

YOU ARE MORE

You know what your problem is?

You want too little.

Your dreams are too small.

You believe you're less than you are.

And your life mission isn't big enough for you.

And I'm here to change that.

That's right.

My goal for the next 8 weeks is to mess you up.

I want to mess up how comfortable you are being where you are.

I want to mess up what you want out of life.

And I want to mess up how you see yourself.

Why?

Because you were made for more.

I don't take myself very seriously.

But I do take life seriously.

And I take the Gospel seriously.

I take life seriously

because we only get one shot at it.

And I take the Gospel seriously

because it tells us what matters in life

and what doesn't.

And if the Gospel is true,

you and I are in danger of

wanting too little,

dreaming too small, and

living lives that are way less than God created us to live.

Not bad lives,
not lives that we have to be ashamed of,
but lives that are so much less than what God
has called us and gifted us and empowered us to live.

John Greenleaf Whittier in his poem Maud Muller wrote: For of all sad words of
tongue or pen, The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Men, it's possible, that will be the story of our lives.

We'll be good guys.
Church guys.
Family guys.
Successful guys
who don't have to be ashamed of the lives we've lived.
But on our gravestones to tell the truth about us,
they'll have to write: What might have been.

And that **will** be your story
if you want too little,
dream too small,
believe you're less than you are, and
get comfortable where you're at.

You were made for more.
And if I could get 300 men to believe that;
if I could get 300 men to see themselves how God sees them
and discover their God-given purpose,
and dream their God-given dream,
and dare to live for what matters most,
we could change the world,
and, brothers, what fun we would have together.

What a ride we've had the past five and a half years in Quest.
We've created something together
that has changed the lives of many men
and that has done a lot of good in the name of Christ for others
through our Kingdom Assignments a couple of years ago
and our mission trips,
including our last trip to Juarez.

But I believe we are on the cusp of much greater things
that God is going to do in us and through us.

I believe there is more for me
and more for you
and more for Quest.

And I don't want to settle for what might have been.
That's why the title of this series of Quest is simply titled: MORE.

Here's the first thing this morning I want to tell you.

1. There's More Going on Than Most Men Know.

If you're married,
you think you know what I mean.

Right, guys?

There's always more going on with your wife than you know about.

And that would be ok, if they would just keep it to themselves;
but, of course, they end up having to tell you about it.

(Turn off the recorder.)

Here's an actual event that happened at my house three months ago.
I'll tell it to you, but you must swear not to breathe a word of this
to anyone.

Let's see the hands.

Tell story.

But that's not what I'm talking about.

I mean there's more to reality
than what we can perceive with our senses.

There's more going on in the world
than what we can see and touch and hear.

That's one reason Jesus would often say,
He who has ears to hear,
let him hear.

And

He who has eyes to see,
let him see.

Because not everyone,

in fact most men don't,
have eyes capable of comprehending what's really happening
around them

or ears trained to discern the small still voice that whispers truth
beneath the seductive lies of the world.

Some do.

And if they are gifted,

they are able to write great books that give us hints about the true
nature of things.

One such author is J. R. R. Tolkien

and one such work is his Lord of The Rings Trilogy.

(Eldredge: Epic)

You'll remember that Frodo and Sam are drawn into a journey and into a
story that is more wondrous and more dangerous than they ever
imagined.

The battle on Weathertop.

The flight to the ford.

The beauty of Rivendell.

The dark mines of Moria,

where they lost their beloved Gandalf.

Their fellowship has fallen apart

and their friends are now far distant.

Into the shadow or Mordor they've come,

two little hobbits on a journey to save the world.

It's at this point Sam says, "I wonder what sort of tale we've fallen into."

At some point on the journey,

he realizes there's a bigger story that they are now part of.

It's not so much that they chose it,

but it chose them.

Not long before,
they had no idea about life outside the shire:
that there were forces so dark,
that the world was in such peril,
that battles were being fought,
or that so much would be required of them.

But on their journey, it has become apparent
that there is much more to the world than they ever imagined.

John Eldredge who wrote *Wild At Heart*,
writes in his little book *Epic: What sort of tale have I fallen into?* is a
question that would help us all a great deal if we wondered it for
ourselves. It might just be the most important question we ever ask.

Fail to ask that question and you are likely to spend
all your life in the shire.
You'll live in a small world
where you feel comfortable and competent.
You will have struggles and challenges,
and they may be exhausting,
but they will never be large battles,
because the cause you fight for will be small,
and the kingdom you serve and protect will be no bigger than yourself.

Men, if we do that our lives will be no more than what might have been.

But ask the question: What sort of tale have we fallen into?
Ask God to give you eyes to see and ears to hear,
and you will see more,
and want more,
and become more than the shire can ever give.

Of course Christians believe there's more to the world than meets the
eye.

But even people in the secular world sense the same thing.

One reason that science fiction is so popular
is because deep in the human heart is the feeling that there is
something more going on than most of us realize.

Here's a clip that some of you have seen before.
But it illustrates what I want you to grasp.

Clip from The Matrix.

There's more to reality than we ever imagined.
As a matter of fact,
 what's most real is often hidden and unseen,
 and if you take this world and its events at face value
 you'll miss what's really going on

And what's really going on is a battle between good and evil.
 The forces that would deceive, blind and enslave.
 And the forces that would bring freedom and truth.

On one level, there are our individual stories.
Growing up,
 getting an education,
 making a living,
 raising a family,
 finding our way in the world,
 and making some kind of contribution to the lives around us.

On a grander level,
 there is the story of humankind's march toward civilization and culture,
 of companies competing,
 of nations doing battle,
 and peoples struggling for justice and security.

But beneath those stories,
 there is THE story,
 the real tale we have fallen into.

It's the story of a gracious and powerful God,
 creating a good world with magnificent beings made in his image.
And how betrayal and rebellion both in heaven and on earth
 have left his creatures lost and captive in a kingdom of darkness.

As in The Matrix,
 most have no idea of their true state or how dire their condition.

And like Frodo and Sam in the shire,
we may have no idea about the great story,
but it is the tale we have fallen into.
And there has been given to the sons of men
the privilege and the responsibility of fighting the King's battles
and rescuing those who have become lost and imprisoned.

How do I know this?
Because it's what Jesus taught.

His favorite phrase was "The Kingdom of God."
And his ministry began with the proclamation:
Mark 1.14-15: The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and
believe the good news!"

Let me translate that for you.
The time is now.
The invasion has begun.
God's Kingdom is here.
Choose sides, men, because it's going to be one hell of a war.

That's what the Gospel is about.
The rightful King has come to do battle with the forces of evil and
to rescue those who belong to him
and re-establish his Kingdom of righteousness and peace.

In John's Gospel Jesus puts it this way,
when he talks about the victory he will win on the cross.

John 12.31: Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world
will be driven out.

The prince of this world,
the one who led the revolt and who now claims the throne of the
rightful King,
the days of his rebellion are numbered.

As with the Nazis after D-Day,
there are many battles still to fight,
but judgment has begun upon the forces of evil,
and the powers of liberation are moving forward.

Paul uses this same language to describe the tale we have fallen into.

Colossians 3.13-14: For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The tale we have fallen into,
the big story is the tale of two kingdoms,
clashing and competing for world dominion.

One to set us free so we may live as the sons of God.
The other to enslave the children of men to what is base and corrupt
and beneath us.

In the stories that we love:
The Lord of the Rings with Frodo and Sam,
Star Wars with Luke Skywalker,
The Matrix with Neo,
Braveheart with William Wallace,
Gladiator with Maximus,
and if you haven't seen it, it's great and it's just out on DVD,
3:10 To Yuma with Dan Evans,

there is always a moment when the hero,
if he is to be a hero,
asks himself: What sort of tale have I fallen into?
What's really going on?
What kind of battle am I being called to fight?

And it's the question you and I must ask.
There is more going on than most men know.
Miss it and whatever else you may accomplish,
your life will be what might have been.

2. Your Life Mission is More Important Than You Have Imagined.

When you and I were born into the Kingdom of God,
we were born into a Kingdom that's at war.
And our mission is to promote the advance of that Kingdom into enemy
territory.

In *Telling the Truth* Frederick Buechner writes about the tale we've fallen
into.

It is a world of magic and mystery of deep darkness and flickering starlight.
It is a world where terrible things happen and wonderful things too.
It is a world where goodness is pitted against evil, love against hate, order against chaos
in a great struggle where often it is hard to be sure who belongs to which side
because appearances are endlessly deceptive.

Yet for all its confusion and wildness it is a world where the battle goes ultimately to
the good who live happily ever after and where in the long run everybody, good and
evil alike, becomes known by his true name...

This is the fairy tale of the gospel with, of course, one crucial difference from all the
other fairy tales, which is that the claim made for it is that it is true, that it not only
happened once upon a time but has kept on happening ever since and is happening
still.

It's still going on.

The battle between good and evil,
the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.
It's as real as it has ever been,
and when we are born into the Kingdom,
we are born to do battle against the forces that deceive and corrupt and
enslave the world that our God loves.

Miss the big story and you'll miss your part.

1 billion people on this planet live on a dollar a day.

2 billion more live 2 dollars a day.

1 billion people suffer from malnutrition.

1/3 of the human race doesn't have clean drinking water.

Hardworking men that some of us now know labor 40 hours a week
and can't afford anything but a shack made of pallets and cardboard.

2 billion people haven't heard the Gospel explained to them
sufficiently to make a conscious choice for or against Jesus Christ.

What about here at home?

According to The Man in the Mirror Ministries:

For every 10 men in the church:

9 will have kids who leave the church

8 will find their jobs unsatisfying

6 will pay the monthly minimum on their credit cards

5 will struggle with pornography

4 will get divorced.

At one of men's retreats a couple of years ago,
our speaker David Cook asked us to write on a medallion
lies that we had been told about ourselves,
curses really that we have lived under.

80 men on that retreat.

Christian.

Churched.

Financially successful.

Professionally moving up.

For over half of them the answer was:

You don't have what it takes.

You'll never measure up.

You'll never make it.

You're a failure.

Every day they wrestle with a lie that strikes at the core of who they are
and causes them to believe they are less than they are.

If you have eyes to see,
you recognize it's not enough to say, "Well, that just the way it is."

If you have eyes to see,
you begin to ask, What sort of tale have we fallen into?

And you begin to understand the words that Jesus spoke when he said:

John 10.10: The thief comes to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly.

And you realize that the battle Jesus came to fight not only happened once upon a time but it has kept on happening ever since and is happening still.

And if you sit out the battle,
if you live the story of going to work,
making a living,
and getting ahead,
and that's it – your life never gets any bigger than that,
it will be a life that might have been and that will be it.

Brothers, we were made for more.

Clip: Black Hawk Down

What were you made for?
To make a difference.

In that clip Sergeant Eversmann can't say the line without smiling.
It sounds pretentious, even arrogant.
And the other soldiers crack up.
He's here to make a difference.
What an idealist.

But I can say it with a straight face.
You and I are here to make a difference.

And if we don't;
at least if we don't try,
our lives will be the story of what might have been and nothing more.

Erwin McManus: We will not stand by and watch humanity sell its soul to gain the world. We will not be seduced by the comforts offered us if only we would compromise. We cannot pretend that all there is, is what we can see. (We) know the world of spirit. We know there is a darkness that subversively corrupts the hearts of men, and to do nothing is to be complicit. We are born into a war. We may feel like children, but we are warriors.

Look what Paul writes to all of the believers in Ephesus.

Ephesians 6.10-12: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Let me translate for you.

There's a war going on.

Like it or not, you're in the middle of it.

And you'd better hike up your skirt and man up

because the world that God loves is under siege and you're here to make a difference.

We may feel like children but God calls us to be warriors.

Like Frodo and Sam in the shire,
we may have no idea about great tale,
but it is the one we have fallen into.

And like Frodo and Sam,
we unlikely characters have been given a hero's part to play.
If we fail, lives will remain captive and dark.
If we fight and win, lives will be set free and made whole
for this world and for eternity.

Let me ask you the question that J. R. R. Tolkien asked C. S. Lewis
before Lewis was converted.

Tolkien to Lewis: What if the greatest story ever told happened to be true?

What if you came to believe in your heart of hearts that the story of the
Kingdom is true – more true than anything you can see with your eyes or
touch with your hands?

And what if you came to believe that your mission in life was to serve and
spread that Kingdom?

What if you came to believe the lives of others literally depended on your
fulfilling your Kingdom purpose in this world?

Our lives would change.

Our purpose would change.

Our priorities would change.
And our plans would change.

It would mess you up, wouldn't it?

I'm here to tell you it's true.
And I'm here to tell you: Your life mission is more important than you have
ever imagined.

3. You are more than you know.

In the Kingdom of God,
you are more important and you are more capable than you know.

In most of the great stories we love,
the hero wonders if he has what it takes.

In fact many believe that they don't.

Neo.

Frodo and Sam.

Luke Skywalker.

Rocky Balboa.

Even Indiana Jones,

John McClane in Die Hard and
William Wallace in Braveheart.

In the Bible,

Gideon, Moses, Jeremiah.

They all wonder the same thing:

Who am I to think I can make a difference?

Who am I to fight the battle that's before me?

Get someone else.

There is one group of heroes that had no such doubts.

They were a small band of 300 men.

Going up against the largest army the world had known.

They were the Spartans.

And there's a reason they went forth with confidence

and without thinking someone else was better fit for the battle before
them.

From an early age they were taught who they were.
They were Spartans.
They were warriors.

These two scenes are from the movie 300.
The second scene is when they are marching to meet the Persians.
The Athenians meet them on the way,
expecting that all of Sparta's army will be there,
but finding only a small band.

Clip for 300.

We act in accordance with our self-image.

So let me tell you who you are.

You are more.

A. You are more powerful than you believe you are.

Acts 1.8: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ...

God has given you the power of his Holy Spirit to live the life
and fulfill the mission he has called you to accomplish.

It's the same power that allowed Paul to say

Philippians 4.13: I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.

You have what it takes – that's God's promise, not mine.

B. You are more equipped for battle than you believe you are.

2 Corinthians 10.3-5: For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

C. You are more gifted than you believe you are.

1 Corinthians 12:4,7: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. ... A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

Each of us has been given at least one supernatural gifting by God's Spirit so we can do the work of the Kingdom not in our ability but in the Spirit's ability.

D. You are more resilient than you believe you are.

2 Corinthians 4.8-10: We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

In addition, God's word says that you are loved as sons (I John 3.1), valued as friends (John 15.15-16), forgiven (Colossians 1.13-14) and accepted (Romans 15.7).

That means you have nothing to prove, nothing to lose and nothing to hide.

You are more than you believe you are.

The world,
your past,
your boss,
your self-image may tell you the lie that those forty men on the retreat struggle with:
that you don't have what it takes,
that you'll never measure up,
and that you're a failure.

But God's word is clear: you are more than you know.

And I can tell you this.

If you will become aware of the more that's going on around us,
if you will begin to live for the life mission you were created for,
and if you will believe that you are all that God says you are
and more than others see,
your life can be more than you ever dreamed
and the impact you'll make on the lives of others will be more than you

ever imagined.

Video Clips

Matrix Scene 8 27.03 – 28.38

Black Hawk Down Scene 1 17.40-18.45 (plus some opening shots)

300 (1) Video Scene 1