 — "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Focus Statement: Just as securing a baby in a car seat or checking your parachute before jumping is the most important thing, making disciples is the central calling God has given us—because He wants as many of us around Him as possible.

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life needs to hear about Christ? What's holding you back from sharing the Gospel with them?
- How does understanding that God "wants as many of us around him as possible" change your perspective on evangelism and discipleship?
- What practical step can you take this week to fulfill the Great Commission in your sphere of influence?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The Most Important Thing!

7. The Quartz on the Road

Had a great message I was going to send in the morning, but thought—why wait?

The quartz on the road! Another great quiet time!

I have been doing prayer walks for a while now and always take the road to the top of our hill. I have been blessed with many sunsets at the top of the hill. Anyway, the other day, I was walking back down the hill towards our gate and noticed hundreds or maybe thousands of sparkling lights on the road! In all the times I walked it, I never noticed them. I determined it was the quartz in the stone, and the light hit them just right. It highlighted to me that we need to have our eyes open to see what is most important and God's plan for our lives! He promises us a blessed life if we follow His commands! I reflect on my story about the quartz on being aware of the most precious things! Our relationship with God, laughter, and joy with family and our children! Joy in godly fellowship with our church! A quiet sunset or night by the fire! There are so many joys connected to godly fellowship and godly living!

Too often we chase after what the world wants! Worldly recognition, nice stuff, and worldly pleasures that fade quickly! When all of the time, the best things, the godly things, are right in front of us like the quartz on the road!

Key Verse: Psalms 112:1-2 — "Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands. Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed."

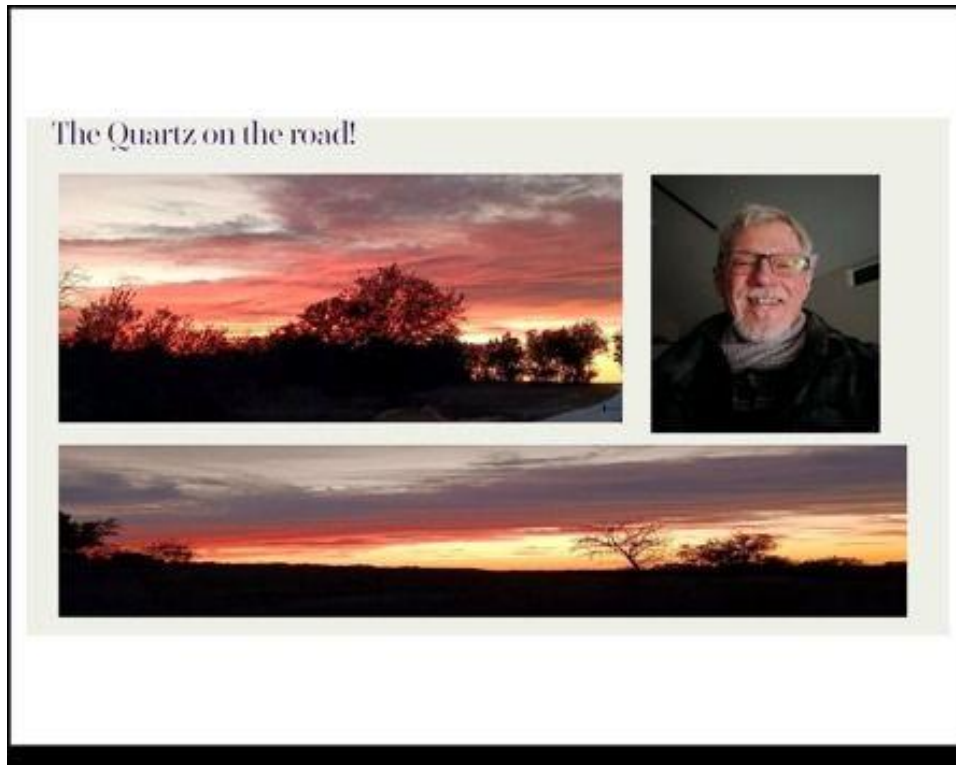
Focus Statement: Like the sparkling quartz that had always been on my familiar path but went unnoticed until the light hit just right, God's most precious blessings—faith, family, fellowship—are often right in front of us, waiting to be seen.

Reflection Questions:

- What "quartz on the road" blessings has God placed in your life that you've been walking past without noticing?
- Are you chasing after worldly recognition and pleasures while overlooking the godly joys right in front of you?
- How can you cultivate greater awareness and gratitude for the precious spiritual blessings already present in your daily life?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The Quartz on the road!

8. Spirit Like Refreshing Rain

Well, God has been consistent in providing good, quiet time messages! I was awakened this morning by the rain! I felt rested and at peace when I woke! The first thought that came to my mind was that Barbara (Pastor's wife) must have had a good talk with the Lord about the needed rain at Pidcoke!

The second thought was my quiet time message for today!

The Spirit of God is like a refreshing rain!

Let us praise God for his spirit that refreshes our souls and is the source of unlimited strength and hope and joy!

Let God's Spirit renew us and refresh us like the spring rain!

Key Verse: Isaiah 44:3 — "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants."

Focus Statement: Just as spring rain refreshes the parched earth, God's Spirit refreshes our souls and becomes the source of unlimited strength, hope, and joy.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your life do you feel spiritually dry and in need of God's refreshing Spirit?
- How can you position yourself to receive the "rain" of God's Spirit more fully in your daily walk?

- What difference would it make in your life if you truly believed God's Spirit is an unlimited source of strength, hope, and joy?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Spirit like refreshing rain!

9. God's Great Mosaic

Renewal—God's great mosaic!

I reflect back, and there have been several times God, and the hope I have in him, have helped me pick up the pieces and give me a great renewal!

Broken pieces!

Broken marriage, death of a loved one, serious health issues, being laid off, moving to different locations, new work responsibilities... and many other examples! I could talk about each of these issues and how much God has helped and generated even better situations for me as I continually trusted in him and pressed forward! I could've written a book!

Renewal—God's great mosaic:

God truly helped me create a beautiful mosaic out of shattered pieces! Through everything, I have been blessed and love God for his faithfulness!

Key Verse: Romans 12:2 — "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Focus Statement: Through broken marriages, loss, health crises, and countless trials, God has faithfully helped me create a beautiful mosaic from shattered pieces—and He can do the same for you.

Reflection Questions:

- What "broken pieces" in your life do you need to trust God to transform into something beautiful?
- How has God already demonstrated His faithfulness in helping you through past difficulties? How can remembering those times strengthen your faith now?
- Are you holding onto shattered pieces instead of allowing God to create a new mosaic? What would it look like to fully surrender them to Him?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: God's great mosaic!

10. The Best Influence

The best influence!

We have great hope and peace to know we will be with our loved ones who fall asleep in the Lord! What a wonderful time we will have when our time comes. May we press forward to spread this truth of eternal life as we live out our time!

The best influence:

My goal is to influence as many as I can for the Lord! Let us influence to help take as many as we can with us!

Key Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 — "For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

Focus Statement: We have great hope knowing we'll be reunited with loved ones who've fallen asleep in the Lord—so let us use our influence to take as many people with us as possible.

Reflection Questions:

- Who are you actively influencing for Christ right now? Who could you be influencing but aren't?
- How does the promise of eternal reunion with loved ones in Christ motivate you to share the Gospel more boldly?
- What specific ways can you use your unique sphere of influence—at work, home, or in your community—to point others toward eternal life?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The best influence!

11. Sharing

I'm feeling off this morning, but I wanted to share!

Got to spend some time with Robert and Jesse during my chemo treatment yesterday! Robert did not seem like a man of faith but got him to talk about his life and the way he liked to help folks! I got to share and invited him to our church!

Jesse talked openly about his life and faith. He specifically talked about his son and some struggles he was having! He was shocked about worldly and woke influences on him! I told him I would pray for them and was able to hand him one of my wristbands for his son! Jesse's response was awesome when I handed him the band for his son!

God is good!

Key Verse: Romans 10:9 — "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

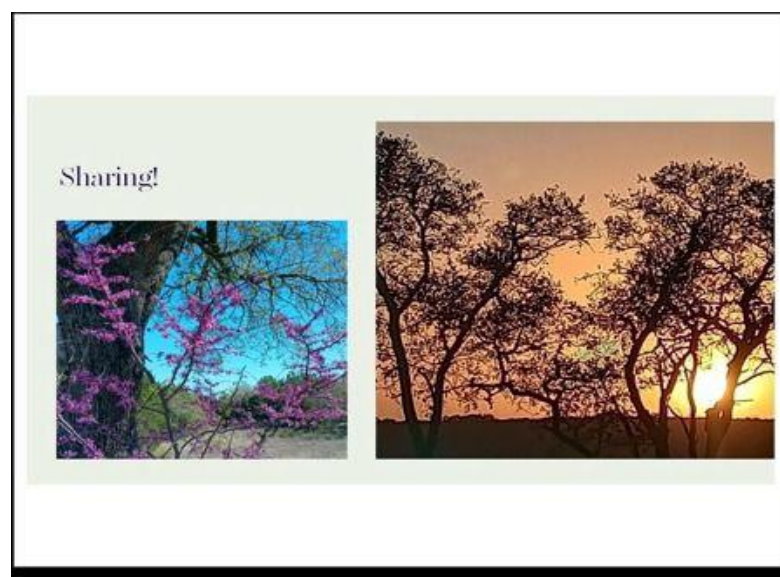
Focus Statement: Even during chemotherapy treatment, God provides opportunities to share faith, offer encouragement, and plant seeds of hope in the lives of those around us.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you looking for opportunities to share your faith in everyday situations, even difficult ones like medical treatments?
- How can you be more intentional about listening to people's stories and finding natural ways to share Christ's love?
- What "tools" (like the faith wristbands) could you carry with you to help start spiritual conversations and offer encouragement?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Sharing!

12. Light

This morning, I woke feeling "off" and not looking forward to today! Yesterday was a tough day, and today is my chemo day! Yeah... Anyway, the Lord always has an answer! This morning, my quiet time message is to let my light shine! As I reflected on this, I thought, how can I make my light shine feeling like this?

Jesus answered—

Light shines better in the darkness!

What an awesome God!

Pastor, we love you, and you're always in our prayers!

Key Verse: Matthew 5:14 — "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden."

Focus Statement: When we feel our weakest and the darkness seems overwhelming, that's precisely when our light shines brightest—because light shines better in the darkness.

Reflection Questions:

- When you're going through your darkest times, do you hide your light or let it shine even brighter?
- How can your struggles and weaknesses actually become opportunities for Christ's light to shine through you more powerfully?
- Who needs to see your light shining today, even if (or especially if) you don't feel like you have much to give?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Light!

13. Refreshed

It is amazing what a smile, a word of kindness, holding open a door, letting others go first in traffic, and so many other small things can do to change people's outlook and refresh their day! It may even make them open for Christ's message if the opportunity presents itself! What I find, regardless of how others react, it refreshes me and often changes my outlook on the day when I do it! Let us give a little of ourselves and make it a habit to refresh others!

Key Verse: Proverbs 11:25 — "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."

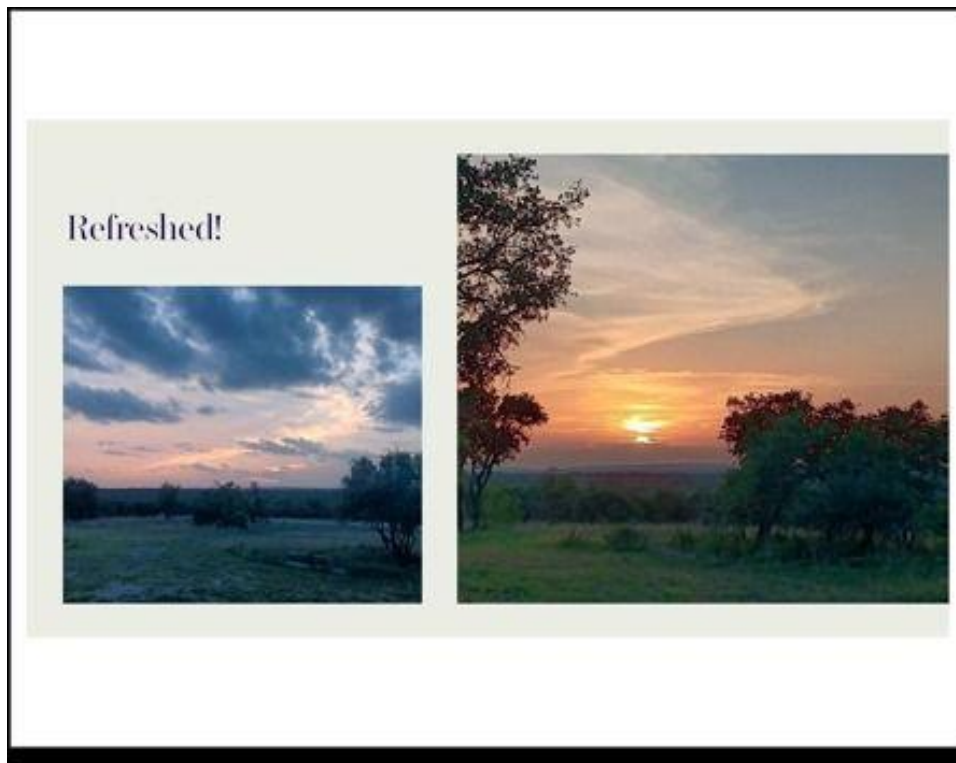
Focus Statement: Small acts of kindness—a smile, holding a door, letting someone go first—not only refresh others but transform our own outlook and open doors for Christ's message.

Reflection Questions:

- What small acts of kindness can you intentionally practice this week to refresh those around you?
- Have you noticed how serving and refreshing others actually refreshes your own spirit? Why do you think God designed it this way?
- How can these simple acts of generosity create opportunities to share Christ's love with others?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Refreshed!

14. Distracted and Desensitized

Over the last 2-3 years, I have been blessed to have a closer relationship with God and have a renewed eternal perspective! I have to admit, being part of a church of great fellowship and dealing with health issues has helped draw me closer with God!

Why not earlier?

I had my walk but it was not full! Like most folks, there are many things that take our focus and impact our standards if we are not careful! **Colossians 3:2** and **Proverbs 4:23** reflect where our focus should be!

I have a good example in my life. I never thought it was an issue as it is something that is so common! Movies, media, and content!

DISTRACTED

One of my hobbies over the years has been to collect movies! I have over 500 CDs and Blu-rays! What is interesting is that over the last 2-3 years, I lost interest in movies and realized how much of a waste of time they have been. As a matter of fact, we started boxing them up!

DESENSITIZED

Thinking about the content of the movies I have and just TV and news in general, there is much that goes against Godly morals! These are all widely accepted movies! If you truly reflect, there really has been a gradual decay in values in our Christian society over the last 50 years! We have all heard the expression of "our grandparents turning over in their graves." We talk about our kids and bad social media impact when the reality is that we need to look closer at what takes our time and the influence it has! Let us not be distracted and desensitized and keep a correct focus!

Key Verse: Proverbs 4:23 — "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

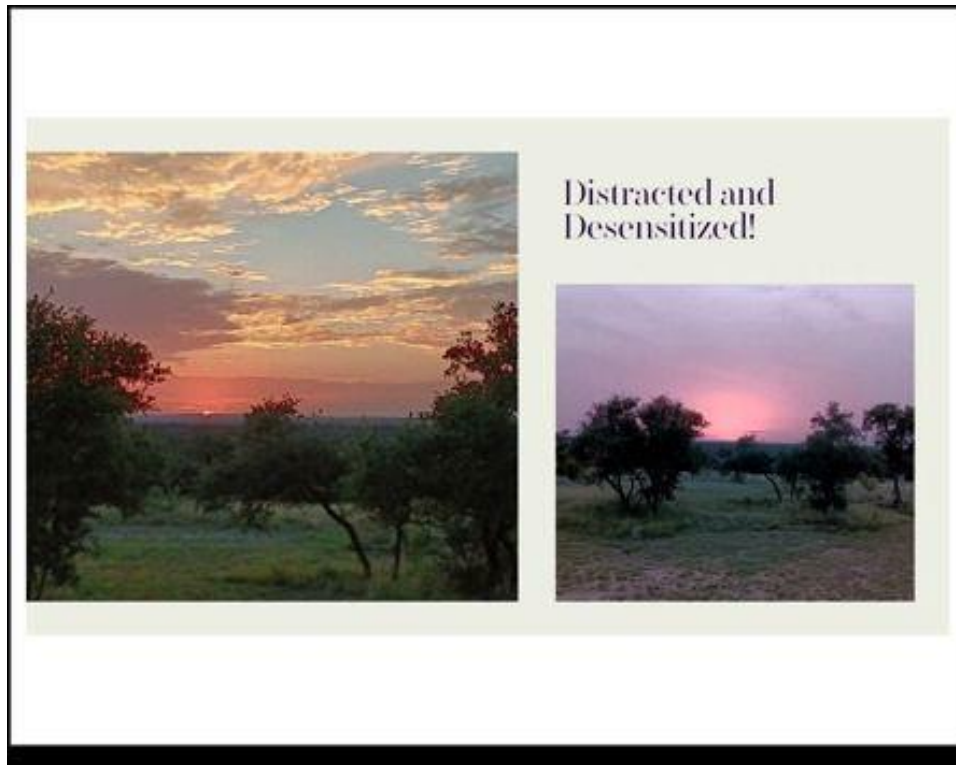
Focus Statement: Over fifty years, our Christian society has gradually decayed in values as we've become distracted by entertainment and desensitized to ungodly content—it's time to guard our hearts and refocus on what truly matters.

Reflection Questions:

- What entertainment, media, or activities are distracting you from a fuller relationship with God?
- Have you become desensitized to ungodly content because it's "widely accepted"? What would your grandparents think?
- What practical steps can you take this week to guard your heart and refocus your time on things that draw you closer to God?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Distracted and Desensitized!

15. Don't Be an Arthur

Don't be an Arthur!

God tells us to be considerate of others! Especially as examples for Christ! **Philippians 2:3-4** stands out. Especially in my Arthur example! Sorry for the lengthy text! Hard to keep a good story short. This one stands out from my youth and had lasting impact!

One of my best memories growing up was family camping! We used to go with my dad's good friend, Art, and his family. Art had a son called Arthur. Arthur was mischievous and inconsiderate when younger. I believe we all have our moments! Anyway, one of my less fun camping summers, the summer my foot was in a cast, and I spent most of my time sitting around the fire or at the picnic table. I got to observe Arthur's shenanigans!

Key note:

Being incapacitated, I would feed the wild birds. I actually got one to eat out of my hand! I called him Charlie! Making a short story long, I watched Arthur continually torment everyone, push my brother in the lake, and shoot Charlie with his BB gun! In my early teen years, he set my definition of inconsiderate! He simply did what he wanted to do. I learned early through Arthur about the ramifications of not being considerate!

Don't be an Arthur!

Key Verse: Philippians 2:3-4 — "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

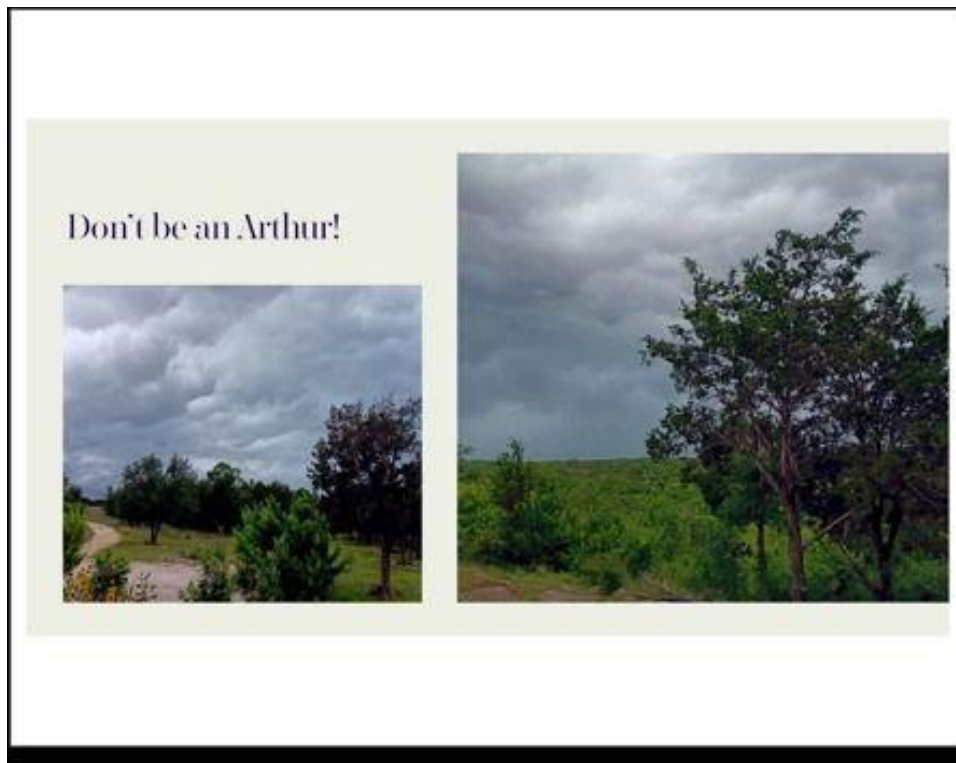
Focus Statement: Through a childhood camping companion who tormented everyone and shot my pet bird, I learned early about the ramifications of being inconsiderate—don't be an Arthur.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your life are you being an "Arthur"—doing what you want without considering how it affects others?
- How does being inconsiderate damage your witness for Christ and your relationships with others?
- What specific action can you take this week to demonstrate genuine consideration for someone else's needs above your own?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Don't be an Arthur!

16. Simplicity—Really? Faith Is Needed

I woke at about 2 a.m. with low blood sugar! Yeah...

As I was eating ice cream at 2 a.m. and waiting for my sugar to come back in line, I had time to ponder the complexity of why I needed sugar, and simplicity did not cover it at all!

Simplicity—Really:

God's creation is so far beyond our comprehension, and we simplify much about it and faithfully assume everything will continue the same each day!

Faith Is Needed:

The complexity of God, being so far beyond our comprehension, Him requiring faith in Him, and His plan for salvation makes perfect sense!!

Key Verse: Romans 1:17 — "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'"

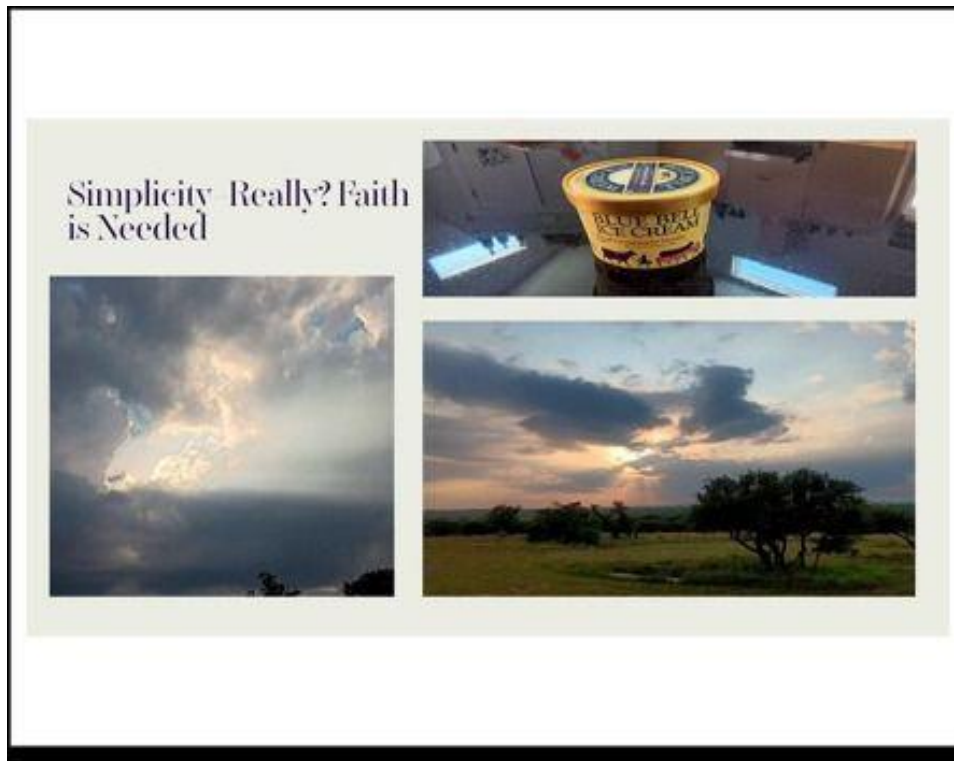
Focus Statement: God's creation is so complex and far beyond our comprehension that His requirement of faith for salvation makes perfect sense—simplicity doesn't cover it at all.

Reflection Questions:

- What aspects of God's creation or character do you try to oversimplify rather than accepting them by faith?
- How does recognizing the incredible complexity of even basic bodily functions (like blood sugar regulation) point you toward faith in an intelligent Creator?
- In what areas of your spiritual life do you need to move from demanding complete understanding to trusting God by faith?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Going back to sleep, Mike



Original reflection image: Simplicity–Really? Faith is Needed

17. A Cold Heart

Let us push ourselves on the days we feel off to keep Christ and His love for us in focus! May we not become indifferent, unloving, or insensitive to those around us!

Lord, keep Your Spirit's flame in our hearts! May our hearts not grow cold! In the hour our passion fades, lift us into Your light and renew us!

As I did my prayer walk yesterday, it weighed heavy on my heart to focus on a passion for love in all of the saints' hearts! Jesus even showed up in my sunset photo to emphasize the message!

Hebrews 10:24-25 — "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Key Verse: Matthew 24:12-13 — "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

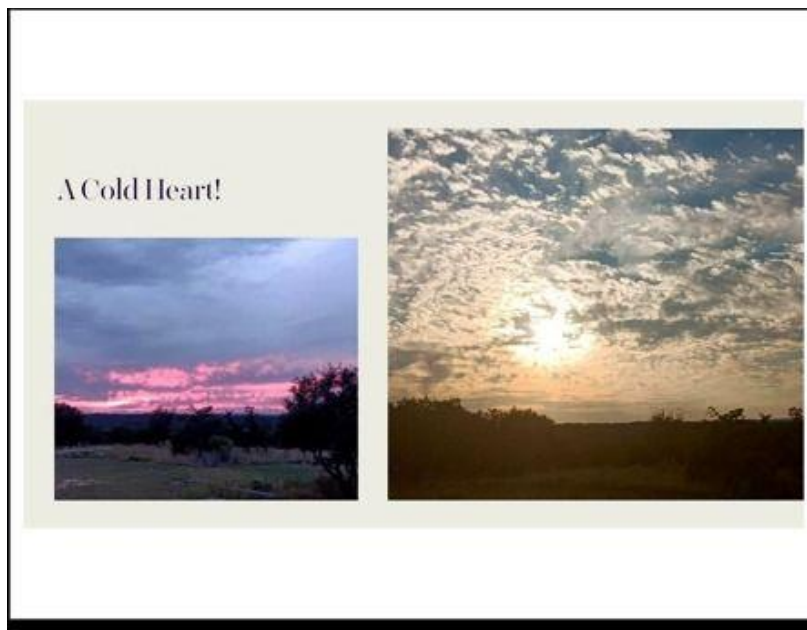
Focus Statement: Even on days when we feel off, we must push ourselves to keep Christ and His love in focus, guarding against hearts that grow cold, indifferent, or insensitive to those around us.

Reflection Questions:

- What signs indicate that your heart might be growing cold toward Christ or toward others?
- How can you "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" in your church community this week?
- What specific practices help reignite your passion for Christ when you feel spiritually cold or indifferent?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: A Cold Heart!

18. Building on the Rock

May we choose what we need for a strong build on our Rock, Jesus!

A Practical Reflection:

I remember when our home was built by Eddie's guys and all the special things they did for a great build! They cleared the topsoil to the bedrock, they used special concrete, they used steel rebar and reinforced in key places! They made corrections when necessary! They added critical connections for our steel beams! They had to keep the concrete hydrated to help it settle!

There was so much attention to detail! The key point in the build was they had to start on the bedrock (Jesus)!

Our Christian Build:

Just like my builder did a great job building our home on a strong foundation, we must even do a better job building on our rock—Jesus!

Just like in good construction, we have our building blocks!

I could elaborate much on each of these but would have to write the Bible! These are just some key highlights!

1. Love God and people!
2. Sharing God's plan for salvation!
3. Being consistent!
4. Time in God's Word! We need to know God's plans for our build!
5. Much prayer!
6. Being more selfless!
7. Fellowship!—Being around God's people is key! We can't grow alone in the dark!
8. Giving time and resource!—God's promise with the tithe is very real and there is great benefit helping others in their walk!

I could keep going!

Building Reflection:

Building on our strong foundation is ongoing!

Key Verse: Matthew 7:24-27 — "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

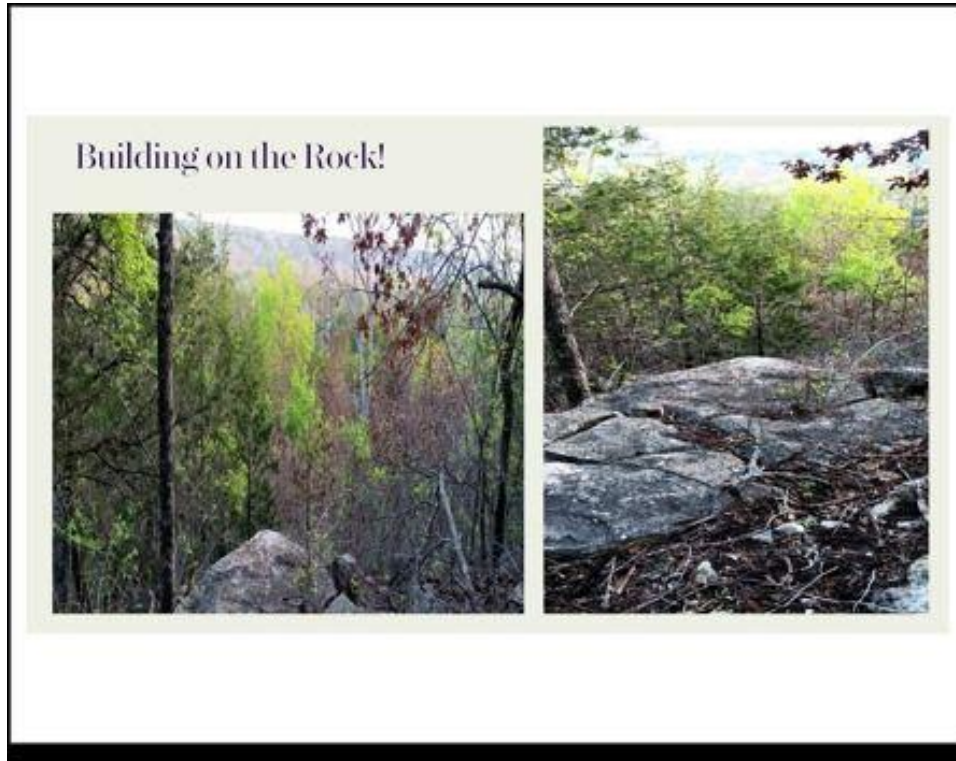
Focus Statement: Just as a strong home requires clearing to bedrock, using quality materials, and attention to detail, our Christian life must be built on the solid foundation of Jesus with the building blocks of love, Scripture, prayer, fellowship, and service.

Reflection Questions:

- Which "building blocks" of your Christian life need the most attention right now—love, Scripture, prayer, fellowship, or service?
- Are you building on the solid rock of Jesus, or have you allowed your foundation to shift to something less stable (career, relationships, comfort)?
- What specific "correction" or "reinforcement" does your spiritual life need to withstand the storms that will inevitably come?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Building on the Rock!

19. From the Heart

Quick message about praising our Lord from our heart! Usually, when I write a song, I just play a good melody and start praising from the heart! Amazingly, the Spirit fills in the words!

From the Heart:

Lift your voice and let the Spirit guide you!

It is amazing how praising God can change your outlook on the day!

Key Verse: Psalms 148:1-3 — "Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights above. Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars."

Focus Statement: When we praise God from the heart rather than going through the motions, the Spirit fills in the words and transforms our entire outlook on the day.

Reflection Questions:

- When you pray or worship, are you speaking from the heart or just going through the motions?
- How does authentic praise—letting the Spirit guide your words—differ from rehearsed or routine prayers?
- What would it look like for you to spend time today simply praising God from your heart without any agenda or requests?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: From the heart!

20. Traffic Mouth

Driving down the road with Kim from Briggs to Copperas Cove, enjoying a beautiful cool day after a blessed time with the family, thinking God is good! Driving along, slightly above the speed limit, on one of the long straightaways, I noticed a vehicle way back behind us! No big deal, just another family enjoying the day! A couple minutes later, I look back and see nothing but a big black steel truck bumper and a Dodge logo! I could hear the sound of the engine with my windows closed! There was no room to pull over because there was no curbside! What to do?

Traffic Mouth:

Anyway, to make a short story long, my reaction was not very good, and the only person who got to witness it was Kim!

Reflecting on My Traffic Mouth:

After getting home and doing some "deep breathing exercises," I finally calmed down and reflected on my response! I was disappointed in myself! We can't say and believe one thing and act contrary to what we say and believe!

Potter and the Clay:

I am better than I used to be, but definitely, I am a "work in progress!"

I still strive to be more Christ-like in all situations!

James gives us a stark reminder how not to react!

Key Verse:James 3:10-12 — "Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water."

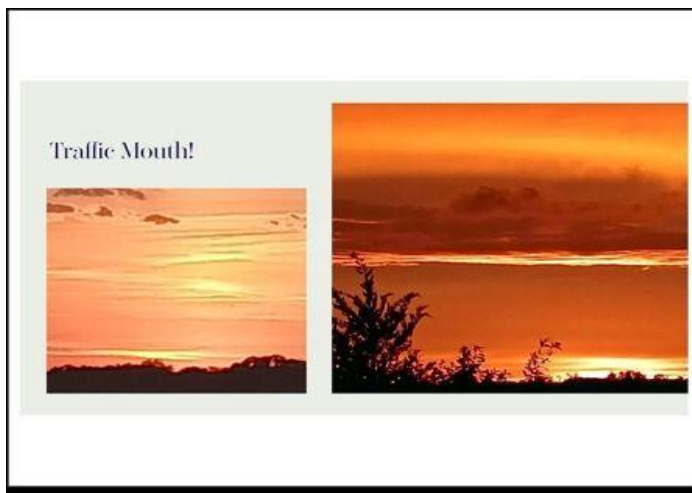
Focus Statement: We can't say and believe one thing and act contrary to what we say and believe—our reactions in difficult moments reveal whether we're truly becoming more Christ-like or just a work in progress.

Reflection Questions:

- What situations or triggers cause you to react in ways that contradict your Christian beliefs?
- How can you prepare yourself spiritually to respond with grace when someone treats you aggressively or inconsiderately?
- In what specific area of your life do you need to acknowledge you're still a "work in progress" and ask God for transformation?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Traffic Mouth!

21. My Walking Stick

God woke me up early again with much on my mind about sharing!

Those who love us and want what is best for us will go out of their way to guide us on the right path! I think of my grandmother Grogan and her brother, my uncle Glen, who gave many words of wisdom and reflected Judeo-Christian values in their words and actions. Also, my father and mother who showed genuine love for us based on those same values! I was blessed! Though not perfect in their faith, the values passed on to them were strong and lasting! The values/seeds reflected/planted in/by those I spoke of help me to be open to the gospel and salvation when I was in college!

God is always faithful!

Great Part of My Walk with Christ:

So, Kim and I became part of "Southwest Family Fellowship" when we moved to South Austin! We were blessed to have a Korean youth minister named Isaac, who was great for our boys, Gavin and John! During this time, I got to do some wonderful walks with my son John in South Austin! I got to share what I learned in Christ and the values given me while growing up!

My Walking Stick:

During this time, John got to attend Riverbend Church and got involved with youth ministry. He even went to El Salvador on a mission trip! One day, while walking the paths at Riverbend, John found a cool walking stick! He gave it to me for our walks! It has very special meaning as it reflects my chance to impart all of the godly things shown to me up to that point in time!

Colossians 1:28 — "He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ."

1 John 1:7 — "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Key Verse: Titus 1:9 — "He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."

Focus Statement: The walking stick my son gave me represents the sacred responsibility of passing down godly values and truth to the next generation, just as my grandmother, uncle, and parents passed them to me.

Reflection Questions:

- Who invested godly values in your life, and how can you honor their legacy by passing those values to the next generation?
- What opportunities do you have right now to mentor, teach, or walk alongside someone younger in the faith?
- What "walking stick"—tangible reminder or practice—could you use to help you remember your responsibility to pass down God's truth?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: My Walking Stick!

22. A Bugged Life

Ever have one of those days where everything is going well and then something as simple as a bug biting you or landing on your face steals your joy and makes you less loving! You may even let it ruin your day! Take the time to breathe, count to 10, and remember what God says about love and peace in situations that might irritate us!

Don't Be Bugged:

Let us always focus on the greatest attribute of love!

1 Corinthians 13:13 — "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 — "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Focus Statement: Small irritations like a bug bite can steal our joy and make us less loving—but when we focus on God's definition of love, we remember not to let minor annoyances ruin our day.

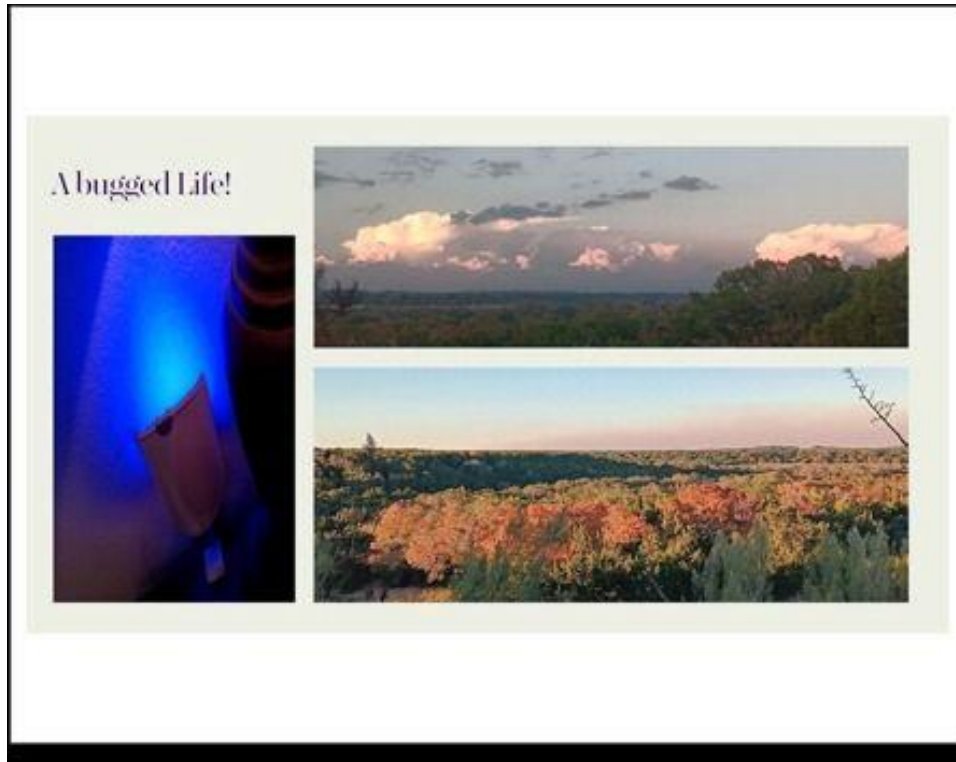
Reflection Questions:

- What small irritations or inconveniences tend to steal your joy and make you less loving toward others?

- How does remembering that "love is patient" and "not easily angered" change your response to minor frustrations?
- What practical step can you take when you feel irritated to pause, breathe, and choose love instead of frustration?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: A bugged Life!

23. Foggy Day

We all have those days when we see less clearly! I believe it is safe to say this last week has been foggy for most of us! When I say foggy, I mean we do not see where the Lord may be taking us clearly! Yesterday became a little less clear for me seeing those I care about suffer and allowing conversations to make me think about my own issues too much!

Turning on God's Fan of Truth:

Waking this morning and thinking about my quiet time, I needed to get out of the enemy's fog! The enemy who seeks to kill, steal, and destroy! Again, God gave me my quiet time message! I just needed to turn on God's fan of promise and victory to blow away the fog!

Be Encouraged!

Romans 8:37 — "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Revelation 21:4 — "'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 15:57 — "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Focus Statement: When life becomes foggy and unclear—when we see those we care about suffer or focus too much on our own issues—we need to turn on God's fan of truth and promise to blow away the enemy's fog.

Reflection Questions:

- What "fog" is clouding your vision right now—worry about loved ones, focus on your own problems, or uncertainty about the future?
- How can you actively "turn on God's fan" through Scripture, prayer, and worship to dispel the enemy's confusion?
- Which of these three promises (victory, being more than conquerors, or no more tears) do you need to cling to most today?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Foggy Day!

24. Light

I am amazed at God's faithfulness!

I was not sure what my quiet time message would be this morning? Did my prayer walk a little early yesterday. Was great praying for everyone and walking with the Lord! Did not get a quiet time message, though? God usually presents one during my walk if my eyes are open. Anyway, as Kim and I were getting ready to settle in for the evening, God, in His faithfulness, presented a message for me as I looked out the window while locking the front door for the evening! Light—I have many sunset pictures, but this one topped them all! It's a simple but powerful message! God is our light and once again was faithful, providing a message! My pictures do not do this sunset justice!

There are so many passages about light! It must be important!

The ones I share just scratch the surface!

John 12:36 — "Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light." When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

Genesis 1:4 — "God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness."

Psalms 36:9 — "For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light."

Key Verse: Ephesians 5:8 — "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light."

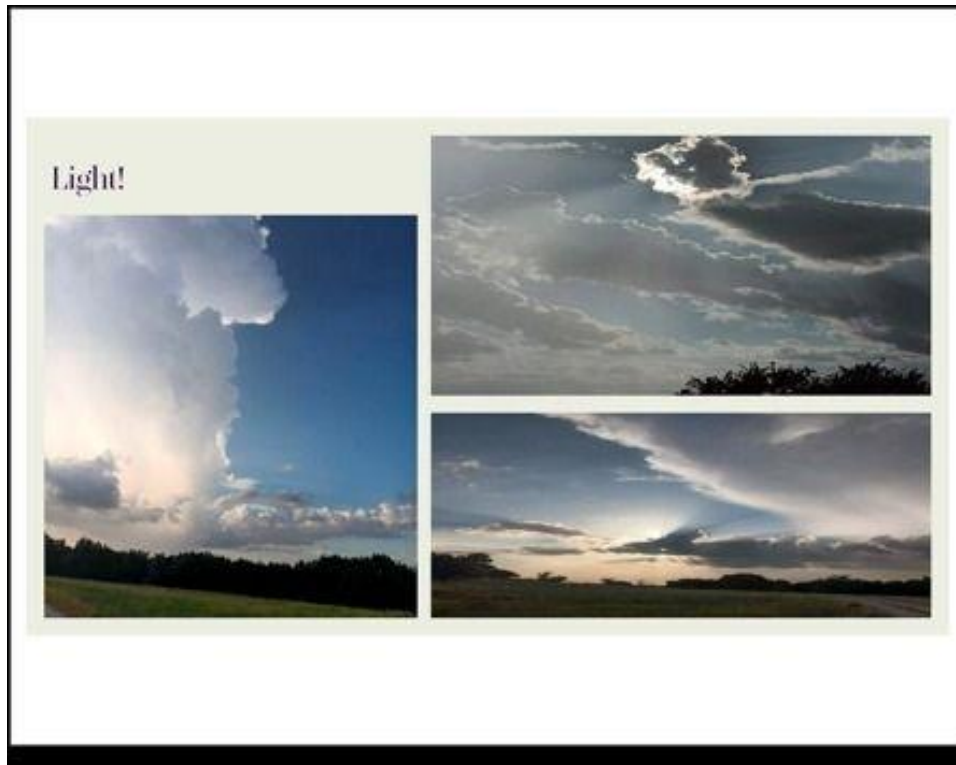
Focus Statement: God's faithfulness is amazing—even when we're uncertain about our quiet time message, He provides exactly what we need at exactly the right moment, reminding us that He is our light.

Reflection Questions:

- When have you experienced God's faithfulness in providing exactly what you needed at just the right moment?
- How does living as a "child of light" change the way you approach your daily activities and relationships?
- What does it mean practically to "believe in the light while you have the light" in your current season of life?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Light!

25. Peace in the Midst of Hardship

Felt moved to bring up God's peace again this morning!

Not long after Jesus's resurrection, His disciples hid in a locked room, fearing that the same people who crucified Jesus would come and arrest them. It's in the midst of their fearful circumstances that Jesus appears to them collectively, speaking words of peace over them. But He doesn't stop there. He then tells His disciples that He is sending them out into the world. This means they are going to have to leave the safety of their locked room. But although their future is unknown, they are known by the One who holds the future. So wherever they go, and whatever they face, Jesus's words will remain true: peace will be with them. And Jesus continues to offer us this same peace.

Peace in the Midst of Hardship Continued:

We will all face hardship and difficulties. We all will go through seasons where we endure intense pain caused by struggling relationships, struggling economies, and struggling health crises. But God's peace isn't based on our feelings or circumstances, which is why it's something we can consistently experience. God's peace sometimes feels like a calmness in the midst of an anxious situation, or hope despite a discouraging diagnosis. It might look like unexplainable joy, or an unshakeable feeling that, regardless of what happens, God is still in control. When our world rages, or the doctor shares something alarming, or the news reports are terrifying, God's peace enables us to walk forward with confident assurance that the One who gives us peace goes with us. Jesus might not remove us from difficult situations, but He will always help us walk through them. Outside pressures don't have the power to take away God's perfect peace that's given to us through Jesus our Savior. So take a few minutes today and thank Jesus for His peace that passes all understanding. Talk to Him about any concerns or worries you're currently experiencing, and as you

give them over to Him, envision Him saying to you, "peace be with you." Through any difficulty, let us hold onto God's peace and love Him with all we can and know His best for us will come!

Key Verse: Mark 12:30 — "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

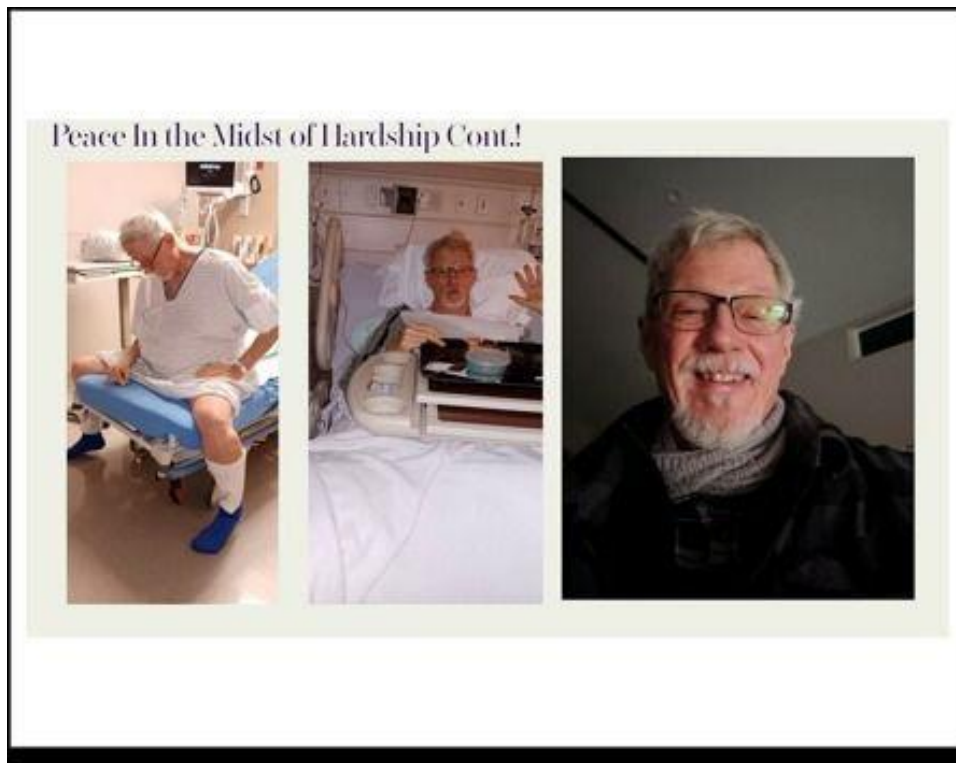
Focus Statement: God's peace isn't based on our feelings or circumstances—it's a calmness in anxiety, hope despite discouraging diagnosis, and unshakeable confidence that God is in control, even when our world rages.

Reflection Questions:

- What "locked room" of fear or anxiety are you hiding in right now, and how is Jesus calling you to step out in faith despite an unknown future?
- How have you experienced God's peace in the midst of hardship—as calmness, hope, joy, or confidence that He's in control?
- What specific worry or concern do you need to give over to Jesus today, envisioning Him saying "peace be with you"?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Peace In the Midst of Hardship!

26. The Light of God's Love in Prayer

I had a great prayer walk yesterday! As I reflected on why it was great, the word authentic came to mind! If you took the person or people you love the most and magnify it by 100 or more, it is the way

God loves each of us! As I tried to think of everyone I prayed for in this light, it brightened each prayer and made them more authentic and focused! God truly became the light shining at my feet as I walked!

From My Song, Hope:

You are the light shining at my feet, and I pray I keep all Your ways! It is hard sometimes to not just go through the motions when we pray! If we focus on how much God loves those we pray for, it truly can light up our prayer time!

Key Verse: John 8:12 — "When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

Focus Statement: When we magnify God's love by 100 or more and pray for others in that light, our prayers become more authentic, focused, and powerful—God truly becomes the light shining at our feet.

Reflection Questions:

- Are your prayers authentic and focused, or do you sometimes just go through the motions?
- How would your prayers change if you truly grasped that God loves each person you pray for with a love 100 times greater than your deepest human love?
- Who do you need to pray for today with this magnified understanding of God's love for them?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The Light of God's Love in Prayer!

27. Pigs in a Blanket—Choices

Well, God has been great at providing me with quiet time messages!

I was reminded about making good decisions this morning!

Was feeling pretty good yesterday. I enjoyed our fellowship at church and even started putting together a Murphy bed with Kim! Anyway, I was distracted and did not eat dinner, so late at night, I stalked the refrigerator and noticed some "pigs in a blanket" that were left over. Anyway, I made the dumb choice to eat them with chips late at night and woke up miserable this morning! I knew better but did it anyway!

Choices:

God used my bad decision to remind me that we need to deny ourselves and make good choices as we take up our cross and put Christ first in our lives. God always works out our good decisions for our benefit! Sometimes, we just need to reflect a little! Also, ramifications of our bad decisions should reinforce why we need to stay on the narrow path!

Don't eat the "pigs in a blanket" late at night!

Key Verse: Matthew 16:24 — "Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.'"

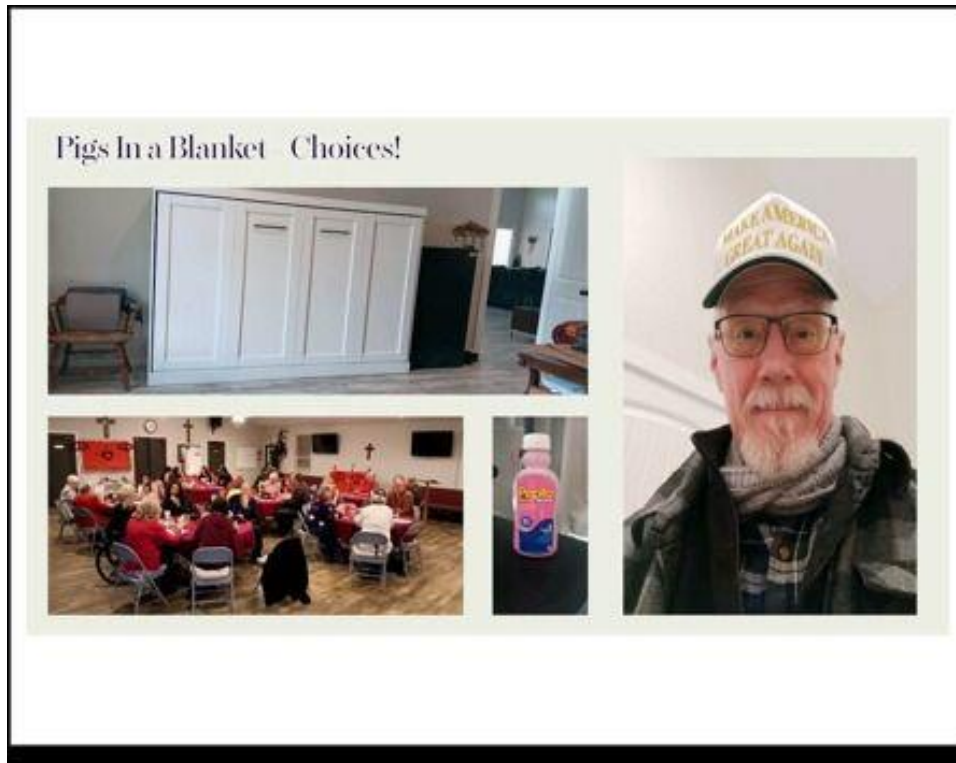
Focus Statement: A bad late-night food choice reminded me that we need to deny ourselves and make good decisions as we take up our cross and put Christ first—because God always works out our good decisions for our benefit.

Reflection Questions:

- What "pigs in a blanket" choices are you making—things you know aren't good for you but you do anyway?
- How does denying yourself in small daily decisions prepare you to take up your cross and follow Christ in bigger ways?
- What good choice have you been avoiding that you know God would work out for your benefit if you'd just make it?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Pigs In a Blanket - Choices!

28. Majestic

In my quiet time, I simply contemplate how majestic our God is! May we praise our all-powerful, all-knowing, and loving God today and find time to sit in silence and reflect on His majesty!

God be with us this day and every day!

Key Verse: Psalms 8:1 — "Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens."

Focus Statement: Sometimes in our quiet time, we simply need to contemplate how majestic our God is—sitting in silence and reflecting on His all-powerful, all-knowing, and loving nature.

Reflection Questions:

- When was the last time you sat in silence and simply contemplated God's majesty without asking for anything?
- What aspect of God's character—His power, knowledge, or love—do you need to meditate on most today?
- How does taking time to reflect on God's majesty change your perspective on your current circumstances?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Majestic!

29. Rest in Peace

Shut out the noise and focus!

These are two promises that really work if I truly shut everything out and trust God! It doesn't necessarily resolve what I may be going through, but it does bring me to the loving embrace of our God, and that is a good place to be! What is amazing is that these are just a couple of God's promises to us!

Philippians 4:6-7 — "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."

Key Verse: Matthew 11:28-29 — "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Focus Statement: When we shut out the noise and truly trust God, His promises of rest and peace really work—they bring us into the loving embrace of our God, and that is a good place to be.

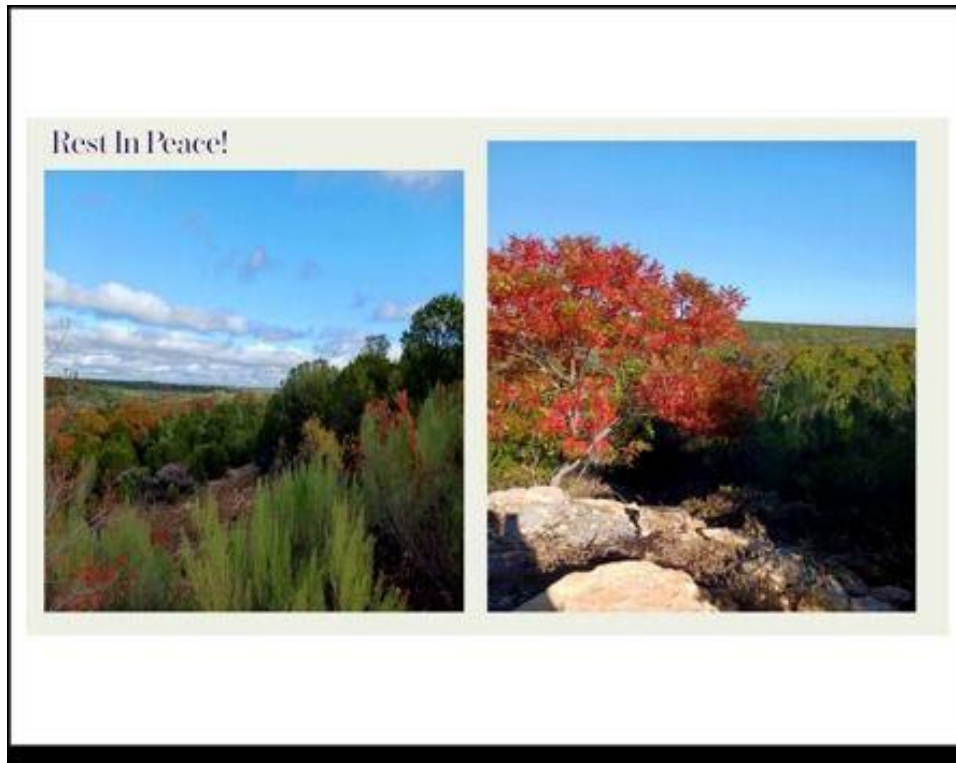
Reflection Questions:

- What "noise" do you need to shut out in order to experience God's rest and peace more fully?
- Have you experienced God's peace that "transcends all understanding"? What did it feel like, and how did it guard your heart and mind?

- What burden are you carrying that you need to bring to Jesus today, accepting His invitation to find rest for your soul?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Rest In Peace!

30. Turn the Lights On

Have you ever been camping and walking with a flashlight, and it goes out when you're well away from camp? You have no choice but to walk in the darkness and hope you don't walk into the lake or into a ditch! It is the same way with our Christian walk. We are saved through the hearing of God's Word, as reflected in **Romans 10:17**, but walking without time in the Word after we are saved is like walking in the dark! God's Word shows us God's will and guidance. It is our guiding light! So make sure to turn the light of God's Word on before you walk into the lake!

Key Verse: Romans 10:17 — "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ."

Focus Statement: Walking without time in God's Word after we're saved is like walking in the dark without a flashlight—we might stumble into the lake or a ditch, so we must turn on the light of God's Word before we walk.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you walking in spiritual darkness because you're not spending regular time in God's Word?

- How has God's Word served as a "guiding light" in a specific decision or situation you've faced?
- What practical plan can you implement this week to ensure you're consistently turning on the light of Scripture before you "walk"?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Turn the lights on!

31. Left-Handed Smoke Shifters

I'm staying with the camping topic for another day. I remember when I was about 5 or 6, we went camping at a community campsite in Deep Creek, Maryland with my dad! To expend my excited energy as dad set up the camp, he gave me a task! He told me to go around to the nearby campsites and ask if we could borrow a "left-handed smoke shifter!" After looking diligently, I came back to let dad know I could not find it. I was a little disappointed until I saw everyone's smiles and laughter and realized it was a joke! Kinda like snipe hunting!

The relevant message here is that we need to convey the truth about Christ. Don't look for faith in something or a false religion that is not the way to life! Don't be deceived that a "left-handed smoke shifter" is what you need!

Jesus is the only way!

Key Verse: Acts 4:12 — "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

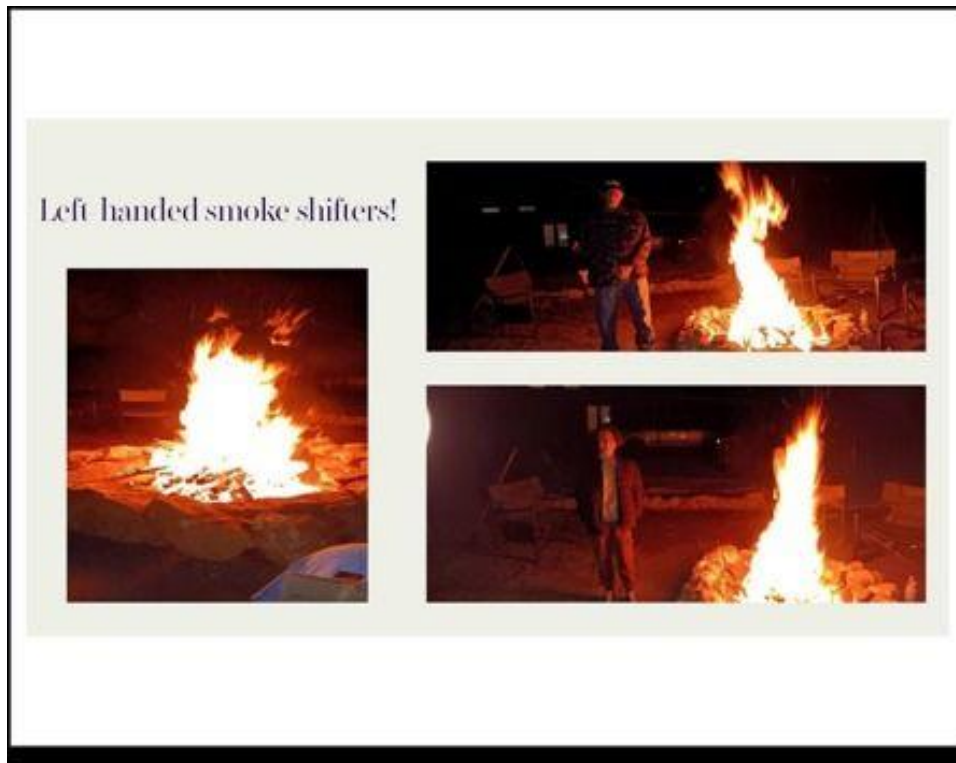
Focus Statement: Just as my dad sent me searching for a non-existent "left-handed smoke shifter" as a camping joke, we must not be deceived into seeking salvation in false religions or anything other than Jesus—He alone is the way.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you searching for spiritual fulfillment in places or philosophies that don't lead to true life in Christ?
- How can you help others avoid being deceived by false teachings or religions that promise salvation apart from Jesus?
- What practical steps can you take to ensure you're building your faith on the solid truth of Christ rather than on empty promises?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Left-handed smoke shifters!

32. True Reflections

We really do see things through a clouded lens and only get a glimpse of who God really is! Sometimes, if we reflect on the obvious, we can see with a little more clarity!

Nature:

If only Darwin knew what we know today about true science, he would never have published his ridiculous theory! If we point up and ask, where does space end? We shudder at the magnitude of

it! The statistical odds of our existence on earth are staggering when you consider universal constants!

If you look at the complexity of a single cell organism and the inner workings, it is more complex than the space shuttle, and it is microscopic!

Science points to creation!

Jesus and Prophecy:

The odds of Jesus fulfilling all of the prophecy about himself are astronomical! Not to mention all of the miracles and witnesses! Even the secular leaders acknowledged what he did!

Believers' Testimonies:

There are so many mind-boggling sacrifices and miracles performed by the Apostles and followers of Christ! Many laid down their lives for the faith!

Christ's Message:

Christ's message of salvation and love and the way we should live our lives is the only thing that makes sense! I could keep going, but I need to make my point! There is so much truth that supports our faith!

True Reflection:

Our God is beyond our comprehension! We serve such an awesome and all-powerful God that desires our fellowship and love and has bridged the gap through Christ's sacrifice of love!

Key Verse: Romans 11:33-36 — "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?' 'Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?' For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen."

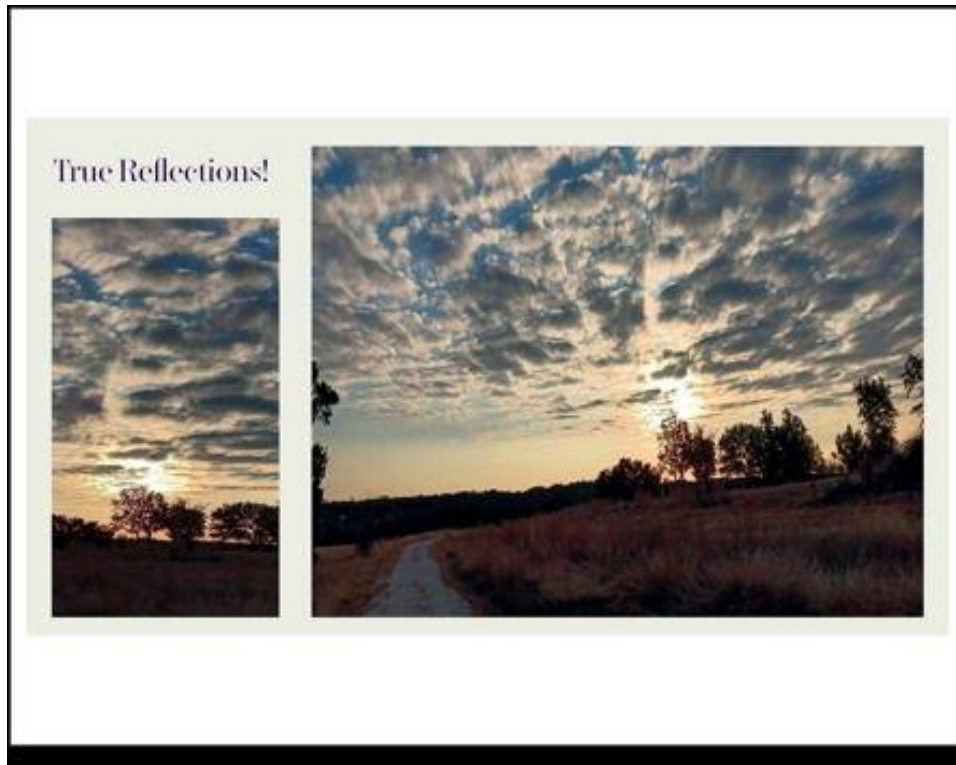
Focus Statement: When we reflect on the obvious evidence all around us—the complexity of nature, the fulfillment of prophecy, the testimonies of believers, and Christ's message of love—we see overwhelming truth that points to our awesome, all-powerful God.

Reflection Questions:

- Which evidence for God's existence—nature's complexity, fulfilled prophecy, or believers' testimonies—speaks most powerfully to you, and why?
- How can you use these "true reflections" to share your faith with someone who doubts God's existence or Christ's reality?
- In what ways does recognizing God's incomprehensible wisdom and power deepen your worship and trust in Him?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: True Reflections!

33. The Ultimate Reunion

Imagine all those we know and love, all of those we have always wanted to meet, and even those we don't know yet meeting in a glorious, never-ending reunion! All being happy and whole!

How wonderful to see my grandmother, mom, brother Ron, and sister Pam again! They all knew Christ! Think about meeting King David, Billy Graham, and so many other great people we have always wanted to meet! There may also be many we did not know that will come up and adamantly thank us for being part of their salvation!

The thought of eternity in God's kingdom is mind-boggling!

Eternal Life and the Ultimate Reunion:

Let's take as many as we can to this reunion! We can't comprehend what this means!

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 15:52-57 — "In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

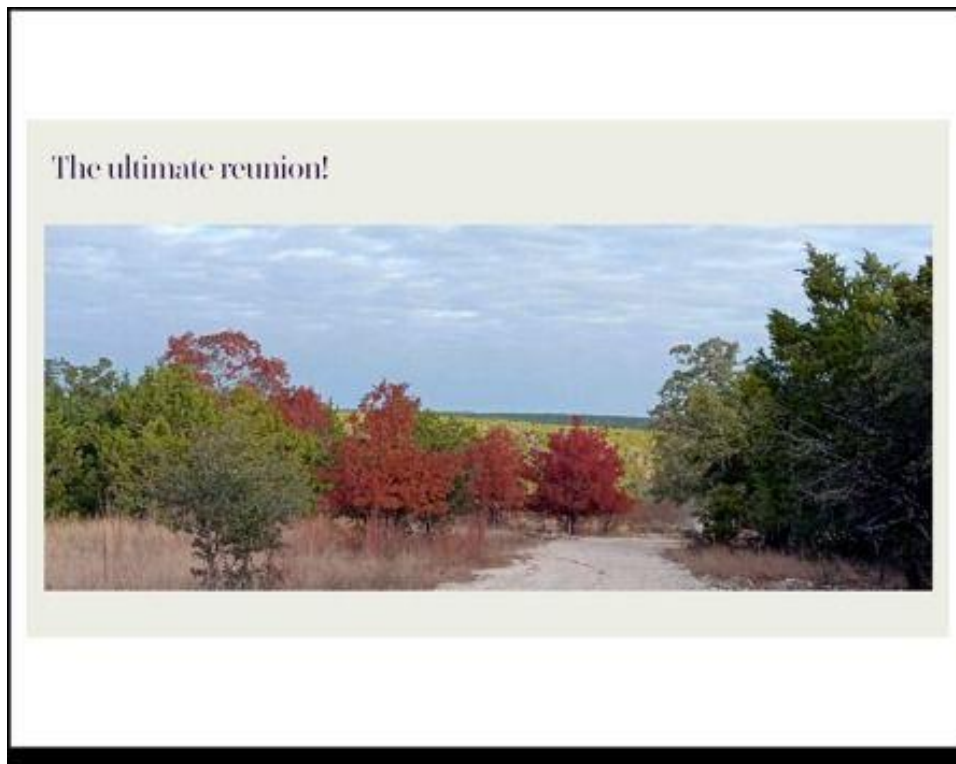
Focus Statement: Imagine the glorious, never-ending reunion where we'll see loved ones who knew Christ, meet great figures of faith we've always admired, and be thanked by those whose salvation we helped secure—this is the mind-boggling reality of eternity in God's kingdom.

Reflection Questions:

- Who are you most looking forward to seeing again at the ultimate reunion in heaven, and how does that hope comfort you today?
- How does the reality of this eternal reunion motivate you to share the Gospel more urgently with those who don't yet know Christ?
- What would it mean to you if someone you influenced came up to you in heaven and thanked you for being part of their salvation?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: The ultimate reunion!

34. Hope (Song Motivation)

I am changing my quiet time message a little over the next few days to share some key messages that have been and remain on my heart! So much so that I put them to song! I have always wanted to complete them in one recording, but circumstances impacted that effort but also have provided me an opportunity to share now as a good friend from my Air Force days helped me with good demos. I feel led to share them now. For me, it is about a persuasive message and nothing else! Please share them openly to encourage others! Unfortunately, not everyone can receive the audio files. I will send them to who I can.

Today's message is about Hope!

Jesus made things right with His sacrifice of love! He gave us eternal hope and a promise to be with us! He taught us the perfect way to live and to be there to pick us up when we fail!

Key Verse: Isaiah 40:31 — "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

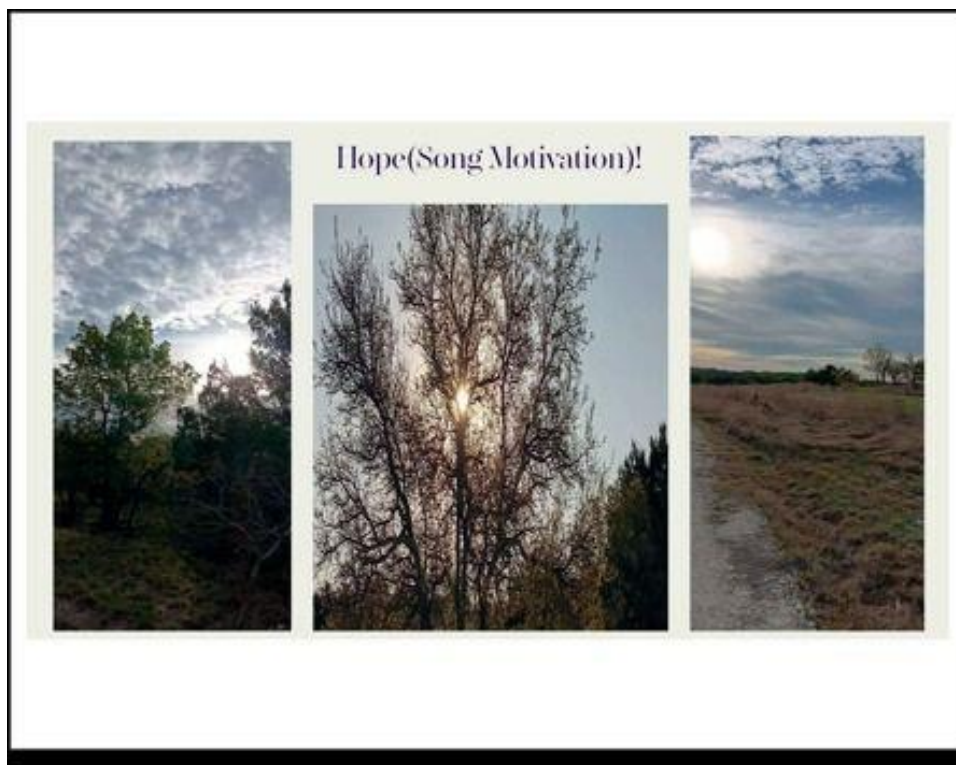
Focus Statement: Jesus made things right with His sacrifice of love, giving us eternal hope and the promise to be with us always—He taught us the perfect way to live and is there to pick us up when we fail.

Reflection Questions:

- How does the hope you have in Christ's sacrifice and promises affect the way you face daily challenges and setbacks?
- In what specific area of your life do you need to remember that Jesus is there to pick you up when you fail?
- How can you share this message of hope through your words, actions, or creative expressions with someone who needs encouragement?

God bless my brothers and be of great hope!

Mike



Original reflection image: Hope(Song Motivation)!

35. Fear Is Gone (Song Motivation)

Being Brave Through Our Faith in Christ!

There are so many ways the enemy uses fear to kill, steal, and destroy and try to keep us from the best life God wants for us! It can be as little as being worried about what the world might think to the fear of death in certain situations! I have learned and desire to impart how the closer we get to God through faith, fellowship, prayer... living the life God wants us to, it is much easier to overcome our fears! From my heart, I say grow and strive to understand God's guidance through His Word and all of the wonderful things that go with a Christian life! Overcoming fear will be much easier with Christ walking at your side!

I was inspired to write another song through the many passages God has given us in His Word. The song is called "The Fear Is Gone."

Key Verse: Isaiah 41:10 — "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Focus Statement: The enemy uses fear in countless ways to kill, steal, and destroy, but as we grow closer to God through faith, fellowship, and prayer, overcoming our fears becomes much easier with Christ walking at our side.

Reflection Questions:

- What specific fear is the enemy using to hold you back from the abundant life God wants for you?
- How has growing closer to God through faith, fellowship, and prayer helped you overcome fears in the past?
- What practical step can you take this week to strengthen your relationship with God so that fear loses its grip on your life?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Fear Is Gone(Song Motivation)!

36. Rapture (Song Motivation)

Was thinking about my next quiet time message for tomorrow and got anxious to send!

A Journey to Heaven!

Many of us have reflected on God's Rapture of the Church! We speak of it often with a sense of longing! In my reflections, I see 4 points, as the pastor would say. It is a reflection based on what will happen to those who are still alive when Christ returns! 1st is our salvation, 2nd is the great commission, 3rd is meeting Christ in the air and 4th is entering heaven for the first time! This is a lot in one reflection, but the thoughts of the journey are awesome!

Obviously, I had to do my best to put this to song! The song is called "Rapture"! I use the word "liting," which means to alight or can mean beautiful. I am thinking of changing it to enlightening.

Key Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 — "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."

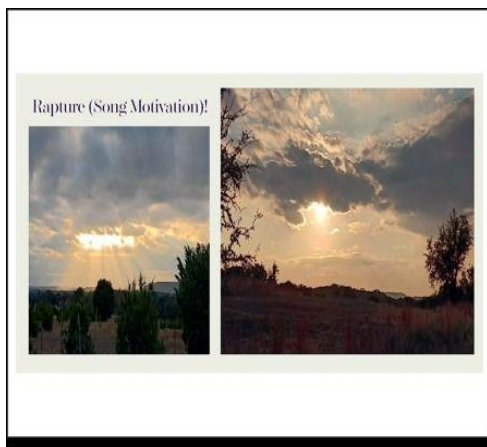
Focus Statement: The journey to heaven includes four awesome points—our salvation, the great commission, meeting Christ in the air, and entering heaven for the first time—a reflection that fills us with longing for that glorious day.

Reflection Questions:

- How does contemplating the rapture and meeting Christ in the air affect your daily priorities and the way you live?
- Are you fulfilling the great commission by sharing the Gospel with those around you, knowing Christ could return at any moment?
- What would you want to have accomplished for God's kingdom before that glorious day when we're caught up to meet the Lord?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Rapture (Song Motivation)!

37. Guiding Light (Song Motivation)

At some point in our lives, we have troubles! Jesus told us we would have troubles in this world! Troubles come in so many forms! I have learned in the midst of darkness that as we pray and continually bring our troubles to God, His light will show us the way! Sometimes, the path is not what we expect. As I reflect back, the path God leads us down is always the best for us and for those around us! Let God be our Guiding Light!

Many times, I look back on my life and see how God's abundant grace has spared me and how His love and power are always with me! Led by God's Spirit, I wrote the song "Guiding Light" during one of my times of reflection!

Key Verse: Psalms 119:105 — "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

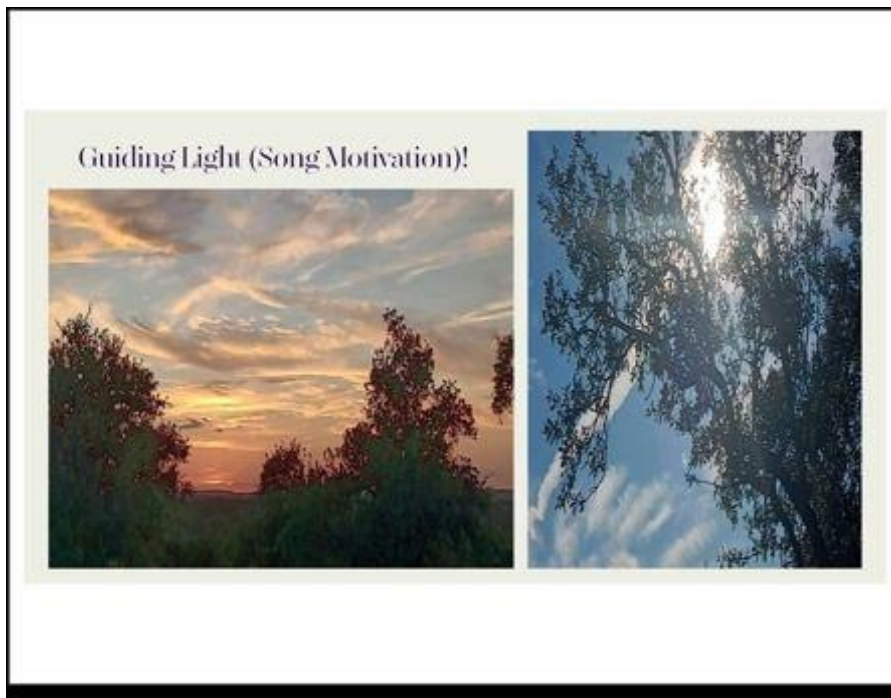
Focus Statement: In the midst of life's troubles and darkness, as we continually bring our struggles to God in prayer, His light shows us the way—and looking back, we see that the path God leads us down is always best for us and those around us.

Reflection Questions:

- What trouble or darkness are you facing right now that you need to continually bring to God in prayer?
- Looking back on your life, how has God's guidance proven to be best for you even when the path wasn't what you expected?
- How can you trust God's light to guide you forward when you can't see the full path ahead?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: Guiding Light (Song Motivation)!

38. The Road Home (Song Motivation)

The Road Home! The straight path! The narrow road!

As we walk the long road and down the narrow path, in your presence, Lord, I know that I can last!
Your Spirit moves me as I stumble, and I fall in your direction so I can give my all!

It is amazing how God will keep us on the "straight and narrow" if we keep Him in focus! I got to reconnect with another old friend, Tom, from my Air Force days through another friend, Barry, who I reconnected with earlier! We met on Barry's podcast yesterday! Barry actually led a mission in the Philippines for 20 years, and Tom is now a devout Christian! It was a great reconnect that I can't go into as I would be typing for a while! All I can say is if you had met us in our Air Force days and see us now, you would definitely come to the conclusion that someone has been praying for us! Many times, I have reflected back and see how God has kept me on His Road Home! During one of these reflections, I wrote "The Road Home" in awe of how faithful God is!

John 14:6 — "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

Key Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6 — "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."

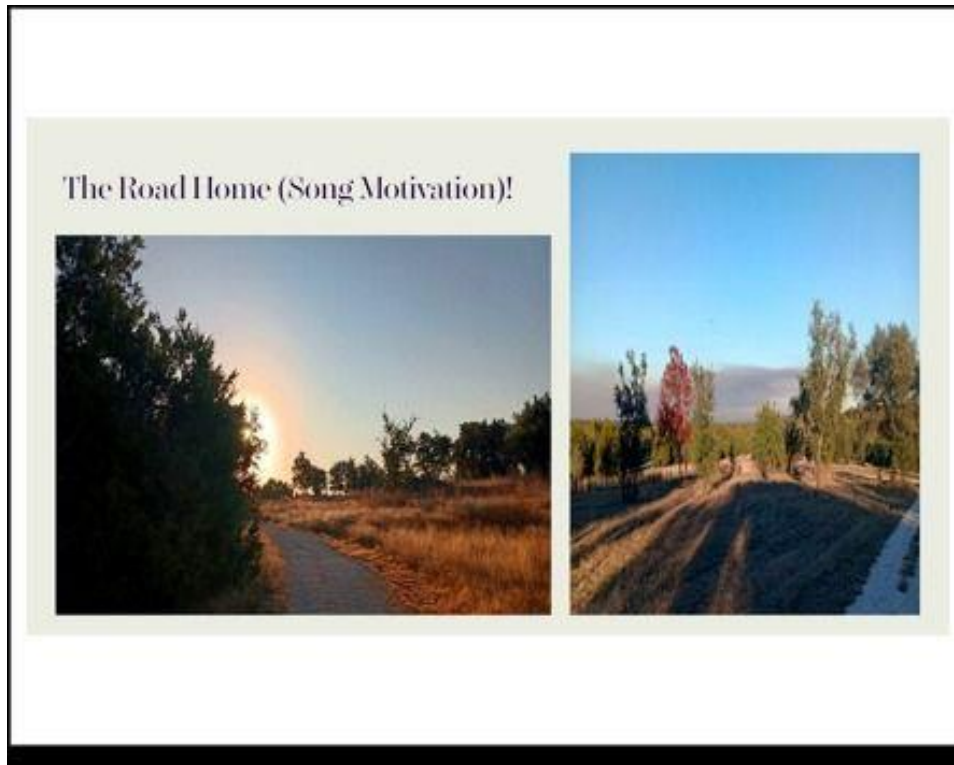
Focus Statement: As we walk the long road and down the narrow path, God keeps us on the straight and narrow if we keep Him in focus—reconnecting with old Air Force friends who are now devout Christians proves how faithfully God has kept us on His road home.

Reflection Questions:

- Looking back on your life, how has God faithfully kept you on the road home despite your stumbles and detours?
- Who from your past might God be calling you to reconnect with to share how He's transformed your life?
- What does it mean practically for you to "keep God in focus" so He can keep you on the straight and narrow path?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: The Road Home (Song Motivation)!

39. Peace of Mind (Song Motivation)

I'm getting a late start this morning. I believe it is because of all that good food yesterday at church! The potato buffet was great! Being of Irish heritage, it makes sense. My quiet time passages come back to God's peace again this morning! Let's lock onto the promises God has for us! As I trust in faith and strive to be genuine in my walk, the promises become more and more tangible and real! Sometimes, we just have to slow down, take a deep breath, and just focus on what having God with us means!

I wrote the song "Peace of Mind" during one of those times!

Isaiah 26:3 — "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."

Key Verse: John 14:27 — "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Focus Statement: As we trust in faith and strive to be genuine in our walk with Christ, God's promises of peace become more and more tangible and real—sometimes we just need to slow down, take a deep breath, and focus on what having God with us truly means.

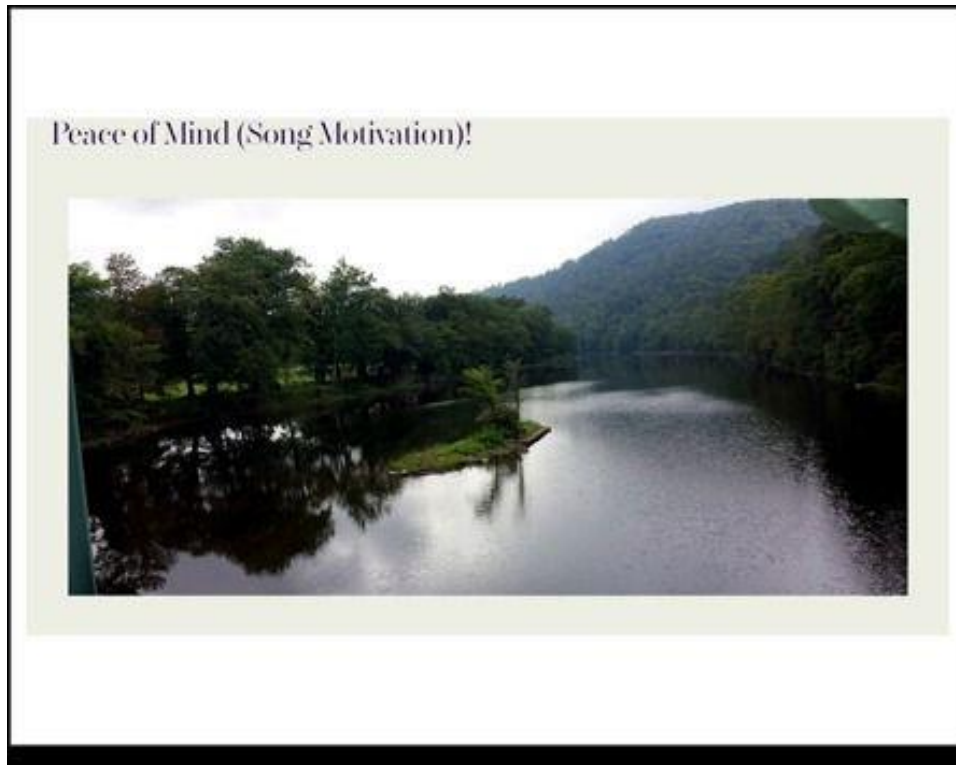
Reflection Questions:

- Are you experiencing God's peace as tangible and real, or does it still feel distant and theoretical to you?
- What do you need to slow down from or let go of in order to focus more fully on what having God with you means?

- How does God's peace differ from the temporary peace the world offers, and where do you need His perfect peace most right now?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: Peace of Mind (Song Motivation)!

40. The Reality of Our Lord (Song Motivation)

Authentic Reality!

Over the course of walking the road of life, centered in Christ, it has become abundantly clear how real Christ is and how alive we can be through Him guided by the Spirit!

Christ is the example of how we should live our lives. His resurrection is at the core! The apostles' joy of seeing the Lord after His resurrection is reflected in **John 20:19-20**! Christ's message of love and authenticity is the only thing that makes sense! I was inspired to write a song of Christ's reality! It is called "The Reality of Our Lord."

Key Verse: John 20:19-20 — "On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord."

Focus Statement: Over the course of walking the road of life centered in Christ, it has become abundantly clear how real Christ is and how alive we can be through Him, guided by the Spirit—His resurrection and message of authentic love is the only thing that makes sense.

Reflection Questions:

- How has Christ's reality become more clear and tangible to you as you've walked with Him over time?
- What would it have been like to be one of the disciples seeing the risen Lord for the first time, and how does His resurrection prove His reality today?
- In what ways can you live more authentically for Christ, reflecting His message of love to those around you?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: The Reality of Our Lord (Song Motivation)!

41. Jesus (Song Motivation)

Jesus!

I reflect, in my physical weariness this morning, how awesome our Lord is! Jesus, you are the answer to the question. You are always on my mind! You are the way, the truth, and the life!

I wrote the song "Jesus" as He is the way and is with us and will never abandon us!

Key Verse: John 14:6 — "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

Focus Statement: In physical weariness and every circumstance, Jesus is the answer to every question, always on our minds, the way, the truth, and the life—and He will never abandon us.

Reflection Questions:

- When you're physically weary or emotionally drained, how does remembering that Jesus is "the answer" change your perspective?
- In what area of your life do you need to more fully embrace Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life?
- How does the promise that Jesus will never abandon you give you strength to face today's challenges?

God bless you and your families,

Mike



Original reflection image: Jesus (Song Motivation)!

42. The Lord's Prayer (Song Motivation)

The Prayer That Always Works! A Great Quiet Time Focus!

There have been many times I did not know what to say in prayer! Many things impacted this. Not feeling well, being distracted by events of the day, being upset over something—these are just a few examples!

This is why I am so grateful for our Lord's guidance in prayer. The "Lord's Prayer!"

It is amazing how this prayer always works to connect with God!

My Song Version!

There was a melody that I came up with that stuck in my head, and lyrics evaded me until God gave me the lyrics!

Key Verse: Matthew 6:9-13 — "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.' For thine is the kingdom and the glory and the power, forever—Amen."

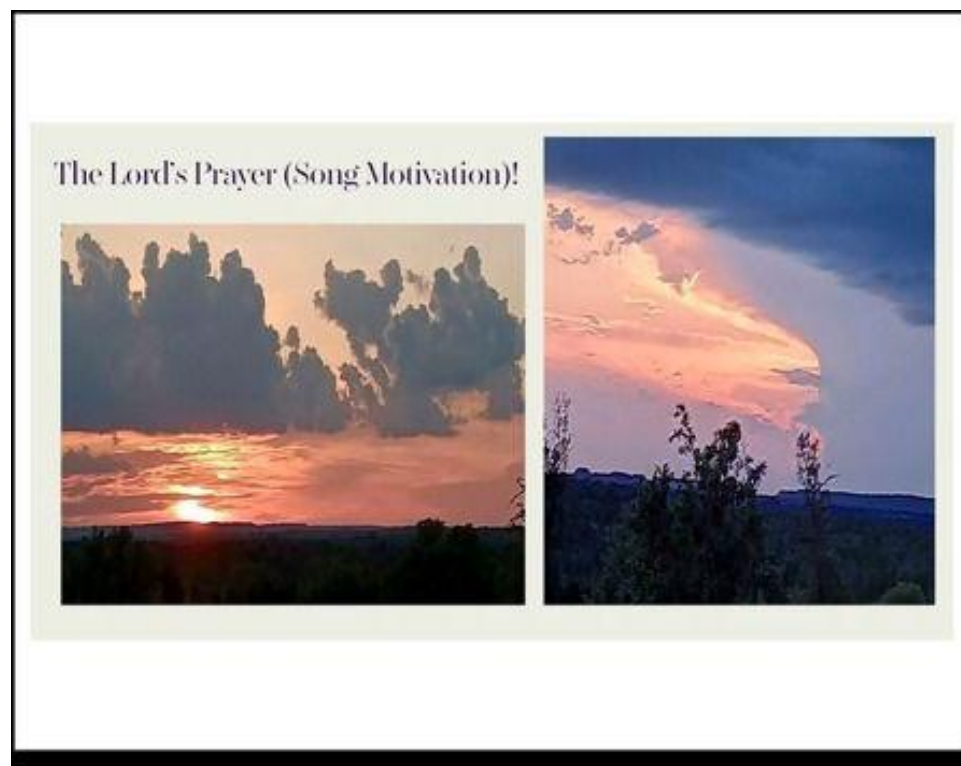
Focus Statement: When we don't know what to say in prayer—whether from not feeling well, being distracted, or being upset—the Lord's Prayer provides a reliable format that always works to connect us with God.

Reflection Questions:

- When you struggle to know what to pray, do you turn to the Lord's Prayer as a guide and starting point?
- Which phrase of the Lord's Prayer speaks most powerfully to your current situation—God's kingdom coming, daily provision, forgiveness, or deliverance from evil?
- How can you use the Lord's Prayer not just as words to recite but as a framework for authentic, heartfelt communion with God?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: The Lord's Prayer (Song Motivation)!

43. What If

Truly reflecting on Jesus's power and authority, all you can do is say wow!

What if we witnessed Jesus do His healing?

We hear about what Jesus did, but do we really understand what Jesus did?

True Reflection!

As I go into my 9th round of chemo, the words "Trust and Obey" ring in my ears! Ministry for God's kingdom must be the priority! Reflecting on what Jesus was healing and how often He did it is mind-boggling? Leprosy, blindness, lameness, bringing the dead to life... Knowing the medical ramifications of what He did could not really be understood for that time! Basically, restoring folks at the cellular level and much more!

It is easy to casually just say Jesus healed people but let us truly reflect when we witness—JESUS HEALED MANY PEOPLE! Even the secular leaders of the time acknowledged what Jesus did! This is such a powerful reflection of Jesus's authority and provides undeniable truth in history that Jesus is who He says He is!

Key Verse: Luke 7:21-22 — "At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, 'Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.'"

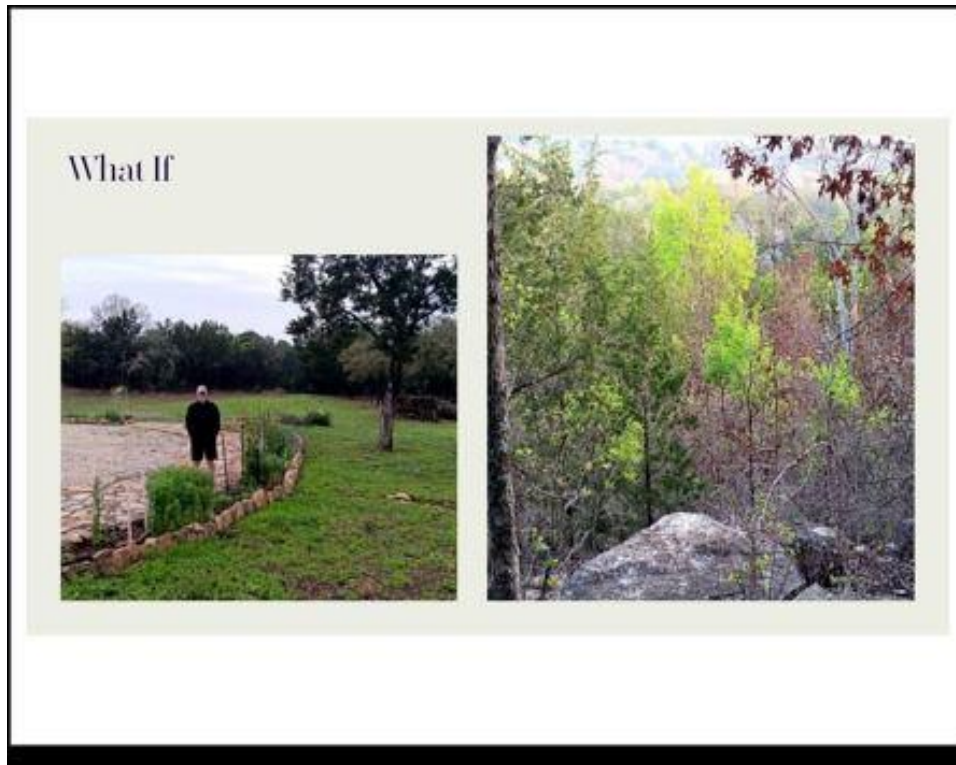
Focus Statement: As I go into my 9th round of chemo, truly reflecting on Jesus's healing power—restoring people at the cellular level and beyond—reveals His undeniable authority and provides powerful historical proof that Jesus is who He says He is.

Reflection Questions:

- How does understanding the medical complexity of Jesus's healings—restoring people at the cellular level—deepen your faith in His divine power?
- What does it mean for you personally that Jesus has authority over disease, death, and every physical ailment?
- As you face your own health challenges or those of loved ones, how can you trust and obey Jesus more fully, knowing His power and authority?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: What If

44. Ouch

Believe it or not, I was thinking about the movie ET for this morning's message! Was thinking about life for all believers with so many facing pain and issues in our lives! My own body reminds me more than I like lately!

As I tap my own chest and look to God, sometimes I just have to say Ouch!

Making the Best of It as We Walk Through Our Valley!

Our Great and Dependable Comfort!

The most wonderful thing about my trial is knowing God is using me and understands mine and everyone else's issues! It is more apparent to me now that He is always with me. My point in all of this is to let us always keep God in focus even through our pain, and we will receive eternal comfort and see the wonders of His plan as we come through our trials!

Key Verse: Romans 8:22-23 — "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies."

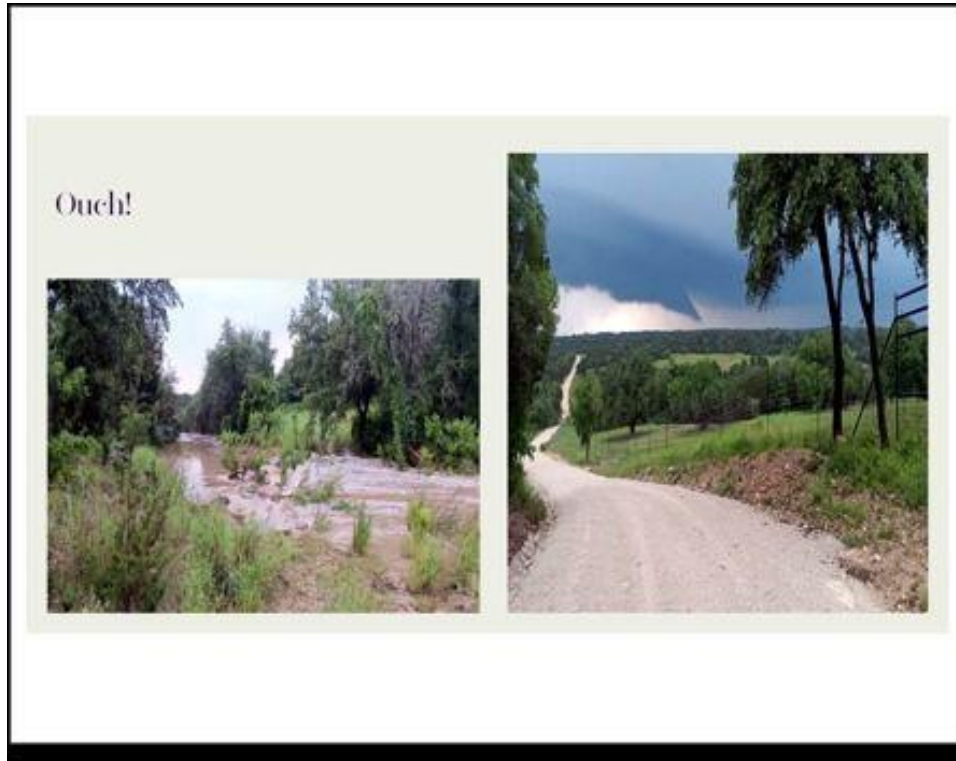
Focus Statement: Even when we must say "Ouch" because of pain and trials, the most wonderful thing is knowing God is using us, understands our issues, and is always with us—if we keep Him in focus through our pain, we'll receive eternal comfort and see the wonders of His plan.

Reflection Questions:

- What pain or trial are you facing right now that makes you want to say "Ouch," and how can you keep God in focus through it?
- How does knowing that God understands your issues and is using your trial for His purposes bring you comfort?
- What "wonders of His plan" have you seen emerge from past trials that you walked through with God?

God bless you and your families, my brothers.

Mike



Original reflection image: Ouch!

45. Where Am I and How Did I End Up Here?

Where am I? Did you ever have that question ring in your mind while driving? I know I have had it ring in my ears, but as "where are we," and it is usually Kim asking the question because I was stubborn and did not even look at Google Maps for directions! I thought I knew where I was going! I remember one time when I was driving home to West Virginia I ended up in downtown Indianapolis because I did not consult the map! It was not a good part of the city! You know this when you look around and start locking the doors!

Where Am I:

Just like in life, we need a good copilot to intercede on the road for us, we need God's Spirit to intercede for us when seeking guidance from God through prayer! Sometimes, we have to ask God, "Where am I—I don't know the way?" Please, Spirit, intercede as I need help to get on the right road!

Key Verse: Romans 8:26-27 — "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God."

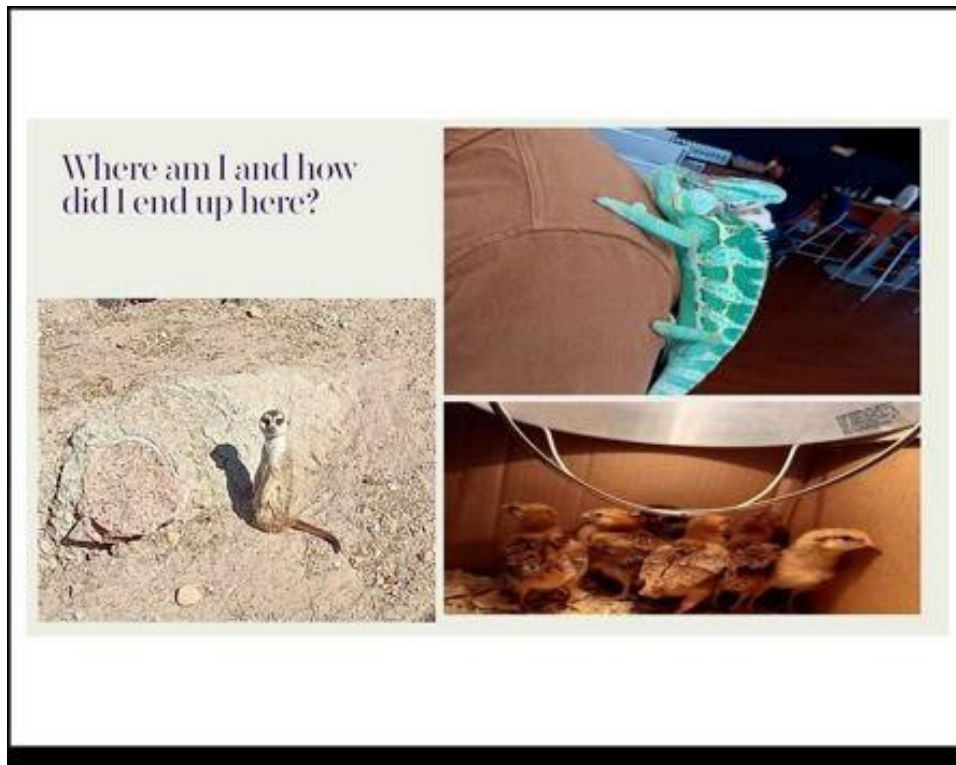
Focus Statement: Just as we need a good copilot to intercede when we're lost on the road, we need God's Spirit to intercede for us when seeking guidance through prayer—sometimes we have to ask God, "Where am I? I don't know the way."

Reflection Questions:

- In what area of your life do you feel lost right now, needing to ask God, "Where am I and how did I end up here?"
- How can you be more intentional about inviting the Holy Spirit to intercede for you when you don't know what to pray?
- What "map" (Scripture, wise counsel, prayer) have you been too stubborn to consult that could help you find your way?

God bless you and your families!

Mike



Original reflection image: Where am I and how did I end up here?

46. Freedom

Now you know I could not do the squirrel video I sent yesterday without a message! We caught him in a cage for stealing food! The message is simple. We were once captive to sin, but in Christ, we have been set free and no longer are under the penalty of death!

Slightly like the little guy, who will be set free in a better place today, we have been set free to a much better life in Christ! We now have a much better life in freedom through Christ! Let us continue to grow and enjoy the blessings and promises we now share in our faith!

Galatians 5:13 — "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."

2 Corinthians 3:17 — "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

John 8:31-32 — "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'"

Key Verse: Galatians 5:1 — "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."

Focus Statement: Just as a captured squirrel is set free to a better place, we were once captive to sin but through Christ have been set free from the penalty of death—now we live in the freedom and blessings of faith.

Reflection Questions:

- How does understanding your freedom in Christ change the way you approach daily temptations and struggles?
- Are you using your freedom to serve others humbly in love, or have you allowed it to become an excuse for selfish living?
- What specific area of your life still feels captive to sin, and how can you embrace the freedom Christ has already won for you?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Freedom!

47. I Need To

Too often, we tell ourselves these three words for so many things that need to be done! Let us avoid them, especially when it comes to our faith! The saying "don't put off for tomorrow what you can do today" is especially important when it comes to our walk with Christ! There are definitely times I do not feel like doing what needs to be done in my walk! Like quiet times, encouraging others, prayer walks, service and support of church activities, prayer, and so much more! I can keep going!

The key thing to remember is that love is not always about feelings—it is more about action! I know we can't do everything, and there is a balance of our time in life, but there are key actions we should always strive to make priority! I mentioned several of them earlier! What I have learned is that through our actions the good feelings like love, hope, peace... will come!!!

We must not give up but press forward and do not let the words "I need to" slip out when it comes to key actions in our faith! He has renewed us through his spirit, so let us press forward to do what is good!

Titus 3:5-7 — "He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."

Key Verse: Titus 3:8 — "I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good."

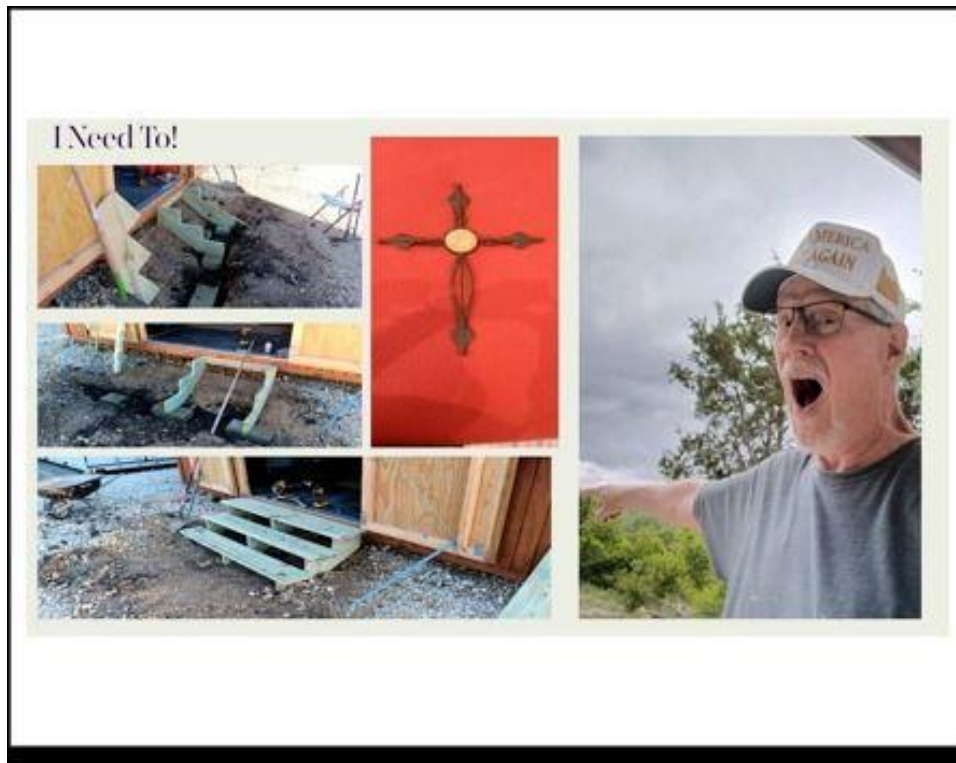
Focus Statement: We often tell ourselves "I need to" about our faith walk, but love is action, not just feeling—we must press forward in quiet times, prayer, service, and fellowship, trusting that good feelings will follow our faithful actions.

Reflection Questions:

- What spiritual disciplines have you been putting off with "I need to" instead of making them a priority today?
- How have you experienced good feelings (love, hope, peace) following faithful actions even when you didn't feel like taking those actions?
- What one key action in your faith walk can you commit to doing consistently this week, regardless of how you feel?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: I Need To!

48. The Light of Prayer

Sending this quiet time this evening as not sure what my state will be in the morning!

I was feeling kinda worn the other day and walked out onto my porch! It was hot and the sun was bright! I sat in one of the chairs and looked out on the field and trees below and just asked God for peace!

The Light of Prayer:

God answered! I could really feel his peace in the moment, and all distractions fled! I looked at the tree leaves nearby, and there was a shimmering light on all of them!! Truly "The Light of Prayer."

The enemy distracts, but God delivers!

This brings to mind our prayer times every 1st and 3rd Sundays before Sunday School! This time has been very special to me! I have been blessed to pray for others and to be prayed for. Pastor and Gary, I have really appreciated these last weeks!! These have truly been "Light of Prayer" moments!!

Acts 1:14 — "They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers."

Acts 2:42 — "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Key Verse: Philippians 4:6-7 — "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

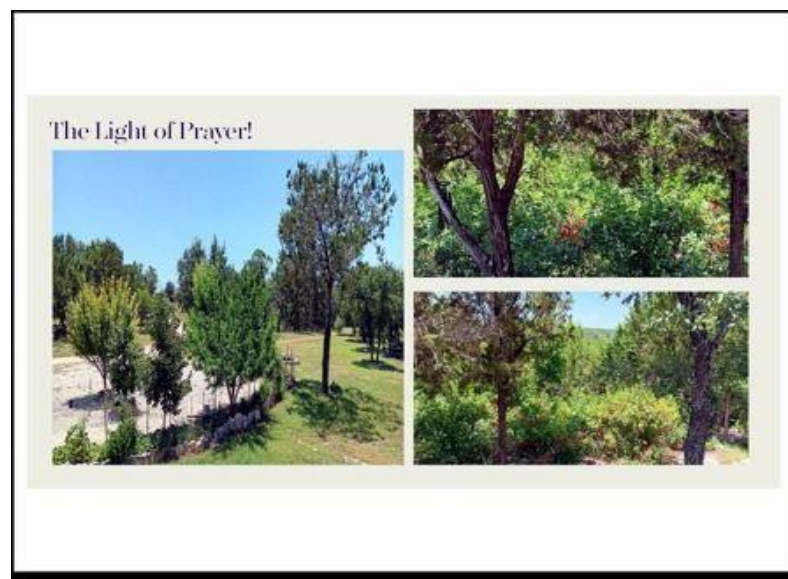
Focus Statement: When feeling worn and asking God for peace, He answered with a tangible sense of His presence and shimmering light—the prayer times at church have been especially powerful "Light of Prayer" moments of blessing.

Reflection Questions:

- When was the last time you experienced God's tangible peace in response to prayer, and what distractions did His presence drive away?
- How can you make prayer times with other believers a more consistent priority in your spiritual life?
- Who in your church community needs you to pray for them this week, and when will you reach out to them?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: The Light of Prayer!

49. Live Empowered

Imagine God's Spirit hovering over the face of the earth... Everything is dark and without form until God breathes out the words, "Let there be light." In an instant, everything changes. The light pierces the darkness, and what was once invisible is now seen clearly. This is what God's Spirit does. He is always near—bringing light to what was once covered in darkness. The Holy Spirit is available to anyone who becomes a follower of Jesus, empowering them to live out the calling God has placed on them. And what has Jesus called His followers to do? To love God, love others, and make disciples.

Jesus' first disciples wanted Him to stay and restore the kingdom of Israel. But in Acts 1, Jesus hints that His Kingdom wasn't what they were imagining. His Kingdom would continue throughout history by the power of the Holy Spirit and the continual testimony of His disciples. The Holy Spirit is a gift from our heavenly Father that helps us live in a way that honors God and reflects His character. When we allow the Holy Spirit to shape us, He transforms the ways we think and act. It's the Holy Spirit who empowers us to make Jesus known throughout the world.

For this reason, living a Spirit-filled life requires intentionally seeking God every day. It's through intentional time with God that we discover how to make disciples. Then, as we go through life, the Holy Spirit will help us joyfully and boldly make Jesus known to the people He places around us. He will give us the insight, discernment, and courage we need to show Jesus' love to others. So right now, take a few moments and thank Jesus for the gift of His Holy Spirit. Then, invite the Holy Spirit to come and change the way you think and act. Spend some time in silent reflection, and allow the Holy Spirit to bring to mind one or two people that you can share Jesus' love with today.

Key Verse: Acts 1:8 — "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses."

Focus Statement: Just as God's Spirit brought light to darkness at creation, the Holy Spirit empowers us to live out our calling to love God, love others, and make disciples—through intentional time with God, we discover how to boldly share Jesus' love with those around us.

Reflection Questions:

- How are you intentionally seeking God each day to live a Spirit-filled life that honors Him?
- Who has the Holy Spirit brought to mind that needs to experience Jesus' love through you this week?
- In what specific way do you need the Holy Spirit to transform your thinking or actions so you can more boldly make Jesus known?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Live Empowered!

50. Our Fortress

Simple message on this Lord's day!

He surrounds us with his protection and Love!

God is our help in time of need, and he is always with us! Though turmoil seems to surround us these days, be encouraged brothers this day and every day that the Lord walks at your side!

My prayer is that you be filled with healing, hope, and peace!!!

Key Verse: Psalms 46:7 — "The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress."

Psalms 46:6 — "Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts."

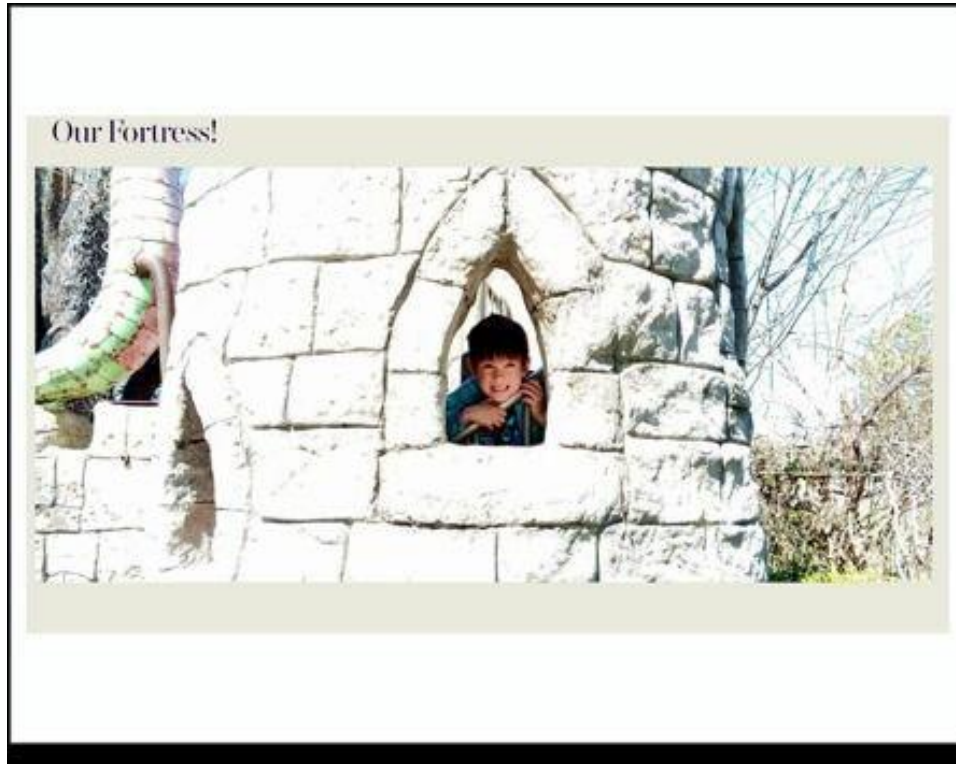
Focus Statement: God surrounds us with His protection and love, always helping us in times of need—though turmoil surrounds us, we can be encouraged knowing the Lord walks at our side every day.

Reflection Questions:

- What turmoil or challenge are you facing right now that requires you to take refuge in God as your fortress?
- How does knowing that "the Lord walks at your side" change your perspective on the difficulties surrounding you?
- In what practical way can you remind yourself today that God is your help and protection in times of need?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Our Fortress!

51. Truths

Figured I would do a quiet time this evening as I will be busy in the morning! Memorial Day made me think of my service time in Korea!

I remember when I was in Korea, there was a truth about what the US did for the Korean people during the Korean War!! You could see the appreciation on the older generations' faces! There was such real gratitude!

For the younger generation, this appreciation was absent!

I always wondered why such a separation in attitudes?

Ultimately, the answer was in truth! The younger generation simply did not receive the truth that was passed down and take it to heart!

Truths:

Let us reflect Christ!

My key point is that we have the ultimate truths to a good life and eternal salvation in Christ! If we allow these truths to be choked out and do a poor job of passing them on, we can't expect the next generation to spread the most important truths of all very well! Let us reflect God's Truths with love and passion and work diligently to help the next generation understand their importance!!!

Key Verse: John 8:31-32 — "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Focus Statement: Just as younger Koreans lost appreciation for America's sacrifice because truth wasn't passed down, we must diligently pass on the ultimate truths of Christ to the next generation with love and passion, or they won't understand their importance.

Reflection Questions:

- What truths about Christ and His salvation are you actively passing down to the next generation in your family or church?
- How can you demonstrate the importance of God's truth through your life, not just your words?
- Who is one young person you can intentionally mentor this month, sharing with them the life-changing truths of the Gospel?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Truths!

52. Simplicity

Sometimes, we just need to keep how we respond to others simple! The action needed may not be simple, but knowing how to act should be! There is a modern-day abbreviation that sets our standard for us!

In all situations, when responding or caring for others, let us simply ask, what would Jesus do (WWJD)? Can't go wrong with this!

Knowledge:

The only other thing I would add is Learn about our Lord through the word! We can't know WWJD if we don't know WWJD through his word!!

Key Verse: Philippians 2:5 — "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."

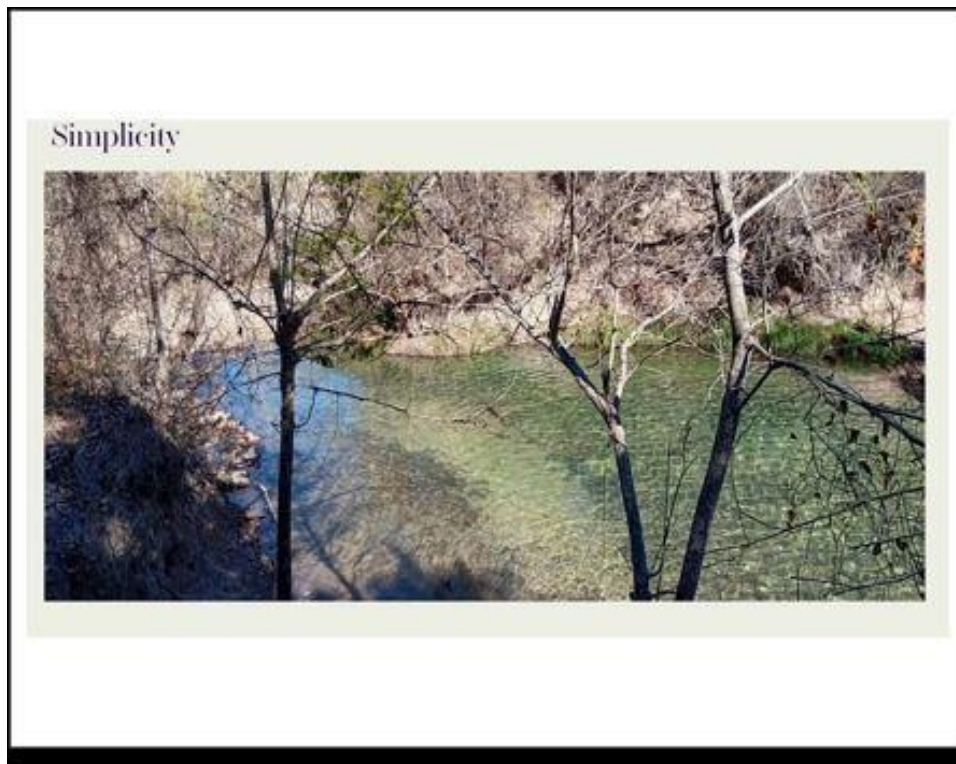
Focus Statement: Sometimes we need to keep our response to others simple—by asking "What would Jesus do?" in every situation and learning about Him through His Word, we can't go wrong.

Reflection Questions:

- In what recent situation did you respond to someone in a way that didn't reflect Christ's character, and how could asking "WWJD" have changed your response?
- How consistently are you spending time in God's Word to learn what Jesus would actually do in various situations?
- What specific relationship in your life needs you to apply the "WWJD" principle this week?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Simplicity

53. Time

For most of us, the first thing we look at in the morning is our clock! Sometimes, smashing the clock comes to mind. As we rub our eyes, the next thing that usually comes to mind is our schedule! It could involve work, family, key meetings, or projects for the day! Most of it wrapped up in routine!

I felt moved in my quiet time to think about time as a key part of our giving and ways we can give and help propagate God's truths and our faith as part of our routine! There are many ways you can give and do it in our Lord's name so folks know where it is coming from! Pray about how we can give some of our time as part of our daily routines back to God!!

Always remember, you can't out give God!!

Also!

Though giving our Tithe is very important and a key part of the life blood of our church, giving of our time can be just as important!

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 9:7 — "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

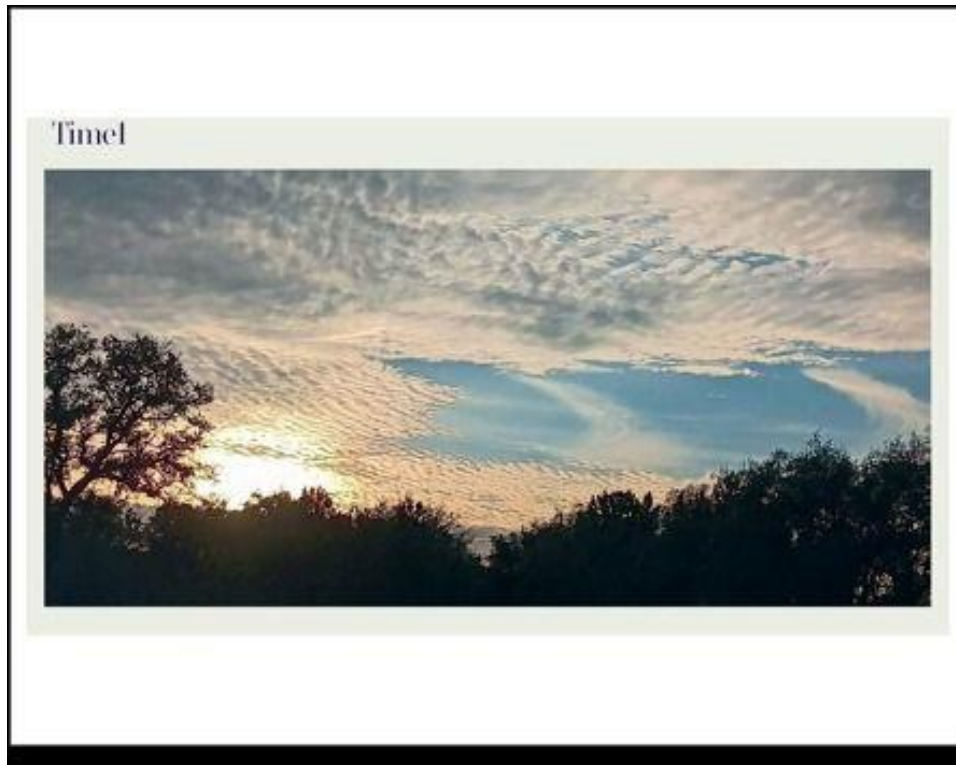
Focus Statement: The first thing we look at each morning is our clock, but we should consider how to give some of our time back to God as part of our daily routine—while tithing is vital, giving our time can be just as important.

Reflection Questions:

- What portion of your daily routine could you dedicate to serving God and others, and what would that look like practically?
- How can you give your time in ways that clearly demonstrate it's being done in the Lord's name?
- Are you giving your time to God cheerfully, or do you view it as an obligation or burden?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Time

54. New Song for a New Day

God is worthy of our praise and awe of him!

Let us reflect on the day we as Christians step into God's eternal light and reflect on his power to do exactly what he said he would do!! Knowing our best times are ahead, thanks to God's promise of salvation, let's live life in all situations with joy and hope!!

I'm working on a new song!

Key Verse: Psalms 98:1 — "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things."

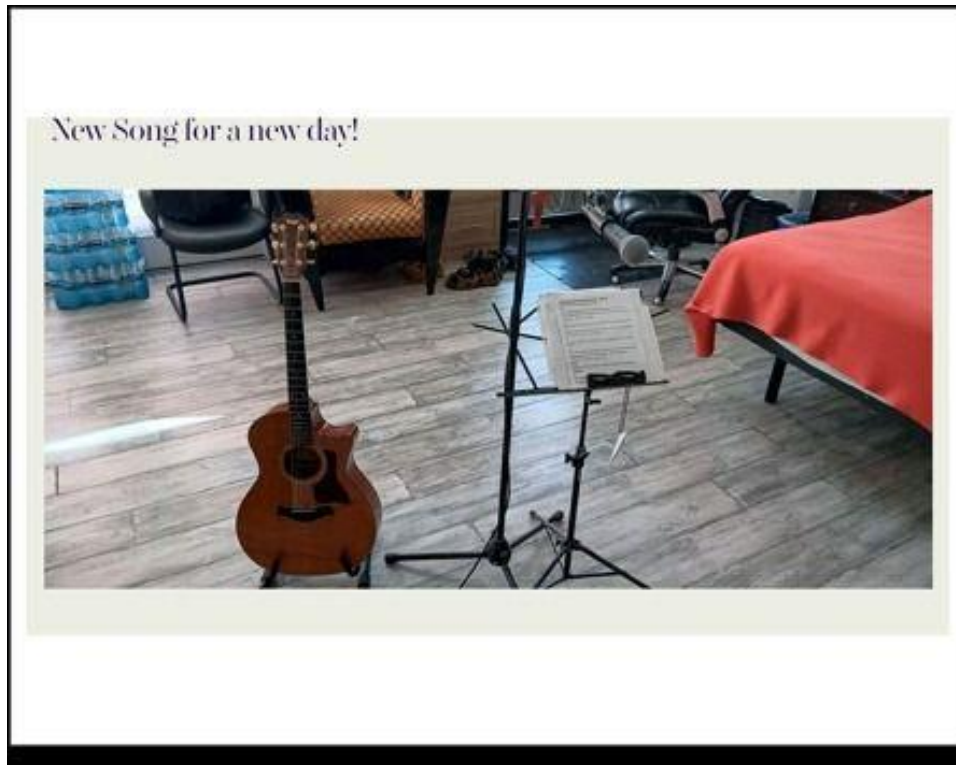
Focus Statement: God is worthy of our praise and awe—knowing our best times are ahead through His promise of salvation, let's live with joy and hope in every situation.

Reflection Questions:

- How does knowing that your "best times are ahead" in eternity change the way you approach today's challenges?
- In what specific situation do you need to choose joy and hope today, trusting in God's promises?
- What "new song" of praise can you offer God this week for the marvelous things He has done in your life?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: New Song for a new day!

55. I've Got That Pruned Feeling

As we walk with our Lord, ever look back on things that used to matter that really don't matter anymore or take much less of a priority? Things that centered around worldly ambitions or stuff you always wanted or vacation trips you wanted to go on? What I have found as I allow God to lead and prune is a trail of stuff behind me that really did not make me happy! I look back and wonder why I wasted so much time? I have to continually search and ask God to guide my priority and time! There is so much reward as we focus on the fruit of the spirit and allow God's word to lead us! We could write a library on the benefits!

Key Verse: John 15:2 — "He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."

Focus Statement: As we walk with the Lord, we look back and see a trail of worldly ambitions and stuff that didn't make us happy—allowing God to prune brings freedom and reward as we focus on the fruit of the Spirit.

Reflection Questions:

- What worldly ambitions or possessions are you still clinging to that God might be calling you to release?
- Looking back, what things did you once think were essential that you now realize were distractions from what truly matters?
- How can you actively invite God to prune your life this week, trusting that His pruning will make you more fruitful?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: I've got that pruned feeling!

56. Strength and Courage

Simple message on strength and courage today!

I pray that we be strong and courageous today and every day as the Lord is with us!

Isaiah 41:10 — "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Key Verse: Joshua 1:9 — "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Focus Statement: Simple message on strength and courage—the Lord is with us, so we can be strong and courageous today and every day.

Reflection Questions:

- What situation are you facing today that requires you to be strong and courageous, trusting that God is with you?
- How does knowing that God will "uphold you with his righteous right hand" give you confidence to face your fears?
- Who in your life needs to hear this message of strength and courage today, and how can you encourage them?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Strength and Courage!

57. Purity of Heart

Little tired this morning and feeling better now and felt led to add to today's message!!

Purity of Heart!

As I was feeling a little foggy today post treatment, I prayed for some clarity during my prayer walk!

God brought purity of heart to mind in the midst of my prayers!

With so many non-biblical and immoral influences these days it becomes difficult to keep morality and peace in focus! Especially when you're feeling weak!

God is Faithful!!!

God always comes through with consistency through prayer and guidance via his word! So my message for this evening is a pure heart centered in the purity of God's way!

God is awesome!!!

Much love, brothers!

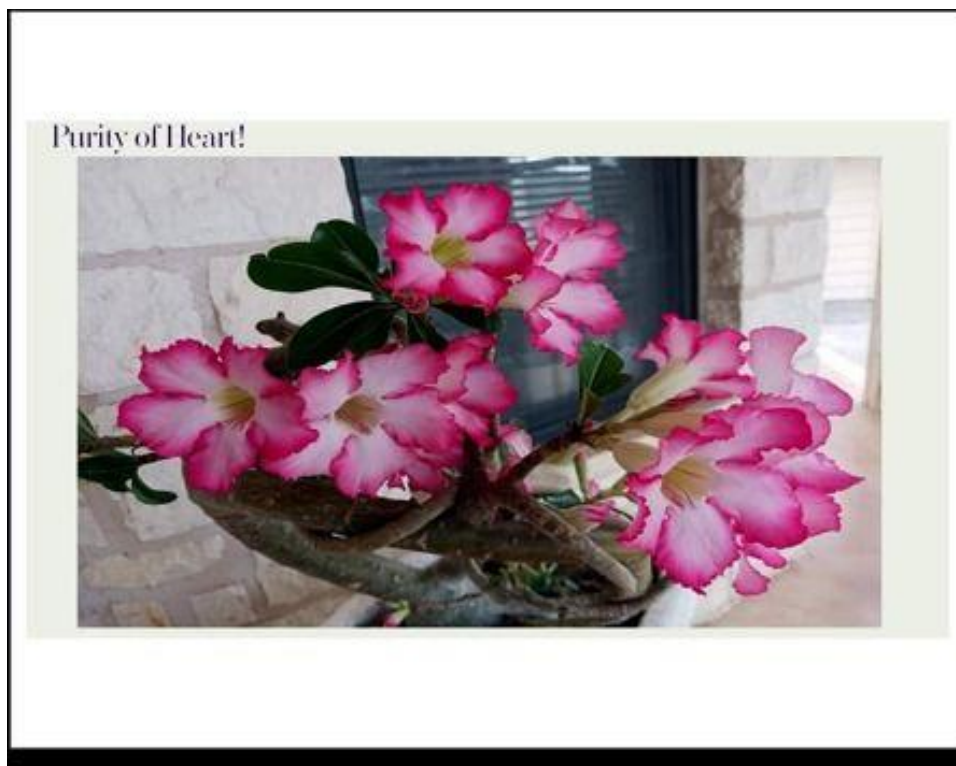
Key Verse: Psalms 51:10 — "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Focus Statement: Feeling foggy after treatment, praying for clarity brought God's reminder about purity of heart—with so many non-biblical influences, we need God's faithfulness to keep morality and peace in focus, especially when feeling weak.

Reflection Questions:

- What non-biblical influences are making it difficult for you to maintain purity of heart and peace of mind?
- How can you more consistently turn to prayer and God's Word when you're feeling weak or foggy?
- What specific area of your life needs God to "create a pure heart" and "renew a steadfast spirit" right now?

Mike



Original reflection image: Purity of Heart!

58. 100 Truths for a Lie

We have heard this expression for quite a while that the enemy will tell 100 truths to get us to accept one lie!

Our enemy at work!

Like—many years ago, that "separation of church and state" meant we could not have prayer or God in public schools!! Boy, did we make a mistake on this one!! This was about the time that Darwinism, the biggest lie of all, was public school gospel! FYI—separation of church and state was for keeping the state out of the church! Not the other way around! As if... As if you would think

it could not get more twisted, I made the mistake of changing from my news channel during prime time to see one of our leaders congratulate a guy, dressed as a girl, for pummeling a bunch of girls in a track meet! Quickly changing the channel to a bearded guy in women's clothing and make-up dancing in front of a bunch of children! It took me a while to get that picture out of my head!!

Anyway...

Simple reality we should always be aware of!

God already has the victory through Christ!

My thoughts... I hated to bring up the enemies' lies at work in a quiet time, but unfortunately, these are the times in which we live! Let us push back against the enemies' lies and continue to be part of God's solution!

Don't accept the lie!

My point in all of this is that we know God does protect us but must remember that evil is still in this world. We must lean on our Lord to fight back against the enemies schemes and remember that there are worldly influences that seek to stop us or make us ineffective!

1 John 5:19 — "We know that we are children of God and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one."

Galatians 5:7-8 — "You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you."

Key Verse: Galatians 5:9 — "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough."

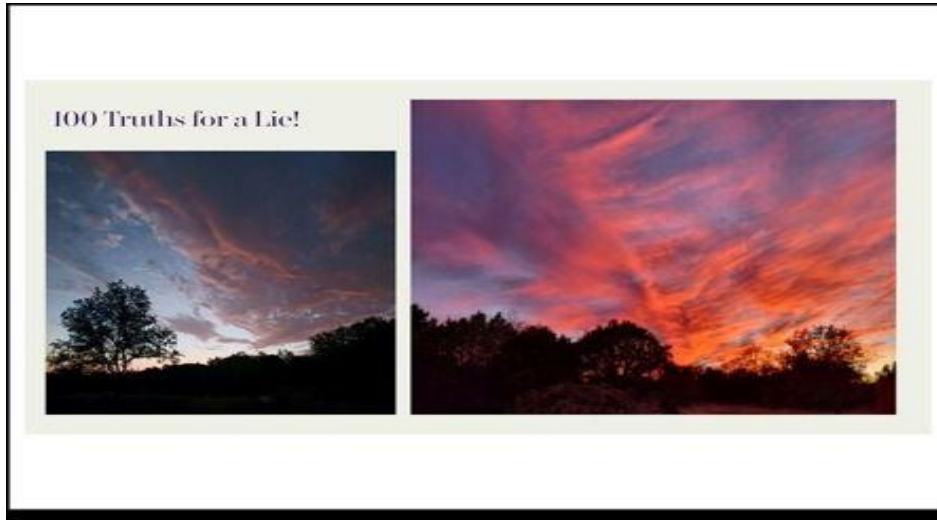
Focus Statement: The enemy tells 100 truths to get us to accept one lie—from "separation of church and state" to modern immorality, we must push back against the enemy's schemes and be part of God's solution, remembering that God already has the victory through Christ.

Reflection Questions:

- What "little yeast" (small compromise or lie) have you allowed into your life that could work through your entire faith walk?
- How can you more actively push back against worldly lies and be part of God's solution in your community?
- What truth from God's Word do you need to stand firm on this week, even when the culture pressures you to compromise?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: 100 Truths for a Lie!

59. Our Center

Not anything we do but everything God does!

I woke this morning thinking of our church, my situation, and the many needs but also the many blessings we have! I read through the Beatitudes and could feel God's hand of peace and comfort! It's not about anything I have done but everything God has done!

Our Center:

God is our center! Think about this and be blessed in this day and every day!

Matthew 5:3-11 — "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

Key Verse: Matthew 5:3 — "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

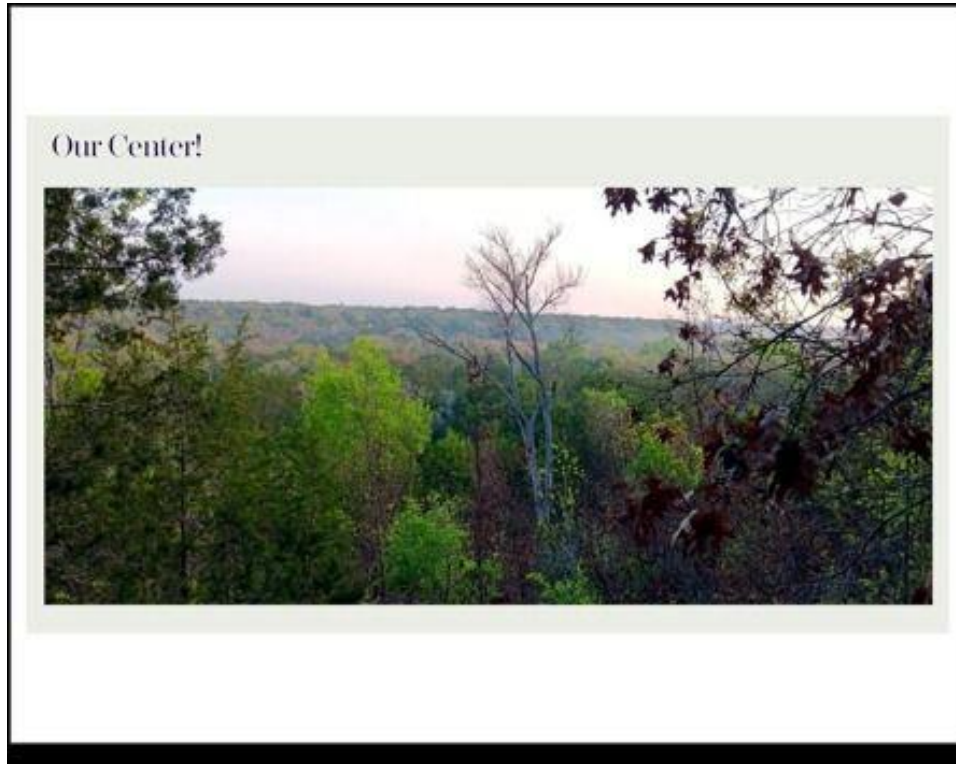
Focus Statement: Waking to think about church, personal situations, and many needs, reading the Beatitudes brought God's peace—it's not about anything we've done but everything God has done, for God is our center.

Reflection Questions:

- When you think about your needs and challenges, do you focus on what you must do or on what God has already done?
- Which of the Beatitudes speaks most powerfully to your current situation, and why?
- How can you make God your center today rather than allowing circumstances, worries, or your own efforts to take His place?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Our Center!

60. Dependable?

Ever have one of those projects that does not go well, but you know you need to get it done? My new shed project became one of those! Slight variances were giving me problems getting the roof on. After fighting with it, I stopped for the day as the sun was cooking me. The last thing I wanted to do was start working on it again, but Kim really wanted to finish it! Today, after thinking of excuses to say no, I prayed and went out and fought with it and got it done!

Anyway, it brought to mind the parable of the two sons!

Dependable:

The gist of this is just talk, and good words will not cut it. Actions and doing what is right in God's sight, even if our words don't align sometimes, is right!

The expression that comes to mind is:

Talk is cheap—do what is right!!

Matthew 21:28-30 — "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' 'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go."

Key Verse: Matthew 21:31 — "Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

Focus Statement: A frustrating shed project taught the lesson of the two sons—good words and talk won't cut it; actions and doing what is right in God's sight, even when our words don't align, is what matters.

Reflection Questions:

- In what area of your life are you more like the son who says "I will" but doesn't follow through with action?
- What task or commitment have you been avoiding that God is calling you to complete, even though you don't feel like doing it?
- How can you become more dependable in your walk with Christ, ensuring your actions match your words?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Dependable!

61. Walking on the Air

My new song I will play next week! Though I would share the 1st verse, chorus, and bridge!

God is worthy of our praise!!!

In 1st Thessalonians highlights the wonder of being lifted up and meeting Jesus in the air!!

The rapture!

We can get the gist of this in our daily walk if we put the Lord 1st in our lives!!

Walking On The Air:

Verse 1: I've been walking on the air every night and every day—as I hear you through my prayers and lifted by the words you say!

Chorus: Holy father, I am so alive in you! Every day and night, Lord, I can see what's right to do!

Bridge: Lord, you hear me when I call, and you lift me when I fall! Lord, you are the light and the answer for us all!

Key Verse: 1 Thessalonians 4:17 — "After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

Focus Statement: A new song about being lifted up to meet Jesus in the air—we can experience this wonder in our daily walk if we put the Lord first in our lives.

Reflection Questions:

- How does anticipating the rapture and meeting Jesus in the air affect your daily priorities and choices?
- In what ways do you experience being "lifted up" by God's presence and words in your current walk with Him?
- What would it look like for you to put the Lord first in your life today, experiencing the joy of "walking on the air"?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Walking on The Air!

62. Silly Rabbit

Growing up and watching "Bugs Bunny" I believe we all have heard the expression "Silly Rabbit"! Anyway, the other day, as I was herding the chickens back into the yard, I looked up, and not 10 feet away, nibbling on grass, was a wild rabbit! He just looked up and started to eat grass again. We actually are never really very aggressive with them, and they have grown to trust us! It's amazing how God uses the simplest examples to teach us life lessons!

Trust:

Let us always work to be trustworthy! This way, people can count on us to be true to our words! Also, let us always trust in the Lord, for he is always true to his word!

Key Verse: Proverbs 3:5-6 — "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."

Focus Statement: A wild rabbit trusting us enough to eat grass nearby teaches that we should always work to be trustworthy so people can count on us, and we should always trust in the Lord who is always true to His word.

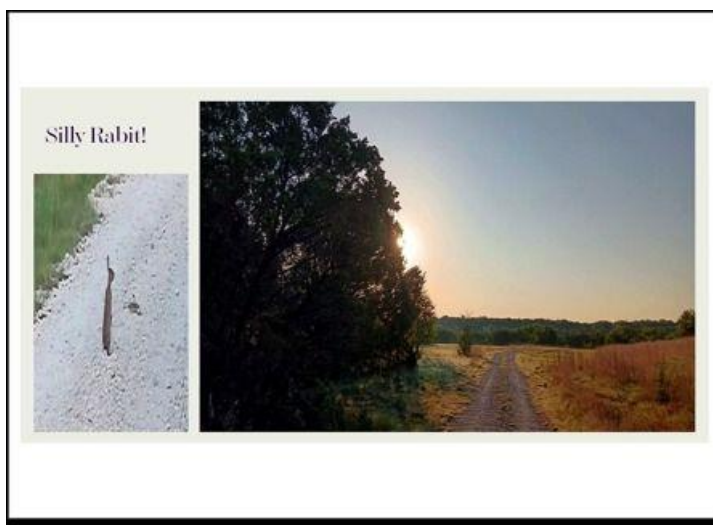
Luke 16:10 — "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your life do you need to become more trustworthy so others can count on you to be true to your word?
- Are you trusting in the Lord with all your heart, or are you leaning on your own understanding in certain situations?
- How can you demonstrate trustworthiness in small things this week, knowing that faithfulness in little leads to faithfulness in much?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Silly Rabbit!

63. Making God a Habit

When I think about any difficulties in life that I have and the ability to overcome them, the word "habit" comes to mind! My life has been extremely blessed! I have to honestly say that GROWTH in my faith and truly seeing the awesome perfection of Love, represented in our Lord, has given me the sight just to see how blessed we are as Christians! Even through great difficulties like cancer!

Making God a habit:

I have to add that what helps me better see the blessings God has given has been through making my relationship with him a habit! Good habit leads to growth!

Be motivated to pursue a good habit as we serve an awesome God that loves us and watches over us!

Key Verse: Isaiah 43:2 — "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you."

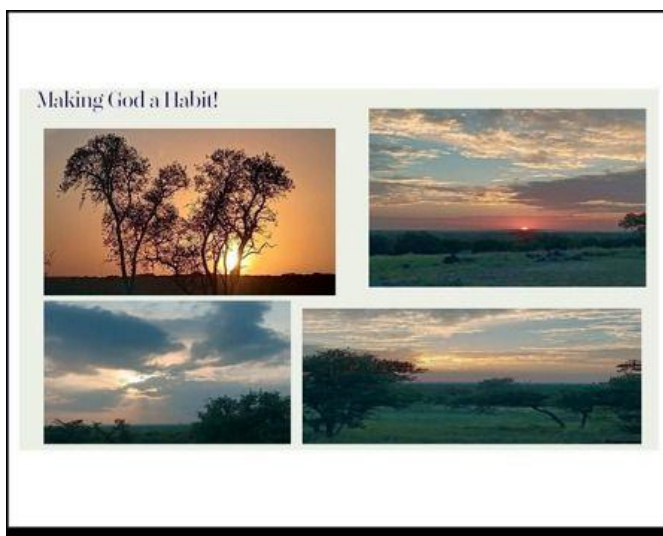
Focus Statement: Growth in faith and truly seeing God's perfect love has helped me see how blessed we are as Christians, even through cancer—making my relationship with God a habit has led to growth and the ability to see His blessings.

Reflection Questions:

- What daily habits have you developed that strengthen your relationship with God, and which ones need to become more consistent?
- How has making time with God a habit helped you see His blessings more clearly, even in difficult circumstances?
- What one spiritual habit can you commit to developing this week that will lead to growth in your faith?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Making God a Habit!

64. Be Chill but Not Cold

Watching all of the craziness these days can easily make us angry and bitter. Let us push back against this with all we have, and if it is not enough, ask the spirit for more strength!

When we see folks supporting lawlessness and immorality for the sake of power, let us pray for them. Let us chill out and not grow cold hearts because many will grow cold!

Let us chill but not be cold!

Key Verse: Matthew 24:12-13 — "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Focus Statement: Watching the craziness of lawlessness and immorality can make us angry and bitter—let us push back with prayer, chill out without growing cold hearts, and stand firm to the end.

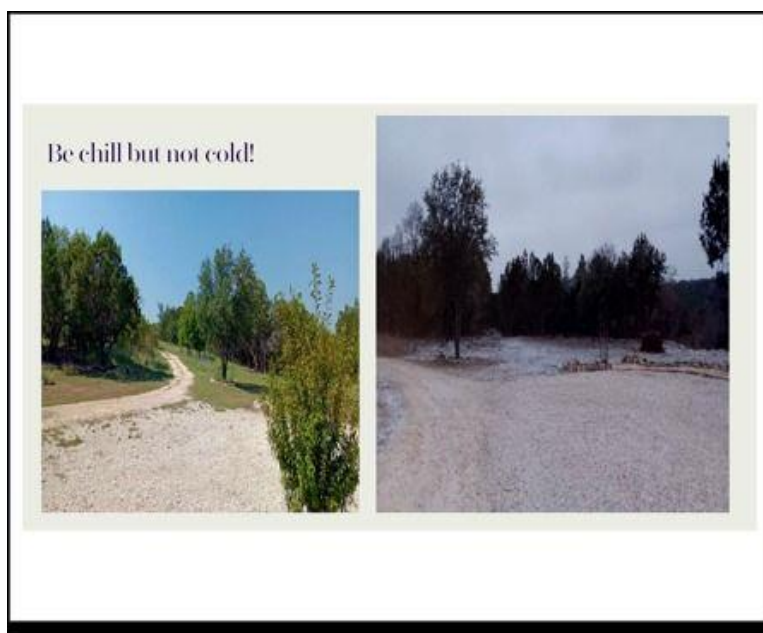
Matthew 24:10 — "At that time, many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other."

Reflection Questions:

- What current events or cultural trends are tempting you to become angry, bitter, or cold-hearted rather than prayerful and compassionate?
- How can you maintain a peaceful spirit ("be chill") while still standing firm for truth and righteousness?
- Who do you need to pray for this week instead of judging or becoming bitter toward them?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Be chill but not cold!

65. Watch Out for That Tree

As I was doing my prayer walk yesterday, God gave me another good message! I am about to tell my age, but when I was younger, there used to be a Kid's show called "George of the Jungle." It was a spoof on Tarzan! George would always fly into a tree while swinging through the forest!

Anyway, the message is that we need to be aware of the traps and snares that the enemy puts in front of us! The best way to do this is to be aware of the enemies traps by using the map God gave us, which can be found in his word!

Watch out for that tree:

Have you ever had someone grab your face with both hands and turn it in the direction of an event. The event can be good or bad! God will do this for us if we listen to him!

Key Verse: Psalms 121:3 — "He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber."

Focus Statement: Like George of the Jungle flying into trees, we need to be aware of the enemy's traps and snares—the best way is to use the map God gave us in His Word, trusting that He watches over us and won't let us slip.

Romans 8:28 — "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."

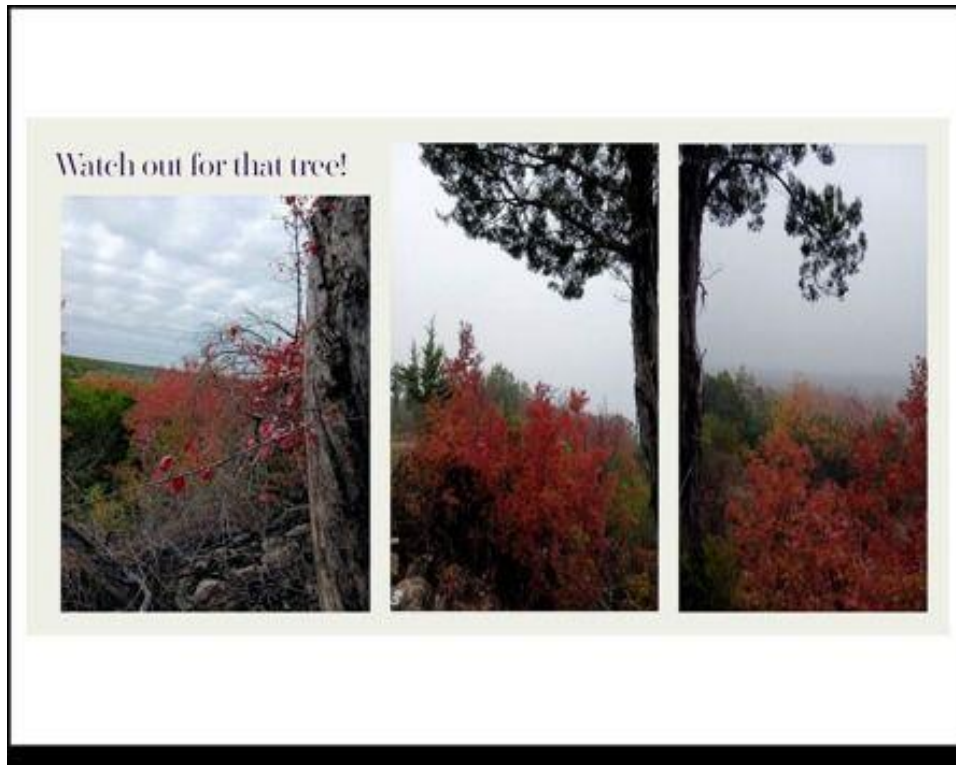
Jeremiah 29:11 — "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Reflection Questions:

- What "tree" (trap or snare) is the enemy placing in your path right now that you need to watch out for?
- How consistently are you using God's Word as your map to navigate life and avoid spiritual pitfalls?
- When has God "grabbed your face" and redirected your attention to something important you were missing?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Watch out for that tree!

66. When the Pieces Come Together

Kim and I have bought these 10,000 plus piece Thomas Kinkadee puzzles and worked on them for days to build! I love the Thomas Kinkadee paintings, but they are very expensive, so Kim and I compromise!

Once the puzzle is complete, Kim does an excellent job of gluing, flattening, and sealing them! Then we would take some plexiglass and a good frame with backing to complete them! You have to really look to tell that they are puzzles!

Anyway, reflecting on this, God gave me my quiet time!

When the pieces come together:

We had our men's bible study last night, and I was blessed to hear the feedback and growth in my brothers lives! Like the puzzles, I could see the pieces coming together!!

We are blessed with some authentic fellowship in our church!

Key Verse: Philippians 1:6 — "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Focus Statement: Building complex Thomas Kinkadee puzzles parallels seeing spiritual growth in our church community—at men's Bible study, I was blessed to see the pieces coming together in my brothers' lives through authentic fellowship.

2 Corinthians 3:18 — "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Romans 8:28 — "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."

Reflection Questions:

- What "pieces" of your spiritual life is God currently working to bring together into a complete picture?
- How have you seen growth and transformation in the lives of your brothers and sisters in Christ through authentic fellowship?
- What role can you play in helping others see their spiritual "pieces come together" through encouragement and discipleship?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: When the pieces come together!

67. Seeds of Light

I remember many years ago after recommitting my life to my faith, hearing about God having a plan to use each of us for the glory of his kingdom! He has given each of us gifts to do this. It took me a while to figure out mine were encouragement and discernment! Leading worship and seeing the impact the spirit had on God's people really brought this to light!

Seeds of Light:

It has become clear to me that these gifts were like seeds of glass filled with light! They represent the seeds of encouragement and life! As I reflected on this during my prayer walk yesterday, I believe we all have access to these seeds of life, and we all should press forward to plant these seeds and water them daily.

It is truly wonderful to see them take root in the lives of our brothers and sisters!

Key Verse: Matthew 13:23 — "But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Focus Statement: After recommitting my life to faith, I discovered my gifts of encouragement and discernment were like seeds of glass filled with light—we all have access to these seeds of life and should press forward to plant and water them daily.

Reflection Questions:

- What spiritual gifts has God given you that you can use to plant "seeds of light" in others' lives?
- Who needs you to plant a seed of encouragement or life in their heart this week?
- How can you be more intentional about watering the seeds you've already planted through continued prayer and support?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Seeds of Light!

68. Time

I woke this morning, thinking I'm not sure what my quiet time message would be? I usually have an idea inspired by God during my prayer walk on an event? Humm...

Quiet Time?

Quiet Time?

Quiet Time?

Then it struck me—Time?

Time:

I have actually thought a lot about time lately! My condition has helped with this focus! As a side note—

Don't wait for cancer to get you priorities right!

Anyway, I have come to believe that time is the most abused thing in our lives, especially in today's high-tech era! As I point this out, I have to look in the mirror 1st!

Looking in the mirror!

There are two other words that come to mind as I reflect on time—Transformation and Priority! At the heart of the matter, we do the things we don't want to do!! Paul states this in Romans 7:14-15!

Time:

So—let us be transformed and prioritize our time based on what God wants us to do! It is not natural, based on our sin nature, that transformation just happens! We can't just sit in our rooms after being saved and wait to get hit by God's lightning bolt to be transformed and get our priorities correct!

Prioritize—Engage!!

I have learned and have been tremendously blessed by engaging in my walk as God wants me to! Honestly, there are many times I do not want to engage! Anyway, what do I mean by "engage"?

1. Accept the truth in Christ!
2. Fellowship and mentoring!
 - Men's Bible study
 - Men's breakfast
 - Men's prayer time
 - Sunday School
 - Sunday Service
 - Church counsel Involvement
3. Personal time in God's Word!
4. Quiet Times
5. Prayer Walks
6. Stay connected with friends and family! Brothers and sisters!

7. Tithe
8. Worship
9. So much more

Being Transformed!

Transformation doesn't just happen. It is an ongoing process as we truly see who God is and love him more!! What I have learned is that the more I prioritize what God wants me to prioritize, the easier it gets and the more blessed I am!

Basically, what I am saying is—Give more time to God! You will not regret it!

Key Verse: Romans 12:2 — "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Matthew 6:33 — "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Colossians 3:2 — "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

Focus Statement: Time is the most abused thing in our lives, especially in today's high-tech era—transformation doesn't just happen; we must prioritize what God wants us to prioritize through fellowship, God's Word, prayer, worship, and service.

Reflection Questions:

- How are you currently "abusing" time by prioritizing things that don't align with God's will for your life?
- Which of the nine ways to "engage" listed above do you need to make more of a priority this week?
- What specific transformation do you need to pursue through intentional time with God rather than waiting for it to "just happen"?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Time

69. Chigger Dog

Our daughter came to visit yesterday while I was spending some time in the word! She had brought her dog Coco with her. Coco had been running around the property in the brush and had gotten dirty! As we visited for a while and were inside enjoying our conversations, I looked at the glass door on our front porch and saw a sad Coco staring back at me. She had been locked out due to dirt and Chiggers and needed to be cleaned! She had become a Chigger dog!

Be Clean!

This made me think of the healing power and salvation of Jesus, where he healed and restored people with leprosy! Folks who had been locked out of society!

Jesus not only healed them but saved them as well!

Perspective:

I believe many folks hear about the miracles our Lord performed and just casually speak of them! Think about it—he healed leprosy!! A nerve destroying and deforming disease and, more importantly, saved their souls!!!

What an awesome God we serve!!

Key Verse: Luke 5:13 — "Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' And immediately the leprosy left him."

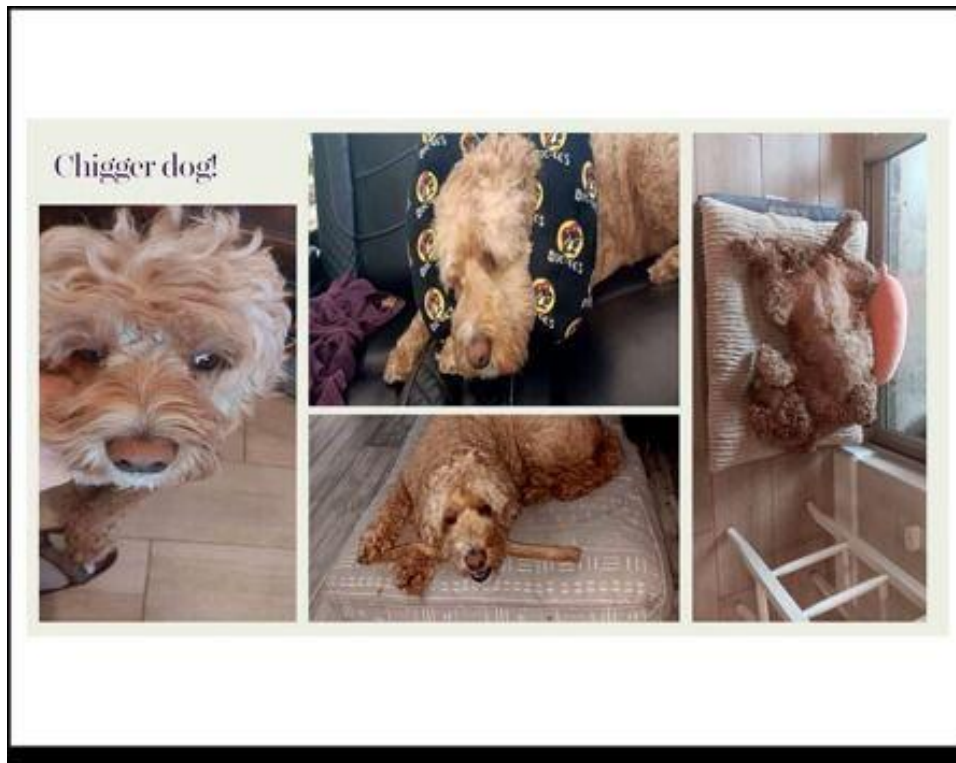
Focus Statement: Our daughter's dog locked out due to dirt and chiggers reminded me of Jesus healing and restoring people with leprosy who had been locked out of society—He not only healed them but saved their souls.

Reflection Questions:

- In what ways do you feel "locked out" by sin, shame, or circumstances, needing Jesus to say "Be clean"?
- How does understanding the full scope of Jesus's healing miracles—both physical and spiritual—deepen your appreciation for His power?
- Who in your life feels "locked out" and needs to hear that Jesus is willing to heal and restore them?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Chigger dog!

70. Stick Ball and Bottle Rockets

Key Verse: 1 John 4:16 — "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."

Focus Statement: Fond memories of grandmother Mini's house—the food, family gatherings, stick ball, and bottle rockets—set a legacy of love, but as much as she loved us, it pales compared to God's everlasting love for us.

Stick Ball and Bottle Rockets!

I remember growing up and the family getting ready to drive from Pa to Parkersburg WV to visit my grandmother Mini! It was literally like the song "To grandmother's house we go" except we were in a station wagon! Upon arriving, we would see her little house in the distance, the smell of good food as the door opened, and the sight of all the food that she obviously spent hours preparing! I could talk for hours just about the food! Most important was the beaming face of grandma as we entered the house! We were blessed!

Stick Ball and Bottle Rockets:

To make a short story long, there were tons of fond memories of family at that little house in WV! The most memorable were when our cousins were there and we would have gatherings in the yard! Like playing stickball with my grandmother's cinder block garage as a back stop and launching Bottle Rockets off the top of her cistern! There were so many good memories, but these two came to the top this time! We were blessed!!

A legacy of love! A godly example!

We all need to love harder and be kinder!!!

We can hear the words "let us love one another," and we should strive to love as Christ loves us, but I have to admit having great examples in life sure helps! My grandmother Mini set a good one. So much so that we named the property my brothers and I share "Mini's Legacy"!

Ultimate Love!!

My key point in this message is that as much as my grandmother loved us is that it pales compared to God's love for us! There are so many passages that reflect this!!

Jeremiah 31:3 — "The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.'"

Romans 5:8 — "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life has set a godly example of love that points you toward understanding God's greater love?
- How can you create a "legacy of love" in your own family that will be remembered for generations?
- In what specific way can you demonstrate God's unfailing love to someone this week, loving harder and being kinder?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Stick Ball and Bottle Rockets!

71. Part of God's Solution

Yesterday was a special father's day for me! It was very special to see the responses from our kids and grandchildren and my niece and nephew! I have been blessed to share life events in my quiet times and from my prayer walks with family and friends and brothers from our life-giving church! God's Word is awesome and all-powerful, and it flows into our lives like refreshing water in the desert!!

Part of the Solution:

Most precious was a letter in the mail from my grandchildren! If we trust in God and share his truths, we can witness the wonderful results and truly be part of God's Solution! Regardless of what life throws at us, especially in these times, we can always choose to be part of God's solution!

Key Verse: Psalms 119:105 — "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

Psalms 19:7 — "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple."

2 Timothy 3:16 — "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

Hebrews 4:12 — "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Focus Statement: Father's Day brought special responses from family, reminding me that God's Word flows into our lives like refreshing water—if we trust in God and share His truths, we can witness wonderful results and truly be part of God's solution.

Reflection Questions:

- How are you actively sharing God's truths with the next generation in your family or church?
- In what specific situation can you choose to be "part of God's solution" this week rather than complaining about the problem?
- How has God's Word been like "refreshing water in the desert" for you, and how can you share that refreshment with others?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Part of God's Solution!

72. Loosen Your Grip

I believe one of our biggest struggles as Christians is giving our all to God. It is an ongoing process. I believe growth is directly related to giving more of ourselves, and if we get stuck or indifferent, God has a way of making us move forward. The key thing to remember as we give more to God is that it is a positive thing and is what is best for us. Trying to hold on to the things of this world is a losing proposition. It's not that we can't have a good life but remembering who it all belongs to!

Let us loosen our grip as God owns what is in our hands!

Key Verse: Mark 8:35 — "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."

Focus Statement: One of our biggest struggles as Christians is giving our all to God—it's an ongoing process where growth is directly related to giving more of ourselves, and the key is remembering that everything belongs to God anyway.

Reflection Questions:

- What are you holding onto too tightly that you need to surrender to God's ownership?
- How has God "made you move forward" when you've gotten stuck or indifferent in your spiritual growth?
- What would it look like practically for you to loosen your grip on one specific area of your life this week?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike

Original reflection image: Loosen your grip!

73. Nine Lives Pete

God woke me up again this morning thinking about my past! Specifically about my friend Pete, who I knew during my time at Shaw AFB in South Carolina! My thoughts were—we all can't be as lucky as Pete, and we need to take each day as a blessing! Looking back, I believe God was keeping him alive for something! I pray it involved good testimony and salvation!

Nine Lives Pete:

Anyway—Memories of Pete:

1. My first memory of Pete was him driving back from California to Shaw, falling asleep at the wheel when he reached South Carolina and gliding to a several hundred-yard stop in shallow swamp water. As I understand, a cop tapped on his window to wake him up! I believe his comment was that he pulled over to take a break!
2. Second memory was of Pete as a passenger in a pickup that flipped and rolled on his way back from Myrtle Beach! He was sitting on the side of the road when a cop told him his neck may be broken and he needed to lay down. Fortunately, he recovered, ok?
3. The third memory was Pete hitting a road sign while taking a turn on his motorcycle! He went off the road into a field where he laid with a ruptured spleen! He recovered from this one as well!

There were a couple more, actually, but these definitely make my point. Pete had Nine Lives!

We may not be as lucky as Pete! We don't know the hour God will call us home or the hour Christ will return, so let us live each day with God at our center and in service to him and each other!

Key Verse: Revelation 14:13 — "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

Focus Statement: Through memories of a friend who survived multiple near-death experiences, we're reminded that we don't know the hour God will call us home or when Christ will return—so we must live each day with God at our center.

Titus 2:11-13 — "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Reflection Questions:

- Are you living each day as if it could be your last, with God at your center and in service to others?
- What would you want to accomplish for God's kingdom if you knew you didn't have "nine lives" to spare?
- How can you be more intentional about living a "self-controlled, upright and godly" life while waiting for Christ's return?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Nine Lives Pete!

74. Easier Said Than Done

Perspective!

Making the best choice to follow our Lord is not easy! When Jesus spoke of himself as being the bread of life, many of his followers left him, but the true apostles did not! He was speaking from a spiritual perspective! Taking the long road down the narrow path! Walking in you, I will find the things that last!

Easier Said Than Done:

The infinite hope we have in the truth and unbreakable foundation of God's salvation and his word that reflects life and love is beyond words to describe! As I reflect on this hope, doing what God wants us to do becomes much easier!

Key Verse: John 6:68 — "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:67-69 — "'You do not want to leave too, do you?' Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.'"

Focus Statement: Making the best choice to follow our Lord is not easy—but when we reflect on the infinite hope we have in Christ's truth and unbreakable foundation, doing what God wants becomes much easier.

Reflection Questions:

- When following Christ feels difficult, where else could you go? Who else has the words of eternal life?
- How does reflecting on the "infinite hope" you have in Christ's truth make obedience easier?
- What specific area of obedience feels "easier said than done" for you right now, and how can you take one step forward today?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Easier said than done!

75. Wiffle Ball Bats

In our growth, we have to focus on the tough teachings as well as the encouraging! Let us not become numb to the evil in this world! I remember being hit with a wiffle ball bat during a game when I was a kid! You would not think it would hurt too much, but when it hits the skin—well! Anyway, the after effect is somewhat numbing and painful!

The reason I bring it up is I was trying to correlate something physical to the loss of innocence!

Wiffle Ball Bats:

These days, it's like a wiffle ball bat gauntlet! It is bad enough for us adults, but imagine the impact it has on our children! We have to be diligent and pray not to become numb to immorality and lawlessness! Especially when it comes to our children!

Key Verse: Matthew 18:6 — "If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck."

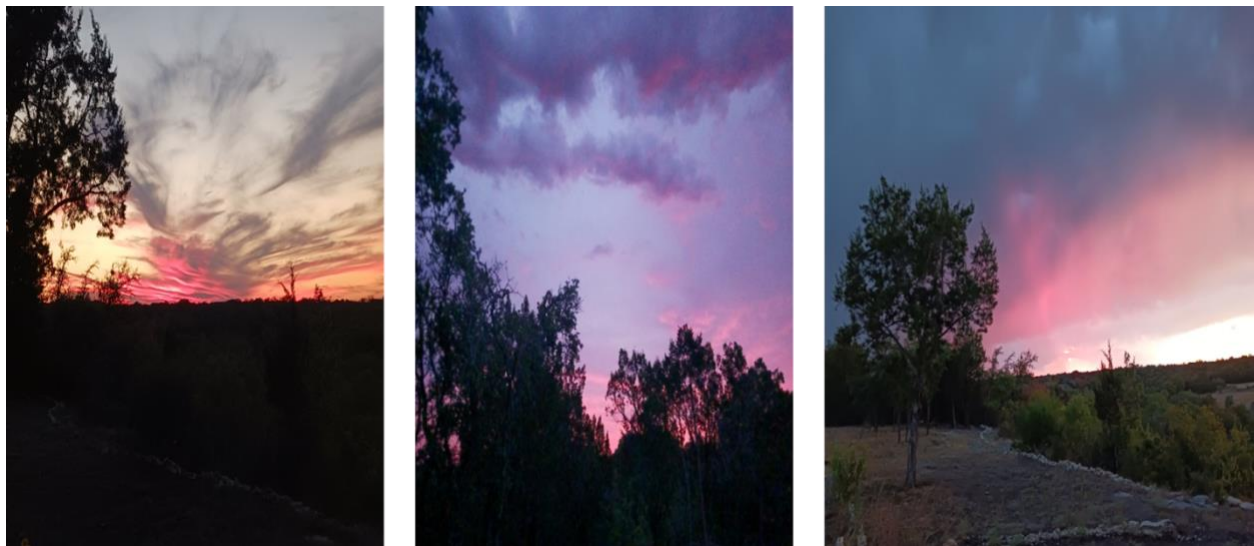
Focus Statement: Just as repeated hits from a wiffle ball bat cause numbness and pain, constant exposure to worldly evil can numb us to immorality—we must be diligent and pray not to become desensitized, especially when it comes to our children.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas have you become "numb" to evil or immorality because of constant exposure?
- How are you actively protecting the children in your life from the "wiffle ball bat gauntlet" of worldly influences?
- What practical steps can you take this week to guard against desensitization to sin in your own life and your family's?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Wiffle Ball Bats!

76. Lost at Sea

Reflecting on my previous quiet time message about innocence impacted, it dawned on me that there is a guidance mechanism missing for many to steer away from evil! Our compass! We as Christians use God's word and teachings as a guide to help us avoid evil seas! This is always a work in progress for me but having knowledgeable and Godly folks around me sure helps!

Lost at Sea:

What I have come to realize is that most folks don't know the word well, and their compass is broken or missing! They are "Lost at sea"!

How can you know what to do if you don't know what to do?

Knowledge!

Let us work to impart God's Word as much as possible in all of our interactions to help folks not be "Lost at sea!"

Key Verse: Psalms 119:66 — "Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I trust your commands."

Proverbs 3:13 — "Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding."

2 Peter 3:18 — "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

Proverbs 18:15 — "The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out."

Focus Statement: Most people don't know God's Word well, so their moral compass is broken or missing—they're lost at sea, and we must work to impart God's Word in all our interactions to help them find their way.

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life is "lost at sea" without knowledge of God's Word, and how can you help guide them?
- How strong is your own "compass"—are you spending enough time in Scripture to navigate life's challenges?
- What specific opportunity do you have this week to share God's Word with someone who needs direction?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Lost at Sea!

77. Wise Old Bird

We have an older chicken who always gets excited when she hears my voice! She especially gets excited when I start the lawnmower! She has learned that when I mow, there is an abundance of dazed and confused insects! Mainly grasshoppers! She actually follows me around as I cut the grass! Our little bird knew what the sound of the mower meant but also acted on going to the noise for a good meal!

A Wise Old Bird:

This brings me to my quiet time message this morning! It is the distinction between knowledge and wisdom! I was reminded about wisdom yesterday and felt it important to distinguish it from knowledge! Knowledge is knowing what is right vs. wisdom, which is doing what is right!

So let us learn but also act! Let us be wise old birds!

Key Verse: Proverbs 2:6 — "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."

Proverbs 2:1-2, 4-13 — "My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, who have left the straight paths to walk in dark ways."

Focus Statement: Our old chicken knew the sound of the lawnmower meant food and acted on it—this illustrates the distinction between knowledge (knowing what is right) and wisdom (doing what is right).

Reflection Questions:

- In what area of your life do you have knowledge of what's right but aren't acting on it with wisdom?
- How can you move from simply knowing God's Word to actually doing what it says?
- What specific action can you take this week to demonstrate wisdom rather than just knowledge?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Wise Old Bird!

78. Laughing at the Arrows

There is a movie called "300." It is about 300 Spartans, who fought against tens of thousands of Persians and held them off for days! There are old and new versions of the movie. I like the older!

Anyway, in the movie, the Persians darkened the sky with arrows! The Spartans being well trained raised their shields in formation to ward off the attack! After the attack, no one was injured, and they all stood up laughing! The keynote was their confidence! They were so confident in their ability and lack of fear that they could laugh at such overwhelming odds!

Laughing at the Arrows:

My point in this message is that we have a God who stands with us! Many Christians today cower in the face of adversity when we should be bold and confident that an all-powerful God is with us! Let us laugh at the arrows!

Let us be bold and confident and speak the truth without fear!

It is not: "We are Sparta!"

It should be: "We are Christians!"

Key Verse: Romans 8:31 — "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Romans 8:37 — "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Focus Statement: Like the Spartans in the movie 300 who laughed at overwhelming odds because of their confidence, Christians should boldly face adversity with confidence that an all-powerful God is with us.

Reflection Questions:

- What "arrows" are you facing right now that you need to face with bold confidence in God rather than cowering in fear?
- How would your response to adversity change if you truly believed you are "more than a conqueror" through Christ?

- In what specific situation this week can you demonstrate bold confidence in God's presence and power?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Laughing at the arrows!

79. Memorable Bus Trips

I remember being in the gym at Shaw AFB and probably in the best physical shape of my life, jumping straight up and dunking the basketball with my left hand, and then my right! I was always a reasonable basketball player! Being 6'8" helped!

Anyway, I don't want to focus on me! A big older black fellow came up behind me and asked if I would be interested in trying out for the base basketball team? I mention his race for a reason! It was Coach Jones!

Anyway, to make a long story short, I tried out and made the team! The one notable thing was I was the only white guy! I will humbly say I got to play but sat on the bench a lot! These guys were good! Many could have easily played major college ball!

Memorable Bus Trips:

It is sad to see the racial tensions in our country and the cultural divides! It seems like much of which comes from folks who want to hold power! All I can say during my time playing basketball for Shaw was I was blessed with great memories, including the bus trips we would take going to other bases! They were my teammates and, most importantly, my friends! I never thought about skin color! I also have to add that a couple of my best conversations about Christ and faith during my chemo treatments were with a couple of wonderful black ladies! My point in all of this is that Christ does not discriminate in any form, and we need to be examples in our walk! Especially in these times!

Key Verse: Galatians 3:28 — "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

James 2:8 — "If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing right."

James 2:1 — "My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism."

Focus Statement: Playing basketball at Shaw AFB as the only white guy on the team taught me that Christ doesn't discriminate—my teammates were my friends, and we need to be examples of unity in our walk, especially in these times.

Reflection Questions:

- How can you actively demonstrate that "there is neither Jew nor Gentile" in Christ through your relationships and interactions?
- What prejudices or favoritism do you need to confess and surrender to God?
- How can you be a bridge-builder and example of Christian unity in your community during these divisive times?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Memorable Bus Trips!

80. Junkyard Miracles

There have been several folks in my life who simply love tinkering and restoring stuff! I have a little of that in me, having been an aircraft mechanic! Ever drive by a junkyard with someone who has the ultimate automobile restoration heart? Where we may see junk, they see a potential work of art!

Junkyard Miracles:

Have there been times in your life when you simply felt like an old junked-out jalopy sitting in a junkyard! Fortunately, we have a God who does not see us this way! I know he looks at each of us and sees vintage!

Restored!

Through Christ, we can be restored and be spotless in God's eyes! What a wonderful God we serve!

Key Verse: Colossians 1:22 — "But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation."

2 Corinthians 13:11 — "Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you."

Focus Statement: Just as car restoration enthusiasts see vintage potential in junkyard vehicles, God doesn't see us as junk—He sees vintage, and through Christ we can be restored and spotless in God's eyes.

Reflection Questions:

- When have you felt like "junk" in life, and how does knowing God sees you as "vintage" change your perspective?
- What areas of your life need God's restoration right now?
- How can you help others see themselves as God sees them—valuable and worth restoring—rather than as worthless junk?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Junkyard Miracles!

81. Soapy Mouth

I was awakened this morning with a singular itch on my arm! Chiggers—aaha! I applied some meds, and it's better now!

Anyway, the irritation inspired today's quiet time message!

One of the most unbelievable things we see these days is to witness something with our own eyes and then have someone say the opposite of what we just witnessed! Worse is that they try to convince us that what we just saw was not true!

Satan, most notably quality is that he is the "Father of Lies"!

Soapy Mouth:

I remember my parents and grandparents emphasizing how important the truth is and that even the simplest of lies was totally unacceptable! So much so they had a bar of soap available if we were ever caught in a lie!

I wish there was an official congressional "Soap Bar" we could use these days!

Let us hold to God's truths in his word as pure gold!

Key Verse: John 8:32 — "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Ephesians 4:25 — "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body."

Zechariah 8:16-17 — "These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against each other, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the Lord."

Focus Statement: In a world where people try to convince us that what we witnessed isn't true, we must hold to God's truths in His Word as pure gold—just as our parents and grandparents emphasized the importance of truth with a bar of soap for lies.

Reflection Questions:

- In what areas of your life are you tempted to compromise the truth or accept lies as acceptable?
- How can you be more intentional about speaking truth even when it's uncomfortable or unpopular?
- What specific truth from God's Word do you need to hold onto "as pure gold" in the face of cultural deception?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Soapy Mouth!

82. Blessed Motivation

Happy 4th everyone!

I took a walk around the house today and started to look at what was around me! I noticed the lights, ceiling fans with remotes, comfortable recliners, multiple refrigerators, tons of food, cool air from AC vents, big windows with great views, a large selection of clothes and shoes, all the over-the-counter drugs you could ask for, two automobiles... I could keep going! In conclusion, we are blessed beyond measure! Better off than King David!

Blessed Motivation:

We are blessed, so let us serve God better!

Let us not take for granted our blessings and praise God for what we have and strive to serve God better every day!

Key Verse: Romans 12:1 — "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God."

Galatians 5:13 — "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."

Deuteronomy 28:6 — "You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out."

Focus Statement: Taking inventory of blessings around our homes—lights, comfort, food, vehicles—reveals we're blessed beyond measure, better off than King David, and this should motivate us to serve God better.

Reflection Questions:

- What blessings have you been taking for granted that should motivate you to serve God more faithfully?
- How does recognizing you're "better off than King David" change your perspective on your current circumstances?
- What specific act of service can you offer to God this week in response to His abundant blessings?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Blessed Motivation!

83. Sweetness

Sorry about the sad emoji last night. Fat fingers!

There are so many needs around us! With sickness and loss and so many other things, we struggle with—along with all of the false negative liberal news—it is easy to get overwhelmed and focus on the wrong things!

Sweetness:

Fruits of the Spirit!

Let us always strive to break through the negative things we deal with, make good decisions, pray, and then give them to God! Then, let us strive to spend most of our time focused on the fruits of the spirit!

Key Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 — "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Galatians 5:24-25 — "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

Focus Statement: With so many needs, losses, and negative news around us, it's easy to get overwhelmed—but we must break through the negative, give our concerns to God, and focus most of our time on the fruits of the Spirit.

Reflection Questions:

- What negative things are you focusing on that you need to give to God so you can focus on the fruits of the Spirit?
- Which fruit of the Spirit do you need to cultivate more intentionally in your life right now?
- How can you "keep in step with the Spirit" this week rather than being overwhelmed by circumstances?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Sweetness!

84. Sleepy Head

Well, I took one of my post chemo pills last night, and it kicked me in the pants so hard that I am still very drowsy! This rest was very good for me! Perfect lead into my brief half-awake quiet time!

Sleepy Head:

God's rest and his intent that we should always take a day of rest from our labors! So, as we press forward in our wonderful adventure with our Lord, let us remember our rest so that we can be recharged for our adventures with God!

Key Verse: Matthew 11:29-30 — "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 6:34 — "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Exodus 34:21 — "Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during the plowing season and harvest you must rest."

Psalms 4:8 — "In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."

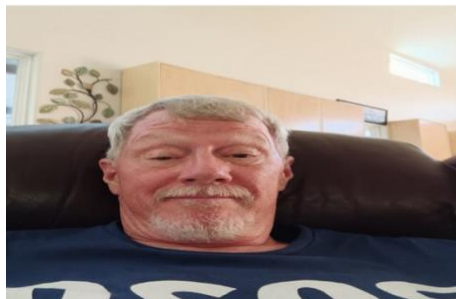
Focus Statement: Post-chemo medication knocked me out, providing much-needed rest—a reminder that God intends for us to take a day of rest from our labors so we can be recharged for our adventures with Him.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you honoring God's design for rest, or are you running yourself ragged without taking time to recharge?
- What does true rest look like for you—not just physical sleep, but spiritual rest in God's presence?
- How can you be more intentional about taking a Sabbath rest this week to prepare for your "adventures with God"?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Sleepy Head!

85. Gettener Done

I woke this morning facing many small tasks, becoming a singular big one! Though I may have a good excuse, there is a little unhealthy intent mixed in. I was a little lazy.

Gettener Done:

Anyway, this leads to my quiet time message of not being lazy and not letting small things build up! It sets a good example and takes a load off to complete the small tasks as they come up! Can't take this one lightly! God has some stern words on this topic! I'm working on not being lazy during my trials! Kim puts me to shame on this one!

Key Verse: Proverbs 18:9 — "One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys."

Proverbs 6:6 — "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!"

Proverbs 12:24 — "Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in forced labor."

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

2 Thessalonians 3:10 — "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'The one who is unwilling to work will not eat.'"

Focus Statement: Small tasks that keep building up can become one big task—and while we may have good excuses, there's often unhealthy laziness mixed in, so we must not let small things pile up.

Reflection Questions:

- What small tasks have you been putting off that are now becoming one big overwhelming task?
- What's the real reason behind your procrastination—legitimate circumstances or a bit of laziness?
- What one small task can you complete today to start building better habits of diligence?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Gettener Done!

86. The Good Stuff

Well—I woke this morning, and the old blood sugar was sinking low! Groggy faced, I rolled out of bed and thought, I need a little sugar? Then it dawned on me that Kim had made some oatmeal fudge cookies! Anyway, my demeanor changed, and I was off to the kitchen! Normally, I don't get to eat these! As I was eating the wonderful oatmeal fudge cookie, my quiet time dawned on me! This oatmeal fudge cookie surprise was like a small sample of what God has in store for us! We have assured hope in Christ, and sometimes, in this world, we can experience an example—a small taste of the good stuff Christ has in store for us! Like the unexpected oatmeal fudge cookie!

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 2:9 — "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived—the things God has prepared for those who love him."

Jeremiah 29:11 — "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Focus Statement: An unexpected oatmeal fudge cookie when my blood sugar was low was like a small sample of what God has in store for us—sometimes in this world we can experience a taste of the good stuff Christ has prepared.

Reflection Questions:

- What unexpected "oatmeal fudge cookie" moments has God given you as a taste of His goodness?
- How does knowing that what you've experienced is just a small sample of what's to come affect your hope and perseverance?
- How can you share the "good stuff" of God's love with someone who needs a taste of His goodness today?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: The good stuff!

87. Napalm Mouth

Busy day tomorrow with family coming so sending this out tonight! I remember when I was in high school at our house in West Virginia. It was a lazy Saturday, and mom, brother, and I were watching TV when my little brother ran into the house and earnestly told me the garage was on fire! I went outside thinking I could put out the fire? Wrong!—The entire back of our 4 car garage was ablaze! It was like a liquid fire—like napalm! Fortunately, the fire department responded quickly and put out the fire! Anyway, we found out later that my youngest brother's little friend had matches, and they were throwing them into some newspaper stuffed in the vent fan in the back. The vent was next to a shelf of paint cans and gasoline.

Napalm Mouth:

The thought of this event made me think about the tongue and how a little spark from the mouth can light someone's world on fire! The correct word to use is gossip! Gossip is like verbal napalm.

Let us not be a Napalm mouth!

Let us do as God wills and tame the tongue to speak truthfully and with wisdom!

Key Verse: Proverbs 26:20 — "Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down."

Proverbs 20:19 — "A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much."

Proverbs 16:28 — "A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends."

Ephesians 4:29 — "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Focus Statement: A childhood fire that spread like napalm reminds us how a little spark from the mouth can light someone's world on fire—gossip is like verbal napalm, and we must tame the tongue to speak truthfully and with wisdom.

Reflection Questions:

- Have you been a "napalm mouth" recently, spreading gossip that could destroy relationships or reputations?
- What practical steps can you take to tame your tongue and speak only what builds others up?
- Who do you need to apologize to for words that spread like fire and caused damage?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Napalm mouth!

88. The Family of God

Saturday was a busy day, especially for Kim, as we prepared for the arrival of our daughter and family from Mississippi! We were also blessed as our daughter, niece, and son-in-law came up from Liberty Hill Texas to join in on the preparation! Also, I got to sync a little with my brothers in preparation! Our daughter and family showed up late on Saturday with much love and greetings! Even got to see my brother Keith that evening while sharing a ride in my son-in-law's new toy!

The Family of God!

As I reflected on family, today's quiet time message hit me! The church was coming together for more good fellowship!

Awesome Fellowship!

I left the house early Sunday morning! I was blessed to do special music and excited knowing the family would be there! I arrived at our church building and was met by the smiling face of our pastor! During my setup at church, the church family continued to pour in! Anyway, it dawned on me as all of my church family grew around me on Sunday, including my visiting family, that this is what God intended when we speak of "The family of God"! Only one word could describe it—"Loving." Interestingly, I sang "I can only imagine" on Sunday! Imagine what it will be like when the entire "Family of God" gets together!

Key Verse: Ephesians 3:15 — "From whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name."

Galatians 3:26 — "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."

Focus Statement: Preparing for family to visit and then gathering with church family for worship revealed what God intended when we speak of "The family of God"—loving fellowship that gives us a glimpse of what it will be like when the entire family gets together.

Reflection Questions:

- How does your church family demonstrate the love and fellowship that reflects God's design for His family?
- What can you do to strengthen the bonds of fellowship in your church community?
- How does imagining the ultimate family reunion in heaven motivate you to invest in your church family now?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike

Original reflection image: The Family of God!

89. God Has Got This

Sometimes, we just need to pray for God's protection and guidance and then just sit in silence and know God is with us! There is nothing we need to say or do! Sometimes, after the noise and craziness of life, we just need God to take control and climb into the back seat and let him drive! Actually, it should be this way all the time.

That is the way I felt last night! It was a good day, but my head was ringing, and I was in a fog and very tired!

God Has Got This!

I simply laid down in bed with a quick prayer and said "God you have got this," and went to sleep!

Knowing assurance before you fall asleep is an awesome thing!

Key Verse: Psalms 4:8 — "In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."

Proverbs 3:24 — "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet."

Focus Statement: Sometimes we just need to pray for God's protection and guidance, sit in silence knowing He's with us, and let Him take control—knowing assurance before you fall asleep is an awesome thing.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you trying to maintain control of situations that you need to surrender to God, saying "You've got this"?
- What would it look like for you to "climb into the back seat" and let God drive in a specific area of your life?
- How can you cultivate the practice of ending each day with the assurance that God has everything under control?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: God has got this!

90. Wow! I Found It!

Have you ever looked for the perfect place or the perfect thing or that perfect person and how you felt after being successful in finding?

Wow! I Found It!

Magnify that feel 10x, and it is what you will get seeking and finding God! God has promised we will find him if we seek, and he will not abandon us!

Be Intentional!

Make seeking God intentional! It's not about waiting for a feeling or event! You have to actively seek! Use your resources! The Bible, those with wisdom, experience and knowledge, fellowship... and so on!

I have grown more in my faith these last 5 years than in the previous 20 as God is answering my prayer not to be a weak saint! I believe some of my stuffing is still on the floor! I still feel as if I have much more weakness to eliminate, but I have to say a key element in my growth is an increased desire to seek God!

The closer I get, the closer I want to get!

Key Verse: Matthew 7:7 — "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Proverbs 8:17 — "I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me."

Lamentations 3:25 — "The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him."

Focus Statement: The feeling of finding something perfect is magnified 10x when seeking and finding God—we must be intentional about seeking Him, and the closer we get, the closer we want to get.

Reflection Questions:

- Are you actively and intentionally seeking God, or are you passively waiting for Him to show up?
- What resources (Bible study, wise counsel, fellowship) can you use more effectively to seek God?
- How has your desire to seek God grown as you've gotten closer to Him, and what's your next step in that journey?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Wow!! I Found It!!

91. Pushes

As we wake day by day and try and focus on a Godly life, there are worldly forces that always push back against our plans! It could be a little push or a big one! As a side note, and I believe I have mentioned before, don't let a little push become a big one!

Pushes:

I was talking to my wonderful daughter yesterday, and we talked about managing the little pushes in life and not letting them become big pushes! I can honestly say from experience that my big push has helped put the little pushes in perspective! Keep in mind I say "perspective" but not always in the right action. Paul mentioned in Romans 7:19 that we do the things we don't want to do!

Regardless, let us continually put on the full armor of God daily and "push" back against the dark forces in this world and let God's light shine through us through the power of his spirit!

Key Verse: Ephesians 6:13 — "Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground."

Romans 7:19 — "For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing."

Philippians 3:14 — "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Focus Statement: As we try to focus on a godly life, worldly forces push back—little pushes or big ones—but we must continually put on God's armor daily and push back against dark forces, letting His light shine through us.

Reflection Questions:

- What "little pushes" are you experiencing that could become big ones if you don't address them with God's help?

- How consistently are you putting on the full armor of God each day to prepare for spiritual battles?
- In what specific situation this week do you need to "push back" against worldly forces and let God's light shine?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Pushes!

92. Maker

I can only imagine what my eyes will see when your face is before me? The first line of one of my favorite praise songs to sing rings out in my head as I reflect on my prayers to our God last night! Our God! What an awesome thought! There is a comfort like a warm blanket or a warm fire on a cold night! Like a refreshing rain in the desert! I could go on! How can we comprehend a loving creator like our God! The God of all comfort! Let that sink into your core as you go about your day!

Maker:

Let us praise and worship our God through our actions in love as one day we will drink living water together as brothers and sisters in Christ and stand before the creator of the universe/our creator!

Key Verse: Psalms 95:6 — "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

Psalms 124:8 — "Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Romans 6:23 — "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Focus Statement: Reflecting on our God brings comfort like a warm blanket or refreshing rain—how can we comprehend a loving Creator like our God, and one day we will stand before Him together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Reflection Questions:

- How does contemplating God as your Maker—the Creator of the universe—affect your worship and daily life?
- What does it mean to you that the God of all comfort is personally invested in your life?
- How can you praise and worship God through your actions in love today, knowing you'll one day stand before Him?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Maker!

93. A Cricket in the Room

It is late at night, and you are tired and just finished getting ready for bed. You say your prayers, pull the blanket up, and close your eyes! A couple minutes into your restful sleep, you hear it! The sound of a cricket! It is not a muted sound coming from outside! It is in your room with you!

A Cricket in the Room:

This leads me to my morning quiet time!

The enemy is like the "cricket in the room." He is always trying to steal our peace and separate us from God! Let us not allow evil a foothold! Let us listen to our Lord's instruction, be aware of the enemy's schemes, and push back against evil! Let us deal with our "crickets," and with God's guidance, keep our peace and not be overcome by evil!

Key Verse: Romans 12:21 — "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Psalms 34:14 — "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

Psalms 37:27 — "Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever."

Romans 12:17 — "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone."

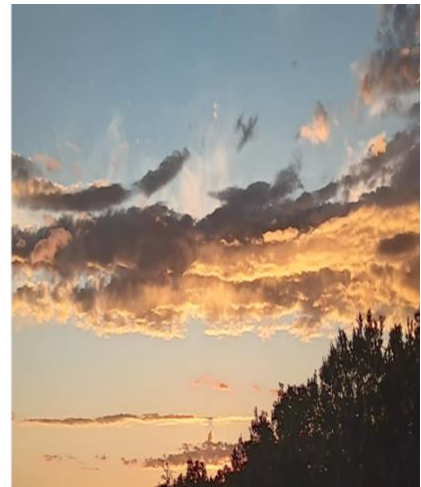
Focus Statement: Like a cricket in your room stealing your sleep, the enemy is always trying to steal our peace and separate us from God—we must listen to God's instruction, be aware of the enemy's schemes, and push back against evil.

Reflection Questions:

- What "cricket in the room" is the enemy using to steal your peace and disrupt your relationship with God?
- How can you be more aware of the enemy's schemes and push back against evil before it gains a foothold?
- What practical step can you take today to "turn from evil and do good" in a specific situation?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: A cricket in the room!

94. The Answer

Ever point up and ask, where does it end? Or contemplate that the amoeba is more complex than the modern-day rocket ship? Calculate the odds that life is just random and just popped into existence! God tells us to just look at nature and know that he exists! I just touch on a couple of simple examples! This does not include the odds of Jesus fulfilling all of the prophecy about himself, along with thousands of years of unbelievable testimonies starting with the apostles!

The Answer:

Bring the spirit of God into all of this, and you have the answer! Jesus is the son of God, and the only path to salvation is through him by his death and resurrection!

Really let this sink in!

Key Verse: Romans 1:20 — "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made."

Job 12:7-9 — "But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?"

Psalms 19:1 — "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

John 3:16 — "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

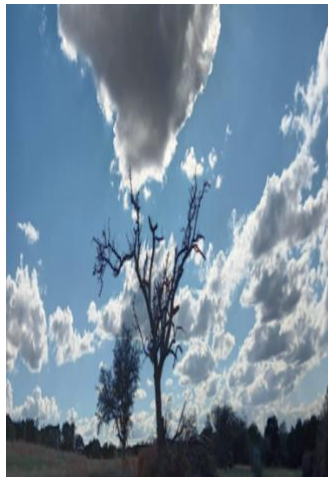
Focus Statement: From the complexity of nature to the fulfillment of prophecy to thousands of years of testimonies, all evidence points to one answer—Jesus is the son of God, and the only path to salvation is through Him.

Reflection Questions:

- When you look at the complexity of creation, how does it strengthen your faith in an intelligent Creator?
- How can you use the overwhelming evidence for God's existence and Christ's reality to share your faith with someone who doubts?
- Have you truly let the answer—that Jesus is the only path to salvation—sink into your core and transform how you live?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: The Answer!

95. Staying in the Fight

Staying in the Fight!

This morning during my quiet time, I was thinking about perseverance—about staying in the fight even when everything in us wants to quit. We all face obstacles that make us want to throw in the towel. Maybe it's doubt creeping in, or guilt from past failures, or fear about what's ahead. Our emotions can be all over the place, especially when we're going through trials.

But here's the thing—we can't rely on our emotions to carry us through. Emotions are fickle; they change with the weather, with our health, with our circumstances. What we need to rely on is the truth of Christ. The truth that He has already won the victory. The truth that He walks with us through every trial. The truth that our perseverance isn't in vain.

Paul tells us to persist in keeping the faith. It's not always easy, but it's always worth it. You know what's amazing? Every trial we push through, every obstacle we overcome with God's help, makes us stronger. It builds our faith muscles. It prepares us for the next challenge.

And here's the beautiful part—when we look back on our lives, we'll see God's blessings woven through every struggle. We'll see how He used those hard times to shape us, to grow us, to bring us closer to Him. The joy and benefits of perseverance become crystal clear in hindsight.

So don't give up, my brothers! Stay in the fight! Keep pressing forward in truth, not feelings. God is with you, and He's already secured the victory!

Key Verse: James 1:12 — "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

Hebrews 10:36 — "You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised."

1 Corinthians 15:58 — "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Focus Statement: Perseverance through obstacles strengthens our faith; we must press forward in truth despite feelings and doubts, trusting God's ultimate victory.

Reflection Questions:

- What trial are you facing right now that's tempting you to give up, and how can you shift from relying on emotions to standing on God's truth?
- When you look back at past struggles, can you see how God used them to strengthen your faith and prepare you for what's ahead?
- How can you encourage someone else who's struggling to stay in the fight and persevere through their current trial?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Staying in the Fight!

96. What We Need

I woke up this morning wanting to take my prayer walk, but man, it was already hot! I looked outside and thought, "Nope, not today." Sometimes our wants have to take a backseat to wisdom, right?

It reminded me of something Kim always says when we're shopping. She's got this great wisdom about getting what you need, not what you want. I'll see something and think, "Oh, that would be nice!" And she'll give me that look and say, "Do we need it, or do we want it?" Most of the time, it's a want, not a need. 😊

You know what? God operates the same way with us. He provides what we need, not necessarily what we want. And honestly, He knows better than we do what we truly need! We might want an easy path, but we need the character that comes from walking a difficult one. We might want immediate answers, but we need the faith that grows from waiting on His timing.

Jesus tells us not to worry about our needs—food, clothing, shelter. He says to look at the birds; they don't worry, and God feeds them. How much more valuable are we to Him? The key is seeking His kingdom first, and then all these things will be given to us.

God's provision is perfect. He knows exactly what we need, exactly when we need it. Our job is to trust Him, to seek His kingdom, and to learn the difference between our wants and our true needs. When we do that, we find that He provides abundantly—maybe not always what we wanted, but always what we needed.

Key Verse: Matthew 6:26 — "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

Matthew 6:33 — "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Philippians 4:19 — "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

Focus Statement: God provides all we truly need; learn to distinguish between desires and necessities by trusting His provision rather than our wants.

Reflection Questions:

- What's something you've been wanting that might not actually be what you need right now?
- Can you think of a time when God didn't give you what you wanted but provided exactly what you needed?
- How can you shift your focus from worrying about wants to trusting God's provision for your needs?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: What We Need!

97. Relative

This morning, I was thinking about perspective—about how we compare our lives to others. You know, we can look at someone like Elon Musk with all his billions and think, "Wow, I wish I had that!" Or we can look at a starving child in Africa and think, "Thank God I'm not in that situation."

Here's what hit me during my quiet time: we should keep the neediest in focus. Not to feel superior, but to be thankful for what we have and to help as we can. It's about perspective and compassion, not comparison and pride.

God doesn't show favoritism. He doesn't love the rich more than the poor, the powerful more than the weak, the healthy more than the sick. He loves us all equally and completely. But we humans? We've got a long history of treating people differently based on their status, their wealth, their position in society.

James warns us about this. He says if we show favoritism—if we treat the rich person better than the poor person—we're sinning. We're discriminating. And that's not how God operates at all.

Peter learned this lesson too. He realized that God doesn't show favoritism but accepts people from every nation who fear Him and do what is right. It doesn't matter if you're a CEO or homeless, a celebrity or unknown—God sees your heart, not your status.

We need to transcend worldly discrimination. We need to show equal compassion to everyone—the wealthy and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, the healthy and the sick. That's how Jesus lived, and that's how we're called to live.

Key Verse: James 2:1-4 — "My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good seat for you,' but say to the poor man, 'You stand there' or 'Sit on the floor by my feet,' have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?"

Acts 10:34-35 — "Then Peter began to speak: 'I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.'"

Focus Statement: God shows no favoritism; treat all people with equal compassion and respect regardless of wealth, status, or condition.

Reflection Questions:

- Do you find yourself treating people differently based on their social status, wealth, or appearance?
- How can you actively show compassion to someone society might overlook or dismiss?
- What would change in your daily interactions if you truly saw everyone through God's eyes of equal love?

God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Relative!

98. Precipice

This is a tough message, but it's been heavy on my heart. I want you to imagine standing at the edge of an infinitely high cliff. Above you is heaven—eternal life with God, surrounded by His love, reunited with loved ones, experiencing joy beyond comprehension. Below you is eternal separation from God—darkness, loneliness, regret that never ends.

That's the precipice of judgment. And here's what breaks my heart: there are people we know, people we love, people we see every day who are standing on that precipice without even realizing it.

I don't want anyone on that precipice. I don't want anyone facing eternal separation from God. Not my worst enemy. Not the person who wronged me. Not the stranger I pass on the street. Nobody deserves eternity separated from the God who loves them.

Revelation paints a stark picture of judgment—the lake of fire, the second death. It's not a message we like to think about, but it's real. And it should compel us to action. It should fill us with urgency and compassion for those who don't know Christ as their Savior.

We need to be passionate about sharing Christ's salvation. Not judgmental, not self-righteous, but genuinely compassionate. We need to represent God with love and urgency, helping people step back from that precipice and into the safety of Christ's arms.

My prayer today is that God would give us His heart for the lost. That He would help us see people through His eyes—not as enemies or strangers, but as precious souls He died to save. That we would share the gospel with passion, compassion, and urgency.

Key Verse: Revelation 20:14-15 — "Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire."

Focus Statement: The eternal consequences of rejecting Christ should compel us to share salvation urgently and compassionately with the lost.

Reflection Questions:

- Who in your life is standing on the precipice of eternal separation from God, and how can you share Christ's love with them?
- Does the reality of eternal judgment motivate you to share the gospel with urgency and compassion?
- How can you balance the sobering truth of judgment with the beautiful message of God's grace and salvation?

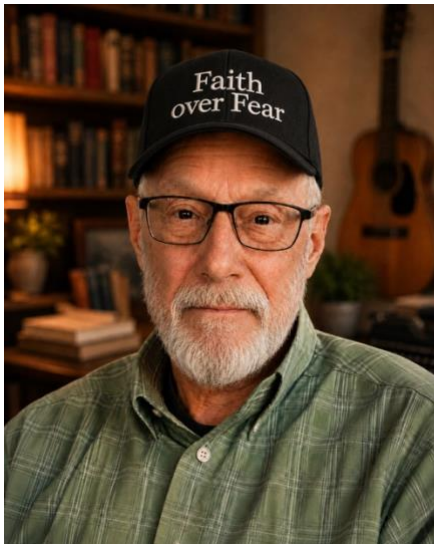
God bless you and your families, my brothers!

Mike



Original reflection image: Precipice!

About the Author



Michael Daugherty is an author, musician, rancher, and devoted Christian whose life has been shaped by faith, family, service, and a deep appreciation for God’s creation. He is a partner in **Mini’s Ranch**, a family land-management operation in Coryell County, Texas. Before transitioning into ranch life and semi-retirement, Michael built a career in technology and product development, including work in the semiconductor industry.

Music has long been an important part of Michael’s ministry. An accomplished acoustic guitarist and worship leader, he has served in church and recovery ministries, using music to encourage others and share the hope of the Gospel. His service has included worship leadership at Glad Tidings Assembly of God and LifeAustin Church.

Michael currently serves as an elder at **Pidcoke Baptist Church**, where he continues to invest in the spiritual life of his church and community. A devout Christian, he approaches writing as an extension of his faith—a way to reflect on Scripture, preserve the lessons God has revealed through ordinary life, and encourage readers facing hardship, uncertainty, and loss.

Through his writing, Michael offers an honest and deeply personal perspective on faith, suffering, gratitude, family, and the enduring promises of God.