

Contending for the Fullness of God's Promises (Mt. 5:4, 6)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Lou Engle has called a **40-day fast (March 1-April 9)**: Many across the nations are joining him in contending for revival, global harvest, and the fullness of God's promises for this hour. People will engage in various types of fasting—water and/or liquids only, a Daniel fast, a media fast, etc.
- B. I believe that we are in a critical hour in human history in the USA and the nations when both light and darkness are escalating rapidly. The prophet Daniel is an example of how to respond at such a time (Dan. 10). The Lord uses prayer and fasting in a catalytic way to “shift” things in the Spirit. I believe this 40-day fast will be a time of “transition” for individuals, our ministry, our nation, etc.
- 12Then he [an angel] said, “...from the first day that you set your heart...to humble yourself before God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13But the prince of ...Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and...Michael...came to help me... (Dan. 10:12-13)***
- C. During this upcoming 40-day fast, by the grace of God, I am committed to be in the GPR for a minimum of 3 intercession sets each day—6am, 10am, and 4pm. I am asking the Lord to move on **120 people to join me** by being in the GPR for at least **any 2 intercessions sets a day for 40 days**—6am, 10am, 4pm, 8pm, 12am, 2am, 4am (with exceptions for traveling or family emergencies, etc.). If you will join me in this for 40 days, then let me know by emailing me at **mikebickle@ihopkc.org**.
- D. On January 22, 2020, the Lord surprised me when He suddenly spoke to me from Hebrews 11:38 saying, “*Oh, the privilege of being among a people of whom the world is not worthy.*” He did not say that we are such a people, but it implied that He would give us grace to be dedicated like this.
- 36Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment... 37...being destitute, afflicted, tormented—38of whom the world was not worthy... (Heb. 11:36-38)***
- E. Hebrew 11 is about having faith or confidence in God's promises—*short term* and *long term*—resulting in a *lifestyle of faithfulness* to persist in contending for them. The Greek word *pistis* is translated as “faith” or “faithfulness”—it is emphasized 24 times in Hebrew 11.
- 6Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe...that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. 7By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household...24By faith Moses...26esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. 27By faith...he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. (Heb. 11:6-27)***
- F. We are to earnestly seek for God's fullness—**personally** for our heart, ministry, circumstances (family, money, relationship, etc.), **eschatologically** (long term and end-time prophetic promises), and **eternally** (His evaluation of our life at the Judgment Seat resulting in our millennial role).
- 19Repent...that times of refreshing may come...20and that He may send Jesus...21whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things... (Acts 3:19-21)***

II. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN AND HUNGER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS (MT. 5:4, 6)

- A. The 8 beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12) are Jesus' clearest statement on how to walk by faith as we pursue loving God with all our heart and contend for His prophetic promises—*short term and long term*.
“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted...⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Mt. 5:4, 6)
- B. We mourn and hunger for the “*gap*” between what is *available right now* in the Spirit and what we are experiencing in our personal life. This also includes contending for God's long term promises. On several occasions, I have heard prominent international leaders say, “*This is as good as it gets.*”
- C. ***Mourning and joy***: We hold these two truths in tension. We rejoice in who we are in Christ and what we are experiencing in God, while we are aware of how much more there is to experience. We are grateful for all that we experience, but continually seek the Lord for a greater measure. We are never content without pressing in with confidence for the fullness of all that He promised.
- D. This mourning is God's gift to us. This gift of mourning is rare, precious, and powerful. Feeling the pain of this godly desperation causes us to be extreme in reordering our life in how we spend our strength, time, and money—so that we use them to seek God for all that He is willing to give us.
- E. Jesus addressed this as the root problem in the “successful” church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-21). God told Howard Pittman that the condition of today's Church is like the Laodiceans (see ***Placebo***).
16“You are lukewarm...¹⁷Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” (Rev. 3:16-19)
14You have said, “It is useless to serve God; what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance and that we have walked as mourners before the LORD of hosts?” (Mal. 3:14)
- F. James called many to mourn over their spiritual shallowness and lack of diligence in seeking God.
8Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you...⁹Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.¹⁰Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (Jas 4:8-10)
- G. Jesus taught on the blessedness of hungering to walk in “more” in the grace of God. Jesus called us to press into God for the release of righteousness in our personal lives, for others, and in society. Hunger is one of the most important signs of life. Lack of hunger is a serious sign of sickness in the spirit. When there is no hunger for a sustained period, then there is no life. Many live in a “spiritual intensive care unit” without any hunger for prayer or the Word. This is abnormal Christianity.
6Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. (Mt. 5:6)
- H. Paul, the premier teacher on grace, pressed in for the prize of walking in the fullness of His calling.

¹²Not that I have already attained...I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me [fullness of his calling]...¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call [the fullness of his calling] of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:12-14)