

Joke: A man is dining in a fancy restaurant and there is a beautiful redhead sitting at the next table. He has been checking her out since he sat down, but lacks the nerve to talk with her.

Suddenly she sneezes, and her glass eye comes flying out of its socket toward the man. As it flies towards him he reaches out, grabs it out of mid air, and hands it back to her.

'Oh my, I am so sorry,' the woman says as she pops her eye back in place.

'Let me buy your dinner to make it up to you,' she says.

They enjoy a wonderful dinner together, and afterwards they go to the theatre followed by drinks. They talk, they laugh, she shares her deepest dreams and he shares his.

She listens. They had a wonderful, wonderful time.

The next morning, they meet up again as she had invited him over for breakfast as well. She cooks a gourmet meal

with all the trimmings. The guy is amazed. Everything had been so incredible!

'You know,' he said, 'you are the perfect woman. Are you this nice to every guy you meet?'

'No,' she replies. . . 'You just happened to catch my eye.'

Genesis 3:1–3 (NIV): Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”

First off let me say this God never said don't touch it. He said don't eat it. And church we need to know what God said, so when the enemy attacks, and He will attack, we will know the promises He has given us and the things He has called us too.

The word says, “my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.”

Notice what it says in the first half of verse 3. . .

Genesis 3:3 (NIV): but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. . .

Where was the tree located? In the middle. And you need to understand that is significant, God is not idle with His words. He never waste words. It mentions that for a purpose.

Scripture points out that the tree was in the middle of the Garden. And that is significant because what that means is that they had to pass by what they did have in order to even get to what they didn’t have.

And so often we pass by what God has given us because we think we are missing out on what wasn't.

No, don't want that banana, not that orange, not stopping for that fruit, I want the one in the middle.

The first temptation known to man was the temptation to focus on lack and disregard the abundance that they had.

And I'm concerned that so many in the body of Christ is living with a lack mentality. We don't serve a God of lack, but one of abundance.

Adam and Eve had to walk past all of the abundance to get to the thing they felt they lacked. I don't want all this other stuff I have. . .if I can just get to this thing that is missing.

And Satan wants us to focus on the lack because then we will never use the full potential of what has already been given.

Check this out. . .

Ephesians 1:3 (NLT): All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with (*some, a few,*

most, many, no it says) every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.

And so often church we look at what other people have and think if only I had that. We see their gifts, their talents, finances, whatever it might be. And we long for what they have instead of using to the full potential what we already have been given.

You have so many gifts in your life. It's time to focus on what you have, and allow them to help you bloom into your full potential.

Be we so often get caught up in the lack game, focusing on what we think we don't have, what we think we're missing. And that blinds us from noticing all the abundance in our life and keeps us from tapping into that abundance.

And when you focus on what you lack you can lose what you have. (Talk about that)

Ultimately Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden.

They lost the abundance because they gave into the temptation to go after what they felt they lacked.

Hear this church, God has blessed each of us uniquely, so don't focus on what you see others have, focus on the blessings you already have. Because what you focus on grows. And if you focus on your lack, you will never utilize what you already have.

Watch this. . .

1 Corinthians 1:7 (TPT): So now you aren't lacking any spiritual gift as you eagerly await the unveiling of the Lord Jesus, the Anointed One.

There's a story in the Scripture, let me give you some background. Elijah the prophet had told King Ahab there was going to be a famine and the famine came.

God told Elijah where to go so that he would not lack food, or water during that time, but eventually, look what happened. . .

1 Kings 17:7–16 (NIV): Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. 8 Then the word of the Lord came to him: 9 “Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food.” 10 So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” 11 As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” 12 “As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.” 13 Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. 14 For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord sends rain on the land.’ ” 15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the

woman and her family. 16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

Sometimes God uses the most unlikely to bless us.

God sent Elijah to a widow who was preparing her last meal for her and her son. Not where I would expect to see a blessing come from.

I mean the faith she had. She didn't question the prophet, she just used what she had. And you and I are simply called to use what we have been given. God can and will use what we have, no matter how little you might think it is, for His purposes and glory. Remember the boy that had just a few fish for his lunch. God multiplied it and feed a multitude. And if any one ever had a reason to complain about lack it was this widow.

Hear this church, there are so many characters in the Scripture that felt they lacked something that would stop them from being what God had called them to.

Look at Moses. . .

Exodus 3:11 (NIV): But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

Exodus 4:13 (NIV): But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

Finally God said, what’s that in your hand. To you it might be just a Shepherd's stick to me it’s a rod of deliverance.

There was Gideon who felt he was from too small a tribe. Jeremiah who felt too young. A centurion who felt too unworthy. The list can go on and on.

And let me say this again. We can’t afford to focus on what we don’t have because we will never see the abundance of what we do.

When you focus on your lack, your seemingly inadequacies, you will miss the abundance of what you have been given.

In Numbers 13 God had asked Moses to go send out spies to the land that was promised to them and they came back with this report.

Numbers 13:26–33 (NIV): They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 They gave Moses this account: “We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28 But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.” 30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.” 31 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack

those people; they are stronger than we are.” 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

And what’s interesting is this was promised to them but they felt like they lacked something to walk into it. They concentrated so much on the lack of ability that they almost missed the abundance of blessing. Watch this a few verse earlier we read. . .

Numbers 13:23 (NIV): When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs.

A single cluster of grapes took two people to carry. That is what God had for them. That’s not lack.

But there's more, after they were told we can do this we can go in and possess the land look what they said. . .

Numbers 14:1–4 (NIV): That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2 All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! 3 Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” 4 And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

We should go back to our bondage, at least in Egypt we had our needs meant.

How quickly they forgot, how quickly we forget, all the abundance, the blessings we have already been given. They wanted to go back to being a slave in Egypt because they felt they lacked what they needed to receive the promises God had given.

Watch this. . .

Nehemiah 9:21 (NIV): For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

Let me try to wrap up today. It's time we stop looking at our spiritual life's as lacking. If only I had this gift, or that gift. Stop looking at your church as lacking. If only we had more of a worship band, if only. . .if we only I can get to the thing in the middle of the garden that I can't have.

I will pass up everything I do have just to get to the thing I don't.

God has given you and I every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. Stop focusing on what you don't have so you don't lose out on what you do.

Psalms 34:10 (NIV): The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Here's the thing, lack has a few different meanings one is you can lack by not having something, or be missing

something. And I have talked about that today.

Let's not focus on what we feel we are lacking. That's what the enemy wants because then you will never use what you have, or reach the potential or places God has called you to.

But you can also lack by being free of something. Free of an addiction, shame, or regret.

And that is something we all should want and the God I serve can help you with that so that you can walk in the abundant life He has for you lacking nothing.

It's time church to seek the Lord with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength. And utilize every gift you have been given to its full potential. God will use it for His glory in abundance.