CAPACITY Josh Macdonald, Sept. 1, 2019

**Capacity-** the maximum amount that something can contain.

I personally believe that every single believer has a different measure of capacity for the things of God in their lives. This is not a competition of who has more and who has less, but it is a reality to our personal lives in God. Creating a larger capacity day by day, month by month, and year by year is of utmost importance to our lives in God. Greater capacity for God will produce greater levels of revelation of who He is, and more supernatural activity operating in our lives. It’s not that God is withholding from anybody, but our personal lives of creating capacity allow us to feel and experience more of the never-ending ocean of His encounter. The question is left, how do I create capacity?

**LOOKING AND SEEING**

In my opinion the greatest issue that we have is that we really don’t see Him for who He is. Lack of fascination is an epidemic in the church and God wants to deliver us from boredom. When we get bored with God all other life issues begin to flow because our eyes turn to other things.

“The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems, for he sees at once that these have to do with matters which at the most cannot concern him for very long; but even if the multiple burdens of time may be lifted from him, the one mighty single burden of eternity begins to press down upon him with a weight more crushing than all the woes of the world piled one upon another. That mighty burden is his obligation to God. It includes an instant and lifelong duty to love God with every power of mind and soul, to obey Him perfectly, and to worship Him acceptably. And when the man’s laboring conscience tells him that he has done none of these things, but has from childhood been guilty of foul revolt against the Majesty in the heavens, the inner pressure of self-accusation may become too heavy to bear.” - A.W. Tozer

***I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42: 5-6 ESV)***

Job had a radical encounter in chapters 38-41 where God literally showed up in a tornado to him (38:1) and blew his mind about how big He is. Job 38 and 39 are some of the most profound chapters in the entire bible in my opinion to blow your mind about how big God is.

Jobs response after this encounter is that he had heard all about God and knew ideas about Him but when he saw Him in His power and glory he shut his mouth because now he really had seen (40:4).

 I would assume that for the rest of Job’s life, his prayers drastically changed after seeing God in that way. In the same way John fell on his face like a dead man I’m sure Job was feeling the same level of intensity.

***Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. The hairs of His head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of many waters. In His right hand he held seven stars, from His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and His face was like the sun shining in full strength. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead (Rev 1:12-17 ESV)***

***After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with One seated on the throne. And He who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings[a] and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” (Rev 4 ESV)***

Something tells me that those around the throne staying holy holy holy day and night aren’t forced to be there. They are stuck there and can’t leave because of the level of encounter they are living in.

 Jesus told the disciples to pray this way, Let it be on earth as it is in heaven (Matt 6:10). We all love that idea in the church today and we mostly associate it with healings and salvations. Though that is good and true, I think a greater dimension of seeing Him in His glory is really what that prayer is about. This reality makes 24/7 prayer, like IHOPKC is doing, not so radical anymore.

**PRAYER LIFE**

Having a vibrant prayer life is key to creating capacity. The question, though, is what are our prayers like? Most believers, when they think of prayer, they think of either writing out a list of wants or sitting in a circle and praying for their sick relatives. Though these things aren’t wrong, there is a higher place of prayer that connects us to the Godhead and causes a life of fascination and wonder to explode on the inside. After all, we do believe God answered our prayers right? Just before this, I grabbed a few Scriptures really talking about Jesus’ beauty, when we begin to touch these realities, it fuels our prayer life.

John 17 is popularly labeled as the chapter of the “High Priestly Prayer”. It’s profound, because we actually get to get a front-row seat to an actual conversation and prayer from God, the Son, to God the Father. Grasp that one God is talking to God.

Jesus prays many prayers for us to the Father but I specifically want to highlight that Jesus prayed that we would BEHOLD HIS GLORY.

***Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24)***

**Paul prayed these prayers for Ephesus**

 ...***that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power (Eph 1:17-19 NKJV)***

***...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:16-19 NKJV)***

**FASTING**

Along with tongues, I believe fasting is one of the most misunderstood subjects in our walk with the Lord. I think that it’s safe to say that most believers know that fasting is a good thing, but because of lack of fathers and mothers in the body who have truly embraced this lifestyle, the sheep are left with misunderstanding. There are different kinds of fasting, but in this teaching I want to only highlight and focus on the bridegroom fast.

I know LOTS of believers who do the annual beginning of the year fast and come to the table with their list of things they want to see God do. This kind of fasting is great, but this kind of fasting also has its downfall because it’s ***performance driven*** and ***wants driven*** and typically not ***intimacy driven***. Jesus highlights a profound insight in Matt 9 when He was questioned about why His disciples didn’t fast. I love the way the NKJV highlights the disciples as FRIENDS. This is very important to pay attention to.

***Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?” And Jesus said to them, “Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. (Matt 9:14-15 NKJV)***

I have looked at Matt 9 for years, and when I pray through it and practice the discipline of fasting in my own life, I see what Jesus is saying to John’s disciples. He highlights 2 realties. Being with them, and being taken away.

**1. Being with them** - Jesus is highlighting the fact that He is present and physically tangible in their lives. He’s saying to them “I am literally right here, they can touch me, feel me, eat a meal with me. ETC ETC.

**2. Being taken away** - Now Jesus is saying to them ... BUT it’s not always going to be this way. He is saying that when He is taken away, they will have to connect to Him by spirit not by the flesh.

FASTING IS AN OUTWARD RESPONSE TO AN INWARD LONGING

The Bridegroom fast is such a beautiful thing, because it’s not motivated by wanting something from God. It’s motivated by pure desire and longing. The problem is many aren’t longing. As this teaching goes on, we will unpack some lifestyle choices that will create fascination and longing.

**CONSECRATION**

When we begin to touch God in new ways, the idea of consecration no longer feels like a duty that we have to do. We begin to realize that consecration creates capacity to feel and experience in ways that we can’t when the cares of the world are drowning out sensitivity and tenderness.

***Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. (Ps 24:3-5 NKJV)***

***Lord, remember David And all his afflictions; How he swore to the Lord, And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: “Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, Or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes Or slumber to my eyelids, Until I find a place for the Lord, A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.” (Ps 132:1-5 NKJV)***

***Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. (Gal 6:7-8 ESV)***

***'Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. ' (Phil 4:8-9 ESV)***

**Orphans** - Oprhans view consecration through the lens of God’s approval over them. They will become machines in the disciplines of the faith, because in them they think God will be happier. This will cause burnout quickly.

**Sons** - Sons recognize that the fulness of God is available within and want to fight to experience all that is available. They recognize that the only thing keeping them from all that God has is themselves. They pursue consecration because they know that it will connect them closer to the activity of the spirit and drown out the activity of the flesh. It has nothing to do with approval or acceptance but everything to do with fighting for connectivity.

**PRIDE**

Pride thinks we know things about God and we take on a “*oh ya I know that*” mindset. This mindset will end in boredom with God. The truth is that the revelation of God is beyond anything we will ever be able to attain to here on the earth. Our human brains can’t even come close to touch the depths of who God is. This should keep is in awe and wonder our entire life.

***My children ask me around 100 questions per day. They are in a constant sate of curiosity and are eager to learn, this is the posture Jesus wants us to be in no matter how long we have been walking with Him. And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. (Rev 3:1&2 ESV)***

# “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matt 18:3-4 ESV)