

## THE BLESSINGS OF SPIRITUAL BARRENNESS

(Russell Baptist Church – 11/8/02 – EKB)

Reading: *Isaiah 54:1-5.*

1. At times in our Christian walk we enter into an experience of spiritual barrenness or emptiness, where we feel dissatisfied and ineffective.
2. Although disguised, **these are in fact times of blessing from God.** They motivate us to pray, seek God, believe His promises and so move into a new place or level of effective Christian ministry.
3. **Example:**  
Some years ago I felt barren, ineffective and fruitless. So I laid down the ministry I was involved in, which was to the Youth Group, Sunday School and leading the College Christian Union. This gave me much more time to pray and seek God for His word to me. Soon afterwards, a young man visited us. I saw in him what I needed. He told me that he had received the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. His advice to me was to pray and ask God for this blessing. One night after seven months of praying and seeking God for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, God gave a vision of one word “**GIFT**”. From that moment I started to thank and praise God for the gift of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, *Lk 11:13.*  
  
After one week, my life was transformed in at least five or six areas. There was a new release of joy, God’s Word seemed like a new book, prayer was alive, there was new victory over sin, a greater boldness in witnessing and a renewed desire to share God’s Word.  
  
Through allowing a measure of spiritual barrenness to come into my life, God motivated me to seek Him for a new level of Christian experience.
4. Spiritual barrenness is an awareness of a spiritual need. It moves us to pray and seek God, believe His promises and receive His full provision.
5. Jesus said, “**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled**”, *Mat 5:6.* God often creates this hunger for righteousness by allowing us to enter into a time of spiritual barrenness.
6. “Hunger and thirst for righteousness” may be explained as a hunger and thirst **for a closer relationship with God and a more effective work of service to others.** God will always fulfil this desire, *Ps 145:19, Pro 10:24.*
7. Those who are satisfied do not have a sense of need and will not make the same progress. *Is 54:1.*
8. So “sing”, “**break forth into singing and cry aloud for joy**”, when you feel spiritually barren, fruitless and hungry for more of God and His work of service to others, *Is 54:2.*
9. Respond by “**enlarging the place of your tent**” through expanding your attitude, faith realm and vision, in line with the promises of the Word which God reveals to you. *Is 54:2.*

10. With joy declare the scripture promises God makes alive and you will be enlarging the place of your tent, *Is 54:2*.
11. God will bring **others to help you stretch out “the curtains of your dwelling place,”** *Is 54:2*. These are “enablers” sent by God to help you. **“Let”** them do it, *Is 54:2*. “Go for it.” “Be realistic, expect a miracle.” Jack Hayford says, “I expect the inevitable, supernatural, intervention of God, I expect a miracle.” *Phil 4:13, Mat 17:20, Mat 14:29, Mk 11:22-24*.

Examples: The young man mentioned above in No. 3 was an “enabler”. He enabled me to see my need and pointed the way to finding a new life in Christ.

When the time came to set up a web site of all our material, to establish, strengthen and equip pastors and believers, God sent two young men to us with the skills and motivation to do this. Prior to this time we were posting out sets of “Pastors Notes” to pastors in about 29 nations. With the web site this will be greatly expanded.

12. Do not hold back. “Do not spare,” *Is 54:2*.
13. **“Lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes,”** *Is 54:2*, by building new relationships in your work of Christian ministry and then work with these and make them stronger. God will bring to you the contacts you need. Build your work of ministry to a whole new level of opportunity and effectiveness with others.
14. There will be great increase on the right hand and the left, *Is 54:3*. Those who receive from you the blessings of the Lord will reach out to the nations and cause many new churches to be raised up, *Is 54:3*. God’s Kingdom will increase greatly and many will be won to Christ.