

BECOMING MEN OF POWER

I. **Not too long ago my pastor and a team of 7 other men went over to South America. One of the men would send daily e-mails of what was happening during the trip.**

A. Reading these reports ministered to me, challenged me, and provoked me.

1. One of the phrases that was used quite extensive though-out the reports was the phrase “an open heaven.”

a. Each place they went they were able to minister under “an open heaven.”

b. As a result, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church, salvation was poured out on the lost, healing was poured out on the sick, and deliverance was poured out on the captives.

2. As I was lying on the floor in my office, crying, knowing that there is an open heaven in South America, there is an open heaven in Toronto, and there is an open heaven in Pensacola.

a. I was crying out to God, that He would give us an open heaven here in Lancaster County.

b. I heard the Lord say to my heart, “*who said it was closed.*”

3. I thought the heavens were closed because what I saw or better a lack of what I saw.

a. I thought God would only open the heavens if we met the right criteria.

1) Sometime He opened sometimes he didn't

2) The Gas Station Owner in Lake City - If I was nicer he would have opened.

b. In the O.T. God opened or closed the heavens according to if we met certain criteria.

1) Deuteronomy 28:12 - "*The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens.* (Verse 2 - If we will obey)

2) Malachi 3:10 - "*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,*" says the LORD of hosts, "*if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.*

4. The NT Jesus opened the heavens once and for all. He met the criteria for us.

a. Matthew 3:16 - *And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, {and} coming upon Him.*

- When the heavens open the Spirit descends.
- b. **John 1:51- And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."**
- c. The heavens over Jesus are open and if your in Him they are open over you.
- d. **Romans 8:32 - He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?**

B. We are still trying to live in NT times with an O.T. mind set.

1. **The Religious spirit loves rules. Our own flesh loves rules. We want to earn it - we want to merit it.**
 - a. In the O.T. obedience would move the hand of God which then would produce faith, in the NT it is faith that moves the hand of God which then produces obedience.
 - b. **I was allowing what I saw and heard or the lack of to determine what I believe, instead of allowing what I believe to determine what I see and hear.**
2. Here is my premise for tonight,
 - a. **"It's not that the heavens are closed to give, but our hearts have been closed through unbelief to receive."**
 - b. It's not that God needs to open the heavens, but our hearts through faith.
 - 1) **Worship doesn't open up the heavens but our hearts**
 - 2) **The word doesn't open up the heavens but our hearts**
 - 3) **Prayer doesn't open up the heavens but our hearts**
 - 4) **Fasting doesn't open up the heavens but our hearts**
3. **In the movie "Hook," Peter Pan (Robin Williams) has come back to never-never land as a grown up.**
 - a. His grown-up and logical way of viewing life keeps him from participating in all the wonders and riches of never-never land.
 - b. **One particular scene brings this idea home.**
 - 1) **The lost boys come to the banquet to eat and enjoy the abundance of food that has been set before them.**
 - 2) **But the grown-up Peter Pan saw only empty dishes and cups.**
 - 3) **It wasn't until he believed they were full was he then able to see and enjoy.**

c. **In the same way we allow what we see and hear or don't see and hear to determine what we believe instead of letting what we believe determine what we see and hear.**

3. Once the Supernatural word comes to the heart it begins to dialogue with the natural mind.
Mark 8:15-19

a. **Greek word for discuss is "Dialogizomai."**

b. We hear two words in that "dialogue" and "logic."

1) **Reasoning will make us adjust what God has said to fit our facts, faith will make us adjust our facts to fit what God has said.**

2) The real challenge of faith is that when God speaks to our hearts that we don't let our minds reason away the supernatural with the natural.

- **The Guy in prison**
- Paid someone's dental bill

4. **My point is - the heavens over Lancaster County are not closed, but your hearts through unbelief.**

C. The O.T. gives us two visions of God's glory

Isaiah 6:3 - "*the whole earth is full of His glory.*"

Habakkuk 2:14 - "*For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.*"

1. **In Isaiah's vision the whole earth is full of God's glory, but in Habakkuk's vision the knowledge of that glory has yet to fill the earth.**

a. You can tap into God's glory anywhere - you just need to look up and see the spout where the glory comes out.

b. **We don't take Jesus anywhere, He is already there, He brings us where He is at.**

c. It's our job to let the people know that the glory is already there.

- **Somewhere in God, there is a glory place, that has no limit in terms of what you can get.**
- You can't bankrupt his love or grace - Here is a good reaction to His grace more!!!

2. **Tonight I want to tell you that you are standing under an open heaven.**

a. Through faith you can open the spout and allow the glory of the Lord to come out.

b. **The Holy Spirit is yours for the asking - Luke 11:9-13**