
Living in God's Best – Don't Settle for Less

A few months ago, I dreamed all night long of preaching a message entitled "How to Receive God's Best." I've spent weeks meditating on this and feel like the Lord gave this to me to share with you.

Before I can share the heart of what the Lord spoke to me, I need to point out two very important things in that title: You have to learn how to RECEIVE God's BEST.

The Lord really impressed on me that the main reason we aren't receiving His best is because we are willing to settle for less. Very few are committed to God's best. We have been influenced more by the world than by God's Word and "dumbed down" to accept far less than what God has provided. As long as you can live with less than God's best, you will. That is a powerful truth.

You have to get sick and tired of being sick and tired before you will aggressively pursue God's best. You have to have a holy dissatisfaction with mediocrity before you can experience all that God has for you. It doesn't happen accidentally or automatically. If you don't pursue it, you won't get it.

Everything in our fallen world naturally goes from good to bad. Things don't get better without effort. We have to seek to find, knock to get the door opened, and ask before we receive (Matt. 7:7). We must raise our sights and aim higher. Most people are shooting at nothing and hitting it every time.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end [hope and a future]" (NIV, brackets mine).

When the Lord spoke to Jeremiah to write these words, Israel was devastated. The city of Jerusalem had been destroyed, and many people had been taken captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Thoughts of peace were probably the last thing on their minds.

But Jeremiah went on to say in verses 12-13, "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

I've had people tell me they prayed and believed God but that nothing happened. These scriptures promise otherwise. So, who's right? I choose to believe God is true. The key is, we have to seek with ALL our hearts. That's the missing element. We have to reach a point where we won't live with anything less than God's best.

That attitude is missing in the lives of far too many Christians. The bar of expectations, even within the church, has been lowered in regards to healing, finances, and more. There is such a fear that someone might be disappointed and, therefore, condemned that many ministers have been teaching people to settle for less and avoid the disappointment.

I am not trying to condemn anyone. We have all been raised in and influenced by an ungodly culture. And nobody learns how to receive God's best overnight. It's a process, but we need to begin moving in that direction. I haven't arrived there either, but I have left and am on my way. God has far more for all of us than we are experiencing.

I have told this story before, but it is such a good illustration that I want to share it with you again. A man came forward for prayer in one of my meetings. He told me he had a terrible pain in his neck and couldn't sleep as a result. He continued, "I've got a back problem, my sciatic nerve causes pain down my entire leg and into my foot, I also have neuropathy..." and on and on he continued.

Then he said, “But if God could just heal the pain in my neck, I could live with the rest.” I looked at him and said, “Well, I understand. If we asked God to heal all of those things at once, the lights in heaven might dim. I’m not sure God could pull that off.”

The guy just looked at me for a minute, and then he replied, “That was pretty stupid, wasn’t it?” I agreed and then went on to tell him that he didn’t have to settle for less than complete healing—God’s best. “It’s that attitude that is keeping you from receiving your healing,” I said.

Christians ought to be walking in supernatural healing. They ought to be walking in financial prosperity. Most, however, are just as sick and broke as their unsaved neighbors. You will never receive God’s best until you become completely dissatisfied with second best—mediocrity.

One of these days, we are all going to stand before God. And when we do, we will know all things even as we are known (1 Cor. 13:12). In an instant, we are going to know what we could have had while on this earth. We will understand that the same power that raised Christ from the dead was resident within us all along (Eph. 1:18-20).

We will discover that we didn’t have to be sick, that we didn’t have to live broke, and that we didn’t have to be depressed and discouraged. We will realize that love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance were living inside us the whole time (Gal. 5:22-23).

We don’t have to limp into heaven, crying, “Praise God, we made it.” We can live a life of victory now. Jesus died to deliver us from this present evil world (Gal. 1:4), not just the one to come.

Moses lived under an inferior covenant compared to ours (2 Cor. 3:7-11). Jesus said John the Baptist was greater than Moses, yet the least New Testament saint is greater than John (Matt. 11:11). Therefore, if Moses was still strong at 120 with good eyesight (Deut. 34:7), why would we settle for less?

Unless you’re willing to stand and fight the fight of faith, you will be overcome by this world. If you don’t stir yourself up, you will settle to the bottom. The world isn’t going to encourage you toward God’s best, and most Christians aren’t either.

Sadly, religion is one of the strongest weapons Satan has to discourage people from believing for something more. Many churches believe that God doesn’t perform miracles today or, worse, that God is the one who wills for our lives to be in such a mess to break us. He sovereignly controls everything. That is not true.

We also have to recognize that it’s all about receiving what God has already done and not about getting God to do something He has yet to do. We don’t need God to heal us; by His stripes, we were healed (1 Pet. 2:24). That miraculous healing power is already IN us. We don’t need God to move; we need to believe what He has already done and learn how to receive.

I encourage you to begin receiving God’s best. In this letter, I have only touched on a small part of this message. But I have just completed a new five-part teaching series called How to Receive God’s Best. In the series, I cover in depth how to not settle for less, as well as subjects like the difference between blessings and miracles, what the blessings of God are, the power of words, and much more.

Andrew Womack