

## Shifting your Boundaries

If you want to live a super-abundant life, **a life without limits**, you must learn to shift your boundaries. Too many of us desire to live within the safety of our defined limitations. However, God wants us to live a life without limitations. For with God all things are possible!

**Micah 7:11** says, "The day for building your walls will come, the day for **extending your boundaries**. In **Isaiah 54**, God gives a very inspiring set of instructions, He says, "Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. **Spread out! Think big!** Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep. You're going to need lots of elbow room for your growing family. You're going to take over whole nations; you're going to resettle abandoned cities. So don't be afraid - you won't be embarrassed. **Don't hold back** - you're not going to come up short" (Message). Another translation reads, "Enlarge your house; build an addition. **Spread out** your home, and **spare no expense!** For you will soon be bursting at the seams. Your descendants will occupy other nations and resettle the ruined cities."

Here, the operative phrase is, "spread out!" Are you "spreading out" or are you containing yourself within the boundaries of your limited thinking. Limited thinking will stifle your life! It will keep you from fulfilling your destiny. God promises to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that you may ask or **think** (Ephesians 3:20). Notice, it's your thinking that sets the bottom line. The higher your thoughts, the higher the measure of your blessings.

Isaiah 54 says "**Spread out! Think big! Don't hold back!**" How many of you are applying this attitude toward the circumstances you are currently facing? It will take some courage to shift your boundaries. And especially the boundaries of your personal attitude toward things! Three times, God told Joshua to be strong and courageous. After the third time He says why – "for the Lord your God is **with you** wherever you go."

Therefore, if God is with you - and if God is for you - can you find any good reason why you should not be strong and courageous? God wants you to boldly step out of the restricted life you are living and into the boundless blessings Jesus has secured for you. But in order to do this, you should prepare and plan for significant growth and increase (in every area). You must enlarge the perimeters of your entire life.

**Spreading out** requires more room for everything!

The greatest obstacle you will need to climb over is the **fear of failure**. Remember this; people who shift their boundaries pay as much attention to their mistakes as they do to their accomplishments. They learn from their failed attempts and either try harder the next time or readjust their energies toward another goal. What are some of your greatest mistakes in life so far? And what have you learned from them? Because your greatest learning opportunities often emerge from your greatest failures. When you understand this principle, you will learn not to be afraid of failure. In a worst case scenario the cost is merely school fees - the cost of learning!

We can all identify with Peter's frustration when Jesus taught him something about fishing (Luke 5:1-6). "One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around Him and listening to the word of God, He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then He sat down and **taught** the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, He said to Simon,

“Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch”. Simon answered, “Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because You say so, I will let down the nets”. When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.”

In order for Peter to experience the super-abundant life that Jesus had probably just been speaking about, he needed to reposition himself and shift the boundaries of his imagination. The catch that he had planned, and was fully prepared for, was tiny in comparison to the catch the Jesus had secured. The nets couldn't hold the Lord's catch, and the boat couldn't carry the load! Remember Isaiah 54? **“Spread out! Think big! Don't hold back!”** Peter obviously wasn't in this frame of mind. He toiled all night without success. If anything, he had only prepared himself for failure, or at very best, he expected to catch a few fish to see him through.

This passage is interesting for several reasons. Jesus tells Peter to “put out into **deep water**,” implying that he had been casting his nets into shallow water. Most of the time it's a lot easier for us to stay in the safety of shallow water, without ever taking any risks. We stay in our comfort zone rather than spreading out and applying our gifts and talents elsewhere. The shallow water feels so much safer - we can paddle a little here and there, and keep our feet on the bottom of the pool. But this type of security also imposes serious limitations and will keep us moored in the safe harbour. Your safe harbour isn't where the abundant blessings lie. Just as in Peter's case, you often have to discover the hard way that the deeper water holds the miraculous catch.

Consider how Peter must have felt having a carpenter-turned-preacher telling him how he should fish. After all, his father, and his father before him, were fisherman. The temptation must have been to respond as the expert - as the third generation fisherman. But despite his very natural human tendency to protect his turf, Peter responds with **humility** and respect. He knew enough about Jesus not to dismiss Him out of hand. And maybe he also felt that there was nothing to lose anyway. They had spent the whole night doing it the “professional” way, and nothing had transpired.

But boy, was Peter rewarded for his obedience! For being prepared to **take a risk** and stretch his “specialist” boundaries! Not only were there fish where Jesus had directed him, but there were so many fish that his nets couldn't contain them. Not even two boats were enough! So often in our lives, and personal or professional development, we plateau on a level of “competent complacency”. A place where we have already clearly defined all our limitations, and are comfortable with them. A place where nothing we do seems to break us through to the next level. I'm sure many of you know what I'm taking about. It's truly frustrating because every thing you've learnt, and all the skills you've developed, do not cause you to prosper or succeed any more. This is when shifting the boundaries of your **imagination** really matters. This is when shifting the boundaries of your **expectations** will give birth to **faith**, because faith brings to reality the things you confidently expect.

Through humility and simple faith, just as in Peter's case, your situation can all change in split second. When God is given the opportunity to adjust your method of dealing with matters, by causing you to think “out of the box,” the results are always astounding. The key is not to allow frustration, past disappointment, present

complacency, or professional pride to restrict you to recognisable opportunities. The superabundance of a divine opportunity lies just an instruction away. But you must raise your sights or you may miss seeing it.

I would encourage you to seek out a perspective, particularly if you are struggling on your journey toward your goals, that is fresh from the throne room of God. You will know it by the immediate results you see! It may be unrecognisable, completely unexpected and even unorthodox. And you probably wouldn't normally be inclined to consider it. However, the results are going to astound you, because a "God-idea" is impregnated with the ability to transform all your efforts into a ship weighted down with success beyond measure! So don't ever let doubt and unbelief shipwreck your dreams. Keep on trusting God in spite of the situation you're facing. Peter's doubts about Jesus' fishing abilities progress to doubts about himself. The first was overcome by a **miracle** and the second doubt by a **promise** (verse 10). Jesus is still in the miracle-working business today, and His promises are clearly listed in His word. Therefore, we are in the same place Peter was before receiving his breakthrough.

Jesus simply said to Peter, "**Launch out** into the deep." This literally means, "Let loose and go where it's more risky." Many of you need to "*let loose and let God*". For if you don't, you will restrict His miracle-working power and limit your blessings to the "shallow" measure you have become familiar with. Remember, God wants to transform your efforts into a vessel weighted down with success beyond anything you can imagine!