

## INSPIRED WORD

### March 27, 2019

#### SHARING

Last week I was given some words to a song that I needed a third verse for. And anyways, I was thinking about the strongest word God has ever given us, and that's love. And lo and behold, I said a little prayer and the Holy Spirit kind of came right into my mind and told me what words to write down for a song, these lyrics. And I wanted to share them with you tonight. We're not doing the song tonight but it says: "Love is strengthened, sacrificed by God, transforms our world by His love for you and I. Compassion, forgiveness, we strive to achieve, patience and stewardship is what our Lord God seeks." And I just wanted to share that with you tonight because, you know, we all spread a little love and we pray once in awhile for things, you know, that we need in our life. Sometimes the Holy Spirit acts really quick and in this case for me it was like minutes. So be careful what you pray for.

Summary of chapters in "Into His Likeness" – small group discussions on same.

#### SCRIPTURE

I have a scripture from **Isaiah 12:2-6**: *A day is coming when people will sing, "I praise you, Lord. God is my Savior; I will trust him and not be afraid. The Lord gives me power and strength. He is my Savior. As fresh water brings joy to the thirsty, so God's people rejoice when he saves them. (Is He saving you? Is He saving me?) Give thanks to the Lord. Call for him to help you. Tell all the nations what he has done. Tell them how great he is. Sing to the Lord because of the great things he has done. Let the whole world hear the news. Let everyone who lives in Zion (who lives here in Colorado Springs, in this nation, in this world), shout and sing. Israel's holy God is great and he lives among his people. We can say amen to that. You're with us, God. Glory to You; we give You praise, You live among Your people, here in this place, now.*

#### EXHORTATION / PRAYER

You know, we can't even say "Jesus is Lord" without the presence of the Holy Spirit. He enables us to do that, to say that from the depths of our hearts. So let's call upon Him to come. Holy Spirit, come. Enable us to praise the Lord tonight, to praise Him from the depths of our being, to focus on Him, to love Him, to want to draw close, to experience His love and give Him our hearts. So come, Spirit of the living God, come, touch us, lead us, guide us.

## EXHORTATION

The scripture says to speak to one another with words of psalms, hymns and sacred songs. Sing hymns and psalms to the Lord with praise in your hearts. These sacred songs, people of God, are spontaneous praises, praises from the heart, praises from the heart, spontaneous and in English or in tongues. He calls us to do that; can we do that? Be spontaneous before the Lord. Let the living water come from our hearts in song and sound, in those syllables of praise. Can we allow that? In the holy name of Jesus.

## SCRIPTURE / EXHORTATION

From the Book of **Micah 6:1-4**: *Now listen to what Yahweh says: Stand up, state your case to the mountains, and let the hills hear what you have to say. Listen, mountains, to the cases Yahweh puts it; give ear you foundations of the earth. For Yahweh has a case against his people and he will argue with Israel. My people, what have I done to you? How have I made you tired of me? I have brought you up from Egypt. I ransomed you from the place of slave labor and sent Moses, Aaron and Miriam to lead you. And He goes on and on about all the things that He has done for the people to show His love and to show His protection and His provision for the people of Israel. And the people realize... I'm summarizing this point, but the people realize how they've fallen away and how they've forgotten and they've let themselves ignore and let their ears be deafened and forget what God had done. And they turned back in a plea for His forgiveness by saying (**vs. 18-20**): "What God can compare with You, for pardoning guilt and overlooking crime? You do not harbor anger forever but delight in showing faithful love. Once more, have pity on us. Tread down our faults and throw all our sins to the bottom of the sea. Grant Jacob your faithfulness and Abraham your faithful love as you swore to our ancestors from the days of long ago." And my sense as we were praising and singing that song is we do forget. It's so easy to forget all the things that God has done in our lives, all the ways He's provided, that every breath is a gift, every heartbeat is an abundance. If you've ever known someone who has emphysema and tried to listen to them breathe, every breath is a gift. If you've ever known someone with heart disease or arrhythmia, every solid heartbeat is an abundance. Maybe turn back to God. Remind each other when we can't remind ourselves of all the ways He's worked in our lives, and ask His forgiveness and cling to His love because that's what He wanted in the first place.*

## EXHORTATION

Let's just take a moment to rest on that strong and mighty tower. Close your eyes and let's just be with God for a moment.

## PRAYER

O Jesus, You're our advocate who stands in the presence of the Father, interceding for us. We welcome Your presence, Lord.

## **SHARING / WORDS OF WISDOM**

I was listening to a really good talk the other day. It was asking why we give up things for Lent. What's the point of having a Lenten fast or giving up meat on Fridays? And besides it being something the Church asks us to do, and we do it in unison, we offer sacrifice together as one faith and one community, and there's power in fasting together. The other thing is that it really strengthens a muscle and it's the muscle of our will that says just because it's a good thing doesn't mean it's not something I can give up. And it pushes us to use the muscle that's uncomfortable to use. As we were doing this last song, it just kept on reminding me that faith is a muscle, and if we don't use faith and we don't push faith, it stays flabby and it's not really there when we need it. It's not there to rely on and feel that... those steel abs that are holding you up and you can count on them. Grace is always there but if we're not practiced at reaching for grace and holding on for dear life when we most need it, it can be pretty scary. So this Lent, as we walk this journey of becoming deeper disciples, let's focus on strengthening those muscles so they're ready for us when God calls. We're ready to say yes. We've waited on Him, we've waited and we've listened and we know what the Shepherd's voice is, so we know where to listen and how to go when He calls us. It takes practice.

## **CONFIRMATION / SCRIPTURE**

I'd like to confirm what CiCi just said, not knowing I was going to until about 10 seconds ago. I was just looking through Isaiah trying to find something that I remembered there, but I still haven't found it, so that wasn't something I was supposed to find. But certain bible verses can stand by themselves. In **Isaiah 7:9**, part of that verse says, *"Unless your faith is firm, you shall not be firm."*