

“Making Room To Receive”

Introduction

Malachi 3:10

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

My tithing testimony. I was always a tither. (Thank God for the Baptists!) But one day God showed me that the problem with this promise was not Him pouring out a blessing-it was my not having room enough to receive it!

*I saw a movie once where a group of people were stranded in the middle of nowhere with no water. They were at the point of death when it suddenly began to rain. They were laughing and leaping and opening their mouths to catch the water from heaven. Then it occurred to them that they needed some *containers* and they started running around trying to find something big enough to receive the abundance of rain.

God says He will pen the windows of heaven and He will pour us out a blessing; the problem is on our end. We need to MAKE ROOM TO RECEIVE IT.

So how do we do it?

I. First You Must Believe There Is *More* For You And That God Wants You To Have It!

A. Jesus Came To Give Us “Abundant Life”

"...I am come that you might have life, and might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

1. Here's what the word "abundant" means:

“abundant”

**present in great quantity; more than adequate; over-sufficient
Dictionary.com**

2. Jesus offers us an abundant life with *more*; *more* quantity; *more* than adequate; *more* than what we need.

3. So if Jesus wants to give us more...

B. It Must Be OK To Want More!

1. Some people think the less you have the more spiritual you are.
2. “Religion” can make you feel guilty if you’re blessed; or shame you for wanting more; for wanting a better life.
3. But if that’s true, why did Jesus tell us to ask for *more* than what we have right now?

Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

Matthew 7:7-8 NASB

a. Notice there is an *escalation* in the pursuit of more: You can just sit there and “Ask” for more; or you can get out of your chair and go “Seek” for more; and it’s even OK to go to God’s door and “Knock” on it for more!

- b. It’s OK to want more out of life!
- c. Actually, it’s wired into our nature to want to improve our standard of living.

4. In his book *Working With The Law*, here’s what Raymond Holliwell said about Matthew 7:7:

Raymond Holliwell, in “Working With The Law”

“Man is never satisfied. God did not intend him to be. The law of man’s being is perpetual increase, progress and growth; so when one good is realized, another desire for a greater good will develop; and when a higher state is reached, another and more glorious state will unfold his vision and urge him on and on.

a. God’s first command to man was to “be fruitful and multiply”!

5. And all mankind, throughout history, whether Christian or not, have strived to make a better life for themselves. But Jesus came to give it to us!

6. So where is it? How do we receive it?

**We have to make a *demand* on God's unlimited *supply*
by "making room to receive" what He says He's pouring out.**

7. Here's one of the great secrets of the Christian life:

**WE CAN RECEIVE ONLY AS MUCH OF THE ABUNDANCE LIFE
AS WE CAN MAKE ROOM FOR!**

8. We have to make room for what we're expecting; we have to prepare a place for what don't see yet.

C. True Expectation Makes Preparation!

1. When a couple is expecting their first child, the first thing they do is to begin to make room for the baby!

- a. They move to a bigger house; a bigger apartment; they paint the room and get a baby bed.
- b. The baby hasn't come yet; but they are :*expecting*" it to come so they are making room for it!

2. What are you expecting? Re-read Matthew 7:7, and add verse 8:

**"Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find;
knock, and it shall be opened to you.
(Now read the next verse)**

**"For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds,
and to him who knocks it shall be opened.**

Matthew 7:7-8

3. We ask...but do we expect to receive? We all are seeking...but do we truly expect to find? We start knocking on the door....but do we *expect* God to pen it? He said He would? Here's one of my favorite verses...

Psalm 81:10:

**I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.**

- a. Do we believe God has the ability to “fill” our lives? If we do, we’ll make room to receive! We will “open our mouth...WIDE!”
- b. If we believe the baby’s coming, we’ll make room for the baby!

II. Examples Of “Making Room To Receive”

A. Elisha & the 3 Kings: Digging Ditches in the Desert

- 1. In 2 Kings 3, God united 3 kings to fight against an enormous army. But they were in the middle of a desert and ran out of water.
- 2. There was no way to win the war without water for the men and the horses. So they went to the prophet Elisha to ask for help.

And Elisha said..."Now bring me someone who can play the harp".
2 Kings 3:15 NLT

- a. In the middle of a desert, with no water and an enormous army coming toward them, Elisha called for the praise team!
 - b. You think “praising God” just means praising Him for what He has already done? NO!
 - c. Anybody can praise God for what He has done!
- Praise God for what He is about to do!
 - When you praise God, you are making room to receive what He going to do!
 - In Acts 16, Paul and Silas were thrown into the inner prison and their hands and feet were placed in stocks...But “about midnight”, they began praising God and it brought an earthquake!

Praising God brings the Presence of God!

While the harp was being played, the power of the Lord came upon Elisha...
And (Elisha) said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches...
2 Kings 3:16 KJV

- 3. They needed water. Lots of water. But God wanted to teach them a lesson...they needed to “make room to receive” the blessing God wanted to pour out on them.

4. Digging ditches in the desert was a simple act of faith that they believed God was going to give them what they asked for!

5. They had to make a demand on God's unlimited supply. They had to "make room to receive"!

a. 500 years ago, the great Puritan Bible scholar Matthew Henry commented on this passage:

Matthew Henry

"To try their faith and obedience, Elisha has them make the valley full of ditches to receive the water. Those that expect God's blessings must make room for them and dig the pools for the water to fill in..."

6. Some of us need to start praising God and digging some ditches! Right now! In your desert with not a cloud in sight!

**"Man must prepare for the thing he has asked for
when there is not the slightest sign of it."**

Frances Shinn, "The Game of Life and How to Play It"

7. Digging ditches made room to receive and placed a demand on God's supply!

a. And it may not come in the way we think!

2 Kings 3:17-18

**"For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet this valley shall be filled with water, so that you, your cattle and your beasts may drink... And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord:
he will (also) deliver the Moabites also into your hand.**

8. We don't know how many ditches they dug...that was up them. But every ditch was a demand; and God's supply filled every ditch! And then God gave them the battle to boot!

9. If you live on a flood plain, you know how water fills it up...water flows to the place of least resistance...where there is room for it. So it is with the blessings of God!

Isaiah 44:3

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour out My spirit upon your descendants and My blessing upon your offspring.

10. In my many years of working with God's people, this verse has answered many questions as to why so many do not receive God's blessing!

B. Elijah And The Widow

1. In 2 Kings 4, God sent Elisha to the house of a poor widow woman. The creditors were literally at the door and she had nothing to pay. All she had was a little pot of oil.

2. So what did he tell her to do? He told her to "make room to receive!"

3. He told her to go to her neighbors and borrow empty oil containers.

2 Kings 4:3

Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels at large for yourself from all your neighbors, even empty vessels; do not get a few.

4. He didn't tell her how many...He just said "borrow not a few".

5. The empty vessels she brought home placed a demand on God's supply.

a. Then he told her to go into her home, shut the door, and start pouring into the vessels the little oil she had in her little pt.

2 Kings 4:5-6

...they were bringing the vessels to her and she poured. 6 And it came about when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not one vessel more." And the oil stopped.

Then the good ending...

2 Kings 4:7

Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt, and you and your sons can live on the rest."

6. Notice that the miraculous supply of oil kept flowing until every vessel was full...and only then did the oil stop!

a. The supernatural supply of oil was only limited by how much of it she had made room to receive!

7. God blesses the “poor in Spirit” because they have a need. God’s abundance flows to those who are “hungry” and “thirsty” for righteousness!

**The more room you make for God in your life,
the more the blessings of God will flow into your life!**

III. Making Room To Receive

A. Give God Something To Work With!

"Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be poured into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

Acts 6:38

1. Do not limit this promise to money! When we GIVE, we make “room to receive”!

2. What we RECEIVE is always MORE than what we give!

3. Now we can understand Acts 20:35: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

4. God’s blessing falls on the giving; our blessing comes in the receiving; God’s blessing is greater than our blessing; so it is MORE blessed to GIVE than to receive...

5. Let me close with this...

B. God’s Blessings are for the Poor, the Hungry and the Thirsty

1. Look at these 2 Beatitudes:

Matthew 5:3, 6

**Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.**

a. In the kingdom of man, it is not a blessing to be poor, hungry, or thirsty.

b. But in the Kingdom of God, to be spiritually poor, hungry and thirsty brings the blessing of God!

2. God gave the Virgin Mary this word about the holy Child she carried...

Luke 1:53

He has filled the hungry with good things, but the rich He has sent away empty.

3. Dig some ditches; borrow some vessels; stay humble; hungry; thirsty; all these make room to receive;

4. And one final, pastoral word to those who ask, “But what if I’m not hungry and thirsty? What if I don’t feel very spiritual right now?”

“In the kingdom of man, the less you eat, the hungrier you get. In the Kingdom of God, the more you eat the hungrier you get.”

Bill Johnson

PRAYER

TITLE SLIDE