

EXPANSION SERIES

WALKING IN ENLARGEMENT



"Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, And strengthen your stakes. For you shall expand to the right and to the left..." Isaiah 54:2-3

Welcome to the year 2024! The beginning of a new calendar year often brings hope and expectations. January is typically the time when a lot of attention is paid to prophetic words and a lot of plans are made for the coming months sometimes in the form of what we call resolutions. Unfortunately, some resolutions do not go past the first month and by February, the hopes, excitement and expectations die down and things are back to status quo.

From our respective experiences over the years, we will likely have realized that regardless of how well thought out and formulated our plans are and regardless of the number of prophetic words we may have received, they will not automatically become a reality. What are the things we need to take cognizance of some critical areas.

We believe very strongly that the Lord is set to do great things in our lives and bring increase this year. By His grace we will achieve all the Lord has in store for us and we start off our Expansion Series with this study on 6 key factors that will help us align with His plans for our enlargement in the coming year.

Day 1

Be Open to Embrace the New

'Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.' Isaiah 43:19

A lot can happen in a year, what makes the difference isn't the months that go past, but what we do with the time. What we do with the time is dependent on where we are going and where we are going is further dependent on what we see. If we believe it will be the "same ol' same ol'" then we will position as such. But if we truly believe that it will be a defining year for good then we start seeing each day as an opportunity to experience God's newness.

For God to do new things isn't hard. The question is do we recognize when God is at work in or around us? Sometimes, experiencing the new means letting go of the past, which may not always be easy. It may be difficult to let go of past successes and even the pains of past hurts so we can embrace new things. But this is what God calls us to do. God is always on the move and if we're not sensitive to His promptings, we run the risk of stagnating without even realizing it.

'Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' Philippians 3:13-14

God is always calling us to reach for more of Him. This calls for a willingness to release ourselves from the past and open up to the new things God wants to do, even though we may not fully understand it yet. This is where seeking His will first comes in.

'... we haven't stopped praying for you, asking God to give you wise minds and spirits attuned to his will, and so acquire a thorough understanding of the ways in which God works. We pray that you'll live well for the Master, making him proud of you as you work hard in his orchard. As you learn more and more how God works, you will learn how to do your work.' Colossians 1:9-10 MSG

Rather than present a list of goals we want to achieve this year, the place to start is to ask God what He wants to do this year and how we can align with His plans. In this way, we are confident that whatever we do will please Him and have His full backing.

Prayer: Lord help me to embrace the new this year, give me complete knowledge of Your will and the spiritual wisdom and understanding I need to do my part.

Day 2

Whispers of Destiny

'This truth was given to me in secret, as though whispered in my ear.' Job 4:12

A critical success factor for life is the specific instruction(s) God gives to people regarding what He would have them do. There may be a general word from God for a season, but there's also a specific word for each of us for the months ahead. This is why it's critical we hear from God for ourselves what He's saying about the days to come. This is what was referred to as a whisper.

The interesting thing about a whisper is that you have to be close to the person speaking to hear what exactly is being said. This implies there's a level of proximity we must have to God. Apart from proximity, whispers cannot be heard in noisy environments, or by a distracted person. This also suggests that we need to give the Holy Spirit all the space and time needed to speak to us in a way that we can clearly hear what He's saying and also clarify from Him that we heard correctly.

'Then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.' Job 33:16

If we truly believe God has specific instructions for how we're to live this year (and beyond) then it stands to reason that we should dedicate time to hearing what He has to say to us. When we make hearing from God **first** a priority, then it's easier for us to hear and align with the instructions he gives us.

'O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps' Jeremiah 10:23

All we need to set our year on the right track is one clear instruction from God. Isaac thrived in famine because he heard and obeyed, David won several battles because he took time to inquire of and hear from God, while Jesus was an infant His life was preserved through the obedience of Joseph to the instructions he received. So as the year is still young, let's spend time seeking what God is saying and receiving grace to walk in complete obedience.

Prayer: Lord I ask for the grace to seek You and discern what You are saying concerning this year and what it holds for me. I ask for the grace to stay true to what You show me regardless of what my natural eyes may see.

Day 3

Believing God Can and God Will

"The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can." "What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes." The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!" Mark 9:22-24

The father of the epileptic boy must have tried several solutions before coming to the disciples and when they struggled with solving the problem he may have given up. When Jesus shows up, we see from his request that doubt had taken over: "help us IF you can". Jesus's response triggered the truth of the father's desperation: help me overcome my unbelief.

What happens when we face a situation that slowly eats away at our faith because there just doesn't seem to be a visible solution? Do we keep coming back to God out of habit but not belief? Do we give up? Or do we take time to reflect and allow ourselves to be open and honest with the Holy Spirit? It's in the place of honesty we can let Him know that unbelief is creeping in, that we know God can do all things but we're beginning to doubt if He will do **this** specific thing.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalms 139:23-24

God isn't intimidated by any issues we may have. He won't love us any less if we admit to Him that we're struggling to believe Him for something. But beyond admitting where we are, we must be willing to let the Holy Spirit work in us to restore our faith in Him.

"In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil." Ephesians 6:16

The reason the enemy attacks our faith life is because he knows all things are possible to those who believe, which makes such a person unstoppable. So the attacks are designed to handicap by questioning our identity, God's love and His willingness to create the outcome we desire. Once we don't really believe something will happen, we start formulating all sorts of alternatives that take God out of the picture.

Prayer: Lord I believe You can do all things, but I am starting to struggle in this area (mention the area). I know You delight in doing me well so I ask Holy Spirit please help me see the situation through Your eyes and Your perspectives and help me rebuild my faith.

Day 4

Audacious Boldness

'We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!'" Numbers 13:33

We fully expect the Lord to do something new but that doesn't mean the process will be without challenges, discomfort and inconvenience. This is where boldness is required, not false bravado but a confidence that the Lord who said it will bring it to pass. When the Israelites went to spy the land of Canaan, they gave up because they saw the giants and compared themselves with what they saw with their natural eyes. They forgot that the God who promised them the land had the power to put it in their possession.

'Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle?...Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt' Numbers 14:3

Before we castigate the Israelites for being fearful, let's put ourselves in their shoes – they had spent hundreds of years as slaves not warriors. Because they weren't used to fighting battles the idea of war was alien to them and they wanted to run back to their comfort zone. Sometimes until the pain of staying the same outweighs the pain we associate with change, we're unlikely to make any adjustments. When we are convinced that the only way is forward, our prayer posture changes from asking God to take us out of a situation to asking for the boldness required to face it head on.

'What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?' Romans 8:31

'They said to all the people of Israel, "The land we traveled through and explored is a wonderful land! Do not rebel against the Lord, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the Lord is with us! Don't be afraid of them!'" Numbers 14:7,9

God always finishes what He starts, so if He has said something, He will see it to completion regardless of what obstacles may come our way. He isn't limited to taking us through the smooth only, sometimes the rough is part of the plan to help build up our confidence in Him and the boldness that comes with it.

Prayer: Lord I thank You for the confidence I have that You are for me and that makes me more than a conqueror in every situation. Help me to walk in boldness in this assurance.

Day 5

As Far as Your Eyes can See

'And the Lord said to Abram...: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are— northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.'" Genesis 13:14-17

To enlarge Abraham, the Lord made Abraham do three critical things. The first was to look around to help him create a clear visual of what the Lord was giving him. Next was to give him a mental picture of the quantum of what his descendants would look like by comparing them to the dust of the earth. Finally, Abraham physically walked through the land so that in the future he would have a tangible experience to recall.

Why was all this necessary? The Lord was intentionally creating a picture for Abraham to store in his heart because He knows that we can't receive anything we haven't already captured in our minds and hearts. What picture is in your heart concerning 2024?

'Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way.'
Psalms 119:37

When we look around us do we see opportunities or are we overwhelmed by challenges affecting our ability to see as we should? The enemy excels at creating distortions and distractions so we can't see well as he knows the power available to a person who can incubate a God-given visual. Once incubated, it's only a matter of time before such a visual will be birthed. One of the most important things we should do this year is to partner with the Holy Spirit so the things He has for us can be planted, take root and produce fruit in our lives.

Prayer: Lord open my eyes and help me see as I should. Show me the things in and around me that affect my vision and help me bring in the necessary corrections and alignment.

Day 6

Step it Up

'For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.'
1 Corinthians 16:9

To experience something different, we must think and act differently. The enlargement God will bring our way calls for us to start functioning differently even before it comes, so we have the capacity not just to receive, but to sustain and multiply the increase. This is because God knows that when we get to a higher level of elevation, we will have to address the challenges that come with that level.

'When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, they mobilized all their forces to capture him...' 1 Chronicles 14:8

There's a level of opposition attached to every level of increase. Which means the greater the territory, the greater the opposition. It's not personal, it just comes with the territory. Once David became king, the real battles just started as he then had to fight numerous battles to keep his throne and expand Israel's influence. He couldn't rest his oars on just being king as the Philistines and other kings kept attacking Israel. And each time David took the battle to the Lord **First** to get direction, strategy and garner success in the spirit before stepping on to the battlefield.

'Give me the wisdom and knowledge to lead them properly, for who could possibly govern this great people of yours?' 2 Chronicles 1:10

Expansion brings additional complexities with it thus we can't afford to remain at the same level mentally. This means we must actively seek for opportunities to expand our understanding and knowledge base so we can be more effective in the areas we are asking God to enlarge us. This will involve continuous investments in time, energy and finance so we remain sufficiently equipped.

'As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.' Proverbs 27:17

We must also be intentional regarding the company we keep and surround ourselves with those who are interested in kingdom expansion and are willing to keep challenging themselves and those around them to ensure their lives bring God glory in every area.

Prayer: Lord I thank you not just for the enlargement, but the preparation process You're taking me through so I am thoroughly equipped to sustain it. Thank You for taking me from strength to strength and glory to glory

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