

How to Open the Windows of Heaven By Todd Bentley

How to Open the Windows of Heaven

Jesus saw heaven open and then the Holy Spirit descended. We have to get the heavens open. Here are a few keys:

Prayer for Holy Hunger

My experience of open heavens started with holy hunger. Youve got to be hungry for His presence. Ask Him for holy hunger and then press in. Youll see better results from asking God to make you hungry and fervent than you will by trying to muster up your own determination and willpower to make yourself hungry and fervent.

Soaking

I listen to worship music and just lie on the carpet, meditating and thinking about Jesus. I quiet my mind of all busyness and when it wanders I simply refocus on Jesus. That brings the presence of the Lord. Now I dont even have to press in to get the presence. I can just get into that position and the presence comes. Ive become very sensitive. Practice 1 Samuel 3:1-8. I want to be like the boy Samuel and lie where the ark of God is. If the glory is around I want to be quiet and lie in it. There is a place for prayer and praise but mostly we are just trying to worship our way into the presence. Its important to practice the presence.

Repentance and obedience

How do I get an open heaven? Get back into obedience. Repentance opens heaven and obedience keeps it open.

Prayer with fasting

"When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:13, 14)

Notice the first verse: "When I shut up heaven." When heaven is shut there is no blessing, revival, or fruitfulness.

Gird yourselves and lament, you priests; wail, you who minister before the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, you who minister to my God; For the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD. (Joel 1:13, 14)

This passage described the church in a terrible place. The abundance was gone; it was dry, the land laid waste, there was no fruit, the fig tree was bare, and the harvest of the field had died. No one was getting saved. God had also cut off the new wine-the drink offering. We need to understand that the two most important ingredients to having a relationship with God back then were oil and wine. If they couldn't bring their offerings, then they couldn't receive atonement. When God cut off the new wine and the new oil, He said in effect that His relationship with them was severed. These were people desperately in need of an open heaven. Joel commanded prayer and fasting.

Lie all night at the altar and pray and fast. If there is any area of your life where heaven is shut, fasting and prayer will open it. When heaven is closed it takes desperate prayer for God to restore as He did for His people in Joel 2:23-25:

Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God; for He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you-the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil. "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you."

Tithes and Offerings

Most people like me the entire time I preach this message until I address this very sensitive area-tithes and offerings.

Extravagant giving is proven throughout Scripture to open the heavens. What does money really have to do with God and the spirit realm? It's amazing how many times God draws a parallel between heaven and blessing and money. Maybe it shows us where our hearts are. Remember, the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10).

People think if they tithe they are going to get blessed. I know people who tithe who are not blessed. Do you know why? Because they tithe by the law. Someone might say, "Well tithing is by the law." No it's not. God did it with Abraham before the law. It's by faith. Someone else might argue that there is no tithing in the New Testament. Jesus didn't excuse the tithe, but He did have strong words to say to the teachers of the law and the Pharisees who were tithing without mercy, faithfulness, and justice. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law; justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone" (Matt. 23:23).

A reason some faithful givers don't receive blessings is because they are stingy about it. They tithe 10 percent-and that's it. Tithes alone don't open the windows of heaven-tithes and offerings do. The tithe breaks up the ground so that the rest of the seed (offerings) can bring forth fruit. The Word says in Malachi that when you bring your tithes and offerings into the storehouse, God will open the windows of heaven.

"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:8-10)

In Deuteronomy 28:12 the Lord called His storehouse "the heavens." Is it possible to take my money and put it in His good treasure-the heavens? God said, "I am going to open up the windows of heaven to pour out blessings." We always use this verse to refer to money, but it really includes all the benefits of the open heaven: "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow."

In the second chapter of Acts, God opened the heavens and poured out His Spirit; three thousand souls were saved, the church emerged, and immediately people sold their land and houses and laid their offerings at the apostles' feet. Generosity and extravagant giving were released. Do you believe that God is your Provider? Would you like to operate in the heavenly system so that you are not affected by the economy? I would much rather bank through a heavenly ATM. If I want my money to be in that heavenly system, I have to put my money where that system is.

Word meditation principle

Get the Word into your heart, mind, and soul daily. Become a modern-day Brother Lawrence. You will find powerful insights into living a life of daily intimacy with God in a nineteen-page compilation known as, "The Practice of the Presence of God: Conversations and Letters of Brother Lawrence." For years Lawrence's heart and spirit anguished and suffered. When this seventeenth-century monk discovered how to wait on the Lord in quietness and stillness, suddenly he found his life had changed. He experienced an open heaven and became intensely aware of the presence of God all of the time. His experience was similar to mine; I came to know a profound peace and God felt so close. Brother Lawrence practiced what is sometimes known today as the "silent prayer of the heart" or "meditation and contemplation."

Servant evangelism

People often ask me: Why did God pick Albany, Oregon, for the tremendous outpouring of healings and miracles you were involved in? What was it about that small church of three hundred people? God chose Albany because the people there believed that they could open the heavens through servant evangelism. Servant evangelism opens heaven over cities and towns. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6). "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13).

Love acts. Love never fails. Faith works through love. For a change, let's forget power evangelism, prophetic evangelism, preaching on the street corners, and tracts. Let's show God's love by action. Buy someone groceries. Head on down to a skateboard park and buy the gang hotdogs. Give out gas vouchers, mow lawns, or wash cars for free. That is all those fifty or sixty people at the Vineyard church did, and it opened heaven because faith brought wonders and power.

There are two things I remember as a drug addict that played an essential role in my salvation. One day a chaplain gave me his card and said: "If you ever want to go for coffee, call me." I never did, but still I thought: What was that? That guy wanted to take time to come into my life and somehow connect emotionally. Another time, while I was in prison, a guy came in and sat on the edge of my bed. I was listening to some Satanic music; that's what I liked-death metal. He was looking at the lyrics and asked: "Hey, do you see what they are singing about?" I said, "I just like the way that it sounds; I don't care what they are saying." He replied, "Okay, that's cool. So you like the sound of heavy metal. I've got some good Christian music." Christian music-come on! I thought of Christian music as southern gospel or organ hymns. He bought me a few tapes of Christian heavy metal bands. I was so impressed that I played them when I did drugs with my friends, and they would say: "Dude, this is good." It didn't bother me that the music was about Jesus.

Jesus was moved with compassion and He healed every sickness and disease. If you want to get more of God's power in your life, try some acts of compassion. The Bible says to bless your enemies. Try doing something nice for them that would blow their minds.

In Him,

Todd Bentley


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
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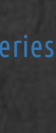
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