

HOPE FOR A BETTER LIFE: MIKE MEDICI



Men come to Brother Bryan Mission at the lowest point in their lives. For Mike Medici this was no exception. He entered BBM's New Life Fellowship Program on April 21, 2016 because as Mike puts it, "they (drugs) had completely consumed my whole life."

It wasn't long before the love of Christ being presented to Mike through the staff, in the chapels, and in his meetings with his chaplain that Mike was brought to a place of surrender to Christ. *"I dedicated my life for Christ in May of 2016 and since that time my love and passion for Christ, myself, and others has grown so deep."*

The change in Medici's life became obvious to all. Mike's aunt wrote a letter expressing her thanks to Executive Director, Jim Etheredge, for what was taking place in Mike's life. She wrote, "This year the Messena and Medici families are thankful to have our nephew whole."

Mike was baptized through a local church and many of his family were there to witness him say, *"I want to make a public declaration that today I confess to the Church and to all the world, that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior."* He went on to declare,

"The happiness that I now have is immeasurable."

Nearing graduation from the NLF Program Mike was invited to become an intern working in BBM's Adult Ed. Center. It wasn't long before he became the Director of the Center.

As Mike contemplated his future he knew he wanted to go back to school and work as a technician in one of the medical fields. He settled on the Respiratory Therapy Tech program at a local junior college. Having been out of school for a number of years, Mike struggled with some of the courses. When it was time to apply for the Respiratory Therapy Program he didn't have the grades and became discouraged.

He sought advice from some of BBM's staff who advised him to look into other fields such as becoming a fireman or policeman. Mike was determined and found out that Jefferson State Junior College was considering opening a Respiratory Therapy Program. An advisor gave Mike hope when he was told that if the program began he would have a greater chance of acceptance into the new program.

The program was begun and Mike was accepted. In December of 2019 Mike Medici had finished a long road that led to his graduation from Jefferson State with a Respiratory Therapy Tech degree and a job as a Respiratory Therapy Technician at St. Vincent's Hospital.



We are very proud of Mike's accomplishments. In the spring of this year, Mike and his sweetheart, Crystal, were married. The Colorado weather cooperated to give them a beautiful setting to begin their new life.

Looking back, Mike Medici entered BBM at one of the lowest points of his life but he found hope for a better life at Brother Bryan Mission.



MEPHIBOSHETH

By: Kay Etheredge



I've always enjoyed the story of Mephibosheth in the Bible. I like that his story, although sad, has a beautiful ending. Sometimes going through something like a pandemic, though, can give us new perspective.

This week I read again in II Samuel the story of Mephibosheth. For some reason this time, it stopped me in my tracks. I was overcome with the beauty and imagery and because we are socially distancing, I was able to sit in total quiet with my Bible in my lap and just think. There is great beauty in having time to do that.

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan...the grandson of Saul. We are told that he was lame in his feet. When he was roughly 5 years old, news came that Saul and Jonathan had been killed. A nurse grabbed Mephibosheth to run away and fell and somehow he became lame in both his feet. A little boy who had his life changed through no involvement of his own...a very tragic and sad event.

David had been anointed king of Israel after Saul's disobedience and bitterness. He loved David so dearly and then took his eyes off the Lord and began to be jealous of David...of David's success and esteem in the sight of the people. He then began to look upon David with great suspicion and even tried on several occasions to kill him. David, a warrior, had several opportunities to kill Saul. Once he came upon his encampment where the men slept in a circle with Saul sleeping in the center. Next to Saul's head was his water jug and his spear. And God had supernaturally put the whole circle of men into a deep sleep. David was urged to kill him. His companion, Abishai, said "Here, let me do it for you". David wisely opted to let Saul live. He recognized that it was God who would take care of his enemies. It is a beautiful illustration of how circumstances may seem right but

circumstances in and of themselves aren't indicative of God's blessing and will.

Saul was injured in battle and rather than allow himself to be captured by the Philistines, asked one of his own army to kill him. The soldier refused, so Saul threw himself onto his own sword. His son Jonathan was killed in the same battle.

After David became king he remembered his dear friend, Jonathan, and how they had promised to care for each other's descendants. He then asked if there was anyone left in Jonathan's family to whom he might show kindness. "There is a son, Mephibosheth, who is lame in both feet". David said "Bring him to me".

Mephibosheth had been an outcast...living in exile. His royal grandfather had been killed and dishonored. His possessions had been ripped from him. He couldn't walk. I began to think about how Mephibosheth might have felt. He really had very little to live for. And then he is summoned to see the king.

David said to him that he would restore all of his grandfather's land to him, and said "you shall eat at my table regularly". He ordered servants to cultivate the land for him and bring in the produce from that land. We are told in II Sam 9:11 "So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons". His story is finished out in vs. 13, as if it needs to be repeated, "Now he was lame in both feet".

I have known Mephibosheths. I knew a Mephibosheth who grew up in a home that was so rough that a rat bit her on the lip once as she slept in her own bed. This woman told me how one of her happiest memories was going to VBS as a child...a woman picked her and her siblings up and drove them to a local church. They had

craft time and were making a bird feeder and she loved it. Her family was one of the undesirables in the community, and she never knew what happened, but one night the woman just didn't come to pick them up. And she never finished her bird feeder and all these fifty plus years later she remembers that.

I have known Mephibosheths through our relationships at BBM. So many men have had tragic lives, so very often through no fault of their own...choices they didn't make...circumstances that were out of their control. As I drove through the almost deserted streets of downtown Birmingham today to go to the post office and bank for BBM, I saw a Mephibosheth standing by the street leading into the post office. I watched her one day put down her sign asking for money and painfully walk, with damaged legs, across the street to a hedge. Curious, I watched to see what she was doing. She dropped her pants and relieved herself right in the view of a busy downtown street. We can all form judgements, but I know that I have never had to use the restroom in such a public place. I had told this woman on more than one occasion that I didn't have any cash and I didn't. But one day I did and I gave it to her. Most times when I see her I try to give her a smile. Today I waved and she waved back. Maybe just the looking at someone and not through them can be a gift. Cast aside and forgotten. I think we have all been Mephibosheth. Those of us who have been lost and consumed by sin, saved by God's grace, and told we are worthy to feast at the King's table. Christian artist Leeland has a song called "Carried to the Table" that he wrote about Mephibosheth. One of the lines is "Carried to the table...seated where I don't belong".

Mephibosheth was carried to King David's table and treated as a son. We are carried to our Father's table and called his Beloved. What a beautiful picture Mephibosheth's life tells us about God's matchless grace!

A pandemic is in play and we are socially distancing. But there are people on corners and in neighborhoods and in our spheres of influence who are broken. They need the love of Christ. I heard this week about a woman I have lost touch with who is dying. She used to go to our church and was very faithful, yet I never once asked her about her walk with the Lord. I regret that now. I was told today that a man took his own life in the shadow of this mission over failed business pursuits. He was young and desperate. He was a Mephibosheth. Look around you. Pick up the phone. Send an email or text. Face Time someone. Write a letter or a thank you note. Give hope to someone that God might lay on your heart. Someone may need to be carried to the table because they can't get there on their own.

Gifts to Brother Bryan Mission in Honor or in Memory of...

In Honor of

Lauren and Rachel Chamberlain
Alyson and Drew Chandler
Bennett Shine
Tom and Debbie Zobel
Tom and Debbie Zobel

Given by

Jere and Ruth Chandler
Jere and Ruth Chandler
June Fletcher
Jere and Ruth Chandler
Mike and Mary Ellen Zinser

In Memory of

Graham
Scott
Walter Baker
Walter Baker, Jr.
Dr. Edwin Bryan
Marti Cobern
Richard L. Davis, Sr.
Nell England
Geraldine Goodwin
David Jones
Albert Lester
Rose F. Neill
Tom Roberts
Ed Roberts
Sarah Walton Vines
Elaine Whitaker

Given by

Dianne Dent
Sherri Sepsas
Dr. and Mrs. John Dumas II
Sara Baker
Rosemary Jager
M. David and Janet Williams
Leesa Davis
Don and Marie Hooks
Thomas Goodwin
Mary Jones
Sherry Elaine Lester
Robert Neill
Jebb Roberts Blankenship
Jebb Roberts Blankenship
Patti Bauer
Lee Cooper



*A very special way you can both Honor a Loved One,
Great Friend, Teacher, or Other Special Person - and
help Brother Bryan Mission, is with a gift in their
honor to Brother Bryan Mission. We will mail a card
of recognition to the Honoree(s), letting them know we
received a gift from you in their honor.*





Congratulations!

MISSION NEEDS

Miscellaneous

- Laundry detergent
- Coffee
- Copy paper
- Men's underwear (M,L,XL,XXL)

Food Service

- Cereal
- Flour
- Corn Meal
- Sugar

Paper Products

- Paper Plates
- 8oz Styrofoam Cups
- Plastic Forks
- Spoons

Hygiene

- Deodorant
- Razors
- Shaving Cream
- Soap



Automatic Monthly Donations to Brother Bryan Mission

To make automatic monthly donations, complete the following and mail to: **Brother Bryan Mission, P.O. Box 11254, Birmingham, AL 35202**

Name: _____

Amount of Monthly Donation \$ _____

Phone # _____

Card Type Visa Mastercard AmEx

Mailing Address: _____

Name on Card: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Card No.: _____

Email Address (optional): _____

Expiration Date: ____ / ____ Security Code: _____

Signature: _____