

Melva's Corner

No Limits On God!

(Special Edition)



Central Truth: Let's not limit God. I don't want to get to heaven and find out that I only did half of what the Lord had planned for me. I'm sure you don't want that either.

In Psalm 78, the psalmist magnified God's faithfulness by recounting Jewish history; specifically, God's mercy on the Jews who came out of Egypt during the forty years in the wilderness. He speaks of how many times they rejected God and doubted His goodness. Psalm 78:40-41 says, "How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel."

That is a powerful passage of scripture, and one that applies to us today. The Lord has spoken that passage to me many times before, but now it's taken on a brand new meaning.

Verse 41 says they limited the Holy One, which is speaking of God. That's an amazing statement! The dictionary defines the verb "limit," as "to confine or restrict within limits." We can confine, restrict, or limit God.

That's a totally foreign concept to some people. There are those who think there can be no such thing as a limit on God. They see that as removing His Divinity. A god that can be limited isn't really a god in many people's thinking.

I will say this: God isn't personally limited by anything or anyone. But when it comes to us receiving from Him, we can limit what He wants to do through us or for us. God doesn't sovereignly do what He wants with us. We have to co-operate. God Himself is limitless, but what He can accomplish is limited. Not because of any lack of power or ability on His part, but because of the part we have to play.

Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us..." Many of us stop after the first comma and proclaim God can do anything, but that's not the truth of this verse. God has limited Himself to what we believe Him to do. If there isn't the power of faith working in us, then He can't, or you could say, will not, work independent of us.

God is who He is, regardless of what we think or believe. If we don't believe God is real, that doesn't make Him cease to exist. As far as our experiences go, we won't encounter Him until we change that opinion. In essence change our mind!

Take salvation for example. II Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." You can't make it any plainer than that. It is not God's will for people to perish, but they do. Why? Not because God wills it, but because God gave us a free will and there are those of us who choose to reject God's provision for our salvation.

That's a very sobering thought! Many don't like that truth because it makes them responsible. They like to think that God just sovereignly makes things happen in their lives. That way, they can blame God for the mess they are in and say, "God is teaching me something or making me a better person." But that's not what God's Word says.

The Lord willed for the Israelites to enter into the promised land in a short period of time. But the generation that came out

of Egypt died during the forty years in the wilderness. That wasn't God's will. That was because of their own choices.

In I Samuel 13:13, Samuel told Saul that if he would have believed and obeyed God, the Lord would have established his kingdom over Israel forever. That means that David wasn't God's first choice; Saul was. If Saul wouldn't have limited God, then we would be singing about the sure mercies of Saul instead of David. We have to co-operate with the Lord to see His will fulfilled in our lives.

There are many ways we limit the Lord. In Psalm 78, the scripture mentions they limited God by not remembering His goodness and faithfulness toward them. They lusted for things they didn't have, and rebelled at godly authority. There are other ways we can limit God too.

Unknowingly we can limit the Lord by small thinking about ourselves and what the Lord can do through us.

We all have images on the inside of us of who we are and what we can do. These images and thoughts are like ceilings, or limits, to what we can do. You will never occupy a place that you haven't already carved out in your thoughts.

What makes one person able to sky dive while another one would never do such a thing? In most cases, it's not some physical ability that makes the difference. It's the way they think on the inside. We can't do something on the outside that we haven't already embraced on the inside. **"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).**

Sometimes, these limits come through things that were spoken to us as children, like: "You'll never amount to anything," or, "You never do anything right." If we believe these negative words, they become strongholds which limit what God can do for us. Other times, life shatters our dreams, and we develop negative thoughts on our own which become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Then, there are some limits which just occur naturally, and we have to grow through them, like children learning to sit, then stand, then walk, then run and jump, etc.

I believe we all tend to think too small. Regardless of how far you think you've come, we have a BIG God who thinks and does BIG. As a friend said to me once, "if your dreams and visions aren't keeping you up at night, you're thinking too small." Let's not limit God. I don't want to get to heaven and find out that I only did half of what the Lord had planned for me. I'm sure you don't want that either.

Maybe you are playing it too safe and you need to take the limits off of what the Lord wants to do for you and through you. There's always something more. The Lord has a perfect plan for you. If your life isn't fulfilling, then you haven't discovered God's best. God has great thoughts for us all (Jeremiah 29:11).

I encourage you to take the few things I've shared here and let the Lord stir you up to receive nothing less than His best. You won't accomplish everything all at once. As lofty as my dreams are the Lord continues to shows me from time to time that I'm still thinking too small. We never really arrive, but I've left the station. I pray you're going with me.

Scriptural References:

"For I know the plans I have for you ... plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
(Jeremiah 29:11)