

Empty or Opportunity

✖ Empty is not fun. No one likes the thought of an empty glass, an empty gas tank and least of all, an empty bank account. When considered in those terms, empty is just plain undesirable. But what would happen if we could begin to think of empty as opportunity? What if, every time we saw barren, we could imagine bounty?

The idea of seeing what could be instead of what is, would not be, however, an earthly exercise in wishful thinking, merely an act of human intellect. Instead it would be a spiritual application of a powerful biblical principle, which simply teaches; “We [the righteous] live by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7, NKJV). In other words, we are to live in expectancy, standing on what we know and believe to be true and not living in despair, troubled by what we see with our natural eyes.

When we start training our hearts to look at life with spirit eyes instead of with human ones, we will begin to recognize that appearances are not final and facts are not always the truth. For the faith-walker, when the world says it’s over, we know God is just beginning and an empty condition is just an opportunity for the Lord to fill it with something spectacular and beautiful.

The widow of Zarephath discovered this (see 1 Kings 17:10-16). In her moment of desperation she experienced a life-shaking encounter that forever rattled her perspective. After the death of her husband she found herself with empty cupboards, empty pockets and an empty hope. That emptiness in God's economy, however, was precisely what made her a candidate for a miracle.

The widow's empty turned opportunity when Elijah, the prophet of God, asked her for a piece of bread. Instead of clutching to her meager supply, she agreed to release her grip on the only remaining resource she had. Who would have known that this single act of faith would activate and unleash the miracle supply of God for her and her son? Just as the word of the Lord had said, "The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land" (NIV). Her source of survival never dried up. Though to the natural eyes the jar and jug appeared near empty, leaving them in a continual state of hunger, the eyes of faith understood it to be abundantly plentiful, leaving them completely satisfied and fulfilled.

This Old Testament story gives us a contemporary lesson on how we should view our needy condition. Instead of seeing our lack as hopeless and futile, we should gaze with the eyes of faith into the

possibilities that await us. Remember, when “empty knocks” it just may be opportunity in disguise.

Still not convinced that empty can be good? Then consider this. Jesus knew empty. In fact it was the very emptiness of our Savior that now allows us to be filled with eternal life. Think about it: First, God emptied heaven and sent His only Son to live and die on this earth. Then, Jesus emptied Himself so He could take on human form and pay the price for our sin (see Phil. 2:6-7). What an amazing concept to grasp! The fullness of Jesus was preceded by His willingness to empty Himself. And last of all, hell was emptied of its power, leaving an empty tomb as proof that our God is an all-powerful, miracle-working God and nothing is impossible with Him!

Today Jesus is on “empty” pursuits. He is not angered about our empty condition; rather, He is tenaciously after our barrenness so that He can bring us His life and fullness. Just as He summoned the “empty jars” at the wedding in Cana of Galilee so He could fill them with water and transform it into wine, He calls to us right now.

God asks for our desert, our dry and empty places, so He can fill us with eternal, life-giving water and grant us the opportunity to taste the sweetest wine this life has to offer.

No,
empty is not fun. But it does possess the potential to be
transformed. Whether
it is our human heart and all our emotions, or our outward
circumstances, God is
the source and the fulfillment of everything we could ever
dare ask for, dream
of or imagine. So next time you see empty, believe for
opportunity!